

**The challenges of implementing isiXhosa as language of
learning and teaching: a case study**

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Dissertation submitted in the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Master of Education*
at the Potchefstroom campus of the North-West University

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November 2010

ABSTRACT

The South African Constitution states that every learner has a right to learn in the official language of his or her choice. This dissertation explores the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in a selected pilot school. The study aims to determine the challenges that hamper the implementation of using isiXhosa as a LoLT. The research took place at an isiXhosa speaking school where the learners and teachers are isiXhosa speaking people. The Western Cape Education Department has launched a programme, the *Language Transformation Plan*, and this selected pilot school comprised the site of research. The isiXhosa speaking learners achieved poorly in the systemic evaluations results, as well as in the Grade 12 results. It has become important to determine the merits of home languages as language of LoLT.

The literature review provided a theoretical framework for the implementation of a home language as LoLT. Aspects such as the historical background of the use of home languages in education, home language in a multilingual context, and language as a resource in education were addressed. Using home languages as LoLT has advantages, disadvantages, and challenges. Attitudes of users about isiXhosa as home language as LoLT were also explored.

This bounded case study followed a basic qualitative methodology to collect data. Interviews related to the School Governing Body, principal, School Management Team, teachers, and learners at the school. The analysis of biographical data and a qualitative content analysis resulted in various themes and three categories. The analysis provided evidence of the experiences of the stakeholders during the implementing of isiXhosa as LoLT. Aspects that were identified related to the needs, advantages and challenges that the participants encountered. In general, the participants were positive that isiXhosa could be used as LoLT as long as these challenges can be addressed. Chapter five provides an overview of aspects that are important for deliberation during policy processes.

Although this bounded case study was limited in terms of scope, it provides important information on the live-world experiences of how isiXhosa affects learning and teaching through a home language. Additional large scale is required to determine country wide and longitudinal data on the advantages of home languages as LoLT.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank and acknowledge the following people and institution for their immense contribution to the success of my studies:

- The God Almighty for giving me strength and determination during the entire period, and for making my studies a success
- My supervisor Dr. Herman J van Vuuren who has been my aspiration, thank you for the knowledge and experience that you have given to me. I will never ever forget your support. You have been like a father to me
- Ms D Dlavane my co-supervisor; you have been a great pillar of life to me
- Dr. S Mbokodi; your advise was of great help to me
- Prof A Seugnet Blignaut; it is not every day that someone meet people like you. Thank you for everything, there are so many I cannot even count. You have been like a mother to me
- A special thanks to Mrs Magdel Kamffer for her assistance in administration
- To Margie; for editing
- To my husband Velile; for your understanding, support and patience
- To my children; Bunny, Khanya and Bonke for understanding when I could not be there for you
- My mom and sisters for looking after my children when I could not
- My late father; I thank you for your wise words
- My principal; Mr. Eagan, your support was extra ordinary
- My colleagues; thank you for taking part in the interviews
- Last but not least; the North-West University for financial support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	viii
List of Acronyms	ix
List of Addenda.....	x

CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION

1.1	Introduction and problem statement	1
1.2	Background.....	2
1.3	Research purpose and aims	5
1.4	Research design and methodology	5
1.4.1	The literature study	6
1.4.2	Data collection	6
1.4.3	Participant selection	7
1.4.4	Recording of data.....	7
1.4.5	Data analysis	8
1.5	Trustworthiness.....	8
1.6	Ethical aspects.....	8
1.7	Contribution of the study	9
1.8	Chapter division	9

CHAPTER TWO: HOME LANGUAGE AS LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

2.1	Introduction	11
2.2	Home language as a language of learning and teaching	13
2.2.1	Historical background.....	14
2.2.2	Home language in a multilingual context	16
2.2.3	Language as a resource in education.....	18
2.3	Advantages associated with home language as a language of learning and teaching	21
2.3.1	Cognitive advantages.....	21
2.3.2	Pedagogical advantages.....	21

2.3.3	Cultural and identity advantages	22
2.3.4	Psychological advantages	23
2.3.5	Human rights advantages	23
2.3.6	Assessment advantages	24
2.3.7	Summary.....	25
2.4	Disadvantages associated with disregarding home language in education.....	25
2.5	Rationale for using home language as language of learning and teaching	27
2.6	Policies and home language in teaching and learning	29
2.6.1	Language policy in an African context	30
2.6.1.1	Botswana	30
2.6.1.2	Lesotho	31
2.6.1.3	Namibia.....	31
2.6.1.4	Nigeria	32
2.6.2	South African constitutional context.....	34
2.6.3	Language in education policy	35
2.6.4	Summary.....	37
2.7	Prospects for African languages.....	38
2.7.1	Attitudes towards home language in education	39
2.7.1.1	Language attitudes.....	40
2.7.1.2	Teachers' attitudes.....	40
2.7.1.3	Learners' attitudes.....	42
2.7.1.4	Parents' attitudes	42
2.8	Language implementation in teaching and learning.....	45
2.8.1	Language planning.....	45
2.8.1.1	Status planning	46
2.8.1.2	Corpus planning	46
2.8.2	Teaching practices and experiences	46
2.8.3	Language and communication	48
2.9	Challenges for implementing home language as language of learning and teaching	49
2.9.1	Uniform standard.....	49
2.9.2	Availability of learning, teaching and support material	50
2.9.3	Language influence and status.....	50
2.9.4	Teacher training	51
2.9.5	Cost	51
2.9.6	Academic terminology.....	52
2.9.7	Summary.....	52

2.10	Synthesis	52
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CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	54
3.2	The research design	54
3.2.1	Qualitative research approach.....	54
3.2.2	Case study approach	55
3.3	Research methodology	56
3.3.1	Interviews and focus groups.....	57
3.3.1.1	Interviews.....	57
3.3.1.2	Focus group interviews	58
3.3.1.3	Field notes	59
3.4	Participant selection	60
3.4.1	Learners.....	60
3.4.2	Teachers.....	60
3.4.3	The school management team	61
3.4.4	The school governing body	61
3.5	Data analysis	61
3.6	Trustworthiness.....	64
3.6.1	Credibility	64
3.6.2	Dependability	64
3.6.3	Authenticity	64
3.6.4	Confirmability	64
3.7	Ethical considerations	64
3.8	Conclusion	66

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1	Introduction	67
4.2	Biographical information.....	67
4.3	Category identification.....	70
4.4	Sub-question 1: What is the rationale (needs) of implementing home languages as languages of learning and teaching?.....	70
4.4.1	Support	70
4.4.2	Training	74
4.4.3	Implementation	75
4.4.4	Conclusion	76

4.5	Sub-question 2: What are the advantages of implementing home language as language of learning and teaching?.....	76
4.5.1	Advantages associated with home language as language of learning and teaching	77
4.5.2	Pass rates	79
4.5.3	Culture	79
4.5.4	Conclusion	80
4.6	Sub-question 3: What are the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as language of learning and teaching in the Intermediate Phase of a pilot school as part of a language transformation programme?.....	81
4.6.1	Employment.....	81
4.6.2	Resources.....	83
4.6.3	Fear of unknown	84
4.6.4	International language.....	85
4.6.5	Code switching.....	85
4.6.6	Terminology	86
4.7	Conclusion	89

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1	Introduction	90
5.2	Overview of the research	90
5.3	Key findings	92
5.3.1	Findings related to policy and needs	92
5.3.1.1	National and provincial policies	92
5.3.1.2	School policies	92
5.3.2	Findings related to policy and advantages associated with the use of home language as LoLT	93
5.3.3	Findings related to policy and the challenges for implementing isiXhosa as LoLT	93
5.4	Recommendations	95
5.5	Limitations of the study.....	95
5.6	Suggestions for further research	96
5.7	Conclusions	96
5.8	Reflection of the research journey.....	97
	References	98

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Framework for home language as language of learning and teaching	13
Figure 4.1	Coding structure used for the analysis of the study	72
Figure 5.1	Aspects emerging from this study for policy deliberation	97

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Percentage frequencies of speakers of the eleven official languages.....	35
Table 4.1:	Summary of the biographical information	71

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
DACST	Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology
ERIC	Education Resource Information
LANGTAG	Language Task Group
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LTP	Language transformation plan
LTSM	Learning, teaching and support material
MLA	Modern Language Association of America
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIED	National Institute of Educational Development
PanSALB	The Pan South African Language Board
PRAESA	Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

LIST OF ADDENDA

Addendum 3.1	Selection of the pilot school
Addendum 3.2	Ethical clearance certificate
Addendum 3.3	Request from Director of School of Continuing Teacher Education (SCTE), North-West University to the WCED
Addendum 3.4	Researcher's request to the WCED
Addendum 3.5	Permission from the WCED to perform research
Addendum 3.6	Permission from the SMT and the SGB members
Addendum 3.7	Permission from the parents or guardians of the learners (English)
Addendum 3.8	Permission from the parents or guardians of the learners (isiXhosa)
Addendum 3.9	Permission from the teachers
Addendum 3.10	Background questionnaire submitted to the teachers
Addendum 3.11	Focus group interview with the SMT members
Addendum 3.12	Focus group interview with the teachers
Addendum 3.13	Focus group interview with the learners (English)
Addendum 3.14	Focus group interview with the learners (isiXhosa)
Addendum 3.15	Individual interviews with the SGB chairperson
Addendum 3.16	Transcribed individual interview with the SGB chairperson (Interview 1)
Addendum 3.17	Transcribed individual interview with the Principal (Interview 2)
Addendum 3.18	Transcribed focus group interview with the SMT (Interview 3)
Addendum 3.19	Transcribed focus group interview with the teachers (Interview 4)
Addendum 3.20	Transcribed focus group interview with the learners (Interview 5)
Addendum 3.21	Captured background information obtained from teachers

The addenda are available on CD-ROM at the back of the dissertation.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

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ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction and problem statement

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is the supreme law in South Africa and it protects, amongst other things, the sovereignty of the eleven official languages and promotes the equal recognition of all official languages (South Africa, 1996a: Section 6 (2)). Language is a fundamental right in education and every learner has the right to receive education in an official language of his or her choice in a public school where that education is reasonably practicable (South Africa, 1996a: Section 29 (21)). The promotion and equal status to all South Africa's official languages is therefore a basic consideration for every educational institution.

The Western Cape Education Language Act (Western Cape Province, 1998) recognises three official languages, namely English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa that can be used as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) or medium of instruction in schools of the Western Cape Province (Sigcau, 2004:240). Although the Western Cape Department of Education (WCDE) has recommended that the three mentioned languages be used in schools, isiXhosa is used as a LoLT only in the Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3) and not beyond (Sigcau, 2004: 240). A provincial Language Transformation Plan (LTP) was launched in the Western Cape Province by the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) to implement isiXhosa as the LoLT across the curriculum in a selection of primary schools in the Western Cape. The implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT led to a survey by PRAESA that was conducted with the purpose of establishing the status of different languages, to enhance language planning and to raise language awareness among the various role players in schools (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10,11). However, the language survey did not address specific challenges of implementation experienced at the selected pilot schools participating in the LTP. Recommendations from the survey was that *focused language* research is needed to account for *local particularities* (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10,11). Therefore, this research study is in line with this recommendation to investigate the challenges experienced at a particular school during the implementing of isiXhosa as the LoLT.

This introduction leads to the formulation of the problem statement: *What are the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of a pilot school as part of a language transformation project?*

The reason for choosing the Intermediate phase is because the Foundation phase is already using home language as language of learning and teaching. The Intermediate phase is piloting the use of home language as language of learning and teaching therefore it will be easy to do research as the phase is already busy with the project.

1.2 Background

South Africa has a complex and intriguing landscape of multilingualism that consists of eleven official languages. During the apartheid dispensation in South Africa (1948-1994), Afrikaans and English were the only languages with an officially recognised nation-wide status, despite the existence of other indigenous languages in South Africa. The period from 1990-94 have been years of transition and political negotiation, which included the establishment of the constitutional rights of the speakers of the indigenous languages in South Africa as well as a choice of the languages to be used as LoLT as well as language subjects in schools (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 13,14).

The promotion and development of indigenous languages in the new South African democracy was initially underpinned by the National Language Project and the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI). Heugh (1995: 340) points out that the language policies ignores the necessity of strategies for implementation in practice. This mismatch between intention and implementation strategy was from the beginning subjected to immense assimilation pressure from English as the language of dominance. Plüddemann *et al.* (2004:17) add that the mismatch between language policy as intention on the one hand and the actual implementation of home languages in practice prevails in education. As an educator, the researcher can relate to this dilemma between policy intentions and the experienced challenges in implementing an indigenous African home language as LoLT at school level. These challenges to implement an indigenous African language as LoLT at a particular school constitute the focus of this research.

Based on the Bill of Rights (South Africa, 1996a), the South African government is bound to support and promote all official languages as LoLT in education. The Bill of Rights (South Africa, 1996a: section 29) states that "Everyone has the right to receive education in the offi-

cial language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable." The successful realisation of the national ideal of multilingualism depends, amongst other things, on reliable research to inform policy makers and those who are responsible for implementing relevant and needed language practices (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10).

The rationale to implement an indigenous language as the LoLT in selected primary schools within the Western Cape Province is based on the following key policy documents (Sigcau, 2004: 240):

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, no. 108 of 1996, chapter 1, section 6(1) and chapter 2 (Bill of Rights), section 29 (2) (South Africa, 1996a)
- The Language in Education Policy Act, no. 27 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996b)
- Western Cape Language Act, no. 13 of 1998 (Western Cape Province, 1998).

Despite the rationale from policies and directives, the challenges to implement isiXhosa as LoLT are:

- A low pass rate exists for isiXhosa speaking learners, because isiXhosa is not used as a LoLT beyond the Foundation Phase in the intermediate and Senior Phases of schooling.
- African learners are deprived of the right to express themselves in their home languages (mother-tongues) in an adapted Outcomes-based Education approach.
- An insufficiently grounded knowledge of one's home language may cause insufficiency in a second language whereby necessary vocabulary cannot be transferred, for example, into English.
- The present learners are viewed as the leaders and administrators of the future; therefore, it is important for them to acquire a grounded knowledge base for communication and service delivery (Sigcau, 2004: 244-249).

These overarching reasons of the bigger picture are also adopted as rationale for this research study in a more localised context.

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) initiated a project with regard to language transformation in education, with the aim to establish the status of LoLT in primary schools, to enhance language planning and to raise language awareness among teachers, learners, departmental officials and school governing members (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10). A specific recommendation from a survey of the mentioned language transformation project, which included Grades 1-7 learners from primary schools of the Western Cape during the period

1999-2002, is the promotion of further research on language matters to identify and address the challenges of implementing an appropriate school language policy for the use of indigenous languages as LoLT (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10,11). Another related finding of the WCDE language survey that supports this research study is that although some isiXhosa-speakers preferred isiXhosa as a LoLT, others preferred English (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10). These ambivalent language preferences for medium of instruction are characteristic of the South African dilemma—indigenous languages are promoted on the one hand, while some sections of the society demand English as LoLT secure social mobility and status (Matshinhe, 2004: 16).

The importance of research in support of home languages as LoLT in schools should be emphasised as “mother-tongues are dying in South Africa ... we need to teach our children to gain confidence in expressing themselves in their own language” (Matshinhe, 2004: 15). Matshinhe (2004: 15) also states that with concerted efforts and political will, African languages can be promoted and developed in most spheres of society.

PRAESA, a non-government organisation (NGO) active in the Western Cape, is currently involved in introducing isiXhosa as LoLT in a selection of pilot schools. This language implementation initiative’s main focus is on the promotion and development of isiXhosa home language policy in some schools within the Western Cape Province. The aims of the initiative are to:

- promote multilingualism in education
- raise the status of African languages, particularly isiXhosa in the Western Cape
- assist teachers in coping with the challenges of working in multilingual classrooms (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10).

This research is based on the aims of the LTI and focused on the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in a specific primary school in the Western Cape Province as a case study. The LTI of PRAESA is viewed within a sociolinguistic framework (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10). This research was also conducted within the same theoretical framework as an attempt to gain insight into certain language aspects pertaining to a particular societal setting—in the case of this research, to education. A sociolinguistic view provides a framework for understanding the way language is used in *the lived experience* within society (Seargeant, 2009: 346). The research was also conducted within a language planning framework whereby language planning indicates the aspirations, laws, regulations (policies), beliefs and practices intended to achieve a planned change in language use in one or more communities (Kaplan & Baldauff, 1997: 4). The perspective of language planning was important for this research

topic to conceptualise the LTI and to understand the role of the various stakeholders within a larger socio-political context (Kaplan & Baldauff, 1997: 11).

1.3 Research purpose and aims

In accordance with the background information and problem statement, the purpose of this research was to investigate the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of a pilot school as part of a language transformation project. The research purpose led to the formulation of the following research question to delineate the aims of the research:

- What are the policy implications of implementing home languages as LoLT?

Three sub-questions were formulated to support the main research question:

- What is the rationale of implementing home languages as LoLT?
- What are the advantages of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of a particular pilot school as part of a LTI?
- What are the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of a particular pilot school as part of a LTI?

Based on the research purpose and related research questions, the research aims were to:

- establish and describe the rationale and implications of implementing home languages as LoLT
- determine the advantages of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the intermediate phase
- identify and describe the policy implications of implementing home languages as LoLT
- determine the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as language of learning and teaching in the Intermediate Phase of a pilot school as part of a LTI.

1.4 Research design and methodology

A qualitative approach was used in this study which aimed to address questions on the complex nature of social phenomena with the purpose to understand and describe the phenomena from the participants' point of view (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 101). The study aimed at

determining the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in a selected pilot school as part of a LTI. The qualitative approach was appropriate for investigating the research topic within the viewpoint of phenomenological and interpretive paradigms that enabled the researcher to seek an understanding of the research topic as a social phenomenon (Burrell & Morgan, 2005: 28; Neuman, 1997: 68; Schumacher & McMillan, 2000: 37).

An intrinsic case study {De Vos, 2005 #30} was selected as research method to obtain information from a particular school that is participating as a pilot school in a home LTI. The selected pilot school became a bounded system and single case study (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 32) within the home language implementation project. It has a specific context and dynamic nature with relevant information about the challenges to implement isiXhosa as LoLT that can be collected to identify analyse trends, patterns and relationships. De Vos *et al.* (2005: 272) maintain that a criterion for selecting a case study should be *the opportunity to learn*, while Mouton (2002: 150) regards the gaining of in-depth insights as the strength of case studies. The research findings from the selected pilot school as case study have the potential to provide rich information and in-depth insight into the challenges associated with the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT in a particular school.

1.4.1 The literature study

A focused literature study provided a theoretical and conceptual framework, to explore topic-related perspectives, to explain the background and context of the research theme and to clarify related concepts (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 51,70). The literature study was conducted in relation to the research purpose and aims and included text books, journal articles, official and departmental documentation concerning the implementation of home languages as LoLT in schools. The various electronic databases of the North-West University were vital for this research and were fully utilised: EbscoHost (Academic Search Premier, ERIC (Education Resource Information Centre), MLA International Bibliography and Teacher Reference Centre, ScienceDirect, J-Stor, Google Scholar, and Emerald. Key phrases relevant to this research were: *school and education, home language, medium of instruction, learning and teaching, indigenous languages and transformation.*

1.4.2 Data collection

Individual and focus group interviews were used as data collection techniques to obtain the participants' views and experiences about the implementation of home language as LoLT in the school as case study. These interview were regarded as the predominant method of

data collection in qualitative research to establish meanings that ostensibly reside with the participants (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 287). The complexity and variety of groups of participants from the school as case study necessitated the use of focus group interviews as planned discussions on a defined area of interest in a non-threatening environment to encourage participants to share their perceptions, points of view, experiences and concerns (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 299,300). Further details are available in Chapter 3.

Unstructured observation was used to understand and interpret the cultural behaviour of the participants to describe the context, school climate and idiosyncratic circumstances in addition to the capturing of responses (Mulhall, 2003: 306; Thietart, 2007: 184). As a teacher in the selected school as single case study, the researcher fulfilled the role of an *observer-as-participant* to write field notes related to the research aims (Judd *et al.*, 1991: 304; Thietart, 2007: 184). Observations should be recorded in written format immediately after observation (Polkinhorne, 2005: 143; Silverman, 2000: 140). The data from the observations was integrated, presented and interpreted with the data analysis procedure of the interviews (Sarantakos, 2000: 210). Further details are available in Chapter 3.

1.4.3 Participant selection

Members from the school and school community who were involved as role players in the implementation of home languages as LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of the school were identified as participants in the research. The groups of participants included learners from the Intermediate Phase, teachers from the Intermediate Phase, the school management team, and the school governing body. The identified groups of participants represented the key role players in the LTI and justified their inclusion in this research. The selection of participants from the various groups was based on the procedure of stratified and purposive sampling (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 219) to include those participants for the provision of information about the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of the selected school. The following individuals and groups of participants were identified for inclusion in this study:

- learners from the Intermediate Phase
- teachers from the Intermediate Phase
- school management team (SMT)
- school principal
- school governing body (SGB).

1.4.4 Recording of data

There were a total of two individual interviews and three focus group interviews. The interviews were captured by means of audio-recording and note-taking. Permission by the interviewees for audio-recording was obtained as part of ethical clearance for this research. Further details are available in Chapter 3.

1.4.5 Data analysis

The data analysis of the verbatim transcriptions of the interviews was performed according to a qualitative content analysis procedure (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 104; Rourke & Szabo, 2002: 64). Further details are available in Chapter 3.

1.5 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the demonstration of integrity and competence in qualitative research by adherence to detail and accuracy to assure authenticity and soundness of the research (Babbie, 1998: 129; Tobin & Begley, 2004: 389,390; Twycross & Shields, 2005: 36). The trustworthiness of the qualitative research methodology of this study relates to the planning and implementation of the research design which was conducted in a logical and systematic manner to ensure the trustworthiness of procedures according to the criteria of credibility, dependability, authenticity and confirmability (Freeman *et al.*, 2007: 28-29; Roberts *et al.*, 2006: 43; Tobin & Begley, 2004: 391-392).

1.6 Ethical aspects

The definition of ethics as stated by (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 57) was accepted for this research, namely: Ethics is a set of moral principles which is widely accepted as rules and behavioural expectations about the correct conduct towards participants. Ethical aspects that applied to this research included, amongst other things: the avoidance of emotional or any other form of harm, timely sharing of complete information about the purpose and procedures of the research, informed consent of all participants, assurance of confidentiality and privacy while the researcher was committed to report correctly on the analysis of the data and the results of the research (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 57-67).

As this research formed part of a postgraduate study at the North-West University, the University's academic policy demands that the research has to be approved by the Ethics Committee of the university. The primary goal of ethical approval is the protection of the participants, the researcher and the university. Ethical screening is a compulsory, quality measure to monitor whether actions and interventions are responsible and legal and whether appropriate safety measures are applied. The researcher adhered in full to the ethical policy requirements and directives of the North-West University, as well as to the applicable ethical norms of the social sciences.

1.7 Contribution of the study

The contribution of this research lies in the highlighting of contemporary challenges to implement isiXhosa as an indigenous African language and as a LoLT in a particular school. Although the research was based on a school as a single case study, which limits generalisation to a great extent, the theoretical basis, findings and recommendations in relation to the implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT will be of potential value to other school communities who share the same situation and experience. The research also established potential areas for further research with respect to the implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT in schools.

1.8 Chapter division

The study is presented according to the following structure:

Chapter 1	Orientation
Chapter 2	Home language as language of learning and teaching in schools
Chapter 3	Research design and methodology
Chapter 4	Data analysis and interpretation
Chapter 5	Findings, recommendations and summary.

This introductory chapter provides an orientation to the research. The importance of home languages as LoLT was substantiated from an extensive literature overview. The need for localised research in a particular setting was highlighted from literature to identify particular and idiosyncratic challenges for implementation. The formulation of a central research question support by three sub-questions led to a brief explanation of the research design and methodology that is extensively described in Chapter 3. The following chapters explore and investigate the three sub-questions to establish and describe the implications and challenges

for implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in a particular school as part of a LTI. The final chapter summarises the findings and presents the conclusions of the research in terms of the main research question.

CHAPTER TWO

HOME LANGUAGE AS LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

CHAPTER TWO

HOME LANGUAGE AS LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

2.1 Introduction

This study investigated the implications and challenges encountered to implement isiXhosa as a LoTL. The research took place at a selected pilot school of Circuit 3 in the Karoo Eden District (Southern Cape, George region). The implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT in this selected pilot school is in accordance with the Language in Education Policy of 14 July 1997 (Western Cape Province, 1998: 8) which promotes multilingualism. The promotion of multilingualism is realised through promoting three official South African languages in the Western Cape, English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa.

A familiar language of instruction improves the communication between teachers and learners as it facilitates easier negotiating of meaning (Malekela, 2006: 61). The same argument applies for communication with parents and between teachers and parents. Fluent and accessible communication encourages parents' participating in their children's school work, which leads to more effective teaching and learning (Desai, 2006: 107).

Instruction in a home language leads to inclusion of more localised content in the curriculum and makes the educational experience more relevant to the life-world of the learner. Parents experience less fear of becoming involved in school matters when they are able to discuss their child's learning with the teachers (Djite, 2008: 10). Parents are further capable to assist in their children's school work (Desai, 2006: 108).

Active learning takes place when instruction takes place in a language that the teacher and learner share with the result that learners who learn in their own language are expected to perform better (Nomlomo, 2006: 119). There is now wide-spread support for an emphasis on and promotion for increased use of home language as a LoLT to promote, amongst other aspects, the cognitive development and improved second language learning (Nomlomo, 2006: 119). The advantages ascribed to home language as a LoLT are in relation to improved learning skills, because improved communication helps build on what learners and teachers already know (Djite, 2008: 11; Nyangome, 2006: 23).

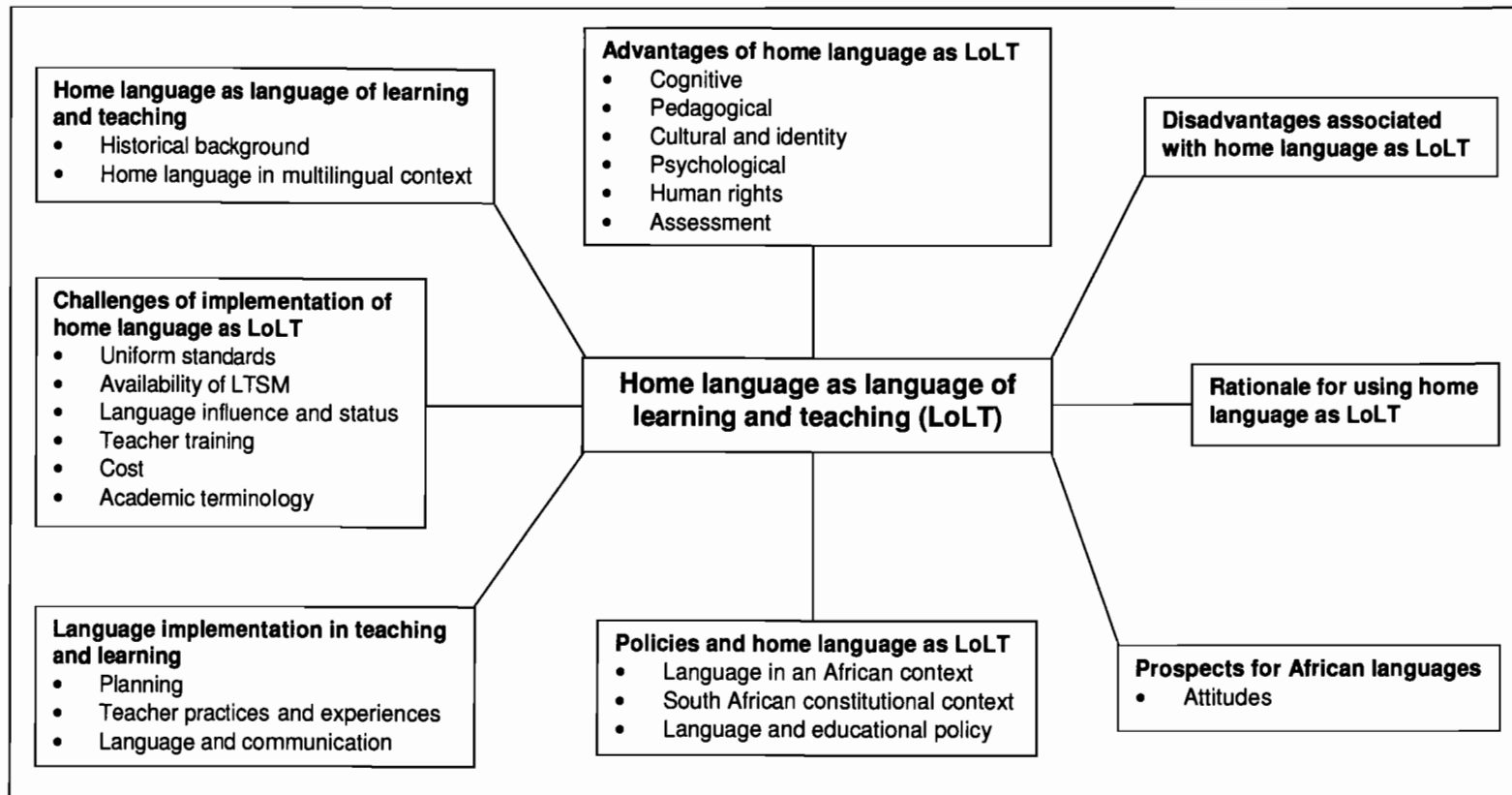


Figure 2.1 Framework for home language as language of learning and teaching

In spite of the evidence of the importance of home language as a LoLT, African languages as LoLT are limited to the lower primary levels of schooling and are rarely used in upper primary classes (Nyangome, 2006: 23). This research intends to focus on the implications and challenges of implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in a selected pilot school. The overview will be presented according to Figure 2.1 that outlines the components of using a home language as LoLT.

2.2 Home language as a language of learning and teaching

Home language as a LoLT is mostly implemented in the Foundation Phase in education (Muthwii, 2004: 15), but for home language to have a lasting educational impact and value to the learner, the continuation of the initial LoLT is of paramount importance in the school (Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2003: 42). However, in most schools it is the case that home language is discontinued after Grade 3 (final grade of Foundation Phase) as a language of a LoLT in the Southern Cape region. The mismatch between the ideal of the continuation of home language as a LoLT and the adoption of English as a LoLT from the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4) is a reality. This has educational consequences to the literacy development of the learners. Hence, this research focuses on the implications and challenges for the continuation of home language as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of a selected pilot school in the Southern Cape.

Home language should be effectively implemented to the level where it can be used for teaching all subjects and the learners to be able to understand and learn with confidence in their home language (De Wet, 2002: 119). In other words, learners should be literate in the use of home language in all school subjects. If a transition in the medium of instruction in schooling occurs before learners have developed an acceptable level of reading, written as well as spoken proficiency in both a home language and second language, then the learning across the curriculum could be negatively interrupted (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 14).

Home language should not be used in isolation, but other languages could be added when the child has mastered his or her home language (Mfum-Mensah, 2005: 72). The following section explores the situation of home language within a historical context.

2.2.1 Historical background

Oppression in South Africa was at the order of the day during the ruling of separate development (the apartheid regime). Exclusive policies were implemented during the apartheid era, for example the Christian National Education policy, which was a specific education policy for the promotion of Afrikaner aspirations in a multicultural South African society. The Christian National Education policy deliberately neglected the promotion and development of indigenous African languages in the schooling system (Sigcau, 2004: 241). The indigenous languages were not adequately supported or resourced during the apartheid era to limit the scientific development and power of indigenous languages (Alexander, 2007: 3).

The United Party government of South Africa was succeeded in 1948 by the National Party government, which introduced a policy of separate development (apartheid). The policy was meant to promote indigenous education in the form of Bantu Education. Language boards were set up to develop terminology and textbooks in each vernacular language (Sigcau, 2004: 241). During the first phase of apartheid governance (1955-1976), the authorities embarked on programmes to train teachers, developed terminology, translated school textbooks and established home language as a medium of instruction for the first eight years of primary education for African learners in South Africa. Even with insufficient resources devoted to Bantu Education, the apartheid system developed the linguistic terminology, textbooks and teacher education programmes to establish this practice for seven African languages (Heugh, 2006: 81; Sigcau, 2004: 241). South African citizens received education in their respective home languages in primary schools during this particular period of history (Sigcau, 2004: 241).

From an educational perspective, the use of home language instruction in primary schools had the advantage of allowing teachers and learners to teach and learn in a language in which they were comfortable and competent. However, in the minds of the black community, such an advantage was clouded by the realisation that educational motives were perceived as secondary to politics. Black people realised that segregation in schools was for the benefit of the National Party as the medium of instruction was exclusively English or Afrikaans in secondary schools (Sigcau, 2004: 241). Political resistance to apartheid and especially to the compulsory use of Afrikaans as medium of instruction in secondary schools for African children resulted in the now well-known student uprising during June 1976 (Heugh, 2006: 82). This particular incident is viewed as a turning point for the recognition of English as LoLT in South African schools. From this point of history onwards, home lan-

guage education for African learners was reduced to four years in South Africa followed by a switch to English for most learners (Heugh, 2006: 83).

In a historical moment in world history, the African National Congress (ANC) government took over a democratic government from the National Party in 1994. In 1996, the ANC government introduced a new Language in Education Policy. The Language in Education Policy in terms of section 3(4) of the National Education Policy Act, Act 27 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996b) stipulates that the right to choose a language of learning is vested in the individual (Sigcau, 2004: 242). The new government declared eleven official languages for South Africa embedded in a democratic Constitution. Although this language policy foregrounds and promotes the greater use of African languages, the ministry and departments of education did not follow through on their intentions and have established instead, an earlier transition to English as LoLT (Heugh, 2006: 82). The reality in education is that the majority of 78% of African learners who use an African language as home language, change to English as a medium of instruction in schools after three years of home language education (Heugh, 2006: 82). Ironically; English and Afrikaans speaking learners continue to enjoy home language as a medium of education as they did during the colonial and apartheid eras. The situation with regard to the issue of language use in education causes the gap to widen in relation to education achievement and development (Heugh, 2006: 82).

For isiXhosa speaking learners, even if they would chose to be taught in their own language, the current education system does not encourage them to do so. There is no WCED school which uses isiXhosa as a LoLT up to Grade 12. Sixteen schools are piloting isiXhosa as a medium of instruction, but it is not yet policy. A conclusion of this situation is that those learners whose home language is English or Afrikaans enjoy a clear advantage to the African learners whose home language is not used as a LoLT. In contradiction, there are few isiXhosa learners who achieve satisfactorily results with university exemption. The isiXhosa learners manage to obtain school leaving certificates which do not meet the academic requirements for admission to most universities in South Africa. A problem facing isiXhosa learners is that from Grade 4 the medium of instruction changes from home language to English as a medium of instruction. In reality many learners are not competent enough in an additional LoLT. To aggravate this, some teachers also experience challenges relating to proficiency in English as a medium of instruction. It is obvious that education cannot be equitable or non-discriminatory when the medium of instruction is a language that neither the teachers nor the learners can use sufficiently in a teaching and learning context (Sigcau, 2004: 243).

2.2.2 Home language in a multilingual context

A common slogan and emphasis in the South African education system is *education for all* (Brock-Utne, 2004: 2). The *all* in this notion of *education for all* includes, according to the judgment of the researcher, also isiXhosa as a LoLT. This particular notion implies fairness in access to education for all, irrespective of their language. The only manner in which education for all can be truly realised is to view and use any language in a multilingual context which is typical of the South African language landscape.

The question may be raised of what is meant by the concept of multilingual education? Multilingual education is viewed in the case where learners are taught to develop various skills of communication, i.e. oral skills as well as reading, writing, cognition and reasoning competencies, first in their home language, and then at a later phase the incorporation of additional languages (Foley, 2008; Kosonen *et al.*, 2009: 4). Additional languages are essential for access and contribution to a meaning life in a multilingual society. Multilingual education takes place within a structured education programme that engages multiple language learning programmes and concept formation in additional languages to that of a sound basis of home language competency as first priority (Mackenzie, 2009: 373).

Most of the African language speaking learners in South Africa receives home language education for the first three years of schooling (Broom, 2004: 506; Nomlomo, 2006: 114). The current educational practice in South African is that English is used as a LoLT from Grade 4 onwards. The importance of a multilingual education has been discussed widely, and the debate revolves mainly about disrupting the cognitive development of learners (Prinsloo, 2007: 30). A number of the positive aspects relate to multilinguality and cognitive development are highlighted in cases where multilingual learners who are of age appropriate. The mentioned positive aspects include *inter alia* increased cognitive advantages such as more divergent and creative thinking, greater multilingualistic awareness and cognitive control of linguistic processes and increased communicative sensitivity (Prinsloo, 2007: 30). The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) also promotes multilingualism in South Africa, but warns of the noticeable link between the failure of Africa to develop and implement western orientated language policies which ignore the multilingual reality of the African continent. The implementation of unrelated policies in schools occurs alarmingly in South Africa in spite of clear evidence and a greater understanding of the multilingual situation in South Africa (Prinsloo, 2007: 30).

The neglect of home language as a LoLT is regarded as one of the primary causes for amongst other the poor results of South African schools, high dropout rates and general academic underachievement of learners who are exposed to instruction in an additional language (Foley, 2008: 1). This is proven by the results that second language learners receive during systemic evaluation which is a programme ran by the department of education. Learners in Grades 3 and 6 six write exams every second year. These literacy and numeracy exams are prepared by the WCED (2007: 2). The best way to acquire literacy skills is by using the medium of home language, and if this is disrupted at an early stage, while learners are still learning the technicalities of their native language, they may never be adequately developed (Prah, 2003: 16). These skills transfer easily to a second language, so that, in fact, proficiency in the second language is no way prejudiced by the continued development or greater allocation of time to the first language. Researchers have shown that the second language skills of children receiving multilingual education equal or exceed those of children taught through a second language, in spite of the amount of time spent using the second language. Therefore English proficiency need not to suffer at all (Prinsloo, 2007: 30). The aim of using multilingual education in multilingual societies can be approached by means of assimilation or pluralism. An education system which is assimilatory seeks to win the learners from their home languages as quickly as possible with the purpose to assimilate the first language by a common (dominant) language in all aspects of schooling (Epstein & Xu, 2004: 25). An education system which subscribes to pluralism seeks, on the other hand, to provide a substantial portion of the child's education in the home language, which ensures multilingualism, the acquisition of proficiency in English while maintaining and developing home language proficiency (Shameem, 2002: 392).

In order for multilingual education to be successful in promoting additive multilingualism, the programme needs to be running for five to six years (WCED, 2007: 2). If English-language instruction start in the fourth year, children do not have sufficient mastery of either language to obtain the real benefits of bilingual education (Prinsloo, 2007: 31). Mastering complex, abstract or academic concepts in a second language that is not known properly is always problematic, but once mastered in the home language; both concepts and vital skills also transfer readily and are available for use in intellectually demanding circumstances (Prinsloo, 2007: 31). In successful multilingual education systems, each language is valued and used for certain functions in appropriate contexts and societies, for various purposes. Meaning that, all three languages have equal value. Not all these languages need to be taught formally, for example, one language can be used in informal discussions of class work, the other for communicative purposes and the third for reading literature. Learners

should be aware of how these languages are used in the South African context (Shameem, 2002: 392).

Nigeria and Guatemala conducted some successful experiments in educational reform (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 12). Both countries are very poor and reform programmes, including language reform initiatives, were initiated on a limited scale and later extended. Considerable care was taken to ensure quality of teaching. Parents' motivation and positive attitudes helped and the status of the local language improved where Spanish had been the dominant language. In both countries, though, one of the deciding factors was the fact that the home language was retained as medium of instruction through to Grade 6. The researchers in Nigeria found that the experimental group of learners were not disadvantaged in the acquisition of English as additional language. Educational reform with regard to the implementation of home language is feasible, but depends on certain aspects like parental involvement and community support (Prinsloo, 2007: 31).

The perception that English as the dominant language is the best for learners, is a widespread phenomenon in many countries (Mawasha, 1996: 23). Mawasha (1996: 23) asks in this regard the question if parents would prefer English as LoLT if they understood that their children can acquire both home language competencies as foundation as well as English proficiency as part of an additional language curriculum? The education authorities have a moral obligation to inform the public, and particularly the parents of learners of related research findings concerning the advantages of home language as a LoLT so that SGBs, who are responsible for school language policies, can take sound and informed decisions in the best interest for the education of their children (Biseth, 2005: 15). This obligation is particularly important since the children who suffer most as a result of one-sided and discriminatory language practises in our schools are frequently from poorer, historically disadvantaged communities (Prinsloo, 2007: 32). The negligence of isiXhosa as a LoLT has come a long way, and therefore it is important to know how it performs as a resource in education.

2.2.3 Language as a resource in education

All languages are equal in their capacity to express human thought and feeling. All languages can further be developed to give meaningful expression to anything that the human society can produce or create (Alexander, 2007: 7). Languages are a valuable resource to its nation in the same way as natural resources such as petroleum and minerals (Braam, 2004: 13). It is particularly in the model of language planning where the concept of language as a resource is popularised. In the planning model of language there are choices to

be made based for example on economic grounds, which implies the same situation as in the case of any other resources (Bamgbose, 1998: 2). Although language is viewed as a resource, it cannot be completely compared with the other resources. The economic and policy framework implies that the learner is free to make a choice concerning the use of language in education. This freedom of choice is however limited, because there are some restrictions when using language, for example, in the education system and in terms of access within the socio-cultural and political contexts (Alexander, 2007: 3). The available language such as English as a LoLT may not be the specific language that African language speaking learners need. This is because language involves attitudes and behaviour patterns which may not necessarily conform to an economic rationale which is usually postulated (Bamgbose, 1998: 2).

South Africa is characterised by having a diverse group of languages, which are resources that should be developed like any other economic resource (Banda, 2000: 15). The aspirations of developing the diverse languages in South Africa were considered by the Language in Education Policy (Western Cape Province, 1998), as well as the Language Task Group (LANGTAG) Report (Beukes, 2004: 8).

The South African Constitution further gives recognition to the notion of language as valuable resource:

Recognising the historically diminished status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages (South Africa, 1996a).

The concept of language as resource entails how speakers use or do not use languages as resources in everyday life and how the usage is beneficial or detrimental to social, political and economic development. The question is no more on what socio-linguists specialising on African languages can do for these languages, but what these languages can do for the resourcefulness of LoLT in order to promote socio-economic development, democracy and the eradication of poverty (Wolff, 2006: 46). The vision statement for promoting multilingualism of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) is outlined in its co-operate goal of supporting the linguistic diversity of our country as a resource for empowering all South Africans in the country's social, political and economic life fully. Such viewpoints highlight the importance of the implementation of indigenous LoLT in the South African education system.

These points of view and policies not only promote the diversity of languages as national resources in education, but they also encourage the specific protection of the language rights of South African citizens (Braam, 2004: 14). The proactive ideal within this paradigm of languages as resources seeks to provide language services that will enhance the status of indigenous languages. These aspirations and directives are consistent with the resource paradigm that intends to reinforce the establishment of a truly democratic society (Braam, 2004: 14).

It is possible to refer to languages as resources in a dictionary sense that refers to a valuable asset for both the community and the individual. An approach and perspective that value languages as resources do not see multilingualism as a problem, but as an enrichment of the socio-cultural life of the community. Acquiring more than one language becomes something to be envied and sought after rather than being seen as a stumbling block (Bamgbose, 1998: 2). In this sense multilingualism is comparable to the energy sector where the introduction of innovative technologies involves more sustainable resources such as the sun, wind and water. Along the same lines, the language sector provides rich potential for innovative and sustainable language initiatives. Even in the narrow terms of a cost-benefit analysis for industrial production sites, language skills and proficiency is a factor to reckon with (Wolff, 2006: 46).

It is important to emphasise the positive characteristics of language proficiency experiences as forcefully as possible because, until the colonial experience of central administration through an imported official language, nothing was more natural than for Africans to speak several different languages and to learn the language of a neighbouring group wherever out-group interaction so demands (Bamgbose, 1998: 3). English as one of the world's most dominant languages means that many native speakers of English are monolingual and can afford to be so. South Africans cannot afford continuing with the myth that monolingualism is something good and multilingualism is the opposite. Instead, bilingualism as a minimum language requirement is to be promoted while it is to be emphasised that multilingualism opens up opportunities for optimal socio-cultural development (Bamgbose, 1998: 3).

The above descriptions explain a basic postulation that no language is inferior to another language in whatever sense. The following section deals with the advantages and disadvantages of home language in an educational context.

2.3 Advantages associated with home language as a language of learning and teaching

A literature study revealed that the advantages associated with home language as a LoLT can be divided in the following categories: cognitive, pedagogical, cultural identity, psychological, individual and human rights as well as assessment advantages.

2.3.1 Cognitive advantages

Teaching primary literacy in the learner's home language makes the most cognitive sense in the learning of a child (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 9). The connection between sound and letter is easily made by the learner if the language used has meaning to the learner. An important contributing factor is that the development of especially linguistic competencies and conceptual proficiency in the home language results in expected higher performance levels in the second language (Benson, 2001: 23). Learners who first learn to read and write in their home language have a better understanding of a second language in its written and oral mode (Ouane & Glanz, 2005: 5). This state of affairs means that the learning of the learners begins with the familiar work to the unfamiliar, from the known to the unknown. However, learners are taught and learn in their home language from Grade 1-3 and instead of continuing this practice in their home language, the medium of instruction is changed from Grade 4 onwards with dire consequences for the cognitive and socio development of the learner. When learners master their home language, they are able to transfer knowledge from their home language to the second and even other additional languages. This transfer of knowledge from home language to second and other languages within the mind of the learner is known as Common Underlying Proficiency (Malone, 2003: 333). This particular argument is in support of the focus of this research to identify the implications and challenges in implementing home language as LoLT.

2.3.2 Pedagogical advantages

The learning of home language speaking learners often suffers in schools because of serious communication problems between teachers and learners (Ejeh, 2004: 73). Teaching in classes by means of a second language as a LoLT often results in teachers facing language difficulties and challenges themselves to express the subject matter and curriculum. In such instances, learners do not have the more advanced language competence to understand what teachers teach. Due to these particular uncertainties, learners are not able to comprehend and express themselves orally and in written form with the consequence that es-

sential communicative exchange or interaction is reduced to mere rote learning and meaningless repetition (Ouane & Glanz, 2005: 6). It is accepted that home language facilitates mutual communication between the teacher and learners. Effective communication leads to better teaching on the part of teachers and better learning for learners (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 17). Teachers are more likely to use effective, learner-centred and context-specific teaching methods that enhance their effort to teach and the learners' effort to learn. The use of a home language allows teachers to create an atmosphere of trust between the learners and themselves. Learners who are not intimidated by their teachers are more alert, take responsibility, participate more actively in classes and contribute to helping their peers (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 17).

Literacy acquisition is associated with language acquisition (Malone, 2003: 333). It takes time for learners to acquire high levels of literacy and language acquisition and this requires continuing teaching and guidance from a competent and knowledgeable person. The South African education system requires from learners to learn a second language as part of the official curriculum. Learners' ability in reading and writing rise considerably where literacy programmes are given special and long term attention (Malone, 2003: 333). Literacy education based on a locally, relevant curriculum allows for amongst other aspects for the local production of reading materials. Furthermore, the production of teaching material in a home language is a valuable resource for the development of contextually appropriate teaching material (Ouane & Glanz, 2005: 6).

2.3.3 Cultural and identity advantages

"Language, culture and literacy are elements that define individuals and their sense of belonging to a group or a nation" (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 30). According to Benson (2001: 23) and (Alexander, 2003: 10), anthropologists as well as linguistics have long recognised that there is a relationship between language and culture. Using the learner's home language make it possible to integrate for example African culture into the school curriculum and thereby creating a culturally sensitive curriculum and developing a positive perception of the culture. Integrating the learners' culture and language into curriculum activities ensures amongst other things parent involvement into school activities. The integration of cultural activities and parental involvement are important factors for making schools part of the community, because schools do not function in isolation but are social institutions (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 17).

The discontinuity of using home language as LoLT in Grade 4 creates a gap between the home and school and may even lead to a culture shock in terms of language usage when the school introduces another LoLT. An example of this language transition experience is the content of the school textbooks. If books are written in an unfamiliar language, it is inevitable that the books will also bring forth unfamiliar cultural notions. A more effective alternative is for the school to continue the use of home language as the LoLT. Home language represents the familiar home culture, traditional values, and experiences of the learner. An effective teacher also functions as a cultural mediator, using his or her understanding of the language and culture of the community to motivate the learners and help them to understand the curriculum content and culture represented by the school (Benson, 2001: 24).

A learner cannot be proud of his or her cultural inheritance if the learner cannot express him- or herself in a home language, because of being taught in an additional language (Senkoro, 2004: 45).

2.3.4 Psychological advantages

Social stigmatisation and discrimination of languages affects literacy education negatively. It results in resistance by learners and community members (Ouane & Glanz, 2005: 5). Signs of resistance can be high illiteracy rates due to low attendance rates, high dropout rates, high repetition rates, low performance in exams and low communal support. In this regard, the home language and respective cultures are considered as key sources of identity and self-confidence. Through the use of home language education as well as culturally adapted curricula in schools, the knowledge and communicative practices of the individual's community are valued. Literacy education expands under such conditions and therefore increases the learner's possibilities to shape and participate freely in social interaction. Literacy education is successful in a positive learning atmosphere in which learners and teachers feel comfortable with especially the language use. Success in learning enhances self-esteem and motivation to attend school. Stress and anxiety are detrimental to learning while teachers draw faster on coercive measures when they teach in less familiar languages (Ouane & Glanz, 2005: 5).

2.3.5 Human rights advantages

The preservation and development of home language, the language with which the individual identifies, is seen as a basic human right without regard to the size of the linguistic

group. The consequences of using an unfamiliar language in school may be a threat to the identity of the individual (Benson, 2001: 25). An unfamiliar language further makes it difficult for learners to comprehend academic concepts and subjects. The teaching in an unfamiliar language does not allow the learner access to the information needed to study and develop at a crucial stage of his or her life (Benson, 2001: 25). These consequences are part of the rationale to consider the use of home language as a basic human right.

The inclusion of the languages and cultures of minority groups or those with less power into the educational system allows status and power to those groups. It could be said that learners have the right to learn in their home language and must have access to the knowledge of the society (Benson, 2001: 25). Linguists promote the right of each language to exist and to be spoken, studied and developed (Alexander, 2003: 9). Some who value the continuation of indigenous languages and cultural resources propose a later transition to a second language in school. The home language should however in such a case be part of a continual study of the language as a specific subject discipline in the curriculum. It is assumed that learners from minority groups who have maintained their home language as a LoLT as well as their cultural ties are more likely to succeed academically than those who have left their cultural ties (Benson, 2001: 25).

2.3.6 Assessment advantages

Home language instruction necessitates moving from a traditional evaluation of school effectiveness and functionality that mainly focuses on achievement results to assessment methods that are more inclusive and holistic. It is of no avail that the curriculum guidelines state that children should learn to cooperate, learn to till the land or to help in the neighbourhood; if all is measured through tests and examinations in an unfamiliar language. Assessment should focus more on learners' ability to demonstrate mastery of knowledge and communication skills (language proficiency) acquired in schools through various kinds of practical application (applied competence). Therefore, locally designed examinations that correspond to local curricula should be undertaken in the home language of learners (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 18).

Teachers and learners communicate more effectively when home language is used (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 17). Effective communication in a teaching-learning situation leads to better teaching on the part of the teacher and improved learning for learners with an accompanying improvement of achievements and results. The use of home language in basic education produces positive outcomes if carefully implemented (Biseth, 2005: 2). Effective com-

munication leads further to more learning opportunities in classroom where languages familiar to both learners and teachers are used. Moreover, when teachers teach effectively reading, writing and numeracy skills through medium of a home language, then learners can develop adequate literacy skills to become productive citizens of the country (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 15). Unacceptable practices are at the order of the day in schools where learners are supposed to be taught in English as a medium of instruction, but because learners do not fully understand the language, teachers use their home language. However, during assessment it is expected from learners to write in English with unfavourable effects on the results because of language challenges.

2.3.7 Summary

The advantages outlined above explain how important it is to use the learner's home language for learning and teaching. When the learners are taught in their home LoLT from an early age, they learn best and can engage in other languages as subjects of the school curriculum. Home language does not only develop a learner academically, but the learner as a whole and as human being.

Where there is an advantage there is also a disadvantage, and one has to know the disadvantages so as to be able to correct them.

2.4 Disadvantages associated with disregarding home language in education

When learners are taught in a second language the emphasis is placed on the learner's language proficiency rather than the learners learning abilities (Clegg, 2007: 4). The use of a second language as a LoLT may cause a problem of understanding for the learners because it is not the language that the learner uses as a form of basic communication. This means that the language of instruction is of lesser meaning for the learning development of the learner. The pressure may become too much for some learners to make sense of what is taught, because these learners do not understand the language of instruction and still have to interpret what is done in class from a second language to their home language.

Teaching and learning in a second language has the potential to cause a break in communication between the teacher and the learner (Djite, 2008: 8). Effective learning can only take place if the teachers and learners have a common understanding of the concepts of what is taught and learn. Learning is ...

“... a negotiation process between teachers' meaning and students' understanding; a sort of give-and-take between teacher and student as they construct shared understanding through face to face communication” (Djite, 2008: 8).

Interpersonal friction because of unfamiliar language challenges can divert energy and attention away from the all-important teaching and learning tasks. Ineffective communication between teacher and learner are also caused by the fact that learners' communication needs are not being met by their communicating abilities and fluency in the language of teaching (Djite, 2008: 9).

Learners feel helpless and hopeless when they lack insight of what is being taught in class (Brock-Utne & Alidou, 2006: 104). They find it difficult to communicate their thoughts in the LoLT, especially when they have to communicate with the teacher. The barriers in classroom communication are exacerbated because learners use their home language as a structure of reference (Brock-Utne & Alidou, 2006: 104). Teaching learners in a second language limits their school achievement, because learners can only learn up to a certain level in a language that they are not sufficiently competent in. Being taught in an unfamiliar language cause learners to experience difficulty with recalling what they have been taught. For learners to be able to represent their experience, they need to acquire new means of encoding (Gray, 2008: 6).

Learners perceive an unfamiliar language of instruction in school and the language they speak at home as two different things and this perception leads to a break in the bond between school and community (Clegg, 2007: 4). A crucial consequence of an unfamiliar language as language of instruction is that parents of learners cannot help them with their school work at home, because school work is conducted in a language that the parents do not know well. An implication of this situation is that learners from poor families will be the ones who suffer as those from the middle and higher class will have parents who are potentially in a better position to be of assistance.

The use of unfamiliar languages forces teachers to use untraditional and teacher centred teaching methods which undermine teachers' efforts to teach in a particular, familiar and known context. In such a situation, teachers do most of the talking while learners remain silent or passive participants during most of the classroom interactions. Because learners do not speak the LoLT, teachers are forced to use outdated conventional teaching techniques such as chorus teaching, repetition, memorization, recall, code switching and safe talk (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 15; Djite, 2008: 7).

The above mentioned disadvantages are in support of the importance of the role of home language as a LoLT in schools.

2.5 Rationale for using home language as language of learning and teaching

Much has been written about education and the related role of home language as a LoLT (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 90; Keeves & Darmawan, 2007: 18). Home language is the language that is learnt by members of a certain community and these community members use this particular language as the first medium of vocalised communication. Home language can be seen as the language of a resident community or group of people with a common heritage (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 98). Children are born into and grow up in the native language of their parents. Therefore, each of the various communities has its own language that is naturally learnt by members during socialisation (Keeves & Darmawan, 2007: 18). The knowledge that children gain through interaction with their home language promotes the cognitive abilities and development of these children. As children interact with parents, immediate family members and friends they obtain a proper understanding and grasping of their home language. Children also learn through the naming of various objects around them and the immediate environment because they have acquired a certain level of proficiency in their home language and developed a vocabulary covering a lot of the objects expressions and sense experiences of daily activities (Hamel, 2003: 9).

Home language education, the use of the home language in formal education, has been the focus of research in the past three decades (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 98). The research includes the study of home languages itself, and also how it is or can be used in teaching specific subjects. One of the important reasons for education in home language is to pass on the universally recognised moral values to the individual and to combine these with common values, cultural norms and the worldview of the learners' community. Keeves (2007: 19) is of the opinion that when home language is not used as a LoLT, a gap between the education system and the society results. This gap is the result of using a language other than the language of the society as the medium of school instruction. The curriculum, syllabus, teaching methodology and content of the lessons are not matched to norms of society and thus contribute to this gap and can lead to learning difficulty and poor performance (Senkoro, 2004: 47).

Home language plays a significant role in the psychosocial development of learners (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009: 5). Cognitive stability can be assured to some extent when home lan-

guage is used as a medium of instruction because its usage provides a more rewarding learning environment, and school learning and experience become a continuation of home experience. It is accepted that children learn best when their home language is used as a medium of instruction. Yet, for most of African countries, formal education is offered in a language that is not familiar to the child. This is unlike the practice in most other leading countries of the World such as England, France, Italy, Germany, India, China, Japan, etc. where learners go through their primary, secondary and university education in their home language (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2009: 5). In South Africa the custom in the majority of schools is to continue to use a second language, namely English as the major medium of instruction in schools. It is the informed view of scholars such as (Djite, 2008: 7) that warns against the use of a second language as medium of instruction because it constitutes a barrier to effective teaching and learning.

Early education in the home language expands the verbal faculty and cognitive realm of the learner. The untimely (too early) introduction of a second language as LoLT distorts the accumulated vocal and verbal faculty, thought processes and cognitive equilibrium (Ndamba, 2008: 173). Studies have shown that the above-described situation accounts for a significant proportion of primary school dropouts in South Africa (Djite, 2008: 4). In recognition of the effectiveness of home language in education, the Language in Education Policy (Western Cape Province, 1998) provides for home language as LoLT in South Africa:

- All learners shall be offered at least one approved language as a subject in Grade 1 and Grade 2
- From Grade 3 onwards all learners shall be offered a LoLT and at least one additional approved language as a subject.

This is the first attempt in the history of education in South Africa that an effort is being made to devote attention to education in the home language of learners. This in itself is an improvement is support by educationists and researchers who have been campaigning for the use of local and indigenous languages as mediums of instruction in South African schools (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 99).

The Western Cape is a multilingual province with mainly three official languages. English is however the dominant language of wider communication. The implications and challenges for implementing isiXhosa as LoLT is seen by some people as a wasteful exercise in terms of production of materials and the provision of teachers, especially for a language in competition with the dominant language. Such criticisms notwithstanding, home language as medium of instruction has remained the option of most multilingual African communities. Ac-

According to Bamgbose (1998: 4), all arguments about the feasibility of the home language medium policy in the South African education system should now give way to a consideration of practical ways of implementing this policy. This particular stance is in support with the rationale and focus of this research.

2.6 Policies and home language in teaching and learning

Language not only plays a central role in cognition development and learning, language in the education policy also determines access to education (Djite, 2008: 1). Whilst multilingualism is the most prominent feature of communities in Africa, the education of the African learner is still locked into a monolingual policy of language substitution, a policy that imposes a language of instruction that the majority of learners do not know and that wrongly assumes that all learners possess the same backgrounds and experiences (Djite, 2008: 2).

The time has come for a much needed paradigm shift, in order to put in place new, practical solutions to the wasteful and long held practice of insisting on a language in education policy that has failed to deliver the desired results (Djite, 2008: 2). Language in education should be addressed as a priority in order to create a truly learning society, a society in which education is much more responsive to the immediate realities of the learners as well as to that of a changing world.

Without denying the challenges for implementing home language as the LoLT, extending the reach of education in developing countries calls for a much bolder focus on the nexus between education, learning and language (Hornberger, 2002: 30). Such a focus requires innovative ways for resolving both logistical difficulties and cost-benefit issues attached to education in the home language. The argument here is about the necessity of home language and culture in education as the necessary vehicles for basic and functional literacy, life-long knowledge acquisition and know-how. It seems to the researcher that many have yet to grasp the incalculable human costs of the language in education crisis in Africa with its doubtful consequences. Education is accepted as empowerment and viewed as the key to sustainable development founded on social justice. The formulation of an appropriate language in education policy is therefore crucial to successful education. Needless to say, an ill conceived language policy may have disastrous results. The overall economic impact of the current education crisis is huge and, as (Djite, 2008: 12) maintains, one should not lose sight of the synergy between education, literacy, and learning. Other pillars of development are health, education, the economy and sound governance.

In the next section of this chapter a brief description is provided about language policy in an African context.

2.6.1 Language policy in an African context

Most African government acknowledge the crucial role that indigenous African languages can play in the continent's education efforts. Most of these governments have made numerous statements and signed several declarations to show their commitment to the promotion of African languages in education (Mtenje, 2008: 24). However, despite such eagerness and enthusiasm, most indigenous African languages in education remains functionally inferior to the former colonial languages due to insufficient or inappropriate language policies and the implementation thereof (Mtenje, 2008: 24). Even in those countries where African languages are constitutionally recognised as official languages alongside foreign languages, the foreign languages enjoying tremendous privileges in terms of usage. More than forty years after the political independence of most African states, African languages are largely reserved for informal domains, while the colonial languages are used in formal and prestigious domains as well as in higher levels of education (Mtenje, 2008: 24). As far as higher education is concerned, there are cases where national constitutions guarantees citizens the freedom of accessing education in a language of their choice, but in reality this is not being fully realised. Foreign languages remain the predominant medium of instruction at all levels of education provision (Mtenje, 2008: 24).

There are some similarities among African countries with regard to the recognition and status assigned to indigenous African languages. The following sections are examining the existence of formal language policies and whether indigenous African language are indeed enjoying official status with accompanying challenges for implementation in a selection of African countries.

2.6.1.1 Botswana

Botswana is a multilingual country with a population of approximately 1.7 million people and with an estimated 38 indigenous languages that vary from Bantu and Khoisan groups (Mtenje, 2008: 25). These languages include Setswana, a cross-border language (also spoken in South Africa and Namibia), which is the country's main language and is spoken by more than one million people, representing nearly 80% of the total population. Other cross-border languages of Botswana include English, otjiHerero, Afrikaans, siLozi and chi-

Kalanga (Mtenje, 2008: 25). According to the Botswana Language Situation Report (Mtenje, 2008: 25), Botswana does not have an official language policy. The Constitution of the country recognises English as the country's official language and Setswana as the national language. The report also states that the Constitution is silent on the language of education, and on the role of less-used languages, including the Khoisan group of languages, which are generally regarded as facing endangerment for sustainability (Mtenje, 2008: 25). The situation with regard to the status and use of indigenous African languages in Botswana is similar to that in South Africa and Lesotho. English is the language used in the more high status functions while the local languages (including Setswana) are reserved mainly for the lower status functions. Of particular interest to note is the fact that Setswana is only used in the lower levels of primary school as medium of instruction which can be ascribed to insufficient directives from policy documents and a political will to promote the use of home language in education.

2.6.1.2 Lesotho

Lesotho is a land-locked country, which is entirely surrounded by South Africa. The position of indigenous languages in Lesotho is not that different from its neighbouring states. Although there is no clearly defined language policy, the country's Constitution recognised Sesotho (the major language of the country) and English as official languages (Mtenje, 2008: 25). English is the main language of government, business, the judiciary, the legislature, commerce, higher education and other high status institutions. Despite that Sesotho being the language of the majority of the Basotho (people of Lesotho), it is the medium of communication only in informal domains. Other less used languages, especially those spoken in the border district with South Africa (e.g. isiXhosa, isiZulu, isiNdebele etc.) are rarely used even in the lower levels of primary education (standard 1-4), were Sesotho is the main medium of instruction (Mtenje, 2008: 25).

2.6.1.3 Namibia

There are less than two million people in Namibia, but there are approximately 28 indigenous African languages spoken from both the Bantu and Khoisan language group. Examples are Otjiherero, Nama, Setswana, Chikwanyama and Sihozi. These languages are some of the major cross border languages of Namibia (Mtenje, 2008: 26). The issue of language is clearly expressed in the Namibian Constitution. According to the Namibian Language Situation Report (2008), article 3 of the Constitution recognises the right of citizens to use the language of their choice (Mtenje, 2008: 26). Namibia has a detailed language pol-

icy which was first developed in 1990, and which is regularly revised to ensure its proper implementation (especially in the education system). There are eleven indigenous African languages recognised for education purposes and the language policy emphasises the priority of using the home language as a medium of instruction, especially at primary school level. English is the country's official language and it is generally used as the language of education at the post primary level. There are structures and institutions that were set up to guide the ministry of education to facilitate the implementation of the policy. The National Institute of Educational Development (NIED) is an example of such a structure of which the focal point is developing and translating education material into indigenous languages (Mtenje, 2008: 26).

Although the Namibian Constitution makes adequate provision for the protection, equality, use and respect for indigenous languages, in reality the situation is no different to that in other countries where English is the dominant language. However, the Namibian language policy acknowledges the academic advantages associated with the use of home language as LoLT (Mtenje, 2008: 27).

Attempts are made by education authorities to harmonise language policy and implementation by introducing teaching methodologies that are child centred, participative and enquiry based (Mtenje, 2008: 27). The intentions were laudable but one can argue that it was of a contradicting nature because of the communication challenges of using an unfamiliar language as medium of instruction that inhibits participation and a child centred approach. Results were not as expected because learners find it difficult to speak, read and understand in a language other than their home language. This situation does not apply only to the learners, but is a problem for the teachers as well. It is not easy for teachers to develop and teach lessons based on communication and interaction because they themselves experience difficulty with proficiency in English (Djite, 2008: 7). To address this particular challenge, teachers use their home language in classes rather than English to assist learners in understanding difficult concepts. The use of an unfamiliar language as LoLT causes learners to rely on mere rote learning to master subject content due to an extent of incompetence in English (Probyn *et al.*, 2002: 42).

2.6.1.4 Nigeria

Nigeria is a West African nation with an estimated population of 120 million people who speak over 250 different languages, with three dominant languages. They are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (Segun, 2007: 2). Like many other African countries that were under colonial

rule, Nigeria has adopted the policy of using English as the official language for government transactions, commerce, industry and education. For educational purposes, English language is the medium of instruction at the secondary and post secondary higher levels. At the primary education level, the National Policy on Education stipulates that the medium of instruction in the primary school is initially the home language or the language of the immediate community. English is then introduced as medium of instruction at secondary level (Ejeh, 2004: 2).

Despite the directives from policy guidelines it happens in practice that most primary schools use English as the medium of instruction as early as possible, even from the first year of schooling. Many Nigerian educators hold the view that this practice of introducing an unfamiliar language at primary level will not enable learners to develop to the best of their ability or potential as progress and development at school is limited by learners' inability to speak, write, express and understand at a young age in a language other than their home language (Ejeh, 2004: 3).

This view point prompted the Institute of Education of the University of Ife, under the directorship of Professor Fafunwa, launched a project designed to use Yoruba Language as a medium of instruction in the project primary schools as long ago as 1970 (Brock-Utne & Ali-dou, 2006: 105). From a history of four decades, there are some lessons were learnt. The main objective of this language in education project was to introduce a coherent and familiar primary education for learners to develop into a literate and productive citizen of the country. Some of the measures were to achieve the designing of a relevant primary school curriculum with appropriate teaching material, as well as and employing Yorumba as LoLT throughout the six years of primary school. English was taught as a separate subject. Some primary school teachers were given special training in the use of the home language for instruction purposes. The design consisted of regular intakes of primary one classes in some primary schools whereby some classes served as experimental and others as control groups. Findings from the project 1971-1983 revealed that the experimental groups excelled the control group on all school subjects at the end of primary education. The use of a specialist English teacher did not make any significant difference to the result (Ejeh, 2004: 74).

The findings from this project highlight the rationale for implementing home language as LoLT in schools and links to the research aims of this study.

2.6.2 South African constitutional context

South Africa's language policy is detailed and is supported by Constitutional provisions (South Africa, 1996a). Section 6 of the Constitution recognises eleven official languages: Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. The statistics reflected in Table 2.1 shows the number of speakers for each of the eleven official languages (Statistics South Africa, 2001).

Table 2.1: Percentage frequencies of speakers of the eleven official languages

Language	Number of speakers	%
Afrikaans	5 983 426	13.3
English	3 673 203	8.2
isiNdebele	711 821	1.6
isiXhosa	7 907 153	17.6
isiZulu	10 677 308	23.8
Sepedi	4 208 980	9.4
Sesotho	3 555 186	7.9
Setswana	3 677 016	8.2
siSwati	1 194 430	2.7
Tshivenda	1 021 752	2.3
Xitsonga	1 992 207	4.4

The South African Constitution specifically recognises the historically weakened use and status of the indigenous languages and insist on practical and positive measures to promote their status as reflected in the provision of section 6, sub section (3a) of the Constitution (South Africa, 1996a). The national and provincial governments may use any particular language for the purpose of government, taking into account usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances and the balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole or the province concerned. The national government and each provincial government must however use at least two official languages. The national and provincial governments are mandated by the Constitution to control and maintain the use of official languages and clearly emphasises that all official languages enjoy equality of esteem and must be treated equitably.

The South African Language Board (PanSALB) (South Africa.info, 2010) was established through the South African Constitution to promote and create conditions for the development and use of all official languages, the Khoisan languages and sign languages. It promotes and ensures respect for all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa. Besides the PanSALB, other structures also assist language promotion and development. They include the nine Provincial Language Committees, thirteen National Language Bodies, and the eleven Lexicographic Units (Mtenje, 2008: 27).

The South African Constitution has a Bill of Rights which includes the right to education in any of the official languages, or in any language of one's choice. Section 29, sub-section 2, specifically states that:

Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable ... (South Africa, 1996a).

The Constitution also recognises the right of an individual to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, provided that this right is exercised in a manner which does not contravene any provision of the Bill of Rights. In the same spirit, the Constitution guarantees the right for arrested, detained and accused persons to a fair trial, which includes the right to be tried in a language that the accused person understands or, if that is not practicable, to have the proceedings interpreted into that language. It can be deduced from the discussion above that the South African Constitution empowers all languages in the country for use in all domains, wherever this is practical and, more importantly, recognises the equality of all languages in South Africa (South Africa, 1996a).

In spite of the strong support from legal documents and structures, and although the nine indigenous African languages spoken by almost 77.9% of the population (Statistics South Africa, 2001), the reality is that most South African languages do not enjoy the same status as English and Afrikaans (spoken by 21.5 percent of the population). In the formal and high-status functions like administration, education, law, commerce, science and technology, health, research etc., English and Afrikaans dominate. The African languages only serve in the lower levels of these domains. In education in particular, English and Afrikaans remain the major languages of instruction in post-primary institutions and academic publications are predominantly in these two languages. One of the consequences of this situation is that millions of South Africans are effectively excluded from the business and affairs of their nation, because much of the discourse and debate in the official domains is in languages which are unfamiliar to them (Mtenje, 2008: 28).

2.6.3 Language in education policy

The Language in Education policy (Western Cape Province, 1998) was developed more democratically than any of its predecessors and can safely be assumed to represent a broad agreement on a sensitive issue like language use in the country. The policy seeks mainly to promote multilingualism as the optimal way of utilising the country's linguistic resources. The significance of this orientation is that it seeks to elevate the status of those

languages spoken by the majority of the people. On paper, the indigenous languages have full equality with Afrikaans and English, formerly the country's only two official languages. The paradigm that underlies the language policy for schools can be briefly summarised according to the following characteristics:

- recognises cultural diversity as a national asset
- acknowledges the need to promote multilingualism
- aims to develop all 11 official languages
- endorses an additive approach to bilingualism
- give individuals (in practice parents and guardians) the right of choice with regard to the LoLT.

The underlying principle of this policy document is to maintain and promote the use of home languages whilst providing at the same time access to the effective acquisition of additional languages as part of a multilingual initiative (WCED, 2007: 3). Other policy directives are designed to intersect with this Language in Education Policy. One of these is the South African Schools Act (1996) (South Africa, 1996b), in terms of which the school's governing body determines the language policy of the school, meaning that the parents have the right to choose the LoLT (Nomlomo, 2006: 113). The reality is that most of the parents, especially the black working class parents, are not aware that there is a language policy that guides teaching and learning in their children's schools. At school level, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) is less convincing in its support for "additive bilingual/multilingual models of education", as these are given "apparent lip-service" (Nomlomo, 2006: 114). Nomlomo (2006: 114) express concern that the implicit reference to LoLT and the absence of any affirmation of the cognitive role of the primary language appear to signal the government's lack of commitment to overcoming the deficit model of the past.

Whether schools pick up on such inconsistencies in government policy, and to what extent their governing bodies are studying the policy documents closely for guidance with regard to their own language plans, is open to conjecture. It can be assumed that in the absence of a concerted implementation strategy on the part of the provincial education authorities, together with NGOs to empower school governing bodies, the latter will adopt way of least resistance and delay to take difficult decisions on issues related to the LoLT. The WCED supports initiatives such as the in-service training of subject advisers in respect of the appropriate strategies for the promotion and implementation of multilingual classrooms. The WCED distributes to all schools the PRAESA Family Guide to Multilingual Education (Nomlomo, 2006: 115; Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10) and has begun to show commitment for the

implementation of the Language in Education Policy. However, it remains unclear to what extent schools are actually reacting to the new language policy.

Language is a fundamental and crucial aspect in education and is regarded as a tool that makes it possible for people to learn and be able to think creatively (Ejeh, 2004: 73).

2.6.4 Summary

The analysis of some African countries indicates similarities to the position and use of indigenous African languages in education. The former colonial languages are recognised as official languages by all the states and enjoy dominant privileges and status with regard to the domains in which they are used. In the mentioned countries, these languages are the main medium of communication in official or high status institutions (e.g. higher education, justice, commerce, legislation, administration, research, science and technology, health etc.). Even in cases like South Africa and Namibia, where legal instruments such as national Constitutions and language policies clearly empower indigenous African languages to function as official languages alongside the former colonial languages, actual language practises are at variance with the legal status. The indigenous languages continue as subordinate to English and Afrikaans and are almost exclusively reserved for lower status and informal functions.

Although a National Constitution in countries like South Africa, Namibia and Malawi unequivocally grant citizens the right to use the language of their choice (which includes the right to receive education in their most familiar language or their home language) the actual practice shows that this right is not being fully enjoyed. Indigenous African languages are marginalised in education, and are restricted to the lower levels of primary education. The intellectualisation and instrumentalisation for the use of indigenous languages in higher levels of education, research and academic discourses remains elusive for speakers of indigenous languages in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa.

The indicated situation concerning the use of indigenous languages shows that language policies in Africa suffer challenges like avoidance and declaration without implementation. The language policies explicated in the previous sections are indicative that (except in the cases of South Africa and Namibia) the majority of the African countries make no formal and complete provision for African languages in societal structures. Lesotho and Botswana have no formal and explicit language policies. In some of these countries (e.g. Botswana and Lesotho) the Constitutions merely state what the official languages are, but they are not

followed by formal language policies to provide detailed guidelines on the use of other languages. Practice in these cases is guided by mere Constitutional statements. All the cases discussed above, where language practices are not guided by formally declared language policies, are a manifestation of what Bamgbose (1998) refers to as a problem of avoidance in which a government does not issue a formal language policy for implementation in practice.

In the case of South Africa and Namibia where formal language policies exist, but are not fully implemented in areas like education, reflect the problem of declaration without implementation. The legal structures and instruments as well as policy provisions are available to support the intellectualisation of indigenous African languages and their use in higher levels of education, but this potential is not being realised.

2.7 Prospects for African languages

In order for indigenous African languages to be meaningfully promoted, particularly in the domain of education, it is not enough to simply have language policies or national Constitutions (or both) that allow or provide for the use of these languages in societies. It is important to ensure that there is a genuine commitment and willingness by African states (political will and commitment) to address the problems which have so far contributed to the inferiority of African languages which condemned them to low status and informal functions. The hegemonic tendency of the ex-colonial languages must be countered by formulating and implementing language policies which, in addition to recognising the usefulness of these foreign languages as widely used international languages, makes deliberate efforts to increase the market value and use of indigenous African languages at all levels of society. This position and viewpoint has been ably expressed by Alexander who states:

It is perfectly clear, however, that unless African languages are given market value, i.e. unless their instrumentality for the process of production, exchange and distribution is enhanced, no amount of policy change at school level can guarantee their use in high status functions and thus, eventually escape from the dominance and the hegemony of English (Alexander, 2007: 13).

In terms of the use of African languages in the school system, there is a need for ensuring that language policies encouraging the centrality of the learner's home language up to the highest level of education and implemented sufficiently in the context of each particular school. As Alexander explains:

This would mean that fundamental changes in the language medium policy would be directly related to the increased use of the African mother tongues, where relevant, in the public service and in the formal economy (Alexander, 2007: 13).

LoLT policies are thus characterized as an important educational means to serve multiple political and social economic purposes. Therefore it is important to know what relevant role players' attitudes and experiences are concerning the implementation and use of home language as a LoLT. This encompasses the aim of this research.

2.7.1 Attitudes towards home language in education

A common understanding of what is meant by attitudes related to the research topic is necessary for the line of argument of this research. Therefore the researcher briefly elaborates from literature on the following thematic issues: attitudes, language attitudes, attitudes towards language in education, teachers, learners' and parents' attitudes.

Attitudes can be described as strong positive or negative emotions or feelings that are experienced by people when they are faced with a particular matter or issue that requires from them to take a stance or viewpoint (Wolff, 2006: 32). Attitudes are abstract phenomena and not something tangible. It can be that there is a difference between what people feel and think and what they actually say and do (Senkoro, 2004: 48). What people think, say and do is determined to a great extent by their attitudes(s) about the issue at hand (Dalvit, 2004: 27). There are factors that influence one's actions, causing a relationship between attitudes and behaviour. In the scope of the research topic, attitudes can either contribute or work against the role of home language as LoLT. Attitudes may well determine the outcomes of education. This implies that if someone has a positive attitude towards a certain language, such a person is more likely to learn it well. It can also be a result of education (influence) meaning that a good and dedicated teacher can improve learners' attitudes in relation to a particular language.

It is important that when language policy developers plan, they should take into account the attitudes of people, and what they prefer so that the intended policy can reflect the need of people and not the interest of a specific group for example a political party in governance (Webb, 1996: 186). In this sense, the success of using home language as LoLT depends also on people's attitude towards their home language and the more unfamiliar language as a second language (Ndamba, 2008: 177; Ngidi, 2007: 16). Mawasha (1996: 23) states that black people in South Africa prefer English as a LoLT, because their attitude is that they re-

gard English as the language of power and employment. This is evident of the role of attitudes concerning support or resistance to a particular language.

2.7.1.1 Language attitudes

Language attitudes are important as it determines the progress or decline of a language (Wolff, 2006: 41). All the stake holders in the education of a learner have specific attitudes towards home language being used in the school as a LoLT. The stake holders are the parents, the learners, the teachers, school management, the school governing body and the community at large.

2.7.1.2 Teachers' attitudes

Some teachers are convinced that learners would perform better if taught and assessed in their home language, because these teachers are of the opinion that under normal circumstances learners think in their home language and translate into English (Muthwii, 2004: 21). Teachers believe that when learners' home language is used, it helps with the integration of traditional norms and values into the school curriculum (Muthwii, 2004: 21).

Teachers' favourable attitudes towards the use of home language as a LoLT include amongst other aspects the following (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 101):

- Support the integration of traditional values and norms into the curriculum
- Ensure a sound foundation for learners' psycho-social development
- Makes school life less traumatic for the learner
- Lessen the experience of anxiety in situations of communication
- Enhance interactivity in classroom situations
- Learners exposed to education in their home language have a wider scope of experience.

Teachers feel that learners become frustrated in school because of the communication breakdown that happens of using an unfamiliar language between teachers and learners. Learners are forced to use English at school, but use their home language at home, because their parents do not speak English and have little or no access to books (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 102). When teachers give instructions or ask questions, learners do not understand and therefore do not respond. If an unfamiliar language is used as LoLT, for example English, it is expected from learners to respond in the same language. It happens

that learners experience anxiety because they experience difficulties to understand and speak an unfamiliar language (Muthwii, 2004: 22). Experiences and feelings from learners entail feelings of self-consciousness resulting in learners who are afraid of making mistakes and appearing as stupid when they try to express themselves in English. These learners may become aggressive (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 102). They describes further scenarios:

- Learners become rude to others when they want something because they do not have the confidence to express themselves in an unfamiliar language.
- Physical violence resulting from frustration becomes the learners' way of communication.
- The early use of an unfamiliar language as LoLT poses learning difficulties for learners (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 102).

This particular description is indicative that an encounter with an unfamiliar language in education has far more consequences than the mere cognitive and social development of the learner. Parents see the possibility of their children completing primary school successfully but in the case of learners' failure in school due to poor performance ascribed to communication challenges is very much disappointing to parents (Muthwii, 2004: 22). These parents feel that there are specific reasons for the poor performance of their children in schools for example (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 104):

- There is a shortage of books written in African Languages for school subjects. This means that parents have to do the hard work of translating into an indigenous language. A challenge in this regard is the literacy levels of some parents who are not able to engage in any translation actions.
- Schools do not have competent teachers with the needed training and skills in some home languages.
- Vocabulary in African languages is said to be limited. It is hard to be expressive in African languages due to a perceived insufficiency of vocabulary.
- Learners come from different linguistic backgrounds and thereby add to the complexity of the problem.
- Teachers' attitude is that they are not enthusiastic to use indigenous languages as a LoLT.

2.7.1.3 Learners' attitudes

Some learners prefer African languages as a LoLT because it is the language they know. Although some learners prefer home language in schools, learners also experience challenges in this regard for example text books like science that are not written in their home language but mostly in English. Learners believe that they would do well in assessments set in their home language and if they are thoroughly taught by competent teachers (Muthwii, 2004: 21).

There is danger in using an unfamiliar language as a LoLT for African children because these children do not have a developed insight into the importance of using their home language at primary level. Some of the learners who favour English as a LoLT can barely carry out a conversation in English (Ndamba, 2008: 177). Such sentiments expressed by learners who could hardly communicate in English can only be attributed to attitudes in this regard. Learners at a young age of educational development do not fully value their home language as such. Therefore they would prefer to use a language that they do not completely understand, even when given the option to use their home LoLT (Muthwii, 2004: 24).

2.7.1.4 Parents' attitudes

Parents' attitudes were developed when everything pertaining to European customs was regarded as good, whereas all that belongs to the local African community was considered to be of an inferior nature (Ndamba, 2008: 178). Most African parents prefer English as LoLT for their children in schools for future influential reasons (Muthwii, 2004: 21). Parents demand increased access to English for their children rather than the replacement of English with a home language as LoLT (Heugh, 2002: 186).

Various authors (De Klerk, 2002: 208; Muthwii, 2004: 21; Nomlomo, 2006: 120) maintain that most parents preferred their children to use English with science from Grades 4-6, about half of the parents chose English as a LoLT for their children:

- Parents want their children to be exposed to English at school as they did not speak it at home.
- English is seen as a means of obtaining access to the world of work.
- Some parents believe that English sharpens the learners' intellect and it makes them more knowledgeable to interact with other racial groups.

- Learning through the medium of English is seen as a way of getting better competency or proficiency in English.
- An indigenous language such as isiXhosa will confine learners to South Africa only and limit learners' opportunities of going abroad.
- Parents also associated English with respect and a way of avoiding vulgar language that cannot be avoided in isiXhosa.
- There is a perception that people who are proficient in English are treated with dignity and respect and are accorded higher status than those who always express themselves in African languages.
- Learning through isiXhosa is perceived as easy and is associated with low educational standards, while learning through English is seen as a means to get access to tertiary education.

These parent responses indicate that their attitudes are more positive towards English as a LoLT. Learning through the medium of isiXhosa is seen as a stumbling block to assure a brighter future (Nomlomo, 2006: 123). Some of the parents' responses revealed that parents were torn between English for its high status and its association with socio-economic benefits on the one hand, and isiXhosa as the home and cultural language of their children on the other hand. Although the majority of parents showed a tendency towards a preference for English, some of their responses contradicted their positive attitudes towards English. The parents acknowledged the importance of isiXhosa as the home language for learners that can identify with and can express themselves freely. This reveals the parents' loyalty to their home language as the main carrier of their culture and identity. Parents are also concerned about the loss of identity of their children, although they prefer English as a LoLT (Probyn *et al.*, 2002: 35). Some parents were not that firm on the issue of English as a LoLT. Some parents prefer isiXhosa as a LoLT on condition that the government would make isiXhosa compulsory as a LoLT. These responses in favour of home language use in education are in contradiction to those responses in favour of English as a LoLT. Nomlomo (2006: 20) makes an interesting observation in this regard with his statement that the parents do not know the difference between isiXhosa as a subject and isiXhosa as a LoLT.

Some parents prefer isiXhosa as a LoLT because they associated it with better academic achievement. These parents had different reasons for their preference (Heugh, 2002: 175):

- Their hopes for better results were raised (Grade 12) among isiXhosa speaking learners.
- Failure and drop-out rates of African speaking children will decline.

- The home language is viewed as the main necessity in maintaining cultural identity.
- Parents want their children to be in touch with their cultural roots by learning through the medium of their home language.
- Early education in the home language helps to bridge home and school experience.
- Early education in the home language makes it possible for illiterate parents to support their children's learning at home.

Parents seemed to be aware of the perceived lower status accorded to African languages by the speakers of African languages themselves, despite the fact that a home language reflects and strengthen one's identity. Some parents seemed to understand the benefits of the child's home language in learning another language. They perceived their home language as a sound foundation in learning English which is the first additional language in this case (Nomlomo, 2006: 124).

Looking at the perceptions of parents (De Klerk, 2002: 208; Muthwii, 2004: 21; Nomlomo, 2006: 120), it becomes evident that some of them were not aware of the language rights of their children. It is to be questioned if they were aware of the guidelines and directives of the South African Language in Education Policy or to what extent they were involved in the formulation of their childrens schools' language policies. Because of the past policies and the economic and political climate, parents send their children to schools with the belief that the school will do everything without their involvement. Their non-support for a home language as LoLT does not mean that they are not loyal to their own language (De Klerk, 2002: 208-212).

Research indicates positive attitudes from parents towards using isiXhosa as LoLT (De Klerk, 2002: 208; Muthwii, 2004: 21; Nomlomo, 2006: 120). However, some schools do not create opportunities for parents to express their views or concerns about the languages to be used in the education of their children. This problem implies that parents are deprived of their right to choose the language to be used in the schooling of their children (Nomlomo, 2006: 125). An example is the selected pilot school used in this research. When the school was selected as a pilot school for the *Language Transformation Plan in the Western Cape Province* (WCED, 2007), parents were not sufficiently informed of what was going to happen concerning the implementation of home LoLT in the school. Parents are therefore uninformed about this commendable language initiative at the school.

Not all parents see a dark future for the use of African languages as a LoLT. Perhaps with greater parental involvement in schools, there is a strong possibility that the language policy aspects can be implemented for the benefit of their children's advancement in education (Nomlomo, 2006: 125).

2.8 Language implementation in teaching and learning

The introduction of a LTI takes place after careful deliberations with the interests of all stakeholders in mind. This section describes such a language planning model.

2.8.1 Language planning

Language planning is a generation of initiatives, objectives, actions and practices with responsibility allocation to specific people according to time frames to achieve intended changes, or to stop changes from happening, in language use where one or more communities or societies are involved (Mthembu, 2008: 27). Language planning refers to work in a socio-political context to solve language problems on a long-term basis. It pays attention to language change because it inevitably involves the community or society (Gray, 2008: 10). Language planning has to account for the educational, economic, political and social development of people within the community or society (Webb, 1996: 44). Language planning is a government-authorised, long term sustained and conscious effort to alter a language itself, or to change a language's functions in a society for the purposes of solving communication problems (Webb, 1996: 44). This means that language planning refers to any structured, logical and clear attempt to design the role a language should take in society by planning its development, its status, and possibly how many people are supposed to use it and in which domain (Mwaniki, 2004: 63). In most definitions of language planning the terms *deliberate*, *future-oriented*, *government oriented*, *solving language problems*, and *bringing about change* are evident and indicative of the essence of the concept language planning. These definitions bring forth the question of who the intended beneficiaries of policies are, as well as who executes these activities (Beukes, 2008: 20). These components of language planning all form part of the focus of this study.

The community should be involved in order for any language planning to be meaningful, successful and long-lasting. In order to secure involvement, the community members should understand the policy and the intentions thereof. This implies that the community

should be consulted in whatever decisions are taken, be it on provincial, district, region or school level. For the purpose of this research it means that the stakeholders of the school must be fully informed of the LTI and associated policies (Nyangome, 2006: 27). Language planning has been categorised into two main activities, which is status planning and corpus planning.

2.8.1.1 Status planning

Status planning includes the choice of officials (Kamwendo, 2006: 65). It refers to the process that determines what languages shall work in what domains. Status planning involves decisions about which languages are to be used for certain functions like legislation (Acts of Parliament), national, regional and local government and the language for formal education (Mthembu, 2008: 28). This last element of status planning is applicable to this research.

2.8.1.2 Corpus planning

Corpus planning is the selection and codification of norms such as in the writing of particular grammar or styles and the development and standardisation (Kamwendo, 2006: 65). This part of language planning involves the technical empowerment of a selected language or dialect. The objective of corpus language planning is to enable a specific language or dialect to carry out effectively the functions that have been allocated (Kamwendo, 2006: 65). The distinction between status and corpus planning provides a useful framework for the implementation of a home language as LoLT.

2.8.2 Teaching practices and experiences

It is an unfortunate reality that in some classrooms learners do not understand what the teacher is saying, and the teachers are not proficient in the LoLT (Brock-Utne & Alidou, 2006: 85). A possible reason is that teachers follow official policies which direct them to teach in a second language, e.g. English. Learners may not be accustomed to English because they do not use it outside of school, have little exposure to it, and are not in any way familiar with the language (Brock-Utne & Alidou, 2006: 85). Most teachers also do not use English outside the classroom with the result that their own proficiency may be limited.

Classroom observation studies relate to several countries in Africa like Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Botswana (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 85). They found that the use of unfamiliar lan-

guages forces teachers to use outdated and teacher-centred teaching methods which undermine teachers' efforts to teach and learners' efforts to learn. Teachers do most of the talking while children remain silent or passive participants during most of the classroom activities. Because children do not participate in the LoLT outside the school, teachers are forced to use these outdated conventional or traditional teaching techniques. In this context, authentic and effective teaching and learning cannot take place. It can be argued that such a scenario is a contributing factor for the occurrence of school ineffectiveness and low academic achievement of learners.

It is logical that in cases of schools where languages familiar to teachers and learners are used as LoLT implies improved communication between teachers and learners. Findings from language studies in education in Africa (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia) indicate that the use of home language as LoLT in basic education produces positive outcomes if carefully implemented (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 85). The primary beneficial aspects discussed in the literature related to the LoLT are the:

- improvement of communication and interactions in the classroom
- integration of culture and indigenous knowledge systems into the school curricula (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 85).

Effective communication leads to successful learning opportunities in classrooms where languages familiar to both teachers and learners are used (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 88).

In an education situation where reading, writing, numeracy and literacy is effectively taught in familiar and home languages, learners can successfully develop adequate literacy skills for the use of learning other additional languages. Recent investigations indicate that there is a correlation between learners' literacy skills and their academic achievements (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 97). Furthermore, teaching practice and the promotion of effective learning negatively impact on education through insufficient and inappropriate educational material or resources (e.g. teachers' guides, textbooks and reference books) in the home language as LoLT. Untrained and inexperienced teachers rely on available teachers' guides to plan, prepare and develop appropriate lessons that are learner-centred. Unfortunately, a significant number of African schools suffer from the scarcity of quality educational materials in a home language as LoLT (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 98). Teachers are forced to translate materials through an unfamiliar language or they have to work with textbooks written in another language. The teacher guides are also often written in another language (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 97).

The teaching practice is often negatively impacted by the socio-political contexts which are not always in favour of the expansion of the use of African languages as LoLT in formal education. Teaching in a home language is viewed by many Africans as a second class endeavour compared to teaching in an international language (Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2006: 99). Such an attitude may encourage teachers to focus more on teaching in second languages than on home languages. Therefore, to promote the most effective teaching practice in schools, the authorities should make a serious effort to politically promote the use of African languages as LoLT. This research aimed to investigate the implementation implications and challenges associated with home language as language of communication at a selected pilot school.

2.8.3 Language and communication

When children come to school, they at least know one or two languages that are used in their community (Brock-Utne & Alidou, 2006: 117; Heugh, 2006: 64). They have learnt to use these languages for effective communication in mainly informal contexts. What is expected in the school is that:

- The home language skills of learners will be further developed at school for academic use both in and after school.
- Learners' thinking skills will be improved through overcoming the range of challenges across the curriculum, including the development of high levels of literacy for comprehension of and engagement with academic texts.
- As the curriculum becomes progressively more challenging in the school system, so are the literacy and linguistic requirements. Learners should continue developing their literacy and language expertise in order to meet the ever increasing challenges and complexity of the formal curriculum.
- Literacy development and language learning do not only take place in the language subject class; they occur (or should occur) in every lesson and every subject of the day. Language and literacy development, therefore, should be enhanced across the curriculum. This requires direct and explicit attention from all teachers, not only the language subject teachers (Brock-Utne & Alidou, 2006: 117; Heugh, 2006: 64).

Research indicated that when a child learns a new language, the child needs at least six to eight years of learning the language before it can be used as a LoLT (Biseth, 2005: 9; Heugh, 2006: 64). If an unfamiliar language is introduced too early, it is assumed that the

learners will neither learn the new language satisfactorily nor the other important subjects of the school curriculum. When children learn subjects like Mathematics and Science through a language that they do not know, they will not understand the concepts and explanations of the concepts (Heugh, 2006: 64). This means that learners using an unfamiliar language as LoLT, they are at risk to fall behind their peers who use home language as a LoLT.

The main point of departure to learn an additional language successfully and also succeed in the other curriculum subjects in a formal education context is when learners are taught in a home language as LoLT for at least six to eight years in school and the second additional language is taught by a subject expert (Heugh, 2006: 64).

2.9 Challenges for implementing home language as language of learning and teaching

This section focuses on the challenges emanating from literature to implement an indigenous home language as LoLT.

2.9.1 Uniform standard

South Africa is a diverse country and so are the classrooms at schools. IsiXhosa is spoken in different ways, depending from which area the learner comes from. Learners from the former Transkei homeland speak differently from the learners from the former Ciskei homeland and the Western Cape. Parents migrated from rural areas to urban areas in search of jobs, and because of this migration, one may find that three learners from the same class can have three different ways of naming something. For example when learners from the Eastern Cape talk about in the middle, the speaker will say *esiphakathini*, but a learner from the Western Cape will say *emetileni*. A learner who has been brought up in the Eastern Cape will have a different dialect as the dialect for the same language for instance in the Western Cape Province (Eurica, 2006: 21; Muthwii, 2004: 28).

Having the different variations of the same language (dialects) in one class makes it difficult for the teachers to teach or to have a common standard for a home language used in class situations. The use of these non-standard terminology may be a challenge for teachers with an increase in the variance between different dialects (Eurica, 2006: 5). Some teachers claim that there is a standardised version for the use of isiXhosa in education, but the manifestation of dialects occurs among the teachers themselves depending on the context or

purpose of communication (Eurica, 2006: 6). Another challenge with an unfamiliar language as LoLT is that learners are expected to use such a language while at school, but when the learners are at home they use their home language (Eurica, 2006: 6). The school becomes a place where some speakers feel that it is a place where neither their home language, nor their culture exist, and it is a place where their social identity is undermined (Eurica, 2006: 6). Reality dictates that one has to accept that a completely uniform manner of speaking in any language can never be fully realised because of the manifestation of language diversity even among homogenous groups of people. The occurrence of dialects within the same language is thus a global reality with different degrees of intensity that educators must account for in their profession.

2.9.2 Availability of learning, teaching and support material

A further challenge for implementing a home language as LoLT is that some schools in South Africa experience a problem of not having sufficient and appropriate learning, teaching and support material (LTSM) in a particular home language (Litteral, 2004: 7). The problem mostly relates to subject text books, teacher guides and literature books suitable for the different levels of learners' reading ability. Because of the scarcity of isiXhosa learning material, learners use English books and watch English television programmes. This state of affairs may be an important cause of lexical borrowing and code mixing noticed in learners' vocabulary when they speak (Eurica, 2006: 9).

Although the shortage of materials is known as a major challenge to the implementation of African home languages as LoLT, Ramani and Joseph (2006: 15) believe that appropriate material can and should be developed by home language and educational experts as an ongoing process. The mentioned authors believe further that competent teachers in home languages can translate textbooks from English to a specific African home language. By doing so, teachers will be avoiding the lengthy waiting period of educational resources to be developed. The shortage of books in home languages can make teachers feel abandoned by the education authorities and this situation can eventually lead to a feeling of incompetency (Muthwii, 2004: 21).

2.9.3 Language influence and status

English is the medium of instruction used in most South African schools and as such has influenced the conversational patterns of African learners (Eurica, 2006: 10). It is also viewed as a trend that when learners mix an indigenous home language with English, then

parents see no need for correcting them. Instead, higher status and value is attached to English than to that of an indigenous home language (Eurica, 2006: 10). Under such circumstances learners may be encouraged to communicate rather in another language than their home language with detrimental consequences for the sustainability and status of such home language

Nomlomo (2006: 120) maintains that parents give preference to English because of several reasons e.g. parents view English as a *door opener* to the world of work, they believe that English empower their children academically, allows their children to communicate more freely within a diverse group of people and lastly that English will improve their children's ability to communicate fluently in English. Nomlomo (2006: 106) is also of the opinion that, for some home language speakers, isiXhosa terms can sound rude whilst English terms sound soft, sophisticated and rich. A person who speaks English fluently is often respected in a community. This state of affairs may contribute to a certain extent of resistance from community members for the implementation of an indigenous home language as LoLT.

2.9.4 Teacher training

The current situation in South Africa is that the majority of teachers are not trained for the education profession in their home languages. The lack of in-service training of educators in indigenous languages constitutes one of the major challenges to implement a home language as LoLT in schools (Eurica, 2006: 10). With an untrained background to teach in a home language, teachers are sceptic and even unwilling to support any LTPs in schools to introduce home language as LoLT (Litteral, 2004: 6; Malekela, 2006: 65).

2.9.5 Cost

The development of comprehensive learning LTSM in all the official indigenous African languages would be a costly undertaking. Most of these materials are available in English and Afrikaans. The implication is that not only to procure all-inclusive LTSM, but practicing teachers should be trained to implement a home language as LoLT across the school curriculum. It is necessary to account for costing in any initiative, but one should also ask (Galabawa & Senkoro, 2006: 52): What are the cognitive destructive costs when learners are taught and learn in an unfamiliar language? What is the cost of drop-out rates of learners who cannot cope with an unfamiliar language as LoLT? What is the cost of the learners who cannot participate in classroom activities because of an inability to communicate? What is the long term cost of producing an ill-informed electorate? These are some of the

questions that provide insight into the dilemma of language implementation in the education system of a diverse nation like that of South Africa.

This research intends to investigate the implications and challenges to implement an indigenous home language as LoLT in a specific South African school as a case study.

2.9.6 Academic terminology

Desai (2006: 107) maintains that insufficient scientific and academic terminology exists in African languages because these languages were not used before in the academic and education domains. Desai (2006: 107) explains that the development of appropriate academic terminology in indigenous languages is an ongoing process and this issue should not be used to delay the developing of LTSM with appropriate academic terminology in African languages. The limitations related to terminology should be accounted for in classrooms where learners find it difficult to express themselves in a particular home language in relation to certain subject matter of the curriculum (Muthwii, 2004: 21).

2.9.7 Summary

The above-stated challenges from literature for the implementation of home language as a LoLT are not meant to be an all-inclusive list, but represent the main obstacles and issues of the current language in education discourse. Collectively these challenges form an important part of the theoretical framework of the research to clarify or contextualise the findings from the empirical section of this research.

2.10 Synthesis

The literature study of the research covered some of the essential topics related to the implementation of home language as a LoLT. The topics include descriptions from literature about the concept of home language, associated advantages and disadvantages for implementation in education, policy implications, related attitudes, language planning issues and implementation challenges (Figure 2.1).

Collectively the explanatory and thematic descriptions from literature provide a theoretical framework for this research (Figure 2.1). The rationale for this research is support by Plüdemann *et al.* (2004: 10-11) who recommend research for the implementation of home lan-

guage in education at a localised level to identify *local particularities*. The purpose of this research is in accordance with the view of Mantsinhe (2004: 15) who emphasises the relevance and importance of research on the topic of home language implementation in education. The research was conducted in acknowledgement of the South African Constitutional (South Africa, 1996a) directive that not only recognises the status of indigenous languages, but promotes practical measures for the advancement of indigenous languages in all spheres of society. In accordance with the Constitution the researcher acknowledges the historical background of the negligence of indigenous languages, especially in education and that current practices must be based on an equitable and non-discriminatory principles and human rights.

A basic point of departure of this research is the acceptance of a socio-linguistic framework to gain insight into the challenges of implementing a home language as LoLT in a particular societal setting (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10-11; Plüddemann *et al.*, 1998). Such a point of departure enables the researcher to understand the issues and experiences of a certain group of people within society. The research was also conducted within a language planning framework that included theoretical viewpoints, attitudes, policies, beliefs and practices to achieve a planned change in the use of language within a particular institution of society to understand the implications within a socio-political context (Kaplan & Baldauff, 1997: 4). A basic assumption is that home language facilitates mutual communication between the teacher and learner, which leads to improved teaching on the part of teachers and improved learning for learners. The strong relationship between language and culture is recognised and an integration of cultural values and customs into the curriculum is promoted (Alexander, 2003: 10). The next chapter describe the research design and methodology in more detail.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a literature overview of home language as a LoLT. This chapter explains and describes the research design and methodology to address the research aims (§ 1.3) and explain the design, methodology, population, sample and the trustworthiness of data.

3.2 The research design and methodology

A research design is the manner in which the research is visualised and carried out, and how the findings are eventually put together (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 30). A research design is an overall plan or strategy to conduct the research and incorporates a specific methodology to address the question of how the research was performed in relation to the primary problem statement by specifying amongst other things the selection of respondents, data gathering techniques and data analysis (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 70). The following subsections describe the design of this research study with the preceding definitional descriptions in mind.

3.2.1 Qualitative research approach

The approach followed in conducting this research was a qualitative design which aimed to address questions about the complex nature of social phenomena to understand and describe the phenomena from the participants' point of view (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 101). The focus of this research is to qualitatively determine the challenges in implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in a selected pilot school as part of a LTI in the Western Cape Province. The qualitative approach is appropriate for investigating the research topic within the viewpoint of phenomenological, naturalistic and interpretive paradigms that enable the researcher to seek an understanding of the research focus as a social phenomenon (Burrell & Morgan, 1989: 28; Neuman, 1997: 68; Schumacher & McMillan, 2000: 37).

During qualitative research, researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected participants in their natural setting. Qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions. The researcher interprets phenomena in terms of the meanings that people assign to these phenomena (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 315). In a qualitative study the *variables* are usually not controlled because it is exactly this freedom and natural development of action and representation that researchers wish to capture and report on (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 3). Qualitative procedures demonstrate a different approach to scholarly inquiry as compared to the methodology of quantitative research. Qualitative inquiry employs different philosophical assumptions, strategies of inquiry, methods of data collection, data analysis, and interpretation. Qualitative inquiry relies on textual and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and draw on diverse strategies for inquiry. The chosen strategies for inquiry in a qualitative research project have a direct influence on the procedures, which even within strategies are anything but uniform (Creswell, 2009: 173).

3.2.2 Case study approach

An intrinsic case study (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 272) obtained information from a particular school that participated as a selected pilot school in a home LTI (Addendum 3.1). The selected pilot school became a bounded system and single case study (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 13) within the home language implementation project. It had a specific context and dynamic nature with relevant information about the challenges to implement isiXhosa as a LoLT that can be collected to identify and analyse trends, patterns and relationships. A criterion for selecting a case study should be *the opportunity to learn* (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 272) regarding the gaining of in-depth insights of a particular setting as a strength of the case study (Mouton, 2002: 150). The findings from the selected pilot school as case study have the potential to provide rich information and a profound understanding of the challenges associated with the implementation of home language as LoLT.

Case studies offer a multi-perspective pool of information from stakeholders that have the potential of giving a voice to the powerless and voiceless such as children or marginalised groups. The potential for rich information is valuable for researchers to come to a deeper understanding of the nature and dynamics of the phenomenon or situation. These particular aspects are salient features of case study research (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 75). The data analysis of a case study focuses on a single situation (phenomenon), which the researcher selects to understand in-depth regardless of the number of sites or participants involved in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 316).

A case study, as a specific form of inquiry, was used in this research to investigate the implementation challenges of isiXhosa as LoLT in a particular school as a bounded system. Case study research has the potential to provide in-depth understanding. To observe effects in real contexts is regarded as the strength of case studies (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 37).

The purpose for choosing a qualitative single case study research design was to use individual interviews and focus group discussions to obtain in-depth idiosyncratic information from the participants about the challenges encountered in the implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT in a particular school. Henning *et al.* (Henning *et al.*, 2004) state that the single case study is suitable for theorising about issues related to particular organisations. However, the purpose of this research is not to generalise to a greater population, but to report on the views and experiences of participants within a particular institution of the schooling system to improve the current practice. One of the reasons for selecting a single qualitative case study was that the researcher was part of the working environment at the institution chosen for the case study. The single qualitative case study further enabled the researcher to describe and gain an understanding of a familiar case and to formulate relevant recommendations.

3.3 Research methods

Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 12) define research methodology as the specific means and techniques the researcher follows for conducting research. The research tools, techniques, processes and procedures that the researcher uses are specified by the research methodology (Mouton, 2002: 374). Research methodology also refers to the logical and coherent methods that complement one another and which are characterised by *goodness of fit* (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 36) to provide data and findings that reflect the research problem and research purpose. Mouton (2002: 374) points out that qualitative research may include multi-method strategies to collect data. In this respect, the mentioned author emphasises that reality is such a complex phenomenon and experience that researchers must be cautioned to rely on a single research method. It is thus acceptable in qualitative research to employ a variety or a combination of data collection methods.

3.3.1 Interviews and focus groups

Individual and focus group interviews were used as data collection techniques to obtain the participants' views and experiences about the implementation of a home language as a LoLT in a selected pilot school as a specific case study.

3.3.1.1 Interviews

Interviews are regarded as the predominant method of data collection in qualitative research to establish meanings that ostensibly reside with the participants (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 285). The interviews for this research were planned conducted accordance to sequential steps (Gall *et al.*, 1996: 305-322). A starting point for planning interviews was to ensure that the interviews were in relation to the purpose of the research, which was in this case, to investigate the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in a selected pilot school as case study. Appropriate selection and sampling of participants in the interviews was the second step. The next step was to decide on the interview format, which in this research was the semi-structured interview, consisting of pre-specified close-form questions, while allowing at the same time for open-form questions to probe responses more deeply for additional information. The pre-specified close-form questions and sequence were formulated and listed in an interview guide or schedule, which also provided guidelines for the interviewer to begin and end each interview. The researcher had access to experienced researchers to orientate and familiarise her as interviewer before engaging in the actual interviews. A pilot test of the interview schedule was conducted to rephrase and revise the questions, sequence and procedure in order to ensure reasonably unbiased data.

The semi-structured interview is commonly used in research projects to corroborate data emerging from other data sources (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 87). Semi-structured interviews seldom span a long period of time and usually require from the participants to respond to a set of predetermined questions with the opportunity to probe and clarify some of the responses. Semi-structured interview schedules basically define the line of inquiry (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 87). The researcher was attentive to the responses of the participants to identify possible new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied and explored and probed these. Pertaining to the probing of further questioning, the researcher was cautious not to be side tracked by trivial aspects that were not related to the focus of the research. Semi-structured interviews are verbal questionnaires which are rather formal consisting of a series questions designed to elicit responses from participants related to the primary research problem (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008: 446). The utterances

from the semi-structured interviews were used to obtain information in connection with the challenges to implement a home language as a LoLT in a school as case study.

The most appropriate respondent to involve in research is the individual or group of people within the situation being studied (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 299). Interviews are a useful tool to obtain large amounts of data in a relative short space of time. They are also effective to obtain in-depth data from relevant people who are able to explain and have the capacity for correcting misunderstandings and uncertainties (Sarantakos, 2000: 210). Interviews however have limitations. The interviewee can only respond to the extent that the interviewer will allow the respondent and in this regard the researcher allowed the respondents to respond optimally in relation to the research problem (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 299; Henning *et al.*, 2004: 58). Kumar (2005: 13) mentions a limitation that could affect the quality of data, namely that of the experience of the interviewer. The researcher attended an intensive training session in the conduct of interviews and focus group discussions as part of a workshop presented by experienced researchers.

An interview schedule for conducting interviews provided the researcher with a set of predetermined questions as an appropriate instrument to engage participants in a narrative situation (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 297). The interview questions of this research focused on the research theme to ensure responses that provided relevant information in coherence with the purpose of the investigation. The interview schedules were provided beforehand to the respondents to enable them to think about what the interview might cover (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 297).

All interviews were audio recorded (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 89). All the respondents gave consent for their participation in the interviews as well as for the recording of the interviews. Audio recording of interviews allow a much fuller record than only notes taken during the interviews (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 298). The audio recording of the interviews enabled the researcher to concentrate on the interview proceedings and progression. The recordings of all interviews were then verbatim transcribed for thorough data analysis.

3.3.1.2 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews or discussions are an established research technique that collects relevant data by means of facilitated group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 90). Focus group interviews are viewed as a specific data collection method to understand more comprehensively what people know, think and how

they experience a certain issue. Focus groups facilitated group interviews where participants could free flow and share in a supportive environment. The complexity and variety of groups of participants from the selected pilot school as case study necessitated the use of focus group interviews as planned discussions on the defined area of interest in a non-threatening environment to encourage participants to share their perceptions, points of view, experiences and concerns in relation to the central problem of this research (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 299-300). The researcher ensured a tolerant environment for conducting the focus group interviews and encouraged participants to share perceptions, viewpoints, experiences, wishes and concerns—without any pressure on participants to vote or reach consensus.

The rationale for using focus group discussions in this research was to obtain rich data from various groups of the study population, namely the Intermediate Phase educators, learners, parents and the SMT members of the school identified to take part in this research. As a research method, focus group interviews are regarded as a powerful means to explore reality and complex behaviour and to facilitate the sharing of experiences and feelings of participants in an interactive way (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 301).

3.3.1.3 Field notes

Field notes were compiled during the interview sessions as written accounts of things the researcher heard, saw, experienced and thought about during the course of the interviews (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 298). Unstructured observations were used to understand and interpret the context of responses from the participants (Mulhall, 2003: 306). The reason for using observations during the interviews was to analyse the responses in the context of idiosyncratic circumstances that provided a *fuller picture* than the mere capturing of the responses (Thietart, 2007: 184). Observations should be recorded in written form immediately after observation (Polkinhorne, 2005: 143; Silverman, 2000: 140). The notes from the observations were integrated with the data analysis procedure of the interviews as an integrated dataset (Sarantakos, 2000: 210). The observations that were done were unstructured observations. These observations were conducted continuously throughout the research process. The reason for doing the observations is to ensure that tampering with the research site remains as minimal as possible (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 301).

3.4 Participant selection

Participants were selected for inclusion in this research because they had certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic. Participant selection is the choosing of units of the target population to be included in the research (Sarantakos, 2000: 13). This research involved purposeful sampling where the researcher purposefully chose participants relevant to the research topic (Sarantakos, 2000: 152).

An extended representation of members from the school and school community who were involved in the implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of the school was identified as participants for this research. The participants comprised learners and teachers from the Intermediate Phase, members of the SMT, and members of the SGB. The identified groups of participants represented the key role players in the LTI in the school and justified their inclusion for this research. The selection of participants from the various groups was based on the procedure of purposive sampling (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 219) to include those participants for the provision of information about the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of the selected pilot school. The following groups of participants were purposefully included in the research.

3.4.1 Learners

Eight learners from Grades 5 and 6 were identified for participation because Grade 5 learners have two years and Grade 6 learners have three years exposure to the implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase. The Grade 4 learners were not included because of the limited implementation and exposure period of home language implementation of one year. Eight learners per grade were purposively selected according to high, low and medium performance criteria in order to compile an even academic profile of learners. The performance criteria were based on the learners' average grade mark that included the different learning areas since the research focused on the LoLT which applies to the curriculum as a whole. The groups of learners equally represented gender equity. A focus group interview was conducted with the learner groups from each grade.

3.4.2 Teachers

Subject teachers from five different learning areas in the Intermediate Phase was purposefully selected because these teachers were personally involved in implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the classroom: Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and

Arts and Culture. The inclusion of subject teachers was relevant because of their direct involvement in implementing isiXhosa as LoLT during the presentation of related subjects at the school. The eight teachers were interviewed together as a focus group interview.

3.4.3 The school management team

Members of SMT were included for participation in the research, because of their managerial and leadership role in the implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT at the selected pilot school. The school principal was interviewed individually. The deputy principal and one head of department from the Intermediate Phase were selected as participants of a focus group interview to represent the SMT.

3.4.4 The school governing body

The SGB was responsible for the governing of the school and represented the parents. The members of the SGB, in their capacity as governors of the school, were key role players with regard to policy implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT in the school. The chairperson of the SGB was selected as participant and was individually interviewed.

3.5 Data analysis

Data analysis is viewed as the bringing of order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 333). The data analysis for this research was executed from the verbatim transcriptions of the interviews and involved a qualitative content analysis procedure (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 104; Rourke & Szabo, 2002: 64). According to the qualitative content analysis procedure, the transcriptions were carefully read at first to gain an understanding of the context and content of responses.

The aim of the data analysis was to identify specific trends and patterns in relation to the research problem and aims. Therefore all the interview data were concatenated into a single data set. To identify the voice of a participant, in the analysis of findings chapter (Chapter 4), each quotation was indicated to the original interview. For example, (2: 45-47) relates to interview two, and lines 45-47 to the transcribed data. Referring to the addenda, one can determine the voice of the participant.

Data analysis commenced with coding that involved the identification and labelling of related *units of meaning* (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 105). Coding of units of analysis was according to an open, axial and selective coding procedure (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 131-132; Thietart, 2007: 139). Once the labelling of codes was completed, the next step of the analysis procedure necessitated grouping the related codes that eventually led to the construction of research-related themes, categories and patterns for further discussion and argumentation (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 104-105; Whitley & Crawford, 2005: 112). The content analysis procedure was applied in this research to reduce the extensive text for the researcher to identify related themes in a systematic manner (Stemler, 2001: 1).

Qualitative data analysis is based on an interpretative research philosophy that aimed to examine the meaning and symbolic content of qualitative data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 99). This research strived to establish how the participants viewed and experienced the implementation of isiXhosa as a LoLT at a selected pilot school by analysing their responses in relation to their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences. The researcher transcribed the interviews as soon after the interviews as possible to retain as much context as possible (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 299). The content analysis of this study can be summarised as:

- Recording of responses by means of audio recording technology
- Recorded responses were transcribed verbatim
- The entire transcribed text and field notes were read at first to obtain an overall impression of the content and context
- Codes as the labels assigned to specific units of meaning identified within the field notes and transcripts (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 104; Neuman, 1997: 422) were identified as part of coding that consisted of three coding steps. The three steps were open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Neuman, 1997: 422-424; Thietart, 2007: 139):
 - *Open coding* involved the identification and naming of segments of meaning in relation to the research problem. The focus of open coding was on wording, phrasing, context, consistency, frequency, extensiveness and specificity of comments. The segments of meaning from the transcripts were clearly marked (highlighted) and labelled in a descriptive manner.
 - *Axial coding* was done by reviewing and examining the initial codes that were identified during the previous procedure. Categories and patterns were identified during this step and organised in terms of causality, context and coherence.

- *Selective coding* as final coding procedure involved the selective scanning of all the codes that were identified for comparison, contrast and linkage to the research topic as well as for a central theme that might occur.
- The codes were evaluated for relevance to the research aims.
- Related codes were then listed in categories according to the research aims and theoretical framework from the literature study (Chapter 2).
- The analysis was also informed by inquisitive questions to identify thematic relationships from the various categories. Questions included among others (Henning *et al.*, 2004: 106):
 - What was the relationship(s) in meaning between all the categories?
 - What can be deduced from the categories as a whole?
 - What meaning was missing?
 - What was fore-grounded in the analysis?
 - What has moved to the background?
 - What alternative explanations were possible?
 - How was the research aims addressed by the various categories?
- The qualitative analysis was concluded by the description of thematic relationships and patterns of relevance to the research.

The qualitative analysis served as a guiding scaffold to ensure that the captured data were systematically interpreted and reported in this research.

3.6 Trustworthiness

When qualitative researchers speak of research *validity and reliability* they usually refer to research that is credible and trustworthy (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 80). Trustworthiness refers to the demonstration of integrity and competence in qualitative research by adherence to detail and accuracy to assure authenticity and soundness of the research (Babbie, 1998: 129; Tobin & Begley, 2004: 389-390; Twycross & Shields, 2005: 36). As such the trustworthiness of this research methodology relates to the planning and implementation of this research design which was conducted in a logical and systematic manner to ensure the trustworthiness of procedures according to the criteria of credibility, dependability, authenticity and confirmability (Freeman *et al.*, 2007: 28-29; Roberts *et al.*, 2006: 43; Tobin & Begley, 2004: 391-392).

3.6.1 Credibility

The data was analysed in a manner to demonstrate the links between the data and the interpretations. The presentation of verbatim citations of participants' utterances reflects the range and tone of these responses. The credibility was further increased by the guidance and presence of an experienced researcher during the interviews. The findings that emanated from the analysis were again submitted to a more experienced researcher for control and evaluation (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 346).

3.6.2 Dependability

Care was taken to ensure that the research was logical, traceable and clearly documented in a reflexive manner by means of a detailed account of the research (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 346).

3.6.3 Authenticity

The interview schedules were based on the theoretical framework (Chapter 2). These interview schedules were further subjected in a pilot test situation to ensure the yielding of reasonable, unbiased and valid data (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 346).

3.6.4 Confirmability

Cross-checking was implemented by working forward and backward through the research to make sure that the data and interpretations were not affected by unrelated influences (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 347).

The above-mentioned criteria did not serve as restrictive directives for the research, but were regarded as guidelines to generate informational knowledge in accordance to the research aims of this study (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 347).

3.7 Ethical considerations

This postgraduate study adhered to the North-West University and according to the university's academic policy. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University (Addendum 3.2). The primary goal of ethical approval was the protection of the participants,

the researcher and the University. Ethical screening is a compulsory, quality measure to monitor whether actions and interventions are responsible and legal and whether appropriate safety measures are applied (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008: 50-59). The researcher met all the ethical policy requirements and directives of the North-West University and the research was approved the Research Committee of the Faculty of Education Sciences. The research was also conducted in a manner that met the applicable ethical norms of social sciences in general.

Ethics can be defined as "... a set of moral principles which is widely accepted as rules and behavioural expectations about the correct conduct towards participants" (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 57). Ethical aspects applied to this research included, amongst other things, the avoidance of emotional or any other form of harm, timely sharing of complete information about the purpose and procedures of the research, informed consent of all participants, assurance of confidentiality and privacy while the researcher was committed to report correctly on the analysis of the data and the findings of the research (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 57-67).

Permission and consent to conduct the research in the selected pilot school identified for the case study:

- Request from Director of School of Continuing Teacher Education (SCTE), North-West University to WCED (Addendum 3.3)
- Researcher's request to WCED (Addendum 3.4)
- Permission from WCED to perform research (Addendum 3.5)
- Permission from SMT and SGB members (Addendum 3.6)
- Permission from parents or guardians of the learners (English) (Addendum 3.7)
- Permission from parents or guardians of the learners (isiXhosa) (Addendum 3.8)
- Permission from teachers (Addendum 3.9).

The interview process and ethical conditions were explained to the participants prior to the interviews to familiarise the participants with the empirical procedures. Permission to record the interview and focus groups discussions by means of audio recording technology was obtained from all the participants. The research was conducted in such a manner to minimise any intrusion to the professional working and school life of the participants. Other related administrative arrangements included:

- Making of appointments with all the participants at the selected pilot school
- Organising a suitable venue for conducting the interviews and focus group discussions

- Confirming all appointments with the participants ahead of time
- Developing an organised administration system for filing of the interview and focus group data, transcriptions, and findings.

The following background questionnaire, individual interview schedules, focus group schedules are available as addenda on the CD-ROM at the back of the dissertation:

- Background questionnaire to the teachers (Addendum 3.10)
- Focus group interview with the SMT members (Addendum 3.11)
- Focus group interview the teachers (Addendum 3.12)
- Focus group interview with the learners (English) (Addendum 3.13)
- Focus group interview with the learners (isiXhosa) (Addendum 3.14)
- Individual interviews with the SGB chairperson of the school (Addendum 3.15).

The transcribed interviews and background information document are available as addenda on the CD-ROM at the back of the dissertation:

- Individual interview with SGB (Addendum 3.16)
- Individual interview with the Principal (Addendum 3.17)
- Focus group interview with SMT (Addendum 3.18)
- Focus group interview with teachers (Addendum 3.19)
- Focus group interview the learners (Addendum 3.20)
- Captured background information (Addendum 3.21).

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter described the research design and methodology followed to address the primary research problem and related research aims. Themes of this chapter included the nature of interviews, focus group discussions, the data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical considerations and administrative matters. The research received meticulous attention to ensure reliable and valid information pertaining to the challenges in implementing isiXhosa as a LoTL in the selected pilot case study school. The next chapter deals with the interpretation of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to investigate the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in a selected pilot school. Semi-structured interviews were used as main data collection method which included two individual interviews and three focus group interviews (Chapter 3). All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. In this chapter the responses from the various participants are presented and discussed with relevant quotations from the interview data. The purpose of this chapter is to report on the data analysis that enabled the researcher to describe the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as home language as LoLT.

This chapter presents the findings of the research study in two sections: firstly the participants' biographical information and secondly a comprehensive discussion of the results in relation to the sub-questions (§ 1.3). The main research question was dealt with in Chapter 5 as a concatenation and conclusion in relation to the three sub-questions:

- What is the rationale (needs) of implementing home languages as LoLT?
- What are the advantages of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of a selected pilot school as part of a LTI?
- What are the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT in the Intermediate Phase of a selected pilot school as part of a LTI?

4.2 Biographical information

Table 4.1 presents the biographical breakdown of the information obtained from the teachers and SMT which includes information related to age, gender, teaching experience and educational background. The teachers involved in this study were from a selected pilot school that have been implementing isiXhosa as a LoLT for four years. A biographical questionnaire (Addendum 3.10) was given to eleven teachers and SMT members. All eleven questionnaires were returned for analysis (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Summary of the biographical information

Age group (years)	20-29 1	30-39 3	40-49 6	50-59 0	60+ 1
Teaching experience (years)	01-09 3	10-19 7	20-29 1	30+ 0	
Highest qualifications	Certificate 0	Diploma 6	Degree 3	Hons 2	Masters 0
Gender	Male 6	Female 5			

An analysis of the age of the participating teachers revealed that ten teachers were older than thirty. Most of the teachers (six) were from the 40-49 age group, with only one teacher in the older than sixty age group, and three teachers in the 30-39 age group. One teacher was younger than 29. The age of the participants was viewed in relation to their teaching experience. The largest group of teachers (seven) according to years of teaching experience was that of 10-19 years of teaching experience, while one teacher had between 20-29 years of teaching experience. There were three teachers in the group of participants with between 1-9 years of teaching experience. These responses in relation to age and teaching experience indicated that the participants in this research were mostly matured and experienced teachers who were able to respond with some extent of authority on the topic. The teachers were fairly well qualified for the teaching profession since three teachers had obtained a degree and two teachers have improved their qualifications up to Honours post-graduate level. About 50% of the teachers (six) were qualified for their careers as educators at diploma level. The teachers as a group of participants in the research were thus reasonably qualified for their professional job as educators. The group of participants was also well represented by both sexes, namely six male and five female teachers. This gender distribution ensured responses for this research based on gender equity (Table 4.1). The biographical information disclosed that the responses were provided by a group of professional qualified and experienced participants from a selected pilot school as case study for this research.

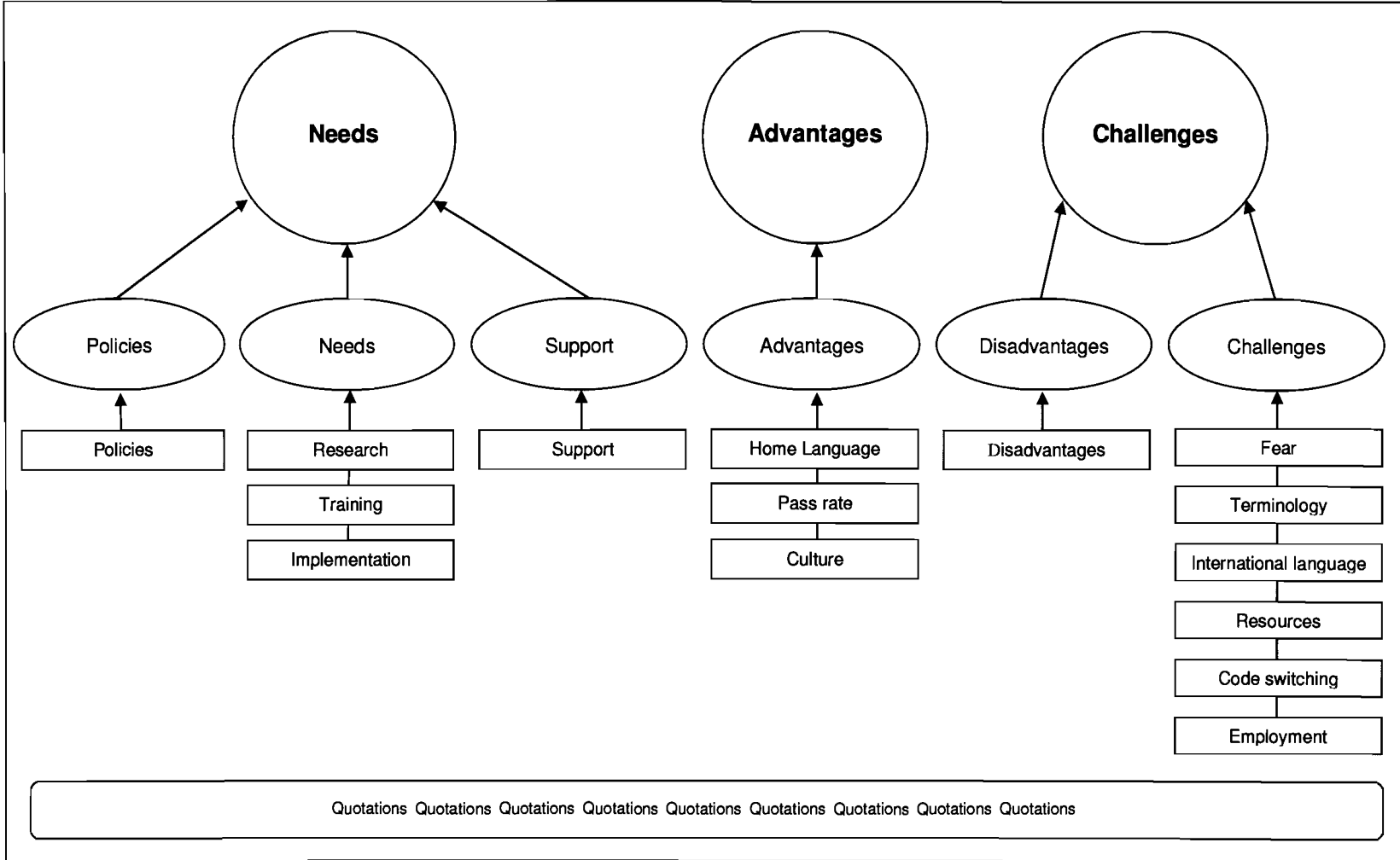


Figure 4.1 Coding structure used for the analysis of this study

4.3 Category identification

From the integrated data set of all the transcriptions, the researcher established a preliminary set of codes for the initial deductive analysis phase (§ 3.5). The identification of preliminary codes led the researcher to reduce the data and to establish emerging patterns in relation to research aims. Further inductive reasoning allowed the researcher to identify new codes in order to combine some codes to form new categories. As the researcher continued with the analysis in an interpretive approach, data were connected to applicable categories. This analysis eventually led to the identification of three patterns, six themes and fifteen categories as illustrated in Figure 4.1.

4.4 Sub-question 1: What is the rationale (needs) of implementing home languages as languages of learning and teaching?

This question seeks to find out what the rationale and needs are for implementing isiXhosa home language as LoLT. The rationale and needs were identified by the participants who were all related role players and isiXhosa home language speakers from the school community. The rationale and needs that were identified are grouped as: support, training and implementation.

4.4.1 Support

After the first democratic elections in South Africa, one of the changes made was to acknowledge the official status of all eleven languages (Nomlomo, 2004: 131). The best way for education was to implement the official languages by promoting the use of home language as LoLT (Nomlomo, 2004: 131). This was done by introducing policies with well-meant intentions in support of the use home language as LoLT. The realisation of policy intentions in practice required the support of all the stakeholders from school communities.

Responses from the teachers indicated that they do not receive adequate support from the parents with regard to the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT in the school. Their responses were indicative of a need for parental involvement:

- *There is no support from the parents. I think if we could get support from the parents and the community as a whole, then this programme can work (2: 63-66).*

Teachers reported that the attitude of parents is to encourage their children to learn in English as LoLT in order to be in a better position for employment:

- *They wanted their kids to go to schools where they are able to learn English. So the parents don't support their own language in school. (2: 76-79).*

Some parents do however support the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT in the school. This support may be ascribed to the initiative by teachers to inform the parents about the rationale and advantages of using isiXhosa as LoLT. This response is in support of regular and effective communication between the school and the community (§ 2.3.3):

- *The parents are supporting and we have spoken to them before we started implementing as being a pilot school, some of them understand (3: 208-209)¹.*
- *Some parents gave us their support (4: 351)².*

One participant mentioned some non-home language speaker were in support of isiXhosa as LoLT, because they want their children to learn isiXhosa. This particular response is contrary to those responses in support of English as language of dominance and is indicative of the support for an indigenous language:

- *Other parents that are supportive are the coloured parents because they want their children to learn isiXhosa (4: 366-367)³.*

Some parents had their doubts about the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT and this uncertainty was attributed to ignorance about the rationale for using a home language as LoLT. Participants mentioned in this regard that the doubt of parents about the language may be caused by the doubt of educators. According to the participants, the attitudes of educators concerning the use of home language in the school affect the attitudes of parents because of their trust in the competence of educators. This state of affairs places a responsibility on educators to inform the parents of the rationale and need for the use of home language as LoLT:

- *The parents as I have said the first time, they do have doubts of where this is going. Their doubts are in our hands, to explain this to them. So we are the ones to sell this to them, parents believe a lot what teachers say ... parents will keep on supporting us (3: 196-201)⁴.*

Participants responded positive with regard to the support they received from school management to implement isiXhosa as LoLT and this situation is in accordance to literature that highlights the importance of commitment and support from management for the successful

¹ *Abazali bayasapota and sithethile nabo before siqale uku implimenta ukuba yipilot school, abanye bayayilandela (3: 208-209).*

² *Abazali basinikile isupport abanye (4: 351).*

³ *Abanye abazali abasupportive ingathi ngamacoloured because befuna abantwana babo bathethe isiXhosa (4: 366-367).*

⁴ *Abazali njengokuba besenditshilo kuqala banayo indawo yokuthandabuza into yokuba iyaphi lento, kodwa ukuthandabuza kwabazali kusezandleni zethu siyicacise into yokuba ... Ngoko ke bayakuyithengiselwa sithi abazali bakholelwa kakhulu kootitshala ... Abazali bazakuhlei nje bayasixhasa (3: 196-201).*

implementation of an initiative (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10). Commitment and support are not limited to the parents' community only, but are internally needed among staff members of the school:

- *The school management is very supportive (1: 57)*⁵.

It was evident from their responses that the teaching staff was informed by the SMT and committed to the implementation of the LTI. Some teachers experienced difficulties with the vocabulary, but they were in general compassionate about the programme. Apparently it was also not such a challenge as may be expected to implement the programme initially, because the participants refer to the relative ease to commence with implementation:

- *The teachers are following; it is only those few that have a problem with difficult words (3: 103)*⁶.
- *Here at school it was not that difficult when this started because we were informed, we accepted it and wanted to see how it is going to be (4: 330-331)*⁷.
- *...otherwise colleagues are supporting each other a lot (4: 333)*⁸.
- *Concerning support for what we are trying our best for inside the school (4: 347)*⁹.

Teachers had the well-being of the learners at heart which is indicative that the learners were enlightened about the rationale and need for this language initiative. Teachers were of the opinion that learners the comprehension of what was taught increased among learners, in contradiction to the situation when English was used as LoLT:

- *I hope the learners are happy about this (2: 202)*¹⁰.
- *Learners are also aware that they were supposed to learn in isiXhosa and they now understand what they are taught. (3: 210-211)*¹¹.

The WPED introduced the Language Transformation Programme (LTP) and identified and requested the schools to pilot this programme. It was expected among the school fraternity of the pilot schools that training in this regard would be provided by the education authorities. No training, orientation or workshops was done in this regard. Participants reported that they were not supported sufficiently by the education authorities and their responses points to some expectation for support. The strong worded responses indicate that this particular aspect was a sensitive and crucial matter for the participants. Insufficient support from the education authorities may be interpreted among other things, as deficient interest in the implementation of the programme, or that the programme is not regarded as important, or even a priority:

⁵ *Siya sapota ischool management le kakhulu (1:57).*

⁶ *Nootitshala bayalandela ibe ngulowo uxakwa mhlawumbi isiXhosa esinzulu (3: 103).*

⁷ *Ngokwalapha esikolweni ukuqala kwethu khange kubenzima because ifikile sayamkela safuna ukuyizama ukuba iza kuba njani na (4: 330-331).*

⁸ *... otherwise isupport ngokwecollegues sininzi ukufa sona (4: 333).*

⁹ *... isupport yona okoko nje thina sinokuthi siyazizamela apha ngaphakathi (4: 347).*

¹⁰ *Abantwana ndiyathemba ukuba bona bayayivuyela (3: 202).*

¹¹ *Nabantwana bayayiqonda into yokuba bekufanele bafunda ngesiXhosa bayeva ukuba kuthiwani na kunangokuya bekufundwa ngesiNgesi (I 3: 210-211).*

- *On the side of the department there is totally I can say the support is very, very minimal (2: 95).*
- *... without the support of the district office, without the support of the head office (2: 96-97).*
- *There is totally no support from the side of the department (2: 103-104).*

The SMT and teachers especially took a firm stance in their responses about support from the department of education. They were disgusted with the absence of any form of support from the authorities as the initiators and authoritative embodiment of this programme. The negative sentiments culminated in a response stated that the department failed dismally to provide support to those who implement the programme:

- *The government does not show any interest in sending everything that is needed (3: 125)¹².*
- *I have not seen anyone coming from the department ever since my arrival here, who came to see how we are doing in implementing this, I have not met that person yet (3: 193-195)¹³.*
- *This thing is not suppose to be the schools responsibility to see to it that it is a success (3: 224)¹⁴.*
- *Who comes to see as to what we need, what goes right, and what goes wrong, when does that happen, when you learn something new there is suppose to be someone next to you, all the way giving you the support that you need, I don't think we are getting that (3: 231-234)¹⁵.*
- *When you go down to the sub divisions at provincial level, it is not supported (4: 75)¹⁶.*
- *... we are going to say there is no support because we don't have resources (4: 333-334)¹⁷.*
- *... if the support system could go all the way (4: 465)¹⁸.*
- *Departmental wise they failed us really because the people from Cape Town are the ones who initiated this Language Transformation thing. Not a single day did they come (4: 341-342).*
- *... they really failed us (4: 345).*

A specific problem cited in this regard was that in some cases where curriculum advisors did visit the school were not isiXhosa speakers. This incapacity to speak isiXhosa caused that no guidance or support realised for the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT:

- *Truly, even the curriculum advisors who can speak isiXhosa are few, sometimes even the one who come and look at isiXhosa does not know isiXhosa (4: 212-213)¹⁹.*

¹² *Ke mhlawumbi urhulumente akabonakali enomdla wokusithumela yonke into eyiyimfuneko (3: 125).*

¹³ *Andikhange ndibone mntu umzekelo usuka kwidepartment oko ndilapha oze for ukuzokujonga iqhuba njani into yokuba sifundisa ngesiXhosa akakafiki kum (3: 193-195).*

¹⁴ *... le nto ingabi yimeme yesikolo into yokuba masibone ukuba senza njani ukuze ube kanti iyaphumelela (3: 224).*

¹⁵ *Ngubani ozayo azokukhangela ukuba zintoni izidingo zesikolo, zintoni ezihamba kakuhle, zintoni ezingahambi kakuhle, yenzeka nini loo nto leyo ukuba ngaba into uyayifunda kumele ukuba kukho umntu olapha ecaleni kwakho kuyo yonke le ndlela uyihambayo okunika inxaso eyiyiyo, andiqondi ukuba siyayifumana lo nto (3: 231-234).*

¹⁶ *Xa usihla kengoku kwisub divisions ezi at provincial level ayisapoteki (4: 75).*

¹⁷ *Ngaphandle kwedepartment siza kuthi asikho kuba asinazi resources (4: 333-334).*

¹⁸ *If ingathi go all the way support system (4: 465).*

¹⁹ *Enyanisweni iCa's ezithetha isiXhosa zinqabile kude nalo ngamanye amaxesha uzokujonga ungu CA wesixhosa wayekade engasazi eso siXhosa angu CA waso (4: 212-213).*

The above-stated responses showed that staff members and parents were in support of the programme, but that support from the education authorities were experienced as a major problem. Other than the provision of resources, the kind of support expected from the education authorities was specified.

4.4.2 Training

With an untrained background to teach in a home language, teachers are usually sceptic and even unwilling to support any LTPs in schools to introduce home language as LoLT (Litteral, 2004: 6; Malekela, 2006: 65). The use of isiXhosa as a LoLT is new in schools, therefore it would be appropriate for the department of education to initiate relevant training to capacitate the teachers for successful implementation. According to the responses from the teachers, it was obvious that no training or any kind of orientation was done to equip the SMT, SGB, teachers or parents for the implementation of this programme:

- *The department did not train any teacher or anybody ... (2: 21-22).*
- *The training of teachers, and teachers were not enough trained to implement this programme (2: 38-39).*

The need for training can be attributed to the situation where teachers used English as LoLT in schools and were trained as educators in higher education institutions by means of English as medium of instruction. In this sense, it is understandable that teachers are in need for some kind of training or orientation to teach in a home language as LoLT:

- *Our college training as teachers was done in English, at school we were taught in English (4:158-159)²⁰.*

The SMT and SGB of the school is required to provide leadership and guidance for the implementation of the LTP, but responses signified that no training for these role players was provided to empower them as school managers and governors of the school:

- *Even the SMT or school managers were not trained to implement the programme (2: 47).*

Based on the responses from the participants it is clear that there is a need for training among the various role players to implement isiXhosa as LoLT. A need analysis and training programme should be conducted to address the needs of all role players involved in this LTI.

²⁰ *Itraining yethu ezicollege, iteacher training sitrainwe ngokwe English, nathi kwi education yethu sasifundiswe nge English (4: 158-159).*

4.4.3 Implementation

The introduction of a LTI is performed after careful deliberations in which the interests of all role players are considered. This means that the background work and thorough research needs to be done before implementation (Plüddemann *et al.*, 2004: 10). When one intends to implement something you need to sit down and plan. Supporting structures should also be in place so that the programme can be successfully implemented. The school principal, SMT, SGB and the teachers felt that there was no ground work done for the LTP and this vacuity led to problems experienced with implementation. The quality of planning and strategies prior to implementation play an important role in the success and failure of a programme.

Because of insufficient planning, the implementation strategies are also not viewed as appropriate. Teachers are the ones who are expected to implement the LTP, but they were not capacitated to cope and be able for successful implementation in their classes:

- *Teachers were not enough capacitated to implement this programme (2: 38-39).*

The department might have done its ground work and research, but according to the teachers it seems as if that was not done as a result their implementation is poor:

- *You plan something before you do it, you don't just don't get up and decide on doing it. This is the picture that the education department is given us (3: 220-221)²¹.*
- *I see it as propaganda being spread for voting purposes. After the elections, it is forgotten (4: 410-412)²².*

Some teachers indicated that they are in support of the programme up to a certain level, but is uncertain of what is intended as end result. This is an indication of not fully informed and understanding the rationale and purpose of the programme:

- *I see implementing in isiXhosa up to intermediate phase as a good thing (3: 10-11)²³.*
- *If this application is going to continue up to high school and tertiary level, I don't know where it will end (4: 41-42)²⁴.*

Teachers are positive about isiXhosa as LOLT, but are disillusioned by insufficient guidance for effective implementation:

- *It is the manner in which it is applied that will make us reluctant (4: 258)²⁵.*

²¹ *Xa uqala into uyayiceba into awuyenzi nje lento yezipilot zenziwa yidepartment ingathi umntu uvuka endlini yakhe ecinge into yokuba kunokubakho into ethile athathe ngokuthi mayenziwe (3: 220-221).*

²² *... but ngokokunokwabo ingathi yinto eyayisenzelwa nje okokuba no siza kuspreada nje lento iyipropaganda for ukuba abantu basilandele emveni koko asizikuyihoya ncam ncam (4: 410-412).*

²³ *Uku implimenta ngesiXhosa kodwa up to intermediate phase ndikubona mna kulungile (3: 10-11).*

²⁴ *Ukuba le implementation iza kuqhubeka ukuya ehigh school nakwitertiary level andiyazi nokuba ijonge ukuphela kweyiphi ilevel (4: 41-42).*

²⁵ *... yindlela le eaplaywa ngayo le eza kwenza mhlawumbi sibereluctant (4: 258).*

A word of advice from one participant is that the department of education needs to involve the teachers when they plan to initiate programmes in schools:

- *Teachers should be involved when the implementation planning is done, as they are good implementers (4: 377-378)²⁶.*

The reason for experiencing implementation challenges is assigned among other reasons to inadequate research before implementation:

- *I think there was not good research before this thing was implemented (2: 18-19).*
- *It must be researched, there must be more research on it (2: 57-58).*
- *Get a lot of professors who can research this thing ... It was never researched (2: 121-122).*

4.4.4 Conclusion

The above mentioned information from the participants signifies a need for guidance and support from the education authorities. Internal and mutual support among educators, school managers, school governors and the parent community were also mentioned as a vital attribute to the successful implementation of the LTP. Training is viewed as an important aspect to capacitate teachers who were not trained to teach in a home language as LoLT. Related research and apt planning were also considered to be crucial for the successful implementation of the LTP in the school.

The following section reports on the advantages as viewed and experienced by the participants.

4.5 Sub-question 2: What are the advantages of implementing home language as a language of learning and teaching?

This question seeks to find out what the reasons are of implementing a home language as LoLT in education. The participants were all isiXhosa home language speakers and the data analysis and interpretation were based the views and experiences of these home language speakers. Categories as part of this research theme were identified as advantages, pass rates and cultural aspects (Figure 4.1).

²⁶ *Xa be implimenta kuza kufuneka bathathe thina zititshala because we as teachers we are good implementers (4: 377-378).*

4.5.1 Advantages associated with home language as a language of learning and teaching

Responses included some advantages as to why isiXhosa as home language should be used as a LoLT in education. These responses referred to the use of a familiar LoLT for learners that may improve the manner in which learners learn, because of improved and effective communication as well as an increase in interactive participation between teachers and learners in classrooms (Benson, 2001: 23). Teaching in a home language is regarded by the participants as conducive for the inclusion of local and contextual content in the curriculum that makes the educational experience more relevant to the life world of learners (Iyamu & Ogiegbaen, 2007: 9). The principal, school management team (SMT), most of the teachers and learners were of the opinion that a home language as LoLT is helpful in allowing learners to learn more effectively (Desai, 2006: 107). Responses were:

- *Teaching in the learners' language enables the learners to learn more effectively because the concepts in learning have to be understood and the concepts can only be grasped in one's mother tongue and not as effectively in a second language (2: 8-10).*
- *Lessons are easily grasped when you use your home language (4: 11).*
- *... it is easy for learners to understand what is taught (4: 92-93)²⁷.*
- *Some information you don't know, but you will hear it in isiXhosa (5: 17).*
- *... learners understand what they learn about ... (3: 54)²⁸.*

These responses about advantages related to a LoLT are in accordance with the viewpoint of (Benson, 2001: 24) who state that the use of a home language as LoLT does not only increase the relevancy of the educational experience, but also improves the learner's communication with teachers. The use of home language in education makes it easier for teachers and learners to negotiate meaning in a more effective way (Benson, 2001: 24):

- *A child can express him/her in his/her language ... (1 4: 7)²⁹.*
- *... it is very easy to tell how you feel when you use your own language (1 4: 33-34)³⁰.*
- *I think it is easy for learners to answer ... (1 4: 104)³¹.*

Because of the learners being able to express them more easily in their home language, they are able to understand and respond with less anxiety to learning challenges (Nomlomo, 2006: 119):

- *For a child to come up with meaningful things, that child has to learn with his/her home language (3:27-28)³².*
- *... it assists learners to build knowledge around big words (4: 98)³³.*

²⁷ *Ngoba ezinye indawo awuzazi kodwa uza kuziva ngesixhosa (5: 17).*

²⁸ *Abantwana bafunda be undastenda ukuba bafunda ngantoni na ... (3: 54).*

²⁹ *Umntwana uyakwazi ukuzi epressa ngolwimi lwakhe (4:7).*

³⁰ *Kulula kakhulu ukuzichaza indlela imbilini yakho ukuba ufeela njani xa uthetha ngolwimi lwakho (4: 33-34).*

³¹ *I think abantwana kulula ukuphendula (4: 104).*

³² *Kodwa ke kwicala lokuba umntwana akhuphe izinto ezizizo umele ukuba ufunda ngolwimi lwakhe lwenkobe (3: 27-28).*

- ... to know a lot of things that you don't know (5: 19)³⁴.
- ... to listen and be able to succeed in everything (5: 23)³⁵.
- ... when you listen and understand, you will succeed in your studies (5: 41)³⁶.

The above responses refer to a situation in which learners understand what is taught and that if they know what is expected from them, the chances of successful learning increases. This situation is contradictory to a situation that is characterised of rote learning without an understanding or insight related to the topic of learning. One response refers in this regard to the happiness of learners in the classroom situation:

- ... this Xhosa thing makes learners happy in their classrooms (4:109)³⁷.

According to the SMT, the implementation of isiXhosa as home language is not just an advantage to the learners, but also for the teachers. As isiXhosa speaking people, not all teachers are confident to speak fluently and teach effectively in English:

- This is making them to be able to teach in their own language, because it was difficult to speak English in the classroom (2: 104-105).

Responses indicated that both teachers and learners are more at ease with their home language in a classroom situation. The same situation applies for parents who will be more at ease and able to assist in their children's school work. The learners feel free to explain to their parents what the school work is about. Related responses in this regard were:

- The learner can take class work home and ask his/her illiterate mother for help (4: 13-14)³⁸.
- When learners are given homework, it becomes easy for the child to talk to the parent and the parent will help the child with the homework (4: 118-119)³⁹.

According to the teacher participants, the use of isiXhosa as language of learning and teaching saves them time in the classroom. Before the implementation of isiXhosa as home language, teachers were expected to teach in English, but practically that did not happen. Teachers use to speak or teach in isiXhosa and expect from learners to do assessment in English. In cases where English was used as LoLT, the teachers have to translate what they said into isiXhosa for the learners to understand what was being taught:

- What we did as teachers when we were teaching our learners English, most of the time you would read that certain passage and then translate it to isiXhosa (4: 90-93).

³³ It assist learners to build knowledge around amagama amakhulu (4: 98).

³⁴ Wazi izinto ezininzi ongazaziyo (5: 19).

³⁵ Ndimamele ndikwazi ukuphumelela kwinto yonke (5: 23).

³⁶ Umamele uza kuphumelela kwizifundo zakho (5: 41).

³⁷ ... lento yesisiXhosa iyabonwabisa abantwana kakhulu apha eziklasini (1 4: 109).

³⁸ Uyakwazi ukuthatha umsebenzi waseklasini awuse ekhayeni kumama ongakhange aye esikolweni (4: 13-14).

³⁹ Xa benikwa umsebenzi wasekhaya kuba lula kengoku umntwana athethe nomzali umzali amncedise kulo msebenzi wakhe wasekhaya (1 4: 118-119).

In conclusion, the responses from the participants point to advantages linked to the use of isiXhosa as LoLT in the school. The advantages included an improvement of the learning and teaching ascribed to more effective communication between the teachers and learners, an increase of interaction in the classroom, more possibilities to link relevant and contextual experiences with curriculum content, learning experiences are more relevant to the life-world of learners, learners and teachers are more at ease in the classroom situation which result in more *happy* learners and the teachers save time by eliminating frequent translations.

4.5.2 Pass rates

Participants attributed the increase of the school's achievement results as a possible effect of using isiXhosa as LoLT:

- *Maybe it is because they learned in isiXhosa that resulted in their results improving (3: 62-63)*⁴⁰.

However, some participants felt that the results were not as good as they thought and relate this situation to the school having some Afrikaans speaking learners who are not taught in their home language:

- *... that Afrikaans speaking child he/she is lowering our marks (4: 144)*⁴¹.

In a teaching and learning situation where learners are able to understand and express themselves comfortably in their home language, for example in systematic evaluation activities (Sigcau, 2004: 241), the participants were convinced that the school's achievement results will improve:

- *I am sure that what you are going to answer is going to be worthwhile and our pass rate is going to be better (3: 181-182)*⁴².

The above-mentioned responses from the participants indicated that they were in support of using isiXhosa as LoLT because of the positive effect on the school's achievement results and pass rates.

4.5.3 Culture

"Language, culture and literacy are elements that define individuals and their sense of belonging to a group or a nation" (Alidou *et al.*, 2006: 30). Using the learners' home language

⁴⁰ *... mhlawumbi yinto befunde ngolwimi lwabo ibenenxaxheba eyithathileyo ekunyuseni indlela abaqhube ngayo (1 3: 62-63).*

⁴¹ *... lamntana we Afrikaans nguye lo uthoba imarks zethu (4: 144).*

⁴² *Ndiyaqiniseka mna into yokuba into oza kuyiphendula iza kuba yinto ephuhlileyo futhi siza kupaselwa ngcono (3: 181-182).*

make it possible to integrate culture into the school curriculum and thereby creating a culturally sensitive curriculum. Language has dual characteristics: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture (Benson, 2001: 23):

- *Self worth is brought back so that people will know who they are (4: 299-300)⁴³.*
- *I see this as a good thing for bringing back our culture (4: 578)⁴⁴.*
- *Your culture is maintained by your language, when your language is not there, gone is yourself worth (3: 156)⁴⁵.*
- *Teaching in isiXhosa will make our culture as Xhosa speaking people to be preserved eternally (3: 242)⁴⁶.*
- *Because isiXhosa is our culture (5: 25)⁴⁷.*
- *We will be able to know our forefathers cultures and rituals (5: 120)⁴⁸.*

The above responses by the participants prove that is indeed important to use isiXhosa as LoLT, not only are they going to do well in class, but they will also have a link with their culture.

4.5.4 Conclusion

The first sub question was about the rationale for implementing isiXhosa as LoLT. The participants were in favour and positive about the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT. They view the initiative as something that can contribute to effective teaching and learning in many ways. Advantages identified in the integrated data analysis were:

- Effective communication will be promoted between learners and teachers, and between the school and the community
- The manner in which the learners learn will improve
- Educators teach in the language that they are comfortable in
- Parent involvement is encouraged
- Pass rates will improve
- IsiXhosa speaking people's culture is maintained and respected.

The indicated advantages are an indication that the participants are positive about the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT, but there are still challenges to overcome.

⁴³ *Kuphinda kubuyiselwa la nto yeself woth yokuba umntu azazi ndingubani (4: 299-300).*

⁴⁴ *Ndiyibona iyimbono entle nyani for ukubuyisa ubuntu (1 4: 578).*

⁴⁵ *Inkcubeko yakho igcinwe lulwimi lwakho, ukusuka kolwimi busukile ubuwena (1 3: 156).*

⁴⁶ *Ukufundiswa kwesiXhosa kuza kwenza okokuba incubeko yethu njengamaXhosa igcinakale (3: 242).*

⁴⁷ *Ngoba isiXhosa yiculture yethu (5: 25).*

⁴⁸ *Siza kutsho sazi iculture yethu namasiko okhokho bethu (5: 120).*

4.6 Sub-question 3: What are the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as a language of learning and teaching in the Intermediate Phase of a selected pilot school as part of a language transformation programme?

This question seeks to find out what the challenges of implementing isiXhosa as LoLT are in the Intermediate Phase of a selected pilot school as part of a language transformation programme. Although research proves that home language is an important resource in the learning and teaching (Djite, 2008: 7), there are still challenges in implementing isiXhosa as LoLT in schools. Teachers believe that the initiative of home language implementation in schools can work, but they doubt the efficiency of implementation (§ 4.5). Challenges that were identified from the data of this research were classified in the following related groups: employment, resources, fear of unknown, language (code) switching, international language, and terminology.

4.6.1 Employment

IsiXhosa speaking people, believe that for anyone to be able to be employed, one needs to be able to read, write and speak English (Nomlomo, 2006: 120). This view of English as an international language of dominance led to some resistance from parents, teachers and learners to accept the use of isiXhosa as LoLT. The principal highlighted in particular as participant the fact that parents view an educated person as someone who can converse in English. The connotation of education to proficiency in English is a serious challenge for the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT and this perception needs to be rectified:

- *Parents from home they see people who are educated as people who can speak English, if you cannot speak English or express yourself in English you are not educated (2: 74-75).*

This narrowly focused perception of parents believing that an educated person is linked to English speaking leads to parents preferring English as LoLT to ensure future employment for their children.

- *Parents want what is right for their children in the workplace, they know in some jobs one need to speak English right through (3: 146-147)⁴⁹.*

Not only are the parents concerned about their children being employed, so are the teachers. The following responses were captured:

⁴⁹ ... qha bona bafuna le nto ingathi iza kulungela abantwana babo emisebenzini bayayazi kweminye imisebenzi kufuneka kuthethwe iEnglish right through (3: 146-147).

- *But when we face the reality, who is going to employ these learners? Where are they going to be employed? Let us leave alone those who are going to work for the public sector, but those who are going to work for companies (4: 39-41)⁵⁰.*
- *... so our children have to learn English so that they can be employed. Who is going to employ someone who cannot speak English? (4: 167-169)⁵¹.*

Teachers do not just fear for unemployment for the children they teach, but even for their own children. This happens when teachers do not enrol their children in the schools where they are teaching, but instead placing their children in English medium schools:

- *Even here amongst us if we tell the truth, our children are at English schools because we believe that for someone to be employed, one should be able to speak English. As we see it really, learners who study at the English schools just pass their Grade 12 and then they get jobs (4: 205-207)⁵².*

The perception of possible unemployment if learners do not follow English as LoLT, let teachers influence their learners in the same way:

- *If I say I am going to be employed, surely I must make it a point that I know English even if I don't know my language (4: 317-318)⁵³.*

Responses from learners clearly points to a firm belief amongst them that English as LoLT will ensure a brighter future than their home language. This perception seems to be the general attitude among all learners:

- *Other people don't know isiXhosa, when you go to work, you work with people who speak English and when you get there English is expected (5: 65-66)⁵⁴.*
- *It is to get work up there (5: 74)⁵⁵.*
- *It is to get work at the municipality and other places (5: 78)⁵⁶.*
- *It is said that we must respect English for example when you work and succeed to higher places you must be able to speak English (5: 80)⁵⁷.*
- *Most jobs are English jobs, and even the people who come from overseas know English (5: 82)⁵⁸.*

The teachers and learners as the main role players for implementing isiXhosa were both convinced of the value of English as LoLT to ensure future employment. This trend to support English as LoLT can be considered as a major challenge for the implementation of isiX-

⁵⁰ ... but xa sesi face ireality ngubani oza kuqasha aba bantu baza kuqashwa phi masiyeke abantu abaza kusebenzela ipublic sector but aba bantu bazakusebenzela icompanies (4: 39-41).

⁵¹ ... so abantwana bethu have to learn le English ukwenzela into yokuba umntu azokuqashwuka uzakuqashwuka ngubani xa ingakwazi ukukhumsha (1 4: 167-169).

⁵² Even apha kuthi if sithetha inyani abantwana bethu bakwi English schools because sinento ethi ukuze uqesheke, ukuze ukwazi ukufumana umsebenzi kufuneka ukwazi ukuthetha iEnglish and siyayibona nyani abanye abantu abafunda kwi English schools umntu upasa nje ugrade 12 and then afumane umsebenzi (1 4: 205-207).

⁵³ If ndithi ndithi ndiza kuqashwa ngumlungu surely kufuneka ndithi make it a point ndiyasazi isilungu noba ndingade ndingayazi lena yam into (1 4: 317-318).

⁵⁴ Abanye abantu isiXhosa abasazi xa uyokuphangela uphangela nabantu abathetha iEnglish ngoku ufike pha kufuneka iEnglish (5: 65-66).

⁵⁵ Kukufumana umsebenzi pha phezulu (5: 74).

⁵⁶ Kukufumana umsebenzi koomaspala nakwezinye iindawo (5: 78).

⁵⁷ Kuthwa isiNgesi masisihoye umzekelo xa uphangela uphumele phezulu kufuneka uthethe iEnglish (5: 80)

⁵⁸ Imisebenzi emininzi yeyeEnglish nabantu abasuka phesheya bazi iEnglish (5: 82).

hosa as LoLT. Relevant information by experts in the field of language acquisition and development should intervene in order to address these perceptions in the most effective way.

4.6.2 Resources

Another challenge that was foregrounded in relation to the implementation of a home language as LoLT was that some schools experience a problem of not having sufficient and appropriate LTSM. This issue is in particular relevant to resources in a particular home language (Litteral, 2004: 7). Learners rely to a great extent on resources during the learning and teaching (Litteral, 2004: 7). In this sense, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (South Africa, 2003) encourages teachers to use a variety of resources to address the learning outcomes and assessment standards as prescribed for a particular phase. There is however a need for appropriate and relevant resources published in the home language as LoLT. The need for resources even occurs among parents, because they experience problems to assist their children with homework. The shortage of resources was blamed for the under achievement of learners:

- *The resources are not enough. Maybe that's why the kids are not performing (1: 28-29).*

The principal, SMT and teachers indicated that the school does not have enough LTSM resources and one of the main complaints was that they have to develop these materials by themselves. The teachers who develop the material were not trained as learning material developers and experience it to be quite a challenge:

- *We are struggling a little bit, because we don't have enough material. There are not enough books (2: 19-20).*
- *The only complain from the teachers is the materials we have to develop (2: 108).*
- *We must try and get resources, we don't have resources. We must try as hard as we can to get resources like books that are written in isiXhosa (3: 87-88)⁵⁹.*
- *We don't have resources (4: 241-242).*

The learners were also aware of the shortage of LTSM resources in their school:

- *Not all of us have isiXhosa books because there are only a few (5: 62)⁶⁰.*

Not only are there too few resources, but those available resources are only in English and have to be translated by the teachers into isiXhosa. The relevance and standard of these translated resources are also questioned because of translation challenges:

- *The only thing that we are doing is to change books that are written in English into isiXhosa (2: 20-21).*
- *We took those books and translate them in Xhosa ourselves (4: 242).*

⁵⁹ ... qha kengoku kufuneka sizame ukufumana iresources asinaziresources kufuneka sizame kangangoko sizifumane iresources like iincwadi yonke nje into emalunga nesiXhosa (3: 87-88).

⁶⁰ Asinazo sonke iincwadi zesiXhosa zimbawwa (5: 62).

- *The materials available are not original, but are translated from English to Xhosa (2: 61-62).*

It is the responsibility of the school to make sure that there are sufficient resources to be able to teach effectively. It is expected from teachers to use their creativity and professional skills to design and develop appropriate resources for the subjects they teach. However, the normal workload of teaching is so demanding that little time is left for the development of quality learning material. Another challenge is that even if the school is in a position to buy resources, this is not always possible because resources are not available as publishers do not publish sufficient resources in isiXhosa.

4.6.3 Fear of the unknown

People are cautious of changes as they are unsure of the implications of these changes (Eurica, 2006: 10). The same apply to the implementation of the language transformation programme (LTP) which implies a major change to the LoLT. The uncertainty related to the LTP was expressed as follows by the participants:

- *Even the parents have doubts about this programme, thinking of where is this programme leading to (3: 196-197)⁶¹.*

Communication and information is crucial for the successful implementation in order to enlighten the necessary role players involved in the programme. Such information will ensure that everybody concerned will be knowledgeable about the programme and thus neutralise to a great extent any uncertainty and fear of unknown. Ignorant participants were doubtful of this programme because they were uninformed:

- *You see, even the people up there ... they are not sure about this thing (4: 232-233)⁶².*
- *... and you think that, what exactly is this, they can allow us to teach the old English method (4: 236-237)⁶³.*
- *We are reluctant ... maybe we will get used to it as time goes on (4: 258-259)⁶⁴.*
- *It can work, but what about the learners who will only know isiXhosa? (4: 259-260)⁶⁵.*
- *Even the people who are in charge of education, it seems as if they are not supporting us and they are not firm about the implementation of the programme (4: 386-387)⁶⁶.*
- *They are using us as guinea pigs in testing this programme. I am not sure when the piloting period will be over and what are they going to say after the pilot phase? Are*

⁶¹ *Abazali njengokuba besenditshilo kuqala banayo indawo yokuthandabuza into yokuba iyaphi lento (3: 196-197).*

⁶² *Uyabona kwa the people aba pha phezulu the professors ntoni abakho sure ngale nto (4: 232-233).*

⁶³ *Uqonde okokuba yintoni kanye kanye ngesiyekwe sititshhe ngolwaa hlobo lwe English lakuqala (4: 236-237).*

⁶⁴ *Si-riluctant utshintsho luhleli lungekho drastic mhlawumbi sakuya siye siqhele (4: 258-259).*

⁶⁵ *Yona inokusebenza although iza kuthi seyisebenzile sibe nabobantu bazi isiXhosa singabaziyo baza kusebenzela bani (4: 259-260).*

⁶⁶ *Kwa abantu abaphetheyo pha kwimfundo ingathi nabo abakakabikho strong abakakabikho firm ngale LTP (4: 386-387).*

we going to go back to using English or are we going to continue with this programme? (4: 391-393)⁶⁷.

It seems as if although teachers see the LTP as something that can work, but because of how it was introduced to them and insufficient support they doubt the worth of the programme in school. If the participants were fully informed, received much needed guidance and support and were empowered with implementation strategies and skills, the changes for successful implementation would have been much improved.

4.6.4 International language

English is viewed as one of the major languages at international level. One needs to be able to read, write and speak it. It is a language that is widely used in the workplace and in South Africa it is a language that helps as a common language of understanding in a diverse country (Nomlomo, 2006: 120). The features of English as a common language to all the people of South Africa and as international language contribute to support for the use of English at the cost of using home languages. The media also plays a role in the promotion of English because learners are also exposed to the influence of the media:

- *Because of the international status of English, everybody wants to be involved in English (2: 73).*
- *They see television; they see kids that are talking English on television and associate education with English (2: 77-78).*

The dominance and assimilation power of English as an international language has a major impact on the promotion and support for the use of home languages in the South African education system. The local languages literally compete with a world language and the challenge seems overwhelmingly in this regard. As professional educators the people in education should use all platforms to inform all concerned about the advantages of learning and teaching in one's home language. Other languages can still be mastered as part of language subjects in the school.

4.6.5 Code switching

It is common among isiXhosa speaking people to mix their language with another language, mainly English and Afrikaans. This practice does not only happen outside of the class, but also in the classroom. It is not only the mixing of languages, but teacher change from one language to another in the same lesson, a practice aptly named *code switching*. This par-

⁶⁷ *Uyabona like ezo zinto kengoku, basenza guinea pigs basa-testa basathini I am not sure nangoku we are not even sure xa liphela eli xesha lokupilota kuza kuthiwani kengoku are we going back ukufunda ne English okanye siza kukhontinyuwisha ngale nto (4: 391-393).*

ticular practice was identified as a contributing factor to the low pass rate by an official of the WCED during a visit to the school. Teachers use more than one language because they are not confident or sufficiently competent to use one language during their teaching. The defence of teachers is that learners do not understand some terminology and concepts and teachers are forced for this reason to use more than one language:

- ... because first you had to teach in English and when you see they don't understand, you have to translate it into Xhosa.
- The pass rate is too low, the reason is because languages are mixed and we don't use proper language (1: 51-52).
- It was a little bit difficult to speak English in the classroom because we were also mixing languages. Although we were teaching in English, it was not pure English, because ... our English is not very good. The teachers are happy with this switching of languages (2: 105- 107).
- We are mixing the language, we don't use the proper language (1: 51-52)⁶⁸.

The learners reported some difficulty to cope with the changing of languages in the classroom:

- The teacher speaks isiXhosa and when the teacher does not know a word, it is mixed with English (5: 54)⁶⁹.

The changing between languages in the classroom can be ascribed to the situation in which teachers are not used or competent to use isiXhosa as LoLT. Teachers were further trained in English and are comfortable with this language in teaching. However, some teachers encountered challenges during teaching as not all teachers are fluent in speaking and teaching through medium of English. The use of a home language which is conducive to contextual and cognitive comprehensive may be the solution to reduce the changing between languages and to make education more effective.

4.6.6 Terminology

isiXhosa was regarded in the past as an unofficial language used for mainly informal uses such as cultural activities, rituals and interpersonal communication among community members (Desai, 2006: 107). Although isiXhosa enjoys equal official status in the newly founded democracy of South African since 1994, there is still a belief that this language is incapable to in expressing modern concepts, especially in mathematics and technology (Molepo, 2008: 20). A possible reason for the mixing of isiXhosa with other languages may be because of insufficient terminology relevant to some subjects being taught:

- A lot of words of things like computers, natural science ... I mean the language that is used in the school subjects; it is most of the time difficult to get it (3: 92-94)⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ *Siyayixuba sixuba ilanguage lena as we don't use the proper language (1: 51-52).*

⁶⁹ *Utitshala uthetha isiXhosa ufike amanye amagama engawazi awaxube ne English (5: 54).*

It is a challenge to any teacher if a language is short of certain descriptive terminology in some subjects, e.g. in the science subjects. Successful and effective teaching relies heavily on language as a communication medium which necessitates the use of appropriate terminology:

- *The main problem is terminology. Terminology problems that are not going to end here at school ... (3: 108-110)⁷¹.*
- *We don't know isiXhosa terminology (4: 159)⁷².*

As much as terminology is a problem, the feeling is that terminology some writers use are not only difficult, but are not familiar and not used in the communities:

- *Those words related to subject matter used in teaching don't make sense to the learners (4: 160-161)⁷³.*

isiXhosa is a language with long expression formulations, for example: instead of one sentence in English, you will find three sentences in isiXhosa. Therefore some teachers even feel that although there were familiar terminology or words, the use of them during teaching is not valuable because such words are not used in the community:

- *Even when we count money we use twenty five cents we are not going to say amashumi amabini anesihlanu (4: 163)⁷⁴.*

Some teachers are in doubt what to do in the example provided and in such a matter, guidance from management and the education authorities is needed. Another challenge is the discourse about the existence of standard isiXhosa for speakers of this language. A learner who has been brought up in the Eastern Cape Province will have a different dialect as the dialect for the same language in the Western Cape Province (Muthwii, 2004: 21). Having different variations (dialects) of the same language in one class makes it difficult for teachers to teach or to have a common standard for isiXhosa as LoLT:

- *There is isiXhosa from different areas. I don't understand another person's isiXhosa because I speak mine. There is confusion (4: 177-178)⁷⁵.*

If there are learners in the same class who make use of other languages, they would also experience difficulty with a LoLT that they cannot speak or understand:

⁷⁰ *Amagama amaninzi ezinto oocomputer, oonatural science ... senditsho ulwimi oluthethwa kwii-subjects ezithile ubukhulu becala ufumanise okokuba luyasokoleka ukuba lufumaneka (3: 92-94).*

⁷¹ *Eyona ngxaki abanayo sisigama, isigama esingazokuphelela kuye apha esikolweni esiza kwazi xa laa mntwana ephuma esikolweni encokola nomnye umntwana wesinye isikolo babe bathetha ulwimi olunye (3: 108-110).*

⁷² *... iterminology yesiXhosa asiyazi (4: 159).*

⁷³ *... lo maga onqunto andiva ke leuphela ungawasebenzisi ebantwaneni because they don't make sense ebantwaneni (4: 160-161).*

⁷⁴ *... even naxa sibala sisebenzisa otwenty five cents asizothi amashumi amabini anesihlanu (4: 163).*

⁷⁵ *Kukho isiXhosa sengingqi mna omnye umntu isiXhosa sakhe andisiva tu ndinesi sam ndisaziyo uyabona kukho i-confusion kwalapho (4: 177-178).*

- *When I give learners homework, the environment is a problem. I give them the homework in isiXhosa, then the other learners will not do it (4: 179-180)⁷⁶.*

Not all the teachers were negative about the terminology issue and some teachers offered ways that could help them to overcome this challenge.

- *When a teacher does not know a term, the teacher can go to another teacher for help, they can then explain to each other and each come up with a term. After that they can look at the most appropriate term (4: 331-333)⁷⁷.*

The ultimate is to have a standard for the language to be created for informal and formal use to enable isiXhosa speaking learners and people to understand each other:

- *Every child doing matric, even if they come from the Baca land (?) or from anywhere, they will write one isiXhosa, every child will write it I don't think there will be a problem (4: 403-405)⁷⁸.*

Some learners were negative and some were positive about the issue of appropriate terminologies in isiXhosa:

- *In isiXhosa you get difficult words that you don't know the meaning of (5: 47)⁷⁹.*
- *Homework written in isiXhosa is difficult. It is better when it is in English because there are difficult words that we don't know (5: 51-52)⁸⁰.*
- *When the teachers speak isiXhosa sometimes they don't know the other words and mix it with English. It is better that we write everything in English because the teachers will also not know the other Xhosa words (5: 54-55)⁸¹.*
- *When you write a word, don't write it when you don't know it, or write it in another language because other Xhosa words are difficult (5: 57-58)⁸².*
- *We will know the old Xhosa words (5: 118)⁸³.*

The essence of the argument of using isiXhosa as LoLT is unambiguous: "If African languages are not used at school, there will never be an African renaissance" (Sigcau, 2004: 252). The challenges in this section relates to implementation difficulties experienced in the practice of a selected pilot school and although high localised as part of a case study, it is the opinion of the researcher that schools in similar circumstances can relate with these challenges. It is obvious that over and above the practical nature of these challenges, there are also challenges pertaining to the attitudes of various role players in education. The changing

⁷⁶ *Ndizonika umntwana ihomework ienvironment iyandibetha apho, ndimnika ngesi siXhosa owe coloured soze abuye nayo loo homework (4: 179-180).*

⁷⁷ *Utitshala xa engalazi igama elithile uyakwazi ukuya komnye utitshala ambuze then bacaciselane then ukuba omnye uza neyakhe item nomnye uza neyakhe item then niske nijonge eyona ezakuba lula (4: 331-333).*

⁷⁸ *... bonke abantwana be-matric nokuba ngowakwaBhaca nokokuba ungowakwabanina ubhala isiXhosa esiyi-one sibhalwa ngumntwana wonke andiqondi ukuba kungabakho ingxaki (4: 403-405).*

⁷⁹ *EsiXhoseni ufumane igama elinzima ongalaziyo ukuba lithetha ntoni (5: 47).*

⁸⁰ *Ihomework ebhalwe ngesiXhosa inzima kungcono ibhalwe nge English ngoba kukho amagama anzima esingawaziyo (5: 51-52).*

⁸¹ *Utitshala uthetha isiXhosa ufike amanye amagama engawazi awaxube ne English bhetele asibhalise ngesingesi yonke into ngoba naye akazuwazi amanye amagama esiXhosa (5: 54-55).*

⁸² *Xa ubhala igama sukulibhala nawe ungalazi okanye usibhalise ngenye i-language ngoba amanye amagama esiXhosa ayaxaka (5: 57-58).*

⁸³ *Siza kutsho sazi la magama akudala esiXhosa (5: 118).*

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Selected schools in the Western Cape Province were requested in 2007 to pilot the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT. The participating schools in this LTI were however not given clear guidelines for implementation in practice. The various role players involved in the implementation of home language as LoLT encountered wide ranging difficulties in practice. Without clear implementation guidelines, the success of this initiative depends to a large extent on a trial-and-error approach to overcome a myriad of challenges. These challenges to implement isiXhosa as LoLT in a selected pilot school served as rationale for the problem statement of this research (§ 1.1).

This final chapter provides an overview of the research. The findings that were derived from the data analysis for the three sub-questions were addressed in Chapter 4, while the findings for the main research question are dealt with in this chapter. Related recommendations are formulated and the chapter closes with a conclusion of the inquiry.

5.2 Overview of the research

Chapter 1 presented an orientation to the research in which the primary problem statement, research sub-questions and research aims were stated. Background information about the research topic was described and substantiated with a brief literature review on the research topic. Sources of relevant information pertaining to home language implementation as LoLT were identified, studied and used as a motivation and substantiation for this research. The initial chapter also provided a concise explanation of the research approach, design and methodology employed for conducting this research. This chapters concluded by outlining the anticipated value of this research and an advance organiser of the chapters that followed.

Chapter 2 reported on a literature study and constitute the theoretical underpinning this research. Related themes from literature were extensively explored to provide a theoretical framework for this research (Figure 2.1). Themes investigated include a historical back-

ground, rationale for using home language as LoLT, advantages, disadvantages, attitudes, policy guidelines and challenges pertaining to implementing a home language as LoLT. The literature study enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding and insight into the historical background of language in education and the contemporary issues related to language implementation in education.

Chapter 3 deals in detail with the research design and methodology. The research was conducted from an interpretative qualitative paradigm since the participants in the implementation of the LTI were the primary sources of data by means of their insights and experiences related to the research topic. The unit of analysis was the challenges to implement isiXhosa as LoLT in a selected pilot school. The interpretive nature of the qualitative research enabled the researcher to gain an understanding into the implementation challenges of isiXhosa as LoLT. The data collection method was based on individual and focus group interviews. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were analysed by means of coding to produce related patterns, themes and categories. Measures were taken to ensure trustworthiness the researcher explained each step in the research. The chapter concludes with an elucidation of the ethical precautions taken to ensure that no harm was done to any of the participants. It also lists the addenda applicable to the research.

Chapter 4 reports on the data analysis and commenced with a discussion of the biographical information which indicated that the data were provided by a group of professionally qualified and experienced participants. The data analysis procedure was performed according to a coding structure consisting of patterns, themes and categories (Figure 4.1). The research sub-questions served as directives for reporting on and interpreting of data. Advantages in relation to improved communication and classroom interaction were highlighted while an increased pass rate was associated with the implementation of isiXhosa as LoLT. The advantages and disadvantages in relation to home language as LoLT form the rationale and need for the use of isiXhosa as LoLT in the selected pilot school. Implementation challenges in this regard were identified and represent the focus of this research. The challenges were complex and referred to practices of language switching, attitudes, resources, terminology, training and parental support.

5.3 Key findings

This section presents the key findings in relation to the main research question (§1.3).

5.3.1 Findings related to policy and needs

5.3.1.1 National and provincial policies

The national and provincial policies e.g. the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (108 of 1996) (South Africa, 1996a), the Language in Education Policy Act (27 of 1996) (South Africa, 1996b), the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) (South Africa, 1996b) and the Western Cape Language Act (13 of 1998) (Western Cape Province, 1998) have worthy intentions with accompanying directives for the use of home languages as LoLT. However, clear guidelines and strategies for implementation in practice is overlooked by these policies (§ 4.5). This disparity corresponds with the findings from literature that indicates a mismatch between policy intention and policy implementation (§ 1.2). This state of affairs left the impression among participants of this research that these laudable policy intentions are misused for political campaigning purposes (§ 4.4.3) and that the current policies do not effectively support the implementation of home language as LoLT in practice. A further finding in this regard is that policies do not account for the assimilation pressure from English as an international language of dominance.

5.3.1.2 School policies

In coherence with the aforementioned findings, the participants experienced a mismatch between policy intentions and the reality of home language implementation as LoLT at school level. The findings indicated that some role players at the school are not sufficiently informed and knowledgeable about the language policy of the school in which they fulfil their roles (§ 4.6.1). In this regard it was mentioned that the role of language in the admission policy of the school was not clear. A further finding at school level was that the local education authorities (the district office) do not adhere to the language policy because written communication takes only place in English or Afrikaans. An inclusive approach to the development of the school's language policy did not realise adequately because some role players were not involved in the development of the school's language policy. The needs related to policy issues necessitate research to recommend situation-specific guidelines and related training for the implementation of a home language as LoLT.

5.3.2 Findings related to policy and advantages associated with the use of home language as LoLT

The previous section (§ 5.3.1) highlighted the discrepancy between policy intention and policy implementation. In this sense, any policy dealing with language as LoLT has to address and accommodate the following advantages as part of the underpinning and purpose of related policies.

The use of a familiar language is viewed by the participants as a supportive means to learning and teaching (§ 4.4.1). The use of isiXhosa as LoLT led to an improvement of communication which furthermore increased interactive participation between teachers and learners. A significant finding in this regard is the inclusion of contextual content in the classroom and school curriculum that maximally relate to the educational experience of the learners' frame of reference (§ 4.5.1). Learners were able to express themselves with more ease in their home language and were able to understand and respond with less anxiety to learning challenges. The use of isiXhosa as LoLT also benefitted the teachers, because not all teachers are proficient in English as medium of instruction and thus eliminating pressure on regular translations which inevitably contributed to productivity in the classroom. A noteworthy finding is that parents are capacitated by isiXhosa as home language to support and assist their children at home with confidence. A particular perception of significance among the participants was the contribution of isiXhosa as LoLT to the rise in the school's overall performance results. The use of a home language as LoLT facilitates the integration of culture into the school curriculum and activities since language is viewed as an important component of one's culture.

5.3.3 Findings related to policy and the challenges for implementing isiXhosa as LoLT

Figure 4.1 indicates that findings that relate to policy deliberations relate to three conceptual areas, namely the needs of the communities, the advantages of using home language as LoLT, and the challenges of implementing home language as LoLT. Figure 5.1 illustrates the relationship between these three macro issues.

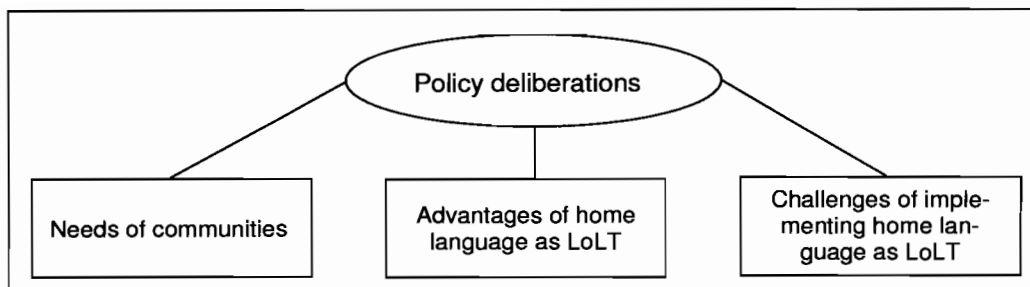


Figure 5.1 Aspects emerging from this study for policy deliberation

Section 5.3.1 stated that policies provide inadequate guidelines and strategies for the implementation of home languages as LoLT. In a situation where policy development at macro (national and provincial) and micro (school) levels intends to provide appropriate guidelines and strategies for the implementation of home language as LoLT, such guidelines has to account for the following challenges.

A certain extent of resistance against the use of a home language as LoLT exists in schools and communities for the reason that English is associated as a warranty for future employment (§ 4.6.5). This viewpoint is supported by educators which influenced the attitudes of learners towards the use of their home language as LoLT. A major challenge reported by the participants is the availability of learning, teaching and LTSM like subject text books in a home language. The availability of home language resources is essential for the successful implementation of a home language as LoLT and policies has to provide directives in this regard. Another challenge identified was the fear of the unknown because teachers were trained in English as a LoLT and are thus comfortable with the status quo. Change to a home language as LoLT is resisted because of anxiety for the unknown and uncertainties. A specific challenge is called *code or language switching* (Mbude-Shale *et al.*, 2004: 159) whereby teachers change continuously between two languages to explain difficult terminology and concepts or because of their incompetence in a particular language. This situation is closely related to a (mis)perception that isiXhosa as a traditional language does not possess the vocabulary for modern day's scientific and technological terminology. A challenge of relevance that includes the parents points to the support that learners received at home. If the LoLT is not familiar or mastered by the parents, it can be assumed that assistance from the parents at home, with for example home work, will also decline.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the findings in the study:

- Follow-up LTIs should be implemented in the school community and society at large to promote home language as LoLT.
- Teachers should receive appropriate in-service training to capacitate them in using home language as LoLT.
- Education language policies should be reviewed at national, provincial and local levels to provide guidelines and directives for the implementation of home language as LoLT.
- More home language speaking subject advisors should be deployed to provide assistance and guidance for the implementation of home language as LoLT.
- At schools, the SMT and SGB should be knowledgeable about the language policy implications for the school and must see to it that staff members are familiar with the school's language policy. The staff and community should be involved in the development of a language policy for the school.
- The education authorities in partnership with the schools must ensure quality LTSM which are made available in a particular home language as LoLT.
- The education authorities must respect the language of the school and base their correspondence on the LoLT of the school.
- Parents should be encouraged and empowered to assist their children with home work.

5.5 Limitations of the study

Limitations of research generally relates to the context in which the research was performed, as well as the theoretical conceptualization of the research.

Contextual limitations in this bounded case study related to the tools used to collect relevant data. The study only used interviews and more data collection strategies would have assisted in ensuring data of a broader context. However, the various interviews supplemented each other and gaps in the data were limited. The interview skills of the novice researcher were also a concern. The researcher during analysis of the data realized that some of the questions to the participants needed more probing in order to draw more from the interviewees. Although the novice researcher took precautionary steps to ensure trustworthiness in

all steps of the research, experience in qualitative research is of utmost importance for the trustworthiness of qualitative data.

Theoretical limitations related to the type of research which comprised a single bounded case study of limited scope. The study took place in only one district of a province where a LTI is implemented. Possibly the Hawthorne effect (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008: 174-175) may have affected the responses from participants in positive manner due to the larger implementation project that ran simultaneously. However, the research was based on a qualitative case study which enabled deep understanding of a particular case, without any indication of impact at a larger scale. This study focused specifically on one school, it can be expanded to more schools so that conclusions can be made in terms of all isiXhosa speaking primary schools in the province. Suggestions for further research indicates a large scale survey to determine the impact of home language implementation in education at provincial or national level (§ 5.6).

5.6 Suggestions for further research

This research has explored the challenges for isiXhosa as a language of learning and teaching in a pilot school in the Eden-Karoo district. It is anticipated that this research will encourage further research about the implementation of a home language as LoLT. Further research on district wide, province wide and country wide in terms of a large-scale survey should be launched to determine the impact of home LoLT.

More research on the National Department of Education's language policies would also be useful. Although some policies are available, problems relate to the implementation at grass-roots level. Further research would assist in providing insight as to why there is a gap between policy and implementation.

5.7 Conclusions

The study was performed at a selected pilot school in the LTI in the Western Cape. It indicated that isiXhosa as a language of learning is not yet fully implemented, and mostly only at pilot schools. The major recommendation is that the government should strive for the development of isiXhosa as a LoLT.

Almost all isiXhosa speaking people want to be fluent speakers of English, despite the development to promote isiXhosa. IsiXhosa speakers should not feel intimidated or threatened by the constant pressure that to be able to find a job one need to be fluent in English. They should be proud of their language and establish the language as a LoLT.

5.8 Reflection of the research journey

I started with my Master in Education in 2008. I knew nothing concerning research and everything was new to me. When we had our first class in January and the terminology they used made me wonder whether if I were at the right place. Determination kept me going. The first assignment of choosing a research paradigm for my research was a tough one as I have never heard of research world views. My supervisors explained that doing a Masters degree through distance learning was demanding, I thought that they were exaggerating, but I was wrong. Using scientific language for the first time to write the research proposal was difficult, but eventually my research proposal was approved alongside with other students that regularly meet with their supervisors. The literature review was the most difficult for me to do and it took a long time. Working accurately with references was a hard schooling.

Then the time came for the interviews ... My husband helped me to train for the interviews. My supervisors also came to George and we practiced the interviews with the rest of the MEd class, role playing the different scenarios that could happen. I was so nervous interviewing the people, but my supervisors calmed me down. After the transcription of the data, I really enjoyed doing the analysis and the writing of Chapter 4. This was the heart of the research.

This journey has taught me that one must not take things lightly, especially if it something that you do not know. All in all this was an opportunity, an experience that I will never forget, because I did not only gain academically but also how to treat people and understand their stories.

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