# Foundation Phase BEd Teacher Education: Bridging the Theory-Practice Divide in Reading Literacy Teacher Preparation through Work-Integrated Learning


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# ABSTRACT

The gap between theory and practice experienced within teacher preparation programmes is a persistent issue worldwide. This divide is also entrenched in the lack of an evidence-based knowledge base for content knowledge within reading literacy teacher preparation programmes.

National and international literature has indicated that to bridge this divide, institutions responsible for initial teacher preparation will have to redesign their programmes so that they produce expert practitioners who know how to use the knowledge of the profession to advance learners learning. This can only be achieved if teacher preparation programmes incorporate clinical practice into their programmes. Teacher preparation programmes incorporate WIL to integrate theory and practice but in order to do this successfully, WIL needs to be fully grounded in practice and interwoven with academic content and professional development in order to achieve this.

This study drew on the theory and practice divide in order to address the lack of the knowledge base to teach reading literacy. Shulman's theoretical framework for teachers content knowledge was used to form the knowledge base for reading literacy teacher preparation programmes. Additionally, WIL was analysed to determine what constitutes an aligned WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education as well as to determine how WIL should be incorporated into foundation phase teacher preparation programmes.

The findings of this study suggest that establishing collaborative partnerships among the key stakeholders for WIL is imperative to integrate theory and practice. A roadmap for WIL was devised which acted as a catalyst to address the changes needed for WIL so that students can optimally benefit from WIL in reading literacy teacher education.



**Key words:**

reading literacy, teacher preparation, work integrated learning, PCK, reading literacy components, integrating theory and practice, partnerships in teacher preparation

# OPSOMMING

Die gaping tussen teorie en praktyk wat in onderwysersopleidingsprogramme ervaar word is ‘n wêreldwye kwessie wat voortduur. Hierdie verdeelheid is verder vasgevang in die gebrek aan kennis wat op navorsing gegrond is ten opsigte van inhoudelikekennis binne leesgeletterdheid in onderwysersopleidingsprogramme.

Nasionale en internasionale literatuur dui daarop dat hierdie verdeeldheid slegs oorkom kan word as instansies wat verantwoordelik is vir die opleiding van onderwysers hul programme herontwerp. Die doel hiervan is om kundige praktisyns te lewer wat weet hoe om kennis van die beroep te gebruik en sodoende leerders se leerprosesse te bevorder. Dit kan slegs bereik word as onderwysersopleidingsprogramme kliniese praktyk programme inkorporeer. Onderwysersopleidingsprogramme inkorporeer werk-geïntegreerdeleer (WIL) om teorie en praktyk te integreer. Om sukses met hierdie integrasie te verseker, moet WIL egter ten volle op praktyk gegrond wees en terselfdertyd met akademiese inhoud en professionele ontwikkeling verweef wees.

Hierdie studie het die verdeeldheid tussen teorie en praktyk as vertrekpunt gebruik om die gebrek aan die kennisbasis wat onderwysers nodig het om leesgeletterdheid te leer, aan te spreek. Shulman se teoretiese raamwerk vir onderwysers se inhoudskennis is gebruik om die kennisbasis vir leesgeletterheid binne onderwysersopleidingsprogramme te vorm. WGL is ontleed om te bepaal wat ‘n belynde WIL program binne onderwysersopleiding vir leesgeletterdheid behels. Dit is ook ontleed om te bepaal hoe WGL in onderwysersopleidingsprogramme van die grondslagfase geïnkorpereer moet word.

Die bevindinge van hierdie studie dui daarop dat dit baie belangrik is dat gesamentlike vennootskappe tussen die sleutelrolspellers van WIL gevestig moet word om teorie en praktyk te integreer. ‘n Padkaart vir WIL is geformuleer wat as ‘n katalisator optree om die nodige veranderinge ten opsigte van WIL aan te spreek, sodat studente optimale voordeel kan trek uit hul opleiding as leesgeletterdheidsonderwysers.

**Sleutelwoorde:**
leesgeletterdheid, onderwysersopleiding, werks-geïntegreerdeleer, leeskomponente, integrasie van teorie en praktyk, vennootskappe in onderwysersopleiding

# ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DISSERTATION

| | |
|---|---|
| ATLAS.ti | Archiv fuer Technik, Lebenswelt und Alltagssprache |
| B Ed | Baccalaureus Educationis |
| CAQDAS | Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis software |
| CHE | Council on Higher Education |
| DBE | Department of Basic Education |
| DHET | Department of Higher Education and Training |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| ECD | Early Childhood Development |
| HEI | Higher Education Institution |
| HOD | Head of Department |
| IRA | International Reading Association |
| LoLT | Language of Learning and Teaching |
| MRTEQ | Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications Framework |
| NCATE | National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education |
| NCS | National Curriculum Statement |
| NIE | National Institute of Education |
| NRP | National Reading Panel |
| NWU | North West University |
| PAR | Participatory Action Research |
| PCK | Pedagogical content knowledge |
| PhD | Philosophiae Doctor |
| PIRLS | Progress in International Reading Literacy Study |
| SMT | School Management Teams |
| WIL | Work-Integrated Learning |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF FIGURES

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

## 1.1 Problem statement

In South Africa, the National Teacher Education Audit of 1996 concluded that the quality of teacher education was generally poor, inefficient and not cost-effective (Hofmeyer & Hall, 1996:41). Furthermore, in 2009 the Teacher Development Summit was held where ground-breaking work was done for the teacher education and development sector. From this summit the development of a new, strengthened, integrated national plan for teacher development in South Africa was devised. This plan is presented in the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-2025 (Department of Basic Education (DBE) & Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), 2011:i).

In this plan, the DBE and the DHET (2011:1) identified a number of challenges which teacher education and development are facing. These challenges include a lack of access to quality teacher education and development opportunities for prospective and practising teachers; a mismatch between the provision of and demand for teachers of particular types and the failure of the system to achieve dramatic improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in schools (DBE & DHET 2011:1). The DBE and the DHET (2011:1) also state that teacher education and development is fragmented and follows an uncoordinated approach.

Furthermore, fragmentation and uncoordinated approaches to teacher education is also evident in America. In America, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (2010:2) states that many critics such as policymakers, teachers, and school district leaders nationwide have raised their concerns that teacher education programmes are inadequately equipped to prepare educators.

Teacher preparation programmes use a variety of methods to prepare pre-service teachers to teach reading literacy in elementary classrooms. Only quite recently have researchers investigated the optimal methods for this type of teacher preparation (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). Such research tries to answer broad questions. What do pre-service teachers need to know in order to teach reading literacy effectively? What do they need to be able to do? What are the best methods for preparing pre-service teachers?

Since 1961, there has been a great deal of research about reading literacy, and about effective reading literacy instruction. However, there has been relatively little research on the

preparation of pre-service teachers to teach reading literacy. What research has occurred has focused largely on teachers' philosophical beliefs and instructional approaches, rather than on content knowledge (McCutchen, Abbott, Green, Beretvas, Cox, Potter, Quirogq & Gray 2002). Fewer research studies have examined the scientific basis of the content and methods taught in teacher preparation programmes. Also, few researchers have applied qualitative research techniques to these issues. As has been noted (Ball, 2000:244), the addition of a qualitative element is necessary because teacher preparation programmes must do three quite different things: (a) identify content knowledge that matters for teaching reading literacy, (b) discover how to best teach that content knowledge to pre-service teachers, and (c) determine what it takes for teachers to put that knowledge into practice.

A common critique of teacher education is that teachers lack depth and breadth of content knowledge required to teach literacy (Layton & Deeny, 1995; Nolen, McCutchen, & Berninger, 1990). Furthermore, Snow, Burns and Griffin (1998:289) quote Kagan as she said that university courses fail to provide novices with adequate procedural knowledge of classrooms, adequate knowledge of pupils or the extended practica needed to acquire that knowledge, or a realistic view of teaching in its full classroom. Snow et al. (1998:289) continue to say that several researchers have found that teacher preparation programmes for the teaching of literacy have not been adequate to bring about the research-based changes in the classroom practices that result in success. Furthermore, they state that even if sufficient course work with the needed content is available, the problem of transferring the knowledge to the future teacher's practice must be addressed.

Today's teachers must understand a great deal about how children develop and learn, what they know, and what they can do. Teachers must know and be able to apply a variety of teaching techniques to meet the individual needs of students. They must be able to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and plan instructional programmes that help students make progress (Snow et al., 1998:279). Snow et al. (1998) align teacher preparation programmes with the opportunities that should be provided to young children in order to prevent literacy difficulties. They continue to say that teachers must have a deep understanding of the what, the how and the why of language and literacy.

The DBE and the DHET (2011:15) has identified that teacher quality is an area that needs attention and reiterates that the Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications Framework (MRTEQ) defines standards at a generic level for all teacher education qualifications. However, they recognise that specific standards need to be

developed that relate to the areas of expertise in which teachers need to specialise (DBE & DHET, 2011:15).

Rose (2006:5) notes that training to equip those who are responsible for beginner readers with a good understanding of the core principles and skills has become a critical issue. He continues to say that there is room for improvement in all types of training of teachers as they need to have detailed knowledge and understanding of reading literacy content so that they can plan and implement high quality programmes. Furthermore, he notes that imaginative and skilful teaching which engages and motivates children does not happen by chance but rather through well trained adults, who are skilled in observing and assessing children's learning, good planning and preparation.

Moreover, according to the DBE and DHET (2011:15), the quality and the relevance of the teacher preparation programmes offered by Higher Education Institution's (HEI), vary widely. In the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011–2025, (DBE & DHET, 2011:3), it is stated that universities have the responsibility for ensuring that the programmes being offered are of high quality and lead to meaningful development for teachers.

The DBE and the DHET (2011:1) acknowledge that there is a primary need to improve the quality of teacher education and development in order to improve the quality of teachers and teaching and through The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011-2025, they (the DBE & DHET) envision addressing these challenges experienced in teacher education.

These challenges will be addressed as this plan draws on various outcomes. Moreover, output four envisages that "[A]n expanded and accessible formal teacher education system is established" (DBE & DHET, 2011:15). The rationale of this outcome is that an expanded and accessible formal teacher education system that both develops practising teachers and produces sufficient numbers of new, quality teachers with the specialised and differentiated competences that are required by the schooling system will be established (DBE & DHET, 2011:15). As part of the plan to address the challenges in teacher education and development the DBE together with the DHET aim to address this as they state that teacher education and development programmes will be enhanced by the development of teacher knowledge and practice standards, which will inform curriculum and programme design (DBE & DHET, 2011:15). They also anticipate the establishment of Teaching Schools and

Professional Practice Schools to ensure meaningful Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) (DBE & DHET, 2011:18).

Alter and Coggshall (2009:2) refer to the work of Levine who stated that a chasm exists between those who believe that teaching is a craft and those who believe that teaching is a profession. This division is based on the fact that crafts are learnt whilst on the job or through practice, whereas a profession requires extensive in-class preparation before an individual is given access to practice or is allowed to work individually, directly with clients. This divide has implications for teacher preparation (Alter & Coggshall, 2009:2). Moreover, Alter and Coggshall (2009:2) state that teaching should be conceived as an academically taught clinical practice profession similar to that of medicine so that this conceptual divide stated by Levine can be addressed, and allow for curriculum reform within teacher education.

According to the NCATE (2010:2), teacher education has too often been segmented with subject-matter preparation, theory, and pedagogy taught in isolated intervals which are often too far removed from clinical practice (school-based experiences). Furthermore, they (the NCATE) state that teaching, like medicine, is a profession of practice. Prospective teachers must be prepared to become expert practitioners who know how to use the knowledge of their profession to advance student learning and how to build their professional knowledge through practice, but in order to achieve this, practice must be placed at the centre of teaching preparation (NCATE, 2010:2).

Korthagen (2011:32) acknowledges that the gap between theory and practice has been a perennial issue. Korthagen quotes Lanier and Little (1986), who state that the relationship between theory and practice has remained the central problem of teacher education world-wide. However, the NCATE (2010:ii) suggests that teacher education must shift away from a norm which emphasises academic preparation (theory) and course work loosely linked to school-based experiences (practice) but rather move to programmes that are fully grounded in practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses.

Teaching reading is a job for an expert. Contrary to the popular belief that learning to read is natural and easy, learning to read is a complex linguistic achievement. For many children, it requires effort and incremental skill development. Moreover, teaching reading requires considerable knowledge and skill, acquired over several years through focused study and supervised practice (Moats, 1999). According to Moats (1999), comprehensive redesign of teacher preparation programmes is possible, but it must begin with a definition of the

knowledge and skills necessary for effective practice and demonstration of how these are best learned. New teachers require much more extensive, demanding, and content-driven training if discoveries from the reading sciences are to inform classroom practice (Moats, 1999; Walsh, Glaser & Wilcox, 2006).

Moats (2009a) notes that teachers feel unprepared to address the instructional needs of students related to language, reading and writing problems. Moats (2009a) is also of the opinion that teachers often have a minimal understanding of how students learn to read and write or why many students experience difficulty with the most fundamental task of schooling. Lyon and Weiser's (2009) research reveals that teachers lack basic understanding of many concepts that relate directly to teaching beginning and struggling readers. According to Moats (2009a), teachers are unaware of or misinformed about the elements of language that they are expected to teach. This can be alleviated if new teachers are given extensive, demanding and content-driven training (Moats, 1999:13).

Moats (2001:2) states that teaching reading and writing effectively requires considerable knowledge and skill. Moreover, she found that practitioners of all levels have not been prepared in sufficient depth to prevent reading problems, recognise early signs of risk or teach learners to read. Furthermore, Moats (1999:19) states that knowing what should be done in the classroom is necessary but not sufficient for developing practical teaching skills. Translating knowledge into practice (skills) requires experience with a range of learners.

According to Moats, Carreker, Davis, Meisel, Spear-Swerling and Wilson (2010:1), teaching reading requires specialised knowledge about language, how children learn and acquire literacy skills and a variety of instructional strategies. To ensure that teachers are trained to teach reading, changes are needed in pre-service teacher preparation and professional development. Policymakers wanting to improve reading instruction may want to consider:

- Maintaining the goal that all children will read at grade level by supporting research-based reading instruction; and
- Aligning teacher preparation and professional development with effective reading principles (Moats et al., 2010:1).

Moats (2009a:389) is of the opinion that progress to true professionalism in reading instruction rests heavily on deep knowledge of content and skills necessary to teach students who struggle to learn. Teaching reading requires considerable knowledge and skill,

acquired over several years through focused study and supervised practise (Moats, 1999:11).

Ball and Forzani (2009:497) claim that practice must be at the core of teachers' preparation and that this entails close and detailed attention to the work of teaching and the development of ways to train people to do that work effectively. Ball and Forzani (2009:497) state that fundamental renovations to the curriculum of professional education for teachers need to be done so that teacher preparation programmes can be fully grounded in practice. Furthermore, Ball and Forzani (2009:503) state that teacher education should offer significantly more—and more deliberate— opportunities for novices to practice the interactive work of instruction. Specifying the content of a practice-focused professional curriculum involves careful analysis of the core tasks of teaching.

Currently, universities are responsible for teacher education and mistrust regarding this was voiced at the Teacher Development summit held in 2009 (Gravett, 2012:2). According to Gravett (2012:2), many delegates at this summit were of the opinion that universities do not prepare teachers adequately for the schooling system. These opinions were evident again when Gravett, Henning and Eiselen (2011) completed a research study. This study alluded to the fact that universities are not producing competent beginning teachers and teacher education programmes are too theoretical so teachers are not prepared for the reality of the classroom (Gravett et al., 2011).

According to Gravett (2012:4), teacher education institutions appear to deal with the theory and practice division in two ways, one being by what Gravett refers to as the "translating-of-theory-to-practice" approach. This simply means that theory is supplied in the coursework component of teacher education programmes and students then apply, implement and test this knowledge through completing assignments and completing practical experiences at school which is the WIL component of the teacher preparation programme. Another way in which teacher education institutions deal with the theory and practice divide is by simply increasing the practicum (WIL) component of courses (Gravett, 2012:4).

According to The Council of Higher Education (CHE) (2011:4), the integration of theory and practice in student learning can occur through a range of WIL approaches. However, the NCATE (2010:ii) states that the WIL component of courses should be analysed and a programme or model regarding WIL can be put in place addressing the current need. The NCATE (2010 ii) states that varied and extensive opportunities should be in place for students to connect what they learn (theory) with the challenge of using it (practice).

In order improve this theory-practice divide, it is necessary to first understand and examine how WIL is incorporated into teacher preparation programmes. To accomplish this, this study systematically examined how universities in South Africa incorporated WIL into their foundation phase reading literacy teacher preparation programmes, and secondly, developed a roadmap for the establishment of partnerships among the key stakeholders for WIL. In addition, this roadmap illustrates how collaborative partnerships can be used as catalysts to bridge the theory-practice divide present in reading literacy teacher preparation programmes.

## 1.2 Literature review

According to the DHET (2011:7), the current mode of teacher training follows a purely skills-based approach, which relies almost exclusively on evidence of demonstrable outcomes as measures of success, without paying attention as to how knowledge must underpin these skills for them to impact effectively on learning. This model produces technicists who may be able to replicate performance in similar contexts, but who are severely challenged when the context changes (DHET, 2011:7). The DHET (2011:7) recognises that teaching is a complex activity that is premised upon the acquisition, integration and application of different types of knowledge practices or learning. Similarly, The NCATE (2010:1) states that, "we need teachers who are well versed in their curricula, know their communities, apply their knowledge of child growth and development, use assessments to monitor student progress and effectively engage students in learning. Teachers need collaboration, communication, and problem solving skills to keep pace with rapidly changing learning environments and new technologies."

Furthermore, the teaching of reading is an especially critical element of elementary education. In the 21st century, it is not enough to be able simply to read and write, even young children must master new and changing literacy's that come with advances in science, technology, and culture. The dramatically transformed array of media in schools, the workplace, and other walks of life demands unprecedented levels of reading proficiency (Smith, Milulecky, Kibby, Dreher, & Dole, 2000). If students are to read at a higher level, the teaching of reading must change accordingly. Consequently, each Faculty of Education should examine every facet of its programmes, specifically the Foundation Phase, and consider how to make them even more effective.

According to the International Reading Association (IRA) (2003a:1-2), "teachers should be well prepared to implement research-based programs and practices, and they must have the

knowledge and skills to use professional judgement when those programs and practices are not working for particular children." According to Moats (1999), a chasm exists between classroom instructional practices and the research knowledge-base on reading development. Part of the responsibility for this divide lies with teacher preparation programmes, many of which, for a variety of reasons, have failed to adequately prepare their teacher candidates to teach reading. Pandor (2008:45) notes that, "We recognise, however, that teachers still struggle to translate the curriculum into good classroom practice. Teachers need support to implement the curriculum." The South African Department of Education (DoE) (2009) appointed a panel of experts to investigate the nature of the challenges and problems experienced in the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). One factor which became apparent was that "[C]ertainty and specificity about what to teach and how to teach it will help to restore confidence and stability in the system." (DoE, 2009:61). From this it might be possible to deduce that teachers do not know ***what*** to teach or even ***how*** to teach it.

The key to ensuring that all children reach their potential in learning to read, rests with formal training and experiences that teachers receive in assessing individual differences and in delivery of direct and informed instruction. Lyon (2002:7) suggests that teacher preparation is the key to teaching children to read. The quality of the teacher is consistently found to be an important predictor of student achievement (Goldhaber, 2002; Rockoff, 2004). Moreover, Snow *et al*. (1998:279) note that pre-service teacher education is intended to develop teacher expertise for teaching reading and preventing reading difficulties, but it encounters many obstacles. Teacher preparation programmes often cannot meet the challenge in preparing teachers for highly complex and increasingly diverse schools and classrooms, the challenge of keeping abreast of current developments in research and practice, the complexity of the knowledge base, the difficulty of learning many of the skills required to enact the knowledge base as well as work with children who experience learning difficulties.

According to the IRA (2003b:1), there is a growing consensus in the United States that putting a quality teacher in every classroom is the key to addressing the challenges of literacy learning in schools. They found that effective teaching makes a difference in student learning. Teachers – not instructional methods or the materials – are crucial to promoting student learning. The IRA (2003b:1) mentions that researchers agree that effective teachers of reading are knowledgeable, strategic, adaptive, responsive and reflective.

Furthermore, Rowe (2005:116) notes that it is reasonable to expect that teacher training programmes should take responsibility for developing specialist knowledge, skills and

capabilities their students will need to become effective teachers of reading. According to Brady and Moats (1997), the knowledge children need to master in order to succeed at reading is well documented, and all kinds of instructional methods that are effective have also been verified. However, most teachers are not being given the content and depth of training needed to enable them to provide appropriate instruction (Brady & Moats, 1997).

According to Levine (in Lyon & Weiser, 2009:478), teacher preparation programmes "cling to an outdated, historically flawed vision of teacher education that is at odds with society". Levine's work revealed that if teachers are to be provided with content, assessment knowledge, instructional expertise, and classroom management capabilities that are to improve student reading proficiency, then colleges of education must also address their low admissions standards, their fragmented and inconsistent curricula, their educational faculty who are disconnected from the real world of the classroom, and their insufficient quality control of programme structures and courses (Lyon & Weiser, 2009:478).

Spear-Swerling and Brucker (2004) note that the importance of effective teacher preparation has been widely recognised by scientific scholars like Moats and professional organisations like the IRA. Moats and the International Reading Panel emphasise the extensive knowledge base and skills required to teach reading well to diverse groups of children (Spear-Swerling & Brucker, 2004). Spear-Swerling and Brucker (2004) have drawn the conclusion that well prepared teachers are central to implementing the recommendations of scholarly panels such as the IRA. Moreover, teachers' knowledge base and skills for developing children's word level reading abilities are important and should be addressed in teacher preparation programmes (Spear-Swerling & Brucker, 2004). Thus, prospective teachers need opportunities to apply their knowledge in working with children (Spear-Swerling & Brucker, 2004).

According to Ball and Forzani (2009:497), agreement is widespread that teachers are key to student learning, and efforts to improve teacher quality have proliferated. As part of the process to improve the teacher quality, the DHET have published the MRTEQ. This publication provides the basis for the construction of core curricula for initial teacher education (DHET, 2011: 5).

Moreover, the approach adopted in the MRTEQ contrasts with previous approaches to teacher training as it pays close attention to the various types of knowledge that underpin teachers' practise (DHET, 2011:7). In addition, the DHET (2011:8) state that competent learning is always a mixture of the theoretical and the practical as competent learning in

effect represents the acquisition, integration and application of different types of knowledge. Thus, the DHET (2011:8-9) notes that disciplinary learning which refers to disciplinary or subject matter, pedagogical learning, practical learning, fundamental learning and situational learning are associated with the acquisition, integration and application of knowledge for teaching.

Moreover, the DHET (2011:8) states that pedagogical learning incorporates general pedagogical knowledge, which includes knowledge of learners, learning, curriculum and general instructional and assessment strategies; and specialised pedagogical content knowledge, which includes knowing how to represent the concepts, methods and rules of a discipline in order to create appropriate learning opportunities for diverse learners. Furthermore, practical learning involves learning in and from practice (DHET, 2011:8). According to the DHET (2011:8), learning from practice includes the study of practice, using discursive resources to analyse different practices across a variety of contexts, drawing from case studies, video records, lesson observations, etc., in order to theorise practice and form a basis for learning in practice. The DHET (2011:8) reiterates that learning in practice involves teaching in authentic and simulated classroom environments.

According to the CHE (2011:4), the integration of theory and practice in student learning can occur through a range of WIL approaches. The CHE states that WIL is used as an umbrella term to describe curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices, across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns. The DHET (2011:8) states that WIL should take place in the workplace and can include aspects of learning from practice (e.g., observing and reflecting on lessons taught by others), as well as learning in practice (e.g., preparing, teaching and reflecting on lessons presented by the student). Practical learning is an important condition for the development of tacit knowledge, which is an essential component of learning to teach (DHET, 2011:8). However, the CHE (2011:4) states that WIL includes, but is not limited to, learning from experience. Furthermore, when WIL includes workplace learning, the intention is to encourage students to reflect on their experiences and develop and refine their own conceptual understanding (CHE, 2011:4).

Alter and Coggshall (2009:2) state that teaching should be conceived as an academically taught *clinical practice profession*. To enter teaching as a clinical profession, novice teachers just like novice doctors should gain the necessary academic grounding in the discipline and participate in meaningful practice-based training in the classroom (Alter & Coggshall, 2009:6). According to the CHE (2011:9), teaching and learning in professional

education should be based both on the academic disciplines that form the knowledge base of the profession, and on the world of professional practice, for which candidates should be prepared. University lecturers whose subjects are application-oriented subjects such as Commerce, Engineering, Education, Law, Medicine, Social Work, or who teach subjects such as Physics or Mathematics for Commerce, Engineering, Medicine, etc. should make their selection of what to teach based on both scientific disciplinary knowledge, as well as knowledge for professional practice.

The DHET (2011:18) state that programmes leading to Initial Teacher Education qualifications must take particular cognisance of the need for students to engage in practical learning. Practical learning must be appropriately structured and fully integrated into overall learning programmes, while including structured supervision, mentoring and assessment. The DHET (2011:18) emphasises that time spent in the actual workplace is very important and should provide an authentic context within which student teachers can experience and demonstrate the integration of the competences they have developed during the learning programme as a whole. The DHET (2011:18) mention that it is also important for students to be exposed to concrete experience of the varied and contrasting contexts of schooling in South Africa.

The CHE (2011:6) states that programmes that include WIL offer opportunities for students to prepare for, and learn from, the workplace, to transfer discipline-based theory and a wide variety of skills learned in their formal education to an authentic context as a colleague and employee, with all the responsibilities and expectations such a role entails. According to Ball and Forzani (2009:503), making practice the core of the curriculum of teacher education requires a shift from a focus on what teachers know and believe to a greater focus on what teachers do. This does not mean that knowledge and beliefs do not matter but, rather, that the knowledge that counts for practice is that entailed by the work.

The NCATE (2010:2) states that teachers benefit from preparation programmes that provide well supervised field experiences (similar to medical school internships) that are congruent with candidates' eventual teaching, and that feature a capstone project – often a portfolio that reflects the candidate's development of practice and evidence of student learning. Furthermore, they (the NCATE) state that expert practitioners need to study content and pedagogy, concepts of learning and child development to know the waters they will navigate, but they also must be able to demonstrate that they can use what they know in ways that help real learners learn.

Skilful teaching requires appropriately using and integrating specific moves and activities in particular cases and contexts, based on knowledge and understanding of one's learners and on the application of professional judgment. This integration also depends on opportunities to practice and to measure one's performance against exemplars (Ball & Forzani, 2009:497). According to Ball and Forzani (2009:497), performing these activities effectively is intricate work. Professional training should be designed to help teachers learn to enact these tasks skilfully. According to Ball and Forzani (2009:497-478), such training would involve seeing examples of each task, learning to dissect and analyse the work, watching demonstrations, and then practicing under close supervision and with detailed coaching aimed at fostering improvement.

Ball and Forzani (2009:503) suggest that a practice-focused curriculum should include foundational knowledge, but should be designed and developed differently from its usual treatment in teachers' preparation. Ball and Forzani (2009:503) state that building a practice-focused curriculum in teacher education requires specifying the content—what teachers need to learn to do—and unpacking it for learning. It requires developing instructional approaches to help teachers learn to do these things for particular purposes in context. Particularly challenging is how to design ways to teach practice that do not reduce it to propositional knowledge and beliefs.

The NCATE (2010:3) states that the transformation of teacher preparation programmes cannot be accomplished by teacher preparation programmes working alone. Preparation programmes, school districts, teachers and their representatives, state (i.e. The Government in South Africa) and policymakers need to accept that they have a common goal of preparing effective teachers for improved learner achievement as it cannot be achieved without all the stakeholders involved. New strategic partnerships should be formed to share in the responsibility of preparing teachers in radically different ways (NCATE, 2010:3). The NCATE (2010:3) reiterates that all teacher preparation programmes and districts have to start thinking about teacher preparation as a shared responsibility. Only when preparation programmes become deeply engaged with schools will their clinical preparation become truly robust and will they be able to support the development of candidates' urgently needed skills and learn what schools really need (NCATE, 2010:3). Conversely, only through much closer cooperation with preparation programmes will districts be able to hire new teachers who are better prepared to be effective in their schools. Through partnerships, preparation programmes will be able to integrate course work, theory and pedagogy with practitioner knowledge (NCATE, 2010:3).

The NCATE's study drew on the establishment of professional development and professional practice schools to ensure meaningful WIL; however, the focus of the study was on how WIL should form an integral part of the curriculum and programme design of reading literacy teacher education.

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What is the theoretical knowledge base for WIL in reading literacy teacher education?
2. What constitutes an aligned WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education?
3. How is WIL incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa?
4. How, according to evidence-based research, should WIL be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes?

## 1.3 The purpose of this study

The purpose of this study was to:

- determine the theoretical knowledge base for WIL in reading literacy teacher education;
- determine what constitutes an aligned WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education;
- determine how WIL should be incorporated into foundation phase teacher preparation programmes;
- systematically examine how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into their reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes and;
- develop a roadmap for WIL which will be a catalyst in addressing the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher education.

## 1.4 Central theoretical statement

WIL, as currently organised within foundation phase teacher preparation programmes, is not sufficient to address the theory-practice divide within the reading literacy component of the programme as recommended by evidence-based research.

## 1.5 Research methodology

A qualitative study was conducted where action research was used to investigate WIL within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes.

### *1.5.1 Research approach*

Creswell (2009:176) states that qualitative research is a form of interpretive inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand. Creswell (2009: 4) states that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. He states that the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants' setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the data (Creswell, 2009:4). Furthermore, Fouché and Schurink (2011:317-318) state the main concern of a qualitative researcher is to understand, to observe and explore the natural reality from an insider's perspective.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:147) state that qualitative approaches have two things in common. Firstly, it focuses on phenomena that occur in natural settings and secondly, it involves studying phenomena in all their complexity. Furthermore, Flick (2009:12-13) emphasises that qualitative research is employed as a research approach to understand and describe a social phenomenon and to attempt to explain it. In this study, WIL, which forms an integral part of teacher preparation programmes across the country, was investigated as little is known about what constitutes an aligned WIL experience or how it should be organised so that students can optimally benefit from it in their teacher preparation programme. Thus experiences of those involved in the curriculation and implementation of WIL was analysed so that light could be brought on the matter.

Qualitative researchers recognise that the issue they are studying has many dimensions and layers, and so they try to portray the issue in its multifaceted form (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:147). This is vital as numerous forms of data were collected and examined from various angles to construct a meaningful picture.

### *1.5.2 Research paradigm*

This study is situated within an interpretive paradigm. Interpretivists believe that reality is not objectively determined, but is socially constructed (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:60) the ultimate aim of interpretivist research is to offer a perspective of a situation and to analyse the situation being studied to provide insight into the way in which

a particular group of people make sense of the phenomena encountered. In essence, this research paradigm is concerned with the uniqueness of a particular situation, contributing to the underlying pursuit of contextual depth (Myers, 1997).

### *1.5.3 Research design*

Somekh (2008:4) states that action research is a flexible research methodology uniquely suited to researching and supporting change. Moreover, it can be regarded as a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research (Ferrance, 2000:1). Furthermore, action research specifically refers to a disciplined inquiry done by a researcher with the intent that the research will inform and change his or her practices in the future. The main role of action research is to facilitate practitioners to study aspects of practice – whether it is in the context of introducing an innovative idea or in assessing and reflecting on the effectiveness of existing practice, with the view of improving practice (Koshy, 2005:xii).

Denscombe (2007:121) states that action research is usually applied to investigate practical issues. Practical issues would usually involve the kind of issues and problems, concerns and needs that arise as a routine part of activity 'in the real world'. Initially, action research was also seen as research specifically geared to changing matters, and this too has remained a core feature of the notion of action research. The rationale for this is that research should not only be used to gain a better understanding of the problems which arise in everyday practice, but actually set out to change things – to do so as part and parcel of the research process rather than tag it on as an afterthought which follows the conclusion of the research (Denscombe, 2007:121). In this particular study, action research was used to gain a better understanding of WIL in reading literacy teacher education, furthermore upon the completion of the investigation a roadmap for WIL was devised which acted as a catalyst to address the changes needed so that students can optimally benefit from WIL in reading literacy teacher education.

Another defining characteristic of action research is its commitment to a process of research in which the application of findings and an evaluation of their impact on practice become part of a cycle of research. This process, further, has become associated with a trend towards involving those affected by the research in the design and implementation of the research – to encourage them to participate as collaborators in the research rather than being subjects of it (Denscombe, 2007:121-122).

Action research integrates social research with exploratory action to promote development. In its classic form, action research involves fluid and overlapping cycles of investigation, action planning, piloting of new practices, and evaluation of outcomes, incorporating at all stages the collection and analysis of data and the generation of knowledge. Furthermore, the outcomes of action research are both practical and theoretical, the knowledge it generates has a direct and on-going impact on changing practice for participants (Somekh (2008:4-5). It is, therefore, important to note that implicit in the term action research is the idea that participators of action research will begin a cycle of posing questions, gathering data, reflection, and deciding on a course of action.

### *1.5.4 Participants*

According to Creswell, purposive sampling shows different perspectives on the problem (Creswell, 2007:74), therefore it is imperative that persons partaking in the study are knowledgeable. Palys (2008:697) sees purposive sampling as a series of strategic choices relating to whom, where, and how a researcher conducts his/her research. This implies that the way that researchers sample must be tied to their objective of the study. However, Palys (2008:697) notes that there is no one best sampling strategy because sampling will depend on the context in which the researcher is working and the nature of the research objectives. The participants, used for the study were lecturers who work within the teacher preparation programmes of universities in South Africa. In addition, these lecturers are tasked to train prospective foundation phase teachers. Furthermore, these universities were involved in the European Union funded Foundation Phase project on Teacher Preparation Programmes. Approval for the project was given by the DHET. Furthermore, School Management Teams (SMT) (which includes Head of Departments (HOD) of the Foundation Phase) within the Blue District of the North West Province as well as the Green District of the Western Cape were randomly selected to participate in this study as students are typically placed within these schools for the WIL component of their course (cf. Chapter 4).

### *1.5.5 Data collection methods*

The data collection methods chosen for this research provide rich data specifically focused on the research questions. Data collection methods included individual semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and an analysis of documents (cf. Chapter 4).

#### *1.5.5.1 Interviews*

One of the data collection methods utilised in this study was that of semi-structured interviews with colleagues who are responsible for the WIL component within teacher

preparation programmes. In this study interviews were used to generate perspectives and experiences on WIL. According to Seidman (1993:3), the purpose of interviewing is not to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses, and not to evaluate, but at the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of the experience. Merriam (2009:88) informs us that interviews are necessary when behaviour cannot be observed.

Interviews elicit data that is not evident from documents. Interviews provide access to multiple perspectives. An interview protocol was designed for the participants. The interview questions were designed to allow for two levels of inquiry at the same time, "satisfying the needs of [the researcher's] line of inquiry while simultaneously putting forth 'friendly' and 'non-threatening' questions in [the researcher's] open-ended interviews" (Yin, 2003:90). All interviews were recorded in MP3[1] format (with the permission of the participants) to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data. These recordings were transcribed and stored on the researcher's computer. However, these recordings will be saved for six years after the completion of the study after which they will be destroyed to ensure confidentiality of the university and participants. The interview questions which were derived based on the research questions, addressed the following issues:

- the theoretical base for WIL within the teacher preparation programme;
- how WIL is constituted within the teacher preparation programme;
- how WIL is constituted within the reading literacy component of the teacher preparation programme;
- course objectives and design;
- how application of knowledge is addressed;
- structure of teacher preparation programmes;
- field experiences;
- structure of WIL within teacher preparation programme;
- evaluation of pre-service teachers within WIL component of teacher preparation programme; and
- how WIL is incorporated into teacher preparation programmes.

#### *1.5.5.2 Focus group interviews*

Focus group interviews were also conducted with colleagues from the universities as well as the SMT's of the randomly selected schools to gain knowledge and an understanding into their lived experiences of WIL. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007: 90), the focus group

[1] MP3 is the name of the file extension for audio recordings.

interview strategy is based on the assumption that group interaction will be productive in widening the range of responses, and activating forgotten details of experiences. Furthermore, focus group interviews also provide opportunities for the participants to build on each other's ideas and comments giving rise to in-depth views not attainable from individual interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 90). Moreover, Krueger and Casey (2009) state that a focus group interview is an interview on a topic with a group of people who have knowledge of the topic. Merriam (2009) suggests that a constructivist perspective underlies this data collection procedure, because the data is obtained from the interaction of a socially constructed group. The object is to get high quality data in a social context where people can consider their views in the context of the views of others (Patton, 2002: 386).

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007: 91), focus group interviews should start with a broad and less structured set of questions to ease the participants into the situation. The participants were thus given the opportunity to give general perspectives about WIL as well as ease into a debate about WIL (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 91).

#### *1.5.5.3 Documents*

The analysis of documents was another research instrument used for this study. "Documents corroborate your interviews and thus make your findings more trustworthy. Beyond corroboration, they may raise questions about your hunches and thereby shape new directions for observations and interviews" (Glesne, 1999:58).

Various documents (i.e., syllabi, textbook(s), course outlines, course handouts, evaluation tools) were analysed. This document analysis did not form part of the literature review as there is a distinct difference between the *literature review* and *data collection*. Niewenhuis (in Maree 2007) makes us aware that when one uses documents as a data collection method you will focus on written communications that shed light on a particular phenomenon you are investigating. He, therefore, distinguishes between two sources of data, namely primary and secondary data. Primary source data is unpublished data and secondary source data is material based on previously published work. He also furnishes researchers with a list of criteria on how to select documents, this includes: the kinds of documents the researcher is dealing with, and the nature of the documents (dates, purpose of the document, main points of the document) (Niewenhuis, 2007: 82-83) (cf. Chapter 4).

### *1.5.6 Methods of data analysis*

Maxwell (1996:77) states that the "qualitative researcher begins data analysis immediately after finishing the first interview or observation and continues to analyse the data as long as he or she is working on the research". Data analysis is multifaceted. Analysis includes organizing data, generating categories and themes, coding data, and interpretation.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994:126) inform us that a defining characteristic of qualitative research is an inductive approach to data analysis. An inductive approach refers to the fact that data is collected that refers to the research question, generating a hypothesis is not a priority and the variables for the data collection is not predetermined (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:126-127).

Content analysis was used to arrive at the categories emanating from the data in light of the research questions. According to Grbich (2007:112), content analysis is a systematic coding and categorising approach which can be used to explore large amounts of textual information in order to ascertain the trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships and the structures and discourses of communication. Julien (2008:120) defines content analysis as the intellectual process of categorizing qualitative textual data into clusters of similar entities, or conceptual categories, to identify consistent patterns and relationships between variables or themes.

Qualitative data can be considered to be a collection of thick, rich, descriptive data, thus it requires a well-organised data-collection plan to support the multifaceted data analysis, thus the researcher utilised the powerful software tool, ATLAS-ti as a database. This software tool was used as extracting meaning in a collection of raw data can be daunting. Qualitative research software like ATLAS-ti helps the researcher to manage, shape and make sense of information as it provides a sophisticated workspace to work through material – discovering patterns, identifying themes, gleaning insight and ultimately, delivering informed, robust findings (QSR International, 2008: 2). So, ATLAS-ti was used to organise and code the data, generate categories and themes so that it could be interpreted.

### *1.5.7 Trustworthiness*

In qualitative research, the quality of the research needs to be evaluated because the “soundness or goodness” of the research is to be validated. This is achieved by determining how much trust can be given to the research process and findings; this determining factor is known as trustworthiness. (Miller, 2008:909).

The aim of trustworthiness in qualitative research is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). This is quite different from the conventional experimental precedent of attempting to show validity, soundness, and significance. In any qualitative research project, four issues of trustworthiness demand attention: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a "credible" conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:296). Transferability is the degree to which the findings of this inquiry can apply or transfer beyond the bounds of the project (Jensen, 2008:886). Dependability is an assessment of the quality of the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis, and theory generation. Confirmability is a measure of how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, trustworthiness was enhanced by using strategies such as member checking, peer review, keeping of paper trails, and an independent audit of my research methods by a competent peer.

## 1.6 The role of the researcher

According to Leckie (2008:776), when undertaking qualitative research, the researcher has a multiplicity of roles and responsibilities, often enacted simultaneously. Many of these roles are so intuitive and commonly understood that they are rarely discussed. Moreover, in this study the researcher collected data by conducting interviews, focus group interviews and completing a document analysis. Furthermore, the researcher developed a road map for Work-Integrated Learning (cf. Chapter 5).

## 1.7 Ethical issues

Research involves several ethical issues. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000:170) noted, "Ethical matters shift and change as we move through an inquiry. They are never far from the heart of our inquiries no matter where we are in the inquiry process". Punch (1994:89) stated that "most concern revolves around issues of harm, consent, deception, privacy, and confidentiality of data". The research design requires no deceptive practices or methods as its intent is clear. I assume ultimate responsibility to address ethical issues.

Prior to volunteering, potential participants received sufficient information to make decisions about participating. They signed informed consent forms which details their involvement and the study's purpose. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time, and of the terms of confidentiality for this study.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the North-West University's Ethical Committee before the commencement of the study.

## 1.8 Chapter division

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter one describes the context, purpose, problem statement of the study and it gives a review of the literature relating to WIL and reading literacy within teacher preparation programmes. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework for the preparation of reading literacy teacher preparation programmes as well as gives an in-depth discussion of teacher preparation programmes. This chapter also exemplifies the knowledge base required by teachers to teach reading. Chapter three deliberates how WIL can be used as a vehicle to integrate theory and practice in teacher preparation programmes. Chapter four illustrates how the research methodology and design was applied within the study. This includes an outline of the research paradigm, the research approach and design, participants used, data collection methods and procedures, data analysis procedures as well as the trustworthiness of the procedures employed. Chapter five reflects the results of the study which encompasses the data and the discussions thereof. Moreover, an action plan, namely, a road map for the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL is illustrated. This roadmap illustrates how collaborative partnerships can be used as a catalyst to address the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher education. The conclusion, a summary of the research conducted and its findings as well as implications and recommendations are presented in chapter six.

# CHAPTER 2: KNOWLEDGE BASE WITHIN READING LITERACY FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES

*"[A] consensus is building that the quality of our nation's schools depends on the quality of our nations teachers" (Feiman-Nemser, 2001:1013).*

## 2.1 Introduction

According to Little, Goe and Bell (2009:1) and Feiman-Nemser (2001:1013), a consensus is building that the quality of schools depends on the quality of teachers. Policy makers and educators are coming to see that what students learn is directly related to what and how teachers teach; and what and how teachers teach depends on the knowledge, skills and commitments they bring to their teaching and the opportunities they have to continue learning in and from their practice. Essentially highly qualified and effective teachers are necessary to improve student performance.

Similarly, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future states that:

> what teachers know and can do makes the crucial difference in what children learn. And the way school systems organise their work makes a big difference in what teachers can accomplish. New courses, tests, and curriculum reforms can be important starting points, but they are meaningless if teachers cannot use them productively. Policies can improve schools only if the people in them are armed with the knowledge, skills, and support they need. Student learning will improve only when we focus our efforts on improving teaching (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996:5).

A common critique of teacher education is that teachers lack depth and breadth of content knowledge required to teach literacy (Layton & Deeny, 1995; Nolen et al., 1990). This is because teacher preparation programmes have been unsuccessful in equipping students with adequate procedural knowledge of classrooms and pupils which they need to be able to function as effective teachers. This however, cannot only be remediated by adding sufficient course work with the needed content, the transfer of this content to the future teacher's practice must be addressed (Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998:289).

Furthermore, in South Africa, teacher education is facing similar challenges that are considerable in magnitude. These challenges include a lack of access to quality teacher education and development opportunities for prospective and practising teachers; a mismatch between the provision of and demand for teachers of particular types and the

failure of the system to achieve dramatic improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in schools (DBE & DHET, 2011:1). The DBE and the DHET (2011:1) also state that teacher education and development is fragmented and follows an uncoordinated approach.

The purpose of this chapter is firstly, to discuss the challenges and theory-practice divide issue confronting teacher preparation programmes. Secondly, a theoretical framework for reading literacy teacher preparation programmes is also highlighted; which is then used as a basis to discuss the knowledge base for reading literacy teacher preparation programmes.

## 2.2 Teacher preparation programmes

Young, Grant, Montbriand and Therriault (2001:1) reiterate that the expectations for teachers are high in today's educational reform and policy agendas. Teachers need to be experts in one or more specific subjects. They must also be prepared to effectively handle the challenges of a growing diverse population of students with diverse needs and that are multicultural and multilinguistic. Furthermore, teachers are also expected to manage the far-reaching changes that take place in and out of schools. Evidently, teachers collect students' work and scrutinise it, they have to evaluate or assess it, determine the students' progress, where they are and whether to go further. When teachers hold class discussions, they make decisions about which (and whose) ideas to pick up and pursue and which (and whose) to reject. The teacher formulates probes, pushes students, offers hints, and provides explanations. When students get stuck, teachers should be able to help them remobilise themselves (Ball, 2000:243). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:6) describes this as:

> expert teachers use knowledge about children and their learning to fashion lessons that connect ideas to students' experiences. They create a wide variety of learning opportunities that make subject matter come alive for young people who learn in very different ways. They know how to support students' continuing development and motivation to achieve while creating incremental steps that help students progress toward more complicated ideas and performances. They know how to diagnose sources of problems in students' learning and how to identify strengths on which to build.

Put simply, this kind of teaching requires high levels of knowledge and skill. So, effective teachers must know their subject matter so thoroughly that they can present it in a challenging, clear, and compelling way. They must also know how their students learn and how to make ideas accessible so that they can construct successful "teachable moments" (cf. section 2.3). This presents a major responsibility for teacher preparation programmes.

Conversely, the expectations for teachers are extraordinary nonetheless; none of these tasks of teaching is possible to do generically. No matter how committed one is to caring for students, to taking students' ideas seriously, to helping students develop robust understandings, none of these tasks of teaching is possible without making use of context and discipline insight (Ball, 2000:243).

Snow, Burns and Griffin (1998:279) note that pre-service teacher education is intended to develop teacher expertise for teaching reading and preventing reading difficulties, but it encounters many obstacles. Teacher preparation programmes often cannot meet the challenge in preparing teachers for highly complex and increasingly diverse schools and classrooms. These challenges include; keeping abreast of current developments in research and practice, the complexity of the knowledge base, the difficulty of learning many of the skills required to enact the knowledge base as well as working with children who experience learning difficulties.

In order to develop teacher preparation programmes which will produce expert teachers who are able to attend to these afore mentioned tasks, it is imperative to understand what challenges teacher preparation programmes face which prevent them from achieving their goal to produce effective teachers. Section 2.2.1 highlights these challenges.

### *2.2.1 Challenges within teacher preparation programmes*

Educational research has highlighted the many problems which beset the South African school system. These problems include in many instances, poor management and leadership, inefficient distribution of resources, undisciplined teachers and ineffective teaching and learning. All these problems in and amongst others, often result in poor performance of schools, ineffective teaching and learners who fall progressively behind regarding the expectations of the curriculum (JET Education Services, 2014:4).

JET Education Services (2014:4) state that the cause of poor performance lies not with teachers but with the teacher education system that produced them. The landscape of teacher training has a history in South Africa. There were a number of excellent teacher education and training colleges during the apartheid years, however, during this time this sector fared poorly and numbers declined after 1994 which led to the radical reorganisation of teacher education and training in 2000. This entailed closing most colleges, merging the remainder with HEIs, and making teacher education the responsibility of HEIs (JET Education Services, 2014:4).

So teacher education has been under the jurisdiction of universities and wariness about this has been voiced. This wariness is embedded in the presumption that universities do not prepare teachers adequately for the schooling system (Gravett, 2012:2). However, this presumption was proved to be true as studies have indicated that universities are not producing competent beginning teachers as teacher preparation programmes are too theoretical so teachers are not prepared for the reality of the classroom (Gravett et al., 2011).

This under-preparation of teachers was highlighted by JET Education Services in an examination of aspects of initial education curricula. They (JET Education Services, 2014:4-5) found that the teacher preparation programmes at the five case study universities participating in their study aspire to produce knowing, caring and committed reflective practitioners. Furthermore, strong subject content knowledge is central to this conception of teacher identity, accompanied by a nurturing attitude and ethical behaviour (JET Education services, 2014:7).

Teacher preparation programmes are normally designed to incorporate three different yet interrelated domains, namely content (subject matter); pedagogy (theories of teaching and learning) and professional experience/practice (the practicum). However, the content of modules and programmes varies widely among institutions. In some institutions, the focus appears to be on quantity (more teachers) rather than quality (better teachers). Additionally, most programmes seem to lack a strong underlying logic and coherence. Curricula change happens in response to changing government policies as opposed to change embedded in research-informed opinions or professional judgements. In some cases, a degree of bureaucratic compliance is coupled with an overemphasis on practice (how) at the expense of theory (why) and this is exacerbated by a lack of staff collaboration and module integration. Teaching practice (practicum) is the area with the greatest variation, in terms of both quantity and quality. The total time students spend in schools varies between 10 and 35 weeks; in some instances, teaching practice takes place mostly in suburban schools even though diverse experiences are encouraged it is not a pre-requisite. Most supervisors of teaching practice are not subject specialists (JET Education Services, 2014:7-8).

According to the DHET (2011:7), the current mode of teacher preparation follows a purely skills-based approach, which relies almost exclusively on evidence of demonstrable outcomes as measures of success, without paying attention as to how knowledge must underpin these skills for them to impact effectively on learning. This model produces technicists who may be able to replicate performance in similar contexts, but who are

severely challenged when the context changes (DHET, 2011:7). This reiterates the wariness in having universities responsible for teacher education. According to Cooper, Orrell and Bowden (2010:20), the historic role of universities has been to conduct research that will generate ideas, ideologies and theories, or discover facts about nature, society and the universe, which are transmitted to its students through education.

Besides fragmentation, it appears as if issues involving theory and practice also seem to surface as a challenge within teacher preparation programmes. Korthagen (2011:32) acknowledges that the gap between theory and practice has been a perennial issue. Knowles (1998:34) states that "the existence of a theory-practice divide separates the 'real' world of classroom practice from the 'ivory tower' of the university which is potentially a destructive notion". This opposing conceptualisation of theory and practice puts the generation of theory and the study thereof within the context of universities and recognises the field as the site of practice and practical action which is neither informed nor guided by practice (Knowles, 1998:34). Despite this, Ball (2000:244) purports that finding ways to integrate knowledge and practice is essential to help teachers develop the resources they need for their work. However, the idea of simply transmitting important pedagogical knowledge to teachers, hoping that they will apply this knowledge in their practices, does not really work (Korthagen, 2011:32).

Young et al. (2001:1) state that the balance between what is required of teachers and what is offered to them has a significant impact on the quality of their teaching and the capacity to implement effective instruction. Herein lies a fundamental difficulty in learning to teach; practical content knowledge is central to teacher education but it is not provided effectively within teacher preparation programmes. Although some teachers have important understandings of the content, they often do not know it in ways that help them hear students, select good tasks, or help all their students learn. Not being able to do this undermines the efforts to prepare high-quality teachers who can reach all students, teach in multicultural settings, and work in environments that make teaching and learning difficult. Despite frequently heard exhortations to teach all students, many teachers are unable to hear students flexibly, represent ideas in multiple ways, connect content to contexts effectively, and think about things in ways other than their own (Ball, 2000:243). Conversely, Ball (2000:243) states that "knowing subject matter and being able to use it is at the heart of teaching all students". But this is the fundamental tension, teachers do not know their subject matter and are not able to use it in practice (Ball, 2000:243).

Similarly, this fundamental tension has been articulated by John Dewey (1906-1964), as early as the 20th century as he called for a notion that a proper relationship should be established between theory and practice within teacher preparation (Ball, 2000:241; Mirel, 2011:8).

### *2.2.2 Theory vs. practice emphasis in teacher preparation programmes*

According to Ball (2000:242), throughout the 20th century, teacher education has consistently been structured across a persistent divide between subject matter and pedagogy. However, this divide has many faces, sometimes it appears in institutional structures as the chasm between the arts and sciences and schools of education, or as the divide between universities and schools of education. Sometimes the divide appears in the prevailing curriculum of teacher education, separated into domains of knowledge: educational psychology, sociology of education, foundations, methods of teaching, and the academic disciplines corresponding to school subjects. These knowledge chunks are complemented by experience: supervised practice, student teaching, and practice itself. In all of these, the gap between theory and practice fragments teacher education by fragmenting teaching (Ball, 2000:242).

The gap between theory and practice can be described as the difficulty to use or apply theoretical notions in classroom practice (Wubbels, Korthagen & Brekelmans 1997:76). This is because, the context of practice differs from the context in which the theory was developed and theory in essence is abstract and practice is concrete. Theory can be described as the formal knowledge, knowledge about ideas, declarative knowledge or what the Greeks referred to as episteme and practice is the practical knowledge, knowledge of how to do the work of teaching, or better described as the procedural knowledge (Gravett, 2012:4-5). However, due to the context of theory and practice, educational theory as taught within teacher preparation programmes, seldom gets a place in the practical teaching process. Furthermore, teacher educators help student teachers to translate educational theory towards their teaching, and this can occur through completing assignments and using certain principles or to practice skills. However, this approach can be seen as deductive and widens the gap between theory and practice rather than narrows it (Wubbels et al., 1997:76-77).

According to Gravett (2012:4), teacher education institutions appear to deal with the theory and practice division in two ways, one being by what Gravett refers to as the “translating-of-theory-to-practice” approach. This simply means that theory is supplied in the coursework component of teacher education programmes and students then apply, implement and test

this knowledge through completing assignments and completing practical experiences at school which is the practicum component of the teacher preparation programme. Another way in which teacher education institutions deal with the theory and practice divide is by simply increasing the practicum component of courses (Gravett, 2012:4).

According to Korthagen (2011:33), there are many reasons to explain the gap between theory and practice. According to Korthagen (2011:33), prospective teachers' prior knowledge about teaching plays a powerful role in their learning during their preparation to become a teacher as their preconceptions to teaching show a remarkable resistance to change. Their prior experience as school pupils within the educational system is the reason for this.

Feiman-Nemser (2001:1016) states that the images and beliefs prospective teachers bring to their teacher preparation programme serve as filters and may function as barriers to change by limiting the ideas that teacher education students are able and willing to entertain. These images and beliefs may mislead prospective teachers into thinking that they know more about teaching than they actually do and make it harder for them to form new ideas and habits of thought and action (Feiman-Nemser, 2001:1016).

Another reason to explain the gap between theory and practice is what Korthagen refers to as the "feed-forward" problem. This refers to the resistance from prospective teachers to internalise learning and experiences as they are exposed to it as well as their inability to relate what they have been exposed to, to theory learnt (Korthagen, 2011:33). It is for this reason that Feiman-Nemser (2001:1017) states that prospective teachers need to get rid of their "filters" so that they can critically examine opportunities of learning so that they too can develop beliefs about teaching. A third reason explaining the gap between theory and practice is related to the nature of teaching. Classroom teaching is influenced by the interaction of many elements such as the curriculum, the context, and how students respond to instruction and this interaction demands a specific type of teacher knowledge (Korthagen, 2011:33-34). The what, when and how to teach in relation to a particular class is the specific type of knowledge needed by teachers and is what Shulman refers to as pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Besides all these reasons offered to explain the gap between theory and practice, it needs to be considered that teaching is also a profession in which feelings and emotions play an essential role. Korthagen (2011:34) states that this affective dimension is also neglected in teacher preparation programmes and this serves as another reason for the gap between theory and practice.

Korthagen (2011:34) reiterates that the reasons for the gap between theory and practice are well-known but teacher preparation programmes still reflect the traditional 'application-of-theory model' stance to teacher preparation. Gravett (2012:4) argues that the way in which teacher education is conceptualised and the way in which programmes are planned and implemented may actually be creating this gap as a discourse exists of 'studying theory from books and in lectures' and then 'applying' it practically in what is termed the 'real world.' Moreover, Gravett (2012:4) purports that teacher education institutions appear to deal with the relationship between theory and practice mainly in two ways. Some follow a "translation-of-theory-to-practice" approach, where the coursework component of programmes supplies the theory that the students then apply, implement and "test," for example, through assignments, observations and experiences in schools as sites of practicum. However, Korthagen (2011:45) suggests that this approach has limited success. Furthermore, other teacher education institutions address this relationship of being overly-theoretical by increasing practicum at schools. This is because they believe that the exposure to classroom practice will result in improved preparation for the practice of schooling.

According to Darling-Hammond (2010:40), when teachers complain that university work has often been "too theoretical," they usually mean that it is too abstract and general. It is so abstract that teachers are often left deprived of specific tools to use in the classroom. However, the theoretically grounded tools teachers need are many, ranging from knowledge of curriculum materials and assessment strategies to techniques for organising group work and planning student inquiries—and teachers in training need opportunities to practice with these tools systematically (Darling-Hammond, 2010:40).

Within practice, knowledge is often tacit, and is acquired in a more social way, through team work and mentoring. This is because every profession contains some basic skills or procedures, such as how to operate an instrument or in the case of the classroom an example of such basic skills could be how to write on the board or using technology to enhance and stimulate learning. These basic skills do transfer well to the workplace, but are limited to routine or expected aspects of practice (CHE, 2011:10-11). But, when discretionary judgements are required, or when the work involves complex and unpredictable circumstances, then complex forms of knowledge are needed. For example, a teacher is confronted with a poor reader who struggles with word recognition and comprehension, this learner tends to avoid reading because it demands persistence and effort. If the teacher labels this problem only as a slow oral reading problem, he/she could miss the underlying causes and advise that the learner simply needs more reading practice. This approach focuses only on the surface symptoms of a reading problem. However, an

informed teacher who has mastered his/her disciplinary knowledge would be able to identify that because of the learners' limitations particular to reading, he/she will continue to get less practice and remain uncomfortable with reading as it is frustrating and unrewarding, so he/she will therefore be exposed to fewer words which may to an extent, result in not developing automaticity in the skills necessary for reading to be enjoyable. So in order to help this learner, the teacher will have to delve into his/her disciplinary knowledge base which is their scientific form of knowledge (Moats & Davidson, 2009:16).

This complex, scientific form of knowledge is usually acquired in an academic context. If it had been learnt in a practical context they (the students) end up being tied to that context and their transfer capacity is lost. Scientific knowledge should be acquired for what it is; it can then provide the knowledge base for posing and solving problems in the world of professional practice. Because students gain this knowledge in their academic subjects, they often fail to understand the relevance of disciplinary knowledge, and experience difficulties in transferring what they learnt in the lecture hall to practice (CHE, 2011:10-11).

Similarly, the CHE (2011:11) states that, in order to deal with these complexities, the WIL approach should be adopted. This approach recommends that students experience a range of professional knowledge domains because they need opportunities to immerse themselves in the academic disciplines that form the basis of their future professions as well as opportunities to learn from the professional domain. As professionals-in-training, they need to be adequately prepared to engage with, and contribute to, the world of professional practice.

Ball and Forzani (2009:503) state that making practice the core of the curriculum of teacher education requires a shift from a focus on what teachers know and believe to a greater focus on what teachers do. This does not mean that knowledge and beliefs do not matter but, rather, that the knowledge that counts for practice is that entailed by the work. A practice-focused curriculum for learning teaching would include significant attention not just to the knowledge demands of teaching but to the actual tasks and activities involved in the work of teaching. It would not settle for developing teachers' beliefs and commitments; instead, it would emphasise repeated opportunities for novices to practice carrying out the interactive work of teaching and not just to talk about the work of teaching. A practice-focused curriculum would also have to include foundational knowledge, but designed and developed differently from its usual treatment in teachers' preparation (Ball & Forzani, 2009:503).

Furthermore, Ball and Forzani (2009:503) emphasise that building a practice-focused curriculum in teacher education requires specifying the *content*—what teachers need to learn to do—and unpacking it for learning. It requires developing instructional approaches to help teachers learn to do these things for particular purposes in context. Particularly challenging is how to design ways to teach practice that do not reduce it to propositional knowledge and beliefs.

Darling-Hammond (2010:40) reiterates that learning from practice is perhaps *the* central issue.

> Traditionally teacher education have often required students to take batches of front-loaded coursework in isolation from practice, then adding a short dollop of student teaching to the end of the programme, often in classrooms that do not model the practices previously described in abstraction. Often, the clinical side of teacher education has been fairly haphazard, depending on the idiosyncrasies of loosely selected placements with little guidance about what happens in them and little connection to university work. Many alternative programmes skip student teaching altogether—giving their recruits no opportunity to receive direct modelling from expert teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2010:40).

Evidently, the traditional stance on teacher preparation ("translation-of-theory-to-practice" approach) is a risk to novice teachers as they will not be able to apply theory to their teaching practices. However, if one has to flip teacher preparation and make it practice focused there could also be a risk of students not being able to relate their practices to theory (Tigchelaar & Korthagen, 2004:666). Smith (2003:53) states that integrating both the traditional stance and practice based approaches to teacher preparation is the core issue.

This raises the core issue of this particular study, namely the design of a teacher preparation programme which integrates theory and practice. Darling-Hammond found that the most powerful programmes require students to spend extensive time in the field throughout the entire programme, examining and applying the concepts and strategies they are simultaneously learning about in their reading literacy courses. During these field experiences candidates work alongside teachers who can show them how to teach reading literacy in ways that are responsive to learners while they take interwoven coursework. Such programmes typically require at least a full academic year of student teaching under the direct supervision of one or more teachers who model expert practice with students who have a wide range of learning needs. As candidates gradually assume more independent responsibility for teaching, they can develop their practice. This is especially important if they

are going to learn to teach in learner-centered ways that require diagnosis, adaptations to learners' needs, intensive assessment and planning, and a complex repertoire of practices which would be applied thoughtfully (Darling-Hammond, 2010:40).

Moreover, Darling-Hammond (2010:40) states that powerful teacher education programmes have a clinical curriculum as well as a didactic curriculum. These programmes teach prospective teachers to turn analysis into action by applying what they are learning in curriculum plans, teaching applications, and other performance assessments that are organised around professional teaching standards. These attempts receive detailed feedback, with opportunities to retry and continue to improve, and they are followed by systematic reflection on student learning in relation to teaching. Opportunities like these, (analysis, application, and reflection) should connect to both the subject matter and the students whom prospective teachers teach. In this way, prospective teachers learn the fine-grained stuff of practice in connection to the practical theories that will allow them to adapt their practice in a well-grounded fashion and to innovate and improvise to meet the specific classroom contexts they later encounter (Darling-Hammond, 2010:40).

It is evident that integrating theory and practice is an integral issue. However, the CHE, states that the integration of theory and practice in student learning can occur through a range of WIL approaches (CHE, 2011:4). WIL is used as an umbrella term to describe curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices, across a range of academic disciplines that integrates and aligns academic and workplace practices. Its purpose is to enable student teachers to experience all dimensions of the workplace and reflect on their experiences as well as the underpinning theory, in order to hone their own conceptual understanding of their roles and identities as teachers (CHE 2011:4). Zinn, Geduld, Delport and Jordaan (2014:104) note that the term WIL has recently been adopted in teacher education. It refers to the practicum component of teacher preparation programmes which refers to the students classroom-based and school-based learning within their teacher preparation programme curricula.

The NCATE (2010:ii) states that varied and extensive opportunities should be in place for students to connect what they learn (theory) with the challenge of using it (practice). However, this can only be done if teacher education shifts away from a norm which emphasises academic preparation (theory) and course work loosely linked to school-based experiences (practice) to programmes that are fully grounded in practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses. Thus, the NCATE (2010:ii) states that the WIL component of courses should be analysed and a programme or model regarding WIL can be

put in place addressing the current need. This is reinforced by Darling-Hammond (2010:43) who states that expectations for teacher preparation programmes need to be raised, every programme should have a common vision that informs a tightly integrated programme of high-quality clinical work married to a supportive learning-focused curriculum.

The NCATE (2010:2) states that teaching, like medicine, is a profession of practice. Prospective teachers must be prepared to become expert practitioners who know how to use the knowledge of their profession to advance student learning and how to build their professional knowledge through practice, but in order to achieve this, practice must be placed at the centre of teaching preparation (NCATE, 2010:2). However, teacher education has often been too segmented with subject-matter preparation, theory, and pedagogy taught in isolated intervals which are often too far removed from school-based experiences or what the NCATE would refer to as clinical practice.

Clinically-based approaches have a number of advantages over the traditional practicum and practice teaching. In clinically-based programmes, teacher preparation programmes learn more directly what they need to know about what schools really need and they enable districts to hire new teachers who are prepared to be effective in their schools. Clinical practice allows for novice teachers to incorporate practitioner knowledge in their learning. Novice teachers can also achieve the full value of embedded clinical experience because school districts would have to commit to reallocating, restructuring and re-staffing schools for clinical preparation. Students, the primary focus, can then benefit from functioning learning communities formed to support teacher learning and from the additional human resources that can be focused on their needs. Together, these partners can shift a programme's emphasis from learning about teaching to using knowledge to develop practice that effectively addresses students' needs. Clinical practice also calls for stringent new accountability mechanisms and the creation of reward structures that ensure that this takes place. This shift illustrates and better reflects the complex nature of professional practice (NCATE, 2010:8-9).

The NCATE (2010:9) states that new teachers need more than technical skills, they need a repertoire of general and subject-specific practices (Feiman-Nemser, 2001), and the understandings and judgment to engage all students in worthwhile learning. They need to have opportunities to reflect upon and think about what they do, how they make decisions, how they "theorize" their work, and how they integrate their content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge into what they do. Additionally, this can be accomplished through a combination of both school embedded practice and laboratory-type experiences. Moreover,

within clinical practice, laboratory experiences, school embedded learning and course work are integrated through a structure designed to help the candidate develop both the knowledge base and skills of professional practice.

In her work, Darling-Hammond found that it is clear that learning to practice in practice, with expert guidance, is essential to becoming a great teacher of students with a wide range of needs (Darling-Hammond, 2010:40). The NCATE also tells us that in order to bridge the conceptual divide or gap between theory and practice, practice must be placed at the centre of teaching preparation. This should be done so that novice teachers can become expert practitioners who know how to use the knowledge of their profession to advance student learning and how to build their professional knowledge through practice. In order to achieve this, teacher preparation must be turned upside down and instead should be conceived as an academically taught clinical practice (NCATE, 2010:1).

Thus, in order to address the challenges in teacher preparation programmes but especially the divide between theory and practice, powerful teacher preparation programmes are needed. Such programmes are fully grounded in practice and interwoven with academic content and professional development. Additionally, these programmes should equip students with the necessary content knowledge to develop a repertoire of general and subject-specific practices. So a sufficient knowledge base should be determined for such programmes to be developed. Section 2.3 aims to establish the theoretical framework for such a knowledge base.

## 2.3 Theoretical framework

Shulman's perspective on teacher knowledge highlights many instances where the complexities of teacher understanding, and the transmission of content knowledge are investigated.

Shulman (1986:5) purports that the person who presumes to teach subject matter to children, must demonstrate knowledge of that subject matter as a prerequisite to teaching. Although knowledge of the theories and methods of teaching are important, Shulman acknowledges that it plays a secondary role in the qualifications of a teacher (Shulman, 1986:5). Through this, Shulman probed the domains and categories of content knowledge of teachers.

Shulman saw a weakness in this dichotomy between content and teaching knowledge (methods). Through this weakness he could identify a special kind of knowledge that allows

teachers to teach effectively. After studying secondary teachers across subject areas, Shulman aimed to better understand the source of teachers' comprehension of their subject areas, how that knowledge grows, and how teachers understand and react to curriculum, reshaping it into something their students will understand (Shulman, 1986:5-6).

Shulman addressed central issues within teacher education, these issues include; the forms teacher knowledge take, as well as the way in which the acquisition and development of knowledge occur. As result of this, Shulman could coin terms that describe content knowledge, and the various domains in which it occurs, for teacher education to reach its objective. To better understand this special knowledge of teaching, Shulman distinguished amongst three different *kinds* of content knowledge, namely, *subject matter knowledge (content knowledge)*, *pedagogical content knowledge*, and *curricular knowledge* (Shulman, 1986:9-10).

**Content knowledge** refers to the knowledge of the subject and its organizing structures, so it is the subject matter teachers need particular to their discipline. Shulman (1986:9) states that to adequately assimilate content knowledge requires one to go beyond knowledge of the facts or concepts of a domain. It requires understanding the structures of the subject matter. Put simply, the structures of the subject matter refer to the theories, principles, and concepts of a particular discipline or simply having a “deep” understanding of a subject.

Teaching can be seen as a complicated task as there are various standards which should be met. Teachers need to understand subject matter (content knowledge) deeply and flexibly in order to help learners create cognitive maps, relate one idea to another and address misconceptions. Teachers need to comprehend how ideas connect across fields and to everyday life. This kind of understanding provides a foundation for **pedagogical content knowledge (PCK)** that enables teachers to make ideas accessible to others (Shulman, 1987:7).

Furthermore, Shulman (1986:9-10) states that “pedagogical content knowledge also includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult as the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning of those most frequently taught topics and lessons”. So if these preconceptions are misconceptions, teachers need knowledge of strategies that will most likely be successful in reorganising the understanding of learners who experience these misconceptions (Shulman, 1986:9-10).

Similarly, the ability to reorganise the understanding of learners is embedded in Shulmans third kind of content knowledge for teaching, namely **curricular knowledge.** This knowledge type refers to the teacher's knowledge about the curriculum and its relevant materials as this would in essence form the teacher's "body of knowledge" within which he/she should use to teach particular content to his/her learners (Shulman, 1986:10).

### *2.3.1 Content knowledge*

Feiman-Nemser (2001:1017) purports that if teachers are responsible for helping students learn worthwhile content, they must know and understand the subjects they teach. Shulman (1986:9) describes content knowledge as "the amount and organisation of knowledge per se in the mind of the teacher". Shulman states that to fully understand content knowledge requires one to move beyond knowledge of the facts or concepts of a domain. It requires understanding the structures of the subject matter (Shulman, 1986:9). The structures of subject matter include knowledge of central facts, concepts, theories and procedures within a given field (Feiman-Nemser, 2001:1017).

Shulman (1986:9) argues that knowing a subject for teaching requires more than knowing its facts and concepts. Teachers must also understand the organising principles and structures and the rules for establishing what is appropriate within the field. This knowledge is crucial as teachers should not only be capable of defining the fact and truths of a discipline. Teachers must also be able to explain why a particular aspect is deemed necessary, why it is worth knowing, and how it relates to other aspects, both within the discipline and without, as well as in theory and in practice.

Consequently, it is important that teachers understand that there are a variety of ways of organising a discipline. If teachers develop sound subject-matter knowledge they will not only be equal to their lay colleague who teaches the subject matter major, but also present an understanding of the structures of their subject matter. Thus, they will not only understand *that* something is so; the teacher must further understand *why* it is so. This too will grant the teacher sufficient knowledge to make relative pedagogical judgements (Shulman (1986:9).

However, Ball, Thames and Phelps (2008:389) remind us that even though knowledge might matter to teaching, it is not only knowledge of content that is important but also knowledge of pedagogy. Consequently, Shulman (1986:9) identified a combination of knowledge of content and pedagogy that is central to the knowledge needed for teaching namely, pedagogical content knowledge.

### *2.3.2 Pedagogical content knowledge*

PCK is also a type of content knowledge which goes beyond knowledge of subject matter but to the dimension of subject matter *for* teaching (Shulman, 1986:9). PCK includes:

> …the most regularly taught topics in one's subject area, the most useful forms of representation of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations- in a word, the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others. Since there are no single most powerful forms of representation, the teacher must have at hand a veritable armamentarium of alternative forms of representation, some of which derive from research whereas others originate in the wisdom of practice (Shulman,1986:9).

Accordingly, PCK deals with the teaching process, including the most useful forms of representing and communicating content and how students best learn the specific concepts and topics of a subject. Feiman-Nemser (2001:1017) confirms this and states that "teachers also need to know their subjects from a pedagogical perspective". Similarly, teachers need to have an understanding of what students find confusing or difficult and have alternative explanations, models and analogies to represent concepts and processes.

According to Mirel (2011:11), the supporters of PCK demand that prospective teachers have a strong background in the subjects they are going to teach. However, such background is not enough, in addition to subject-matter knowledge, teachers must also find ways to communicate knowledge to others, thus content knowledge and knowledge of pedagogy should be blended as teachers must have two types of subject-matter knowledge namely, knowledge of the discipline and knowledge of how to help their students come to understand the discipline. Furthermore, how teachers represent knowledge is a vital component of effective teaching and this is central to PCK. Thus, the heart of PCK is ensuring that teachers master both the content they will teach and the best ways of teaching it.

PCK has great implications for teacher education as it offers the possibility of changing the nature and content of teacher preparation, more so that the focus should be put on reconnecting subject matter and pedagogy in ways that make a difference in how teachers teach (Mirel, 2011:11).

### *2.3.3 Curricular knowledge*

Shulman (1986:10) states that the curriculum is:

> represented by the full range of programs designed for the teaching of particular subjects and topics at, a given level, the variety of instructional materials available in relation to those programs, and the set of characteristics that serve as both the indications and contraindications for the use of particular curriculum or program materials in particular circumstances.

So the curriculum and its relevant materials are the body of knowledge specific to the discipline that deals with the theory and practice of education. This is then also the guidance or the "tools" provided to teachers to teach particular content and remediate or evaluate student achievements. It is thus imperative that teachers possess the understandings of the curriculum and its alternatives for instruction (Shulman, 1986:10). To illustrate simply, a medical doctor needs to understand the full range of available treatments as well as its alternatives to treat a disorder for any patient from any given background. In order to understand this, medical doctors would have had to be exposed to this to fully understand it. Consequently, teachers need to have knowledge of the materials of a particular discipline, texts, software programmes, visual materials, demonstrations so that they too can develop what Feiman-Nemser calls a "teaching repertoire" to stimulate the growth of all the children with whom they work (Feiman-Nemser, 2001:1018).

Shulman finds it vital that teachers are familiar with the curriculum materials which their students are studying and thus proposes two additional aspects of curricular knowledge, namely, *lateral curriculum knowledge* and *vertical curriculum knowledge*. Lateral curriculum knowledge refers to the teacher's ability to relate the content of a given subject or lesson to topics or issues being discussed simultaneously in other classes. Vertical curriculum knowledge refers to the teacher's familiarity with the topics and issues that have been and will be taught in the same subject area during the preceding and later years in school, and the materials that embody them (Shulman, 1986:10).

Subject matter knowledge (content knowledge), PCK, and curricular knowledge thus form a framework for classifying both the domains and categories of teacher knowledge. Besides portraying the kinds of knowledge needed by teachers, Shulman further suggests that these kinds of knowledge be presented in various forms. Shulman also proposed we consider three *forms* of teacher knowledge, namely, *propositional knowledge, case knowledge*, and *strategic knowledge* (Shulman, 1986:10). These are not separate from the three kinds of knowledge named above, but rather describe different forms of each kind of teacher knowledge.

### *2.3.4 The three forms of teacher knowledge*

Shulman (1986:10) is of the opinion that much of what is taught to teachers is in the form of propositions. Thus, propositional knowledge refers to the aspects of the work to be considered as what teachers do, which includes lesson planning and organising reading groups. Furthermore, Shulman argues that there are three types of propositional knowledge in teaching, namely disciplined empirical or philosophical inquiry, practical experience, and moral or ethical reasoning. Additionally, Shulman organised propositional knowledge into *principles*, *maxims*, and *norms*. A principle usually emerges from research (disciplined empirical or philosophical inquiry), the maxims come from practical experiences and refer to those experiences which can usually never be confirmed by research, - and norms refer to moral and ethical reasoning and concerns aspects like justice, equity and fairness (Shulman, 1986:10-11).

Due to the nature of teacher preparation programmes, learning these propositions will be difficult as it will have to happen out of context, so Shulman proposes case knowledge as the second form of teacher knowledge. Case knowledge refers to learning about teaching in a similar way a lawyer learns about the law and doctors learn about medicine, teachers learn about teaching through lesson analysis and lawyers learn about the law by studying prior legal cases. In order to truly understand a case, a learner starts with the factual information and works towards the theoretical aspects that explain why things happened. Case knowledge is knowledge of specific, well-documented, and richly described events. In contrast, cases themselves can be considered as reports of events however, the knowledge they represent is what makes them cases. This is so because, cases may be examples of specific instances of practice-detailed descriptions of how an instructional event occurred, this can be completed with a description of the context, thoughts, and feelings of those described in the case. On the other hand, cases may be examples of discipline (theory) indicating in detail a more abstract proposition or theoretical claim. Shulman classifies case knowledge into three types of cases, namely *prototype* cases (that exemplify the theoretical, for example, a case where the knowledge of how a particular teacher taught a particular lesson is illustrated), *precedents* (that communicate maxims, for example, a case where the way a teacher brought a classroom of misbehaving learners under control), and *parables* (that communicate norms and values, for example, cases that illustrate the very heart of teaching as profession and as craft ) (Shulman, 1986:11-12).

The last form of knowledge is strategic knowledge. Strategic knowledge describes how a teacher reacts when faced with contradictions of knowledge, so strategic knowledge must be generated to extend understanding beyond principle to the wisdom of practice as the teacher

is not only a master of procedure but also of content and rationale, and capable of explaining why something is done. This can be done as teachers are capable of reflection which leads to self-knowledge which is the metacognitive awareness that will distinguish the work of teachers as a craft and as a profession (Shulman, 1986:12-13).

Shulman's theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge consists of content knowledge (subject matter knowledge), PCK, and curricular knowledge. If this framework is adopted within teacher preparation programmes, teachers will not only have knowledge of content but they will understand the nature of knowledge and inquiry as well as know their subjects from a pedagogical perspective. Shulmans notion around content knowledge for teacher preparation, therefore, forms the theoretical knowledge base for reading literacy teacher preparation as indicated in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Shulmans' theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge**

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Three kinds of teacher content knowledge</th></tr>
<tr><td><u>CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</u><br>(subject matter knowledge)<br>• Subject matter teachers need to have particular to their discipline</td><td><u>PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</u><br>• Subject matter for teaching so this refers to knowledge of how to teach certain aspects best</td><td colspan="2"><u>CURRICULAR KNOWLEDGE</u><br>• Subject matter about the curriculum and its relevant materials (body of knowledge). This is then also the "tools" provided to teachers to teach particular content and remediate or evaluate student achievements</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td rowspan="2"></td><td>Lateral curriculum knowledge<br>• Ability to relate content across the curriculum</td><td>Vertical curriculum knowledge<br>• teacher's familiarity with the content of the subject and how it progresses over time</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4"></td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="4">The three kinds of content knowledge comes in various <u>forms</u></th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">1. Propositional knowledge<br>(aspects of the work teachers do)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Disciplined empirical knowledge (Principles)<br>• Emerges from research</td><td>Practical experiences (Maxims)<br>• Derived from practical experiences which cannot be confirmed by research</td><td colspan="2">Moral/Ethical reasoning (Norms)<br>• Justice, fairness, equity</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">2. Case knowledge<br>(learning about teaching through cases like medicine and law, therefore working from the facts to the theory</td></tr>
<tr><td>Prototype cases (exemplify the theoretical)</td><td>Precedents (communicate the practical experiences)</td><td colspan="2">Parables (communicate norms and values)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">3. Strategic knowledge<br>(teacher behaviour in teaching and learning situations and environments)</td></tr>
</table>

This study draws on Shulman's proposed theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge as it focuses on the dimensions of content knowledge for teacher preparation programmes as well as how to best develop it within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes. This framework thus forms the knowledge base for reading literacy within teacher preparation programmes and is illustrated in section 2.4.

## 2.4 The knowledge base for reading literacy within teacher preparation programmes

*"What teachers know and do is the most important influence on what students learn. Competent and caring teaching should be a student right" (The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996:6).*

Reading literacy teacher preparation programmes have a responsibility to develop teacher expertise for reading (Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998:279). Additionally, Lyon and Weiser (2009:475) state that US legislation requires the use of scientifically based reading instruction practices that explicitly and systematically provide instruction of aspects related to reading. However, this is impeded as many teachers lack the basic understanding of these aspects related to reading and the teaching thereof. Furthermore, research has shown that there are a great number of teachers who do not adequately know how to implement scientifically based reading instruction. This highlights the challenges which teacher preparation programmes are confronted with as raised by Snow, Burns and Griffin (1998:279). Challenges like these prevent teacher preparation programmes from preparing teachers for highly complex and increasingly diverse schools and classrooms.

In South Africa, the DBE and the DHET (2011:15), revealed that the quality and the relevance of the teacher preparation programmes offered by HEIs, vary widely. Similarly, the DBE and the DHET (2011:3) states that universities have the responsibility for ensuring that the programmes being offered are of high quality and lead to meaningful development for teachers.

Thus, the content within teacher preparation programmes seems to be questionable, regardless of this, teachers still need to fulfil their task of teaching our children to read, therefore teachers need to have sufficient knowledge of all the elements which pertain to this task. According to the DoE (2008:12), teachers responsible for teaching foundation phase learners must have knowledge of the five components of reading, namely, phonemic awareness, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. In 1997, the United States governmental agencies and Congress convened the National Reading Panel (NRP) to assess the status of research-based knowledge as well as the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read (NRP, 2000:1-1). Like the South African DoE, this panel found that research findings support the inclusion of the five components in the teaching of reading. Therefore, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension should form an integral part of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes.

### *2.4.1 Content knowledge required to teach reading*

*"Most people do not realize how complex teaching is. Effective teachers do more than teach specific strategies or make available to students a wide variety of texts. Indeed, effective teachers of reading engage in a diverse array of instructional practices" (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002:43).*

According to Ball (2000:244), content knowledge (subject matter knowledge) for teaching has too often been defined by the subject matter knowledge that learners have to learn. This simply implies that many assume that what teachers need to know is what they teach, along with a broad perspective on where their learners are heading. Ball states that nothing is inherently wrong with this perspective as lists of what teachers should know can be generated by analysing the school curriculum. However, Ball (2000:244) mentions that instead of beginning solely with the curriculum, our understanding of the **content knowledge needed in teaching must start with practice**. We must understand better the work that teachers do and analyse the role played by content knowledge in that work. Furthermore, Ball (2000:244) suggests that in order to improve our sense of what content knowledge matters in teaching, we would need to identify core activities of teaching. These activities include what learners know; choosing and managing representations of ideas; appraising, selecting, and modifying textbooks; and deciding among alternative courses of action, and analysing the subject matter knowledge and insight entailed in these activities. This approach, a kind of job analysis of classroom teaching focused on the actual work that teachers do, could provide a view of subject matter as it is used in practice.

Moats (2009a:387) states that teachers feel unprepared to address the instructional needs of students with language, reading and writing problems. Moats (2009a:387) continues to note that teachers often have a minimal understanding of how students learn to read and write or why many students experience difficulty with the most fundamental task of schooling. Lyon and Weiser's (2009) research reveals that teachers lack basic understanding of many concepts that relate directly to teaching beginning and struggling readers. Moats (2009a:387) continues to say that teachers are unaware of or misinformed about the elements of language that they are expected to teach. This can be alleviated if new teachers are given extensive, demanding and content-driven training (Moats, 1999:13).

According to Moats et al. (2010:1), teaching reading requires specialised knowledge about language, how children learn and acquire literacy skills and a variety of instructional strategies. To ensure that teachers are trained to teach reading, changes are needed in pre-service teacher preparation and professional development.

Moats (2009a:389) is of the opinion that progress to true professionalism in reading instruction rests heavily on deep knowledge of content and skills necessary to teach students who struggle to learn. Teaching reading requires considerable knowledge and skill, acquired over several years through focused study and supervised practise (Moats, 1999:11). These knowledge and skills are imperative as teachers need to instruct most students directly, systematically and explicitly to decipher words in print, all the while keeping in mind the ultimate purpose of reading, which is to be learnt, enjoyed and understood (Moats, 1999:11).

Moats (1999:14) established a core curriculum for reading teacher preparation and in-service professional development and its goal is to bring continuity, consistency and comprehensiveness to pre-service teacher education. This particular curriculum is divided into four areas:

- Understanding knowledge of reading psychology and development.
- Understanding knowledge of language structure which is the content of instruction.
- Applying best practices in all aspects of reading instruction.
- Using validated, reliable, efficient assessments to inform classroom teaching.

Research indicates that teachers must have considerable knowledge of language structure in order to teach reading effectively and to differentiate instruction for diverse learners, thus this component of the curriculum proposed by Moats is what Shulman refers to as a teacher's content knowledge.

#### *2.4.1.1 Knowledge required to teach phonemic awareness*

The IRA (1998:3) defines phonemic awareness as "an understanding about the smallest units of sound that make up the speech stream: phonemes". In other words, phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Armbruster, Lehr and Osborn (2001:1) emphasise the fact that children who have phonemic awareness skills are most likely to have an easier time learning to read and spell than other children who have few or none of these skills. The NRP (2000:2-1) conducted studies which have identified that phonemic awareness and letter knowledge are predictors of how well children will learn to read and this indicates the importance of teaching phonemic awareness to children.

Teaching phonemic awareness requires knowledge of phonology. This is because phonology is the science of vocal sounds and refers to the study of the sound system within

a language (Moats, 2009c:10). Studying the language system includes understanding the order in which phonemes are combined; where accents are applied to words and phrases and the way in which speech sounds change when they are combined with other sounds. Furthermore, phonological awareness is the ability to identify, think about and manipulate the parts of words including syllables, onsets and rimes and phonemes. Additionally, it also includes activities focusing on recognising and producing rhymes. Moats (2009c:11) reiterates that phonological awareness activities encourage the ability to think about details of spoken words. Table 2.2 illustrates how units of language are used to develop phonological awareness.

**Table 2.2: Examples of units of language to develop phonological awareness**

| Unit of language | Activity that learners could do |
|---|---|
| Syllables (unit of speech organised around a vowel sound)<br>e.g. Zel - da<br>rea-ding | Clap your hands as you say each syllable<br>e.g. Zel - da<br>rea-ding |
| Onset and Rime (two parts of any syllable, onset is the initial sound(s) before the vowel and rime is the vowel and remaining consonants.<br>e.g. d - uck<br>cl - amp | Blend the syllables together<br>e.g. d + uck =duck<br>f + ish =fish |
| Phoneme (smallest unit of sound that differentiates words)<br>e.g. chose =/ch/ō/z/<br>those =/th/ō/z/ | Raise your finger as you say each sound<br>e.g. know =/n/ō/<br>chose =/ch/ō/z/ |

These activities are used to develop phonological awareness. All these activities can be considered as oral language tasks that demand thinking about and manipulating individual sounds which is phoneme awareness and is acquired generally, after awareness of larger linguistic units like syllables, onset and rime have developed (Moats, 2009c:14).

In order for pre-service teachers to acquire knowledge about the progression of the development of phonological skills they need to have knowledge of activities that promote phonological skills. Therefore, Snow, Griffin and Burns (2005:75) state that reading teachers should have a working knowledge of the phonological system which includes the ability to articulate, identify, count and manipulate phonemes. Moats et al. (2010:19) state that the awareness of speech sounds in reading, spelling and vocabulary would help develop pre-

service teachers' knowledge about the reciprocal relationships among phonological processing. Thus, if teachers can teach their learners to manipulate phonemes by using letters and focus on only one or two types of phoneme manipulation as opposed to several types they are equipping their learners to become phonemically aware (Armbruster et al., 2001:5-6). If teachers have knowledge of phonological manipulations they will be able to effectively instruct, teach and help their learners acquire phonemic awareness. Further activities to teach phonemic awareness include: phoneme isolation, phoneme identity, phoneme categorisation, phoneme blending, phoneme segmentation, phoneme deletion, phoneme addition and phoneme substitution (Moats et al., 2010:19; Armbruster et al., 2001:4-5).

Moats et al. (2010:20) state that phonological awareness, print concepts and knowledge of letter sounds are foundational to literacy, teachers who understand how to teach these skills effectively can prevent problems associated with reading as they will be able to interpret reading and spelling errors. Additionally, teachers will be able to alter and implement instructional practices to address these reading and spelling errors (Moats, 2009c:18-20). It is, therefore, imperative that pre-service teachers must learn phonology in order to develop phonemic awareness among their learners.

According to Moats et al. (2010:19-20), the component of phonology should be covered as follows in terms of content:

1. Know the progression of the development of phonological skills.
2. Identify the differences among phonological manipulations.
3. Understand the principles of phonological skill instruction (brief, multisensory, conceptual and auditory-verbal).
4. Understand the reciprocal relationships among phonological processing, reading, spelling and vocabulary.

Phonological awareness instruction aims to support learners' ability to blend and segment phonemes that are associated with graphemes. Phonological awareness instruction also involves more than the manipulation of sub-word units; accurate identification of and discrimination of confusable phonemes and words is important for reading and spelling because if a student confuses rich with ridge, the teacher can provide explicit feedback regarding the voiceless /ch/ and voiced /j/ -consonants that are otherwise indistinguishable in manner of articulation (Moats, 2009b:385). Teachers who enact phonemic awareness instruction should understand that letters and sounds are separate entities, teachers should

also understand the difference between a phoneme and a grapheme as well as be able to differentiate between the two during instruction (Snow et al., 2005:74).

#### *2.4.1.2 Knowledge required to teach phonics*

"Phonics is the system of correspondence between phonemes and graphemes, and also the approach to reading and spelling instruction that directly teaches learners to use the correspondences to identify unknown words" (Moats, 2009c:16). Put simply, phonics is the connection between sounds and letters or letter combinations and it is the approach used to teach learners to identify unknown words by using their knowledge of sounds and letters.

Smartt and Reschly (2007:4) emphasise that phonics involves the understanding that there are single speech sounds (phonemes) represented by each letter or letter combination and also the ability to form correspondences between letters and sounds and to recognize spelling patterns. Furthermore, Villaume and Brabham (2003:479) state that phonics has a predefined role as it helps children to learn and use the alphabetic principle, thus children will be able to recognise familiar words as well as decode new words. Additionally, Villaume and Brabham (2003:479) reiterate that learners who understand this principle know that the sounds of spoken words are mapped onto written words in systematic ways. As learners develop understandings of this principle, they become adept at using letter-sound correspondences to figure out (decode) unrecognised words.

However, the ability to read unfamiliar words (decoding) is aided by applying knowledge of phonics (Moats et al., 2010:21-22). Thus, Moats and Foorman (2003) state that phonics instruction in English requires that the teacher lead learners through multi-layered, complex and variable spelling correspondences at the sound, syllable and morpheme (orthography and etymology) level. This is because reading and spelling requires the student to analyse words by syllable and/or morpheme. Recognition of prefixes, suffixes, roots, and parts of compounds, and recognition of the morphological structure of words to which inflections have been added, facilitates word recognition, access to word meaning and recall for spelling (Moats, 2009b:385).

According to Moats (2009d:16), English is a "layer-cake language" as it is not only organised to represent sounds, syllables and morphemes but its spelling has derived from several languages that were combined over hundreds of years as political and social changes evolved in Great Britain. Thus English originated from Anglo-Saxon, Norman French, Latin and Greek (Moats, 2009d:16-17). Table 2.3 displays some words from the English language which originated from these languages.

**Table 2.3: Examples of English words which originated from the Anglo-Saxon, Latin and Greek language**

| Anglo-Saxon | Latin | Greek |
|---|---|---|
| bedroom<br>earthworm | extract<br>report | Geography<br>Biology |
| Anglo-Saxon words can be compounded by combining two meaningful word parts (morphemes).<br>e.g. bed + room=bedroom | Latin words are built by adding prefixes and suffixes to roots.<br>e.g. ex + tract = extract | Greek words are formed by combining word forms.<br>e.g. Bio + logy = Biology |

(Moats, 2009d:16-17).

Table 2.3 indicates how the English language is multi-layered and complex as it demands knowledge of syllables and morphemes (orthography and etymology) as well as prefixes, suffixes, roots, and parts of compounds, and the morphological structure of words (Moats and Foorman, 2003; Moats, 2009b & Moats, 2009d). For this very reason, Moats (2009b:385) states that phonics and spelling instruction requires the teacher to know and explain this multi-layered orthographic system. English orthography represents sounds, syllable patterns, and meaningful word parts (morphemes), as well as the language from which a word originated. Additionally, Table 2.3 also emphasises that phonics includes much more than a letter-sound correspondence for each letter of the alphabet; it highlights the complexity of the spelling system (orthography).

Moreover, teachers who enact phonics instruction must be able to appreciate and explain the morphemic structure of words. Therefore, Cunningham, Zibulski and Callahan (2009:491) suggest that teachers must have knowledge of the grapheme/phoneme conventions. Additionally, teachers should have knowledge of the basic information about morphemes and morphological processes as well as how they connect to spelling (Snow et al., 2005:81). Furthermore, spelling and reading build and rely on the same mental representation of a word and knowledge of the spelling of a word aids reading fluency (Snow et al., 2005:86).

### *2.4.1.3 Knowledge required to teach fluency*

Rasinski, Reutzel, Chard and Linan-Thompson (2011:287) define fluency as a characteristic of reading that occurs when readers' cognitive and linguistic systems are developed so that

they can read with accuracy to allow for understanding of the texts and reflecting its prosodic features. Put simply, fluent readers will put less effort into word recognition and, therefore, have more available for comprehension. Similarly, Snow et al. (2005:109-110) state that fluency depends on a readers' knowledge about the topic, vocabulary as well as the readers control over cognitive and other processes applied in reading. Similarly, Moats et al. (2010:24) define fluency as "the ability to read a text accurately and quickly". From this it is possible to deduce that accuracy and speed are important aspects of fluency. This is highlighted by Rasinski and Mraz (2008:115) who recognise fluency as a muliti-dimensional concept which consists of three support structures namely, accuracy, automaticity and prosody.

Accuracy or accurate decoding is an essential part of fluency because if a reader is unable to decode words then reading cannot occur. However, accurate decoding demands automatic decoding too. Automaticity refers to how people become instinctive at performing certain complex tasks and this is required in reading too. Readers need to recognise words automatically so that they can use their cognition to create meaning as opposed to decoding words (Rasinski & Mraz 2008:115). Prosody or prosodic reading is the third support structure for fluency and refers to the reader's ability to group sections of the text together into syntactic and semantic groups for interpretation. In other words, the reader groups the text meaningful units which allow him/her to read expressively with appropriate phrasing and intonation (Rasinski & Mraz 2008:115-116).

According to Moats and Davidson (2009:16), reading fluency is both a cause and a consequence of reading experiences and reading habits. This is because good readers recognise words instantly and use phonic decoding skills easily and accurately. Additionally because good readers experience success in reading they practice reading early, thus they are exposed to more printed words and then begin school with the knowledge of sounds, letters and words. So automaticity in word recognition, accurate word recognition and prosody (expression) is developed in good readers. Conversely, poor readers lack these skills and need to develop automaticity in the skills necessary for reading to experience success.

The skills necessary to experience success in reading include the recognition of letters, speech sounds, letter-sound correspondences, rime chunks, syllable patterns, morphemes and whole words (Moats & Davidson, 2009:19). Moats and Davidson (2009:19) use Scarborough's (2001) "rope" model to illustrate how the skills necessary for reading relate to develop reading fluency.

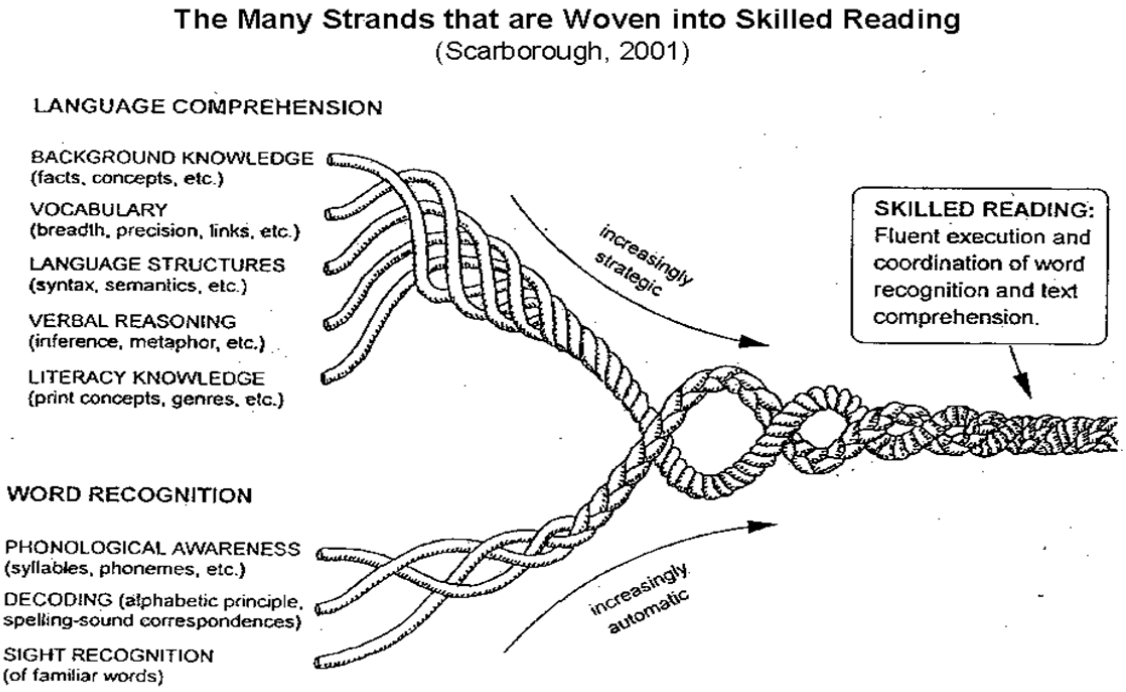



**Figure 2.1: The skills necessary for reading**

Moats and Davidson (2009:19).

Figure 2.1 indicates the skills learners need to develop to eventually read fluently. These skills include the language comprehension (which includes aspects such as syntax, semantics) and word recognition (which entails aspects of language structure such as phonology, morphology and orthography). However, the accuracy and automaticity of these skills should not be ignored as automaticity, accuracy and prosody are the three support structures for fluency. Thus, the development of fluency rests upon the integration of the instruction of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary and reading comprehension. Similarly, teachers need to have knowledge of the above-mentioned in order to place students in appropriate groups and assign appropriate texts for reading instruction so that fluency can develop among readers as it is a predictor of reading competence (Moats et al., 2010:24).

### *2.4.1.4 Knowledge required to teach vocabulary*

Armbruster et al. (2001:29) define vocabulary as the words we must know to communicate effectively. Smartt and Reschly (2007:4) state that vocabulary is a function of the ability to recognise and understand individual words in reading and use them correctly. Moreover, Moats (2009e:5) combines these definitions and describes vocabulary as the learners' knowledge of and memory for word meanings which is not only demonstrated through

reading and writing but also through oral language which refers to listening and speaking. In other words, vocabulary does not refer to the words which learners can decode and recognise but refers to words which learners fully understand the meaning of.

The NRP (2000:4-15) states that vocabulary occupies an important position in learning to read. As a learner begins to read, reading vocabulary encountered in texts is mapped onto the oral vocabulary the learner possesses. Thus, the reader is taught to translate the unfamiliar words in print into speech, with the expectation that the speech forms will be easier to comprehend.

Moats (2009b:385) states that phonology also plays a role in vocabulary acquisition as knowledge of phonology will enable a teacher to be sure that students pronounce words accurately, and may break them into syllables or morphemes. Moats and Foorman (2003:24) state that the instruction of vocabulary requires an understanding of semantic organisation and the relationships among word structure (morphology), grammatical rule and meaning (etymology and orthography). Therefore, the knowledge of words is multifaceted, as it ranges from the partial recognition of a meaning of a word to deep knowledge as well as the ability to use the word effectively in speech and writing (Moats et al., 2010:27). So teachers of reading need to teach for word recognition and word meaning so that learners can acquire vocabulary.

Morphology refers to the study of words, but particularly the smallest unit of meaning in words namely morphemes. Morphemes can be differentiated into two types namely, bound and unbound morphemes (Kieffer & Lesauz, 2007:137). Bound morphemes refer to prefixes and suffixes (e.g., geo – as in geo-graphy and – ity as in popular-ity) and unbound morphemes are roots within complex words which can stand alone (e.g., popular). Knowledge of morphology can be a powerful tool in reading as it (morphology) equips the reader with the knowledge and skills to decode words in order to recognise them. So if readers possess the necessary knowledge to break up words into understandable morphemes, they would be dissecting the words in order to understand the text. In addition, knowledge of morphemes allows learners to develop word attack skills (Kieffer & Lesauz, 2007:137).

Moreover, the explicit, systematic teaching of word meanings and indirect methods of instruction such as those involving inferring meanings of words from sentence context or from word parts (for example, root words and affixes) is essential for vocabulary instruction (Moats et al., 2010:28). Thus, teachers need to know how to develop students' vocabulary

knowledge as well as understand the importance of wide exposure to words both orally and through reading.

#### *2.4.1.5 Knowledge required to teach comprehension*

Tannebaum, Torgesen and Wagner (2006:381) state that one of the most important skills learnt by young learners is the ability to understand written text which is usually referred to as reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language (The RAND Reading Study Group, 2002:11). Duke and Carlisle (2011:199) also allude to this as they define comprehension as the act of constructing meaning with oral or written text and state that meaning does not reside in the oral or written text, the reader creates and adjusts a mental representation of the meaning of the text by using various interacting factors such as the text, the reader and the content. These definitions highlight that comprehension involves the construction of meaning but there are three central elements involved namely, the reader, the text and the action of comprehension.

The reader reads the text and the action of comprehension is a result of this. This can only occur because the reader brings all his/her existing knowledge, skills and experiences to the act of reading. The text is then interpreted based on the knowledge, skills and experiences brought to reading by drawing on the purpose of, processes involved in and the consequences related to the act of reading (The RAND Reading Study Group, 2002:11). Thus the reader, the text and the action of comprehension are connected for comprehension to occur.

This connection illustrates how complex “constructing meaning” actually is, especially in reading. This is supported by Moats and Hennessy (2009:5-6) who state that reading comprehension is the most challenging and multifaceted reading literacy component because it involves many cognitive processes. Thus, because reading comprehension is so complex, the instruction thereof requires thoughtful analysis of the text, anticipation of what might be challenging and as well as what could be miscomprehended. However, in order to understand this complexity, the nature of reading needs to be understood. Reading requires drawing on various literacy skills as well as different mental activities. The reader must have sufficient decoding skills and be a fluent reader before he/she is able to make meaning when reading (cf. section 2.4.1.2 & 2.4.1.3). Constructing meaning involves connecting what is read to the existing knowledge of the readers and then thinking about all of this information until it is understood (The RAND Reading Study Group, 2002:13-16).

Because reading comprehension is the most challenging literacy component, the instruction thereof needs to incorporate the concepts that will help teachers to accommodate the complexity thereof as well as teach learners to comprehend. According to Moats and Foorman (2003:24), comprehension instruction requires the teacher to know and explicate linguistic concepts such as text organisation, genre, inter- and intra-sentence references, figurative and idiomatic language (pragmatics) and complex sentence structure (syntax). Furthermore, Moats et al. (2010:30) state that reading comprehension also depends on factors such as background knowledge and knowledge of text structure (syntax). Put simply, teachers should have knowledge of pragmatics and syntax to be able to teach comprehension because to comprehend, a reader must decipher the individual words, phrases, and sentences in the text, and integrate it with their existing knowledge to create meaning (Moats & Hennessy, 2009:23).

Duke and Carlisle (2011:200) note that in reading these factors work together to build meaning as the reader accesses the meaning of words in the text, processes the syntax of the sentences, relates the sentences to one another to build coherence and then relates the larger pieces of text to build a holistic coherence which then is comprehension.

Evidence-based research points to the fact that aspects within language structure should form the bedrock of reading literacy training so that pre-service teachers can be equipped to teach phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. Not only do these components form the scientifically-based reading instruction programme, but inherently forms the content knowledge (subject-matter knowledge) (cf. section 2.3.1) which Shulman refers to. Table 2.4 below illustrates how the aspects of language structure form the disciplinary knowledge base which should be incorporated into literacy modules so that pre-service teachers can teach the reading literacy components.

**Table 2.4: The disciplinary knowledge base required to teach the reading literacy components**

| Aspect of language structure | Reading literacy component |
|---|---|
| Phonology | Phonemic awareness |
| Phonology<br>Morphology<br>Etymology<br>Orthography | Phonics |
| Morphology<br>Etymology<br>Orthography<br>Semantics | Vocabulary |
| Syntax<br>Pragmatics | Reading comprehension |
| Fluency is tied to all of the aspects of language structure and the integration of the instruction of phonology, morphology, etymology, orthography, semantics, syntax and pragmatics will develop fluency. | Fluency |

(van der Merwe & Nel, 2012:146).

This study focused on how aspects within language structure should form the foundation of reading literacy teacher preparation programmes so that pre-service teachers can be equipped to teach phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. However, literature appreciation which includes the exposure to a variety of texts should not be ignored (Moats, 1999:7-8). Knowledge of literature is an important domain which teachers should possess for reading instruction as it is a proxy for reading activities (Cunningham, Perry, Stanovich & Stanovich, 2004:160). Furthermore, reading experts agree that knowledge of literature and the ability to apply that knowledge to classroom activities is a fundamental component of reading instruction as it helps teachers to contribute to learner's motivation to read and it allows teachers to create learning environments which encourages reading engagement (Cunningham et al., 2004:142).

While delivering instruction in all the necessary instructional components, the interdependence of these components should be recognised as students who gain phonological skills are more likely to improve in vocabulary and students who use phonic word attack skills proficiently are more likely to spell and write well (Moats, 2009b:386). Teachers who realise these interdependencies may be more likely to tie instructional components to one another. Furthermore, it is not sufficient for teachers to simply understand what is meant by phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and

comprehension; teachers need to know how all of these components work together to contribute to reading proficiency and how to teach them in an integrated fashion (Lyon & Weiser, 2009:476)

### *2.4.2 Pedagogical content knowledge*

Pedagogical content knowledge refers to knowing *how* to deliver subject matter in the classroom. It thus captures the complex yet necessary relationship between subject matter knowledge and teaching ability. This complex relationship is illustrated by Snow et al. (1998:279) who states that "today's teachers must understand a great deal about how children develop and learn, what they know, and what they can do. Teachers must know and be able to apply a variety of teaching techniques to meet the individual needs of learners. They must be able to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses and plan instructional programmes that help make learners progress".

However, Ball (2000:244) highlights three problems that must be addressed in order to prepare teachers to know their content as well as how to use that knowledge to help learners learn. In order to prepare teachers to fulfil this daunting task, teacher preparation programmes should identify content knowledge that matters for teaching (cf. section 2.4.1), understand "how" that knowledge needs to be held and determining what it takes for teachers to put that knowledge into practice. The latter is what this section of this chapter aims to achieve.

Snow et al. (2005:201) acknowledge that specifying the knowledge that teachers of reading should possess is a daunting task, however, in comparison, it is nothing if one has to consider specifying the course of development of that knowledge. Similarly, Ball (2000:245) states that the assumption exists that someone who knows content for himself or herself is able to use that knowledge in teaching. In other words, teachers need to understand subject matter in order to be able to use it in teaching. However, this is the actual problem; within practice, teachers are not able to deconstruct subject matter into teachable forms. Ball illustrates this as:

> teachers must be able to work with content for students in its growing, unfinished state, they must be able to do something perverse: work backward from mature and compressed understanding of the content to unpack its constituent elements (Ball, 2000:245).

So, knowledge for teaching requires that teachers take complex content knowledge, break it down into understandable entities and use that in teaching. For example, for reading

literacy, teachers need to have knowledge of morphology to be able to teach vocabulary, so teachers need to be able to unpack morphology into its most basic form such as suffixes, prefixes, compounds and roots to teach learners vocabulary. Another aspect to be considered from a practice perspective is PCK, thus the consideration of linking content and pedagogy. Ball (2000:245) describes this as rooted content knowledge which comprises more than just understanding content itself. It is much deeper than just the content; it is content knowledge *for* teaching (Shulman, 1986:9). In other words, drawing on methods and activities and considering ways to represent and formulate the content so that it is understandable to others. For example, reading literacy teachers need to have a repertoire of knowledge and skills in order to use morphology to teach and develop vocabulary as they will be confronted with a diverse group of learners who will come from different backgrounds with different experiences but still need to learn the same thing. Additionally, Ball states that these two aspects of content knowledge can help to bridge the gap between content and pedagogy, this is because teaching is a practice, a thinking practice as it integrates reasoning and knowing with action (Ball, 2000:246).

Knowing the subject matter is the foundation for PCK. Grossman, Schoenfeld and Lee (2005:205) state that effective teachers need subject matter competence, they need to know how to solve problems which they pose to learners and to know that there are multiple approaches to solving many problems, however, this is not enough. Additionally, teachers need to make the right choices, thus they need to know what kinds of mistakes learners are likely to make, they must be prepared to address the sources of learner's errors in a way that will contribute to their learning. Effective teachers know much more than their subjects and good pedagogy, "they know how students tend to understand (and misunderstand) their subjects; they know how to anticipate and diagnose such misunderstandings and they know how to deal with them when they arise" (Grossman et al., 2005:205) and this is knowledge is known as PCK. Snow et al. (2005:205) sum this up by conceptualising teaching as having these underlying key components:

a) subject matter knowledge;
b) knowledge of learners;
c) the ability to engage learners in active learning;
d) reflective practice (the capacity to examine and learn from one's own practice, including mistakes);
e) PCK; and
f) professional commitment (active participation in professional communities).

This view of teaching also emphasises the application of knowledge in context as well as the relationship among the different types of knowledge teachers should have (Snow et al., 2005:205; Shulman, 1986). Besides this, the fact that learning to teach is a process in which expertise develops over time (a continuum) and is marked by increasing sophistication of and control over a complex and multifaceted knowledge base (Snow et al., 2005:206).

In addition, Grossman et al. (2005:205) state that teachers can begin to develop this knowledge along with the tools and the preference to continue developing it in professional education which is better known as the practicum component. Furthermore, when teachers know what to look for, they will develop more of this on the job as they gain experience with learners and in this way they begin to build their understanding of learners subject matter reasoning and understanding. However, they (Grossman et al., 2005:205) together with Snow et al. (2005:201) acknowledge that the links between content knowledge and teaching performance are not that easy to document.

With particular reference to teaching reading, there is still a lot yet to be learnt about what literacy teachers need to know but even more, about what they need to know when (Snow et al., 2005:207). Even though there are no specific guidelines pertaining to this, we can however refer to the strong research base which already exists that can guide us in thinking about what constitutes PCK in literacy that make a contribution to the skilful teaching thereof. For example, reading comprehension is the most challenging literacy component as the instruction thereof needs to incorporate the concepts that will help teachers to accommodate the complexity thereof as well as teach learners to comprehend. Moreover, in order to teach comprehension, teachers need to have knowledge of pragmatics (i.e., teachers should know how to explain how texts are organised, different types of texts, the use of figurative and idiomatic language) and syntax (i.e., teachers should have knowledge of and be able to explain text structure) (Moats & Foorman, 2003:24; Moats et al., 2010:30 & Moats & Hennessy, 2009:23). So knowledge of pragmatics and syntax is the subject matter or content knowledge needed by teachers in order to teach reading comprehension. But, this content knowledge needs to be made accessible to learners so it should be “deconstructed into teachable forms”, or better known as PCK. Consequently we need to look at what knowledge do teachers have about their subject matter which will allows them to transform this content knowledge (i.e., pragmatics and syntax) into representations, explanations and learning opportunities that will make this content accessible to learners. This can be done by setting clear instructional purposes, selecting appropriate texts, activating learners’ relevant prior knowledge around aspects relating to the text and posing questions about the text which learners have to comprehend. Additionally, interpreting learners thinking, using

their contributions, modelling and verbalising the reading process and attending to complex discourse routines are all aspects of PCK for reading comprehension (Scott, 2009:174).

Setting clear instructional purposes influences the outcomes of learning. Teachers of reading must set and communicate a purpose for reading as this affects learners comprehension. Additionally, the choice of text should also tie in with the purpose of reading as it will create the platform where discussions will stem from. Thus, teachers should also understand the challenges which the text may pose as this will affect the learner's ability to comprehend. Additionally, learners possess prior knowledge about a topic but it is important that teachers activate this knowledge. When reading texts, learners attach the new knowledge to their existing knowledge to comprehend. This is also the springboard for posing questions to learners about the text. Posing questions to learners provide them with an opportunity to think about the text which leads to comprehension but the levels of questioning affects how learners will comprehend. Teachers need to be able to interpret learners thinking based on their responses to the questions posed as well as the discussion about the text. These responses can be of value as student thinking can be used to comprehend. Thus, teachers should be able to use learner responses and weave it back into the discussion but this can be a difficult task. Modelling and verbalising the reading process requires that teachers exhibit the processes they are using to read, this is very important in teaching reading as learners can then see for example, how inferential thinking is used. Furthermore, comprehension involves complex discourse patterns like text-based discussions. Talking about texts is something which learners need to be taught how to do as it leads to learners talking together about the text which evidently aids comprehension (Moats & Hennessy, 2009:22-23).

In essence, I have now established what PCK entails within reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes. However, Grossman et al. (2005:205) state that teachers begin to develop PCK in their professional education, so we need to unpack curricular knowledge within teacher preparation programmes to understand this.

### *2.4.3 Curricular knowledge*

Within Shulman's framework, curricular knowledge is the last knowledge type that forms part of a theoretical framework for teacher preparation. Curricular knowledge gives teachers the "tools" to teach particular content and remediate or evaluate student achievements (Shulman, 1986:10). Put simply, teachers need to be given tools to teach and conduct their work and this relates to the third question which Ball (2000:244) highlighted, namely, how do

we create opportunities for learning subject matter that would enable teachers not only to know but to learn to use what they know in the varied contexts of practice.

In an attempt to address this aspect, Ball (2000:246) highlights the following questions: How can we design opportunities for learning that are aimed at helping teachers use subject matter knowledge to figure out what their learners know, to pose questions, to evaluate and modify their textbooks wisely, to design instructional tasks, to manage class discussions, and to explain the curriculum to parents? One important aspect to note is that all these questions relate to teachers' professional learning. Snow et al. (2005:210) note that within the profession of teaching, a great deal of experience, if not research, has been done about the nature of experiences and content prospective teachers encounter at different levels of the teacher development continuum. Snow et al. (2005:210-211) employ a developmental trajectory when conducting research about the nature of reading acquisition in school settings. In an attempt to decipher how we create opportunities for learning subject matter that would enable teachers not only to know, but to learn to use what they know, in the varied contexts of practice, Snow et al. devised broad principles to guide us in thinking what could and should occur in teacher preparation programmes so that teachers can be equipped with the tools to teach particular content and remediate or evaluate learner achievements.

Snow et al. (2005:216) state that programmes that help teachers apply what they have learnt to particular contexts and learners, ease the transition to classroom teaching. Assigning mentors to students is an attempt to achieve this. A skilled mentor can then provide on-going consultation and evaluation to students. The National Commission on Teaching America's Future found that teachers who had mentors assigned to them were more likely to stay in the profession and could easily move beyond classroom management issues and focus on student learning (National Commission on Teaching America's Future, 1996:80-81).

In other words, curricular knowledge will be developed once students are exposed to supervised practice or what the NCATE calls clinical practice (NCATE, 2010:ii). In the medical field, students are exposed to the field to fully understand it as doctors need to understand the full range of available treatments and their alternatives to treat a disorder for any patient from any given background. This is no different for teachers. Teachers need to have knowledge of the materials of a particular discipline, texts, software programmes, visual materials, demonstrations so that they too can develop "teaching repertoire" to stimulate the growth of all the children with whom they work (Feiman-Nemser, 2001:1018).

Additionally, Snow et al. (2005:219) suggest that programmes which promote articulation among the key components (coursework, practicum experiences) are more likely to help teachers develop a sense of efficacy and professional responsibility as they will need to achieve an integrated understanding of theory and practice. Similarly, teacher preparation programmes will have to make a concerted effort to build conceptual links between classroom, clinical practice or any other field experience in ways that will prepare teachers to apply their course work and other experiences to their practice (Snow et al., 2005:219). This will then alleviate the fragmentation apparent in teacher preparation programmes. Moreover, Feiman-Nemser (2001:1020) reiterates that students need well designed opportunities to link theory and practice, to develop skills and strategies, cultivate habits of analysis and reflection through focused observation, child study, analysis of cases, micro-teaching and other laboratory experiences.

Shulmans' theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge can be used as a framework for reading literacy teacher preparation programmes. The content knowledge (subject matter knowledge), PCK and curricular knowledge were illustrated accordingly, specifically for reading literacy teacher preparation. This knowledge base has implications for the design of teacher preparation programmes and this is discussed in Chapter 3.

## 2.5 Summary

A major problem within teacher preparation programmes has been highlighted, that being the gap between theory and practice. Literature has shown that a solution to bridging this gap is to look at the design of teacher preparation programmes; these programmes should improve their clinical practice component so that teachers are prepared to become expert practitioners who know how to use the knowledge of the profession to advance learners learning as well as to build their professional knowledge through practice. Additionally, it was also established that the integration of theory and practice in student learning can be achieved if courses are fully grounded in practice and interwoven with academic content and professional development. Shulman's theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge was used to form the knowledge base for such reading literacy teacher preparation programmes as it focuses on the dimensions of content knowledge needed to address the gap between theory and practice. Chapter 3 unpacks WIL and how it can be used as a vehicle to best develop this knowledge within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes.

# CHAPTER 3: WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING WITHIN FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMMES

## 3.1 Introduction

According to Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006:1021), the traditional approach of teacher preparation programmes is generally characterised by a strong emphasis on theory that is ‘‘transferred’’ to teachers in the form of lectures, and teaching practice is usually seen as the opportunity to apply what is learnt in lectures. Furthermore, lecturing appears to be viewed as an appropriate form of teaching about teaching; this theory-into-practice view of teacher education is increasingly being challenged as it has led to many limitations and inadequacies.

Knowledge concerning teacher preparation shows a gap between theory and practice (Ball, 2000:242; Korthagen, 2011:34; Korthagen et al. 2006:1022). Teacher preparation programmes have been found to be fragmented and the existence of this gap has been highlighted as a major point of concern as illustrated in the previous chapter (cf. chapter 2). Korthagen et al. (2006:1021) state that teacher education also finds itself in a difficult position as graduates of teacher preparation programmes have highlighted the irrelevance of teacher preparation for the reality of everyday practice. Bullough and Gitlin (2001:1) found that courses within teacher preparation programmes were disjointed as methods courses were disconnected from curriculum courses, and both were disconnected from practice teaching.

However, it was found that in order to bridge this gap, the practice component of teacher preparation programmes should be improved so that expert practitioners (teachers) can be produced. Teachers, who are considered expert practitioners, know how to use the knowledge of the profession to advance learners learning as well as to build their professional knowledge through practice. The NCATE (2010:ii) emphasises that teacher preparation programmes should make provision for programmes which are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses. The reason being that clinically based programmes will create varied and extensive opportunities for pre-service teachers to connect what they learn (theory) with the challenge of using it (practice), while under the expert guidance of skilled clinical educators (mentors[2]).

[2] Mentors can be regarded as teachers in the workplace who guide students in learning workplace practices (Cooper et al., 2010:xii).

Ball and Forzani (2009:497) state that it is necessary to fundamentally renovate the curriculum of professional education for teachers, wherever and through whatever pathway it occurs. Ball and Forzani (2009:497) claim that practice must be at the core of teachers' preparation and that this entails close and detailed attention to the work of teaching and the development of ways to train people to do that work effectively. The reason for this claim is that Ball and Forzani (2009:497-498) are of the opinion that the work of teachers includes broad cultural competence and relational sensitivity, communication skills, and the combination of rigour and imagination which are fundamental to effective practice. Furthermore, Ball and Forzani (2009: 497-498) purport that skilful teaching requires using appropriate tasks and activities accordingly and integrating activities in particular cases and contexts. This should be based on knowledge and the understanding of one's students and on the application of professional judgment. This integration also depends on opportunities to practice and to measure one's performance against exemplars. Performing these activities effectively is intricate work. Thus, teachers' professional training should be designed to help teachers learn to enact these tasks skilfully. Such training would involve seeing examples of each task, learning to dissect and analyse the work, watching demonstrations, and then practicing under close supervision and with detailed coaching aimed at fostering improvement (Ball & Forzani, 2009:497-498). This is an example of what the NCATE (2010:ii) describes as clinical practice and should be achieved by integrating theory and practice in student learning which occurs through practice teaching or WIL.

Darling-Hammond (2010:40) states that teachers complain that university work has often been "too theoretical," meaning that it is too abstract. It is so abstract that teachers are often left deprived of specific tools to use in the classroom. However, the theoretically grounded tools teachers need are many, and teachers in training need opportunities to practice with these tools systematically (Darling-Hammond, 2010:40). Similarly, Young et al. (2001:1) argue that the preparation of teachers is a lengthy process which should be filled with high-quality learning experiences based on sound theoretical principles. Additionally, time should be allotted for applying these theoretical principles to practice as well as to reflect on the learning. Hence, the previous chapter argued for a practice-focused curriculum for learning about teaching that would include significant attention not just to the knowledge demands of teaching, but to the actual tasks and activities involved in the work of teaching. Similarly, it would emphasise repeated opportunities for novices to practice carrying out the interactive work of teaching and not just to talk about the work of teaching (Ball & Forzani, 2009:503).

The CHE (2011:4) states that the integration of theory and practice in student learning can occur through a range of WIL approaches, apart from formal or informal work placements

(CHE, 2011:4). The primary intention of WIL is to enhance student learning, and to this end several innovative curricular, pedagogical and assessment forms have developed in response to concerns about graduateness, employability and civic responsibility (CHE, 2011:4). Furthermore, Cooper et al. (2010:19) indicate that industries want to employ graduates who are already familiar with workplace culture and demands, and who understand the intersection of theory and practice. Cooper et al. (2010:19) reiterate that students want to find everyday relevance and practical applications in their studies for their life after graduation.

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate what clinical practice entails for it to narrow and/or bridge the gap between theory and practice. Considering that WIL is an approach which seeks to actively build links between the world of teaching and learning (theory), and the world of professional practice (practice) (CHE, 2011:9), it can be seen as a vehicle to integrate theory and practice in student learning in so doing prospective teachers learn *about* practice, *in* practice, *from* practice, *for* practice, and ultimately, *to* practise. In order to achieve this, WIL should be analysed critically.

## 3.2 Work integrated learning

### *3.2.1 Definition*

According to Cooper et al. (2010:37), WIL is an umbrella concept encompassing a variety of terms used in professional, vocational, liberal arts and science education. This metaphor of the umbrella concept is extended by the CHE (2011:4) who state that the term WIL is also used to describe curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns. These curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices aid the integration of theory and practice in student learning which is what the implementation of WIL approaches, which includes formal or informal work placements, aim to achieve (CHE, 2011:4). Put simply, WIL is primarily intended to enhance student learning by integrating formal learning (theory) and workplace learning (practice).

Similarly, WIL can be described as an approach to career-focussed education that includes classroom-based and workplace-based forms of learning that are appropriate for the professional qualification. However, what distinguishes WIL from ideas of learning-for-work is that it emphasises the integrative aspects of learning to work (practice). WIL could thus be described as an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces (CHE, 2011:4). This is supported by Cooper et al.

(2010:41) who purport that WIL involves student engagement in experimental and **situated learning** because an intentional aspect of the above mentioned definition which can be highlighted is that learning is situated within the act of working.

### *3.2.2 Situated learning*

Learning that is situated in the workplace or a community (situated learning) is a formal aspect of a university curriculum where learning is expected to consist of the integration of theory and practice (Cooper et al., 2010:1-2). According to Lave and Wenger (1991:29-30), a situated learning space is one where learning and its application takes place in the same location. This usually happens with a group of people who are willing to work together and are prepared to support each other's learning (cf. section 3.3.5). In other words, situated learning is largely about students *working to learn*, whilst being guided by the objective of *learning to work*.

According to Cooper et al. (2010:58), the broad aim of WIL is that students should achieve professional competence, not merely as a professional in a specific field but rather by mastering the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes needed to function effectively in diverse situations in diverse, real-world contexts. So, w*orking to learn* illustrates how WIL ensures that students are learning 'through' work by *learning to work* in various situated contexts.

WIL is included in curricula for this very reason and because it provides unique opportunities for learning. Additionally, universities want their students to engage in work and community service as it is a vehicle for learning and experiences gained help that students learn to work to be work-ready on graduation (Cooper et al., 2010:26; CHE, 2011:4). Despite the agenda of why WIL is implemented in the curriculum, the value of it should not be underestimated as it takes the strengths of theory and blends it with rich, tacit practice knowledge of workplaces and communities. This can happen in various forms and through various models.

### *3.2.3 Models of WIL*

A variety of terms are used to refer to WIL, these include, practicum, internships, field-work, cooperative education and service learning (Cooper et al., 2010:37). In teacher preparation programmes terms such as teaching practice/practice teaching, professional practice and service learning are also used. Although the terminology used to describe WIL programmes and practices vary, they are all based on a common understanding of the importance of enabling students to integrate theoretical knowledge gained through formal study, with the

practice-based knowledge gained through immersion in a work or professional context. Table 3.1 gives a description of the various terms used for WIL.

**Table 3.1: A description of the terms used for WIL**

| Work integrated learning term | Description |
|---|---|
| practicum | Practicums usually involve extended periods of time (usually block periods) spent in an organisation to develop skills and competencies related to professional learning under the supervision of an experienced professional. Theoretical training occurs before the commencement of the practicum.<br>Practicums are usually part of courses. |
| internships | Internships are very similar to practicums but may extend over longer periods of time. An internship may refer to study after a course has been completed. |
| field-work | Fieldwork refers to short periods of time spent in a work place where the student is able to observe and participate in work. Fieldwork is linked to academic programmes. |
| cooperative education | Cooperative education refers to periods of work experience which are integrated into university classroom studies. The work experience is aligned to the students career goals. Cooperative education has a strong emphasis on the integration of theory and practice in the curriculum and on partnerships with the industry. |
| service learning | Service learning is a course-based programme as it is part of the training programme. Through service learning, students engage in community activities which meet the needs of the community, students then use these activities to develop an understanding of course material as well as gain an understanding for civic responsibilities. |

Cooper et al. (2010:38-39).

From the descriptions of the models, it is possible to draw the conclusion that student learning, should happen in university lecture halls as well as be situated within work places and communities. So, learning in and through work place and communities is the driving force for a new strategic initiative (WIL) within teacher preparation programmes. Because of this, Cooper et al. (2010:4) state that "WIL is seen as a strategy for developing knowledge workers for the knowledge economy who are competent not only in specific vocational skills which include information technology skills, but also in understanding the

interconnectedness between theoretical, practical and general life experience knowledge". Once students understand these knowledge types they could be considered graduates who are familiar with workplace cultures and demands as well as a graduate who understands the intersection of theory and practice which is what industry, or in this case the field of education, also needs (Cooper et al., 2010:19).

Moreover, Cooper et al. (2010:33) reiterate that theoretical learning and practice learning can be complementary parts of a whole as each elaborate and challenge one another. Furthermore, it requires intentional curriculum planning, well-prepared students, authentic workplace relations, capable supervisors, as well as constructive, mutually beneficial partnerships between university disciplines and their related industries and community groups.

Currently, in South Africa the practicum experience as well as the service learning model is used by teacher preparation programmes. This is stipulated in the *Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* as follows:

> The learning-in-practice, workplace-based component of WIL for teacher education qualifications mostly take place in classroom and school settings, but could also include a small component of service learning in community settings.
> (DHET, 2015:15)

Additionally, the DHET (2015:21-23) state that WIL is an essential part of the Bachelor of Education (Baccalaureus Educationis) (BEd) programme which includes supervised and assessed teaching practice. It should be spread out across the academic programme and the school experience component should take place in blocks of varying duration throughout the programme (students should spend a minimum of 20 weeks and a maximum of 32 weeks in formally supervised and assessed school-based practices over the four-year duration of the degree). A mentorship programme, proper supervision and adequate school placements in functional schools should be envisaged as pre-requisites for the practicum experience.

## 3.3 Conceptual framework

The purpose of a conceptual framework is to learn from the experience and expertise of others as you develop your own knowledge and perspectives as it allows you to make reasoned, defensible choices about how the research will be explored (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012:14). Moreover, conceptual frameworks are constructed as it incorporates pieces of information obtained through research, in other words, it is a framework which is built by

incorporating relevant theories and research conducted about the phenomena studied as this could be key sources to understand what is going on with the phenomena being studied (Maxwell, 2005:41). Maxwell (2005:39) states that a conceptual framework is "the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that support and inform the research" which is what is highlighted in this section.

Cooper et al. (2010:37) state that all WIL is characterised by seven key dimensions: *purpose*; *context*; nature of the *integration*; *curriculum* issues; the *learning*; *partnerships* between the university and the workplace or community; and the *support* provided to the student and the workplace. The value of WIL is that it takes the strengths of the theoretical orientations of academic education and blends these with the rich, tacit practice knowledge of workplaces and communities. This integration is achieved through focusing on the seven key dimensions when planning and implementing work integrated learning. These dimensions as proposed by Cooper et al. (2010:39-42) will form the conceptual framework for this study. This framework which includes the seven key dimensions aligns the practicum component of teacher preparation programmes as well as shapes and promotes WIL. Cooper et al. (2010:39) proposed that successful implementation of any WIL model needs to include all seven dimensions of the framework. Cantalini-Williams, Cooper, Grierson, Maynes, Rich, Tessaro, Brewer, Tedesco and Wideman-Johnston (2014:5) state that the seven dimensions are not deemed to be hierarchical or mutually exclusive.

### *3.3.1 Purpose*

Cooper et al. (2010:39) list **purpose** as the first dimension for WIL. Cooper et al. (2010:39) state that having a clear purpose for WIL goes beyond simply integrating theory and practice. A clear purpose for WIL will clarify goals, articulate expectations and intended outcomes for all the stakeholders involved in WIL, namely the students, the workplace, the university and the community. This will ensure that strong partnerships develop in suitable contexts that facilitate integrated, supported student learning. Additionally, defining the purpose of WIL experiences for students will also serve as a guide as to which WIL model to use. Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:23) state that one needs to take cognisance of many considerations in terms of the purpose dimension. Student teachers' perceptions of teaching beyond the traditional classroom need to be broadened and is needed as emphasis is placed on work integrated learning in *diverse contexts*. Due to the fact that there is a need to develop and articulate intended outcomes for all the stakeholders involved in WIL, they (the stakeholders) need to be involved and give input in this activity of developing and articulating outcomes as well as clarifying their role within WIL. This working relationship will have to be an on-going and interactive occurrence amongst stakeholders where they co-

construct the WIL component together (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster & Cobb, 1995:90). Additionally, Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:23) purport that if purposeful outcomes are to be implemented and realised, preparatory activities and appropriate supporting materials need to be in place before and during as well as upon the completion of a practicum.

### *3.3.2 Context*

**Context** is the second dimension for WIL as highlighted by Cooper et al. (2010:39). Contexts or the workplace are important for practice learning for professions as learning is achieved through work. This is facilitated through various strategies such as *guided learning*, *mentoring* and *coaching* as learners are immersed in a community of practice where they move from the periphery to full participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991: 34-35). Workplace learning has great value for students as it provides sites for learning vocational, professional, disciplinary and service expertise (Cooper et al., 2010:39). This is supported by Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:23) who identify the context dimension as "the diverse workplace settings that allow for the direct application of teaching and pedagogical skills". Moreover, by immersing student teachers in authentically diverse South African contexts, teacher education becomes more realistic, providing a stronger link between theory and practice (Robinson, 2015:12).

Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:23) reiterate that the context should allow for collaboration and reflection among teacher candidates and their advisors/supervisors who should form a community of practice. Furthermore, they recommend that workplace contexts such as schools and communities be provided with on-going support and be engaged in on-going communication.

### *3.3.3 Integration*

Cooper et al. (2010:40) emphasise that **integration** is another dimension for WIL. For WIL, integration refers to the process of putting together formal learning and productive work. Put simply, it refers to connecting theory and practice as it involves the application of theory with real-world problem solving, abstract thinking, practical actions and discipline specific skills or PCK as defined by Shulman (cf. Chapter 2 section 2.2) (Cooper et al., 2010:40; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5). Darling-Hammond et al. (1995:95) illustrate this by stating that:

> effective teaching is context based and must be adapted to individual students, successful teacher preparation must involve not only a foundation of theoretical knowledge but also a rich array of classroom experiences that help teacher candidates integrate their formal knowledge of teaching and learning with the

knowledge of adaptive practice that can be gained only by working with the guidance of experienced teachers.

It is important to note that integration is not simply an action but rather a learning process which is encouraged in student learning in the workplace and the university through *dialogue*, *reflection*, *tutorials* and *assessable work*. This should require of students to put knowledge into action and develop the ability to act knowledgeably and responsibly in the workplace context (Cooper et al., 2010:40). However, this can only happen if integration between theory and practice is to be fully developed through dialogue, reflection and tutorials which are focused on applicable work experiences. Moreover, Korthagen et al. (2006:1024) emphasise that reflection is seen as the essential tool for linking practice and theory.

Similarly, student teachers will benefit if WIL experiences make provision for the direct application and integration of their teaching skills. Besides, these work experiences should also be designed in such a way that they enable the student to foster an inquiry stance (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:23-24).

### *3.3.4 Curriculum*

Learning in the workplace should be included in the **curriculum**, which is also the fourth dimension of WIL (Cooper et al., 2010:40). Curriculum as a dimension of WIL acknowledges that declarative knowledge, which is the information passed on in books and lectures about theory, and functional knowledge, which is the application of declarative knowledge in real world situations are integrated into experiences. Put simply, declarative knowledge (theory acquired in coursework, namely the *what*) and the functional knowledge (workplace practice or the *how*) are integrated into the WIL experience (Cooper et al., 2010:40; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5). This will lead to major implications for implementation in that it involves making sure that learning in the workplace is embedded throughout course work at universities as well as the work-based curriculum. However, Cooper et al. (2010:40-41) suggest that the curriculum should be constructively aligned. This refers to the practice of defining intended learning outcomes, choosing teaching and learning activities that lead to achieving these outcomes, assessing students to measure whether the outcomes set have been mastered and to see how well they matched what was intended, and a final mark should then be given (CHE, 2011:13). The constructive alignment of the curriculum provides a structure for designing WIL as curriculum alignment in WIL aims to ensure that outcomes, pedagogy and assessment are matched (CHE, 2011:13).

Furthermore, Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:24) emphasise that teacher preparation programme coursework should address the importance associated with the practicum experience and include content on topics such as effective strategies for mentoring as mandatory elements of the core curriculum. Practicum experiences should also be aligned with the curriculum of the teacher education programme and the interests/expertise of the participants. Additionally, both the theoretical knowledge *(what)* and practical knowledge *(how)* need to be included in the curriculum. Teacher preparation programmes also need to ensure that assessment practices are aligned with the learning outcomes set for the practicum component. Due to the fact that the workplace learning can be so diverse, students need to consider and understand the culture of the practicum setting. In order to achieve this, the curriculum of teacher preparation programmes should include courses intended to address the specific outcomes and culture of the practicum setting to be experienced.

According to the CHE (2011:13), WIL entails the recontextualisation of both academic and professional knowledge domains, and the alignment of workplace and academic interests, to the extent that this is possible or desirable. In other words, curriculum development needs to address the multiple interests of all the partners involved so the design, implementation and evaluations should be done in partnership with academics, workplace representatives, and students.

A well aligned curriculum will consist of learning activities that require the integration of disciplinary and workplace knowledge and skills, it will also make practice a fundamental component as it can act as an organiser for both theoretical and practical learning. Additionally, the placement of students in authentic contexts (learning environments) where they engage in meaningful activities may lead to enhanced and integrative learning (CHE, 2011:15). According to the CHE (2011:15), these strategies ensure that students focus on the integration of theoretical knowledge and practice in ways that allow them to connect university or disciplinary learning (theory) with workplace application (practice). In other words, it is important in WIL curricula to ensure that course outcomes, learning activities and assessment practices are aligned.

In essence, assessment in WIL should be aligned with the intended outcomes of the subject or programme, it should be aligned with the purpose of WIL (learning by doing in a community of practice) and the teaching and learning activities, and students need to be prepared for assessment (CHE, 2011:41). However, the National Institute of Education (NIE)

(2009:94) remind us that in the context of teacher preparation a distinction needs to be made between *assessment of learning* and *assessment for learning.*

Assessment for learning can be regarded as formative assessment because the purpose of this assessment is to "enable students through effective feedback to fully understand their own learning and the goals they are aiming for" (NIE, 2009:94). Put simply, students are given feedback on their work to improve their learning. Assessment of learning refers to the process of grading students to determine their success and to report on their learning (NIE, 2009:94) so this can be regarded as summative assessment (CHE, 2011:43). Additionally, the NIE (2009:95) state that in order to equip teachers for schools, the role of assessment and good assessment practices should be modelled and effective assessment tools should be used in teacher preparation programmes. The NIE suggest that the use of portfolios is a way to bring teaching, learning and assessment together (NIE, 2009:98). Little, Goe and Bell (2009:10) describe portfolios as a collection of materials compiled by students to exhibit evidence of their teaching practice (WIL). Additionally, materials are collected and created by the student for evaluation purposes. Similarly, the portfolio process requires students to reflect on the materials and explain why certain artefacts were included and how they relate to the purpose. However, portfolios do not just contain exemplary work but should also illustrate evidence that the student is able to reflect, identify problems, modify aspects of their work and use information to plan future activities (Little et al., 2009:10).

### *3.3.5 Learning*

**Learning** is a central element within this chapter and is also the fifth dimension for WIL. According to Cooper et al. (2010:41), WIL involves student engagement in experimental and situated learning which should be guided by clearly explained learning intentions and expected learning outcomes. This is because learning is always a work in progress and has a developmental component (Cooper et al., 2010:63). This is illustrated clearly when Cooper et al. (2010:41) state that within WIL, students participate in a spiral learning process where theory and practice are conceptualised and reconceptualised with each spiral deepening the students understanding.

In order to understand this spiral we need to look at how knowledge is built through WIL. Knowledge is acquired at universities through the traditional academic lecture but it does not transfer to practice in the workplace in a straightforward manner. This is because there is a distinct difference in the way knowledge is organised in university courses. In academic programmes, knowledge is 'packaged' in the form of separate academic subjects which contrasts to the way that knowledge is acquired in practice. In practice, knowledge is often

tacit, and is acquired in a more social way and in a situated context (CHE, 2011:11). In the field of Education there are some basic skills that do transfer well to the workplace but the success thereof is limited to routine practices. However, when the workplace presents circumstances where complex and discretionary judgements are required, a more complex form of knowledge is needed which is usually acquired in an academic lecture (theory). Inherently this is regarded as a scientific form of knowledge. The CHE (2011:11) state that scientific knowledge (theory) should be acquired for what it is because if it is learnt in a practical context, it gets tied to that context and the transfer capacity is lost. In addition, theory provides the knowledge base for posing and solving problems in the world of professional practice. This highlights a difficulty students experience because this knowledge is obtained from their university academic courses, and they often fail to understand the relevance of disciplinary knowledge, and experience difficulties in transferring what they learnt in the lectures to the workplace (CHE, 2011:11). Thus, in order to deal with this complex issue a transformative process is needed where students will have to change their understanding and interpretation of theory, personal perspective, beliefs, values and practice. In other words, this transformative process helps students to comprehend what they are doing and learning, interpret theory, practice it and develop personal dispositions. (Cooper et al., 2010:41)

According to Cooper et al. (2010:37), WIL takes the strengths of theory of academic education and blends these with rich, tacit practice knowledge of workplaces and communities. This means that the learning which develops in WIL takes place in a situated context, or what Lave and Wenger call situated learning. According to Lave and Wenger (1991:29-30), a situated learning space is one where learning and its application takes place in the same location. This usually happens with a group of people who are willing to work together and are prepared to support each other's learning. Situated learning as proposed by Lave and Wenger is a theoretical description of learning in a *community of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991:29). Lave and Wenger (1991:29) illustrate this by stating "learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and that the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community". In other words, this type of learning is influenced by socialisation and simulation. So the traditional method of transferring as highlighted in section 2.4.2 is not desirable within situated learning. However, a movement towards a context where a group of people come together (community) to enquire and solve a problem is the focus giving rise to the community of practice. Moreover, learners who seek communities of enquiry do so because they have shared interests and seek to benefit from the knowledge of others who may be more experienced and may be more knowledgeable which then also enhances

learning (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5-6). Additionally, because the learning which occurs through WIL is situated, it would include opportunities for observation, review and reflection for the student. The student will also have to make connections to experiences (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5-6).

According to Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:24), within the dimension of learning, teacher preparation programmes need to articulate explicitly the value of experiential learning from the practicum as well as encourage implicit learning through related work experiences as there is a great difference between the two and both are needed for learning to take place within WIL. Teacher preparation programmes would also have to provide opportunities through observation, review, reflection and refinement so that the transformative process of spiral learning can occur so that the students can grow, develop understandings as well as professional identities.

Experimental learning refers to learning activities that engage the student directly in the phenomena being studied (NIE, 2009:66). Furthermore, the CHE (2011:72) describes experiential learning as learning that has meaningful learner involvement and involves the process of making meaning from direct experiences but also involves learning through reflection of these experiences. Because field work, micro-teaching and other similar teaching activities are encompassed in experimental learning, it is pertinent to WIL as the student learns by being engaged and immersed in these experiences. Moreover, teacher preparation programmes should not disregard these experiences as they lead to implicit learning.

### *3.3.6 Partnerships*

WIL builds links between workplace knowledge and the academic curriculum. It also helps students to transfer academic knowledge to workplaces. Thus for this reason, WIL cannot occur without partners who represent the different knowledge fields (CHE, 2011:51). This is reiterated by Cooper et al. (2010:42) who accentuate that WIL is not possible without the establishment of **partnerships** between the work industry and educational institutions. The effectiveness of WIL depends to a major extent on the commitment of both academic and professional partners. For too long educational institutions and practice communities have been merely interested, disconnected observers of each other (Cooper et al., 2010:34). For reciprocal partnerships to be established there needs to be synergy between partners, so that if there is a major shift or change of direction or values in one, it will impact on the other (Cooper et al., 2010:34).

It is important to note that teacher preparation programmes are not solely responsible for the preparation of teachers. Preparation programmes, school districts, teachers and policymakers need to accept that their common goal of preparing effective teachers for improved student achievement cannot be achieved without each other's full participation, thus making them partners. They must form new strategic partnerships to share in the responsibility of preparing teachers in radically different ways (NCATE, 2010:3). Acknowledging the partners involved in teacher preparation also alludes to the fact that they will form a diverse body of partners as each of them has their own strengths and ideas. The establishment of partnerships will make provision for these diverse interests that are represented, draw on their strengths as well as give rise to new ways of improving and developing the common goals addressed (Cooper et al., 2010:42). This is confirmed by Darling-Hammond et al. (1995:90) who found that the establishment of partnerships among teacher preparation partners and stakeholders helped in how teachers were prepared as well as the conditions within which they practiced. Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:6) raise further benefits of establishing partnerships among teacher preparation partners by stating that "partnerships involve the integration of multiple stakeholders at different levels in varying contexts, all with shared goals. Strong partnerships and mutual goals result in more effective practicum processes". Therefore, through partnerships, the workplace industry and the university can then understand each other's interests and improve the quality of education in both the university and the workplace.

Considering the dimension of partnerships within WIL, teacher preparation programmes will have to plan their practicum model collaboratively with multiple partners from diverse contexts. Moreover, it will also be necessary to provide specific support for partnerships on an institutional level as well as emphasise the importance of these partnerships, and of professionalism for all participants (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:24). It is only when preparation programmes become deeply engaged with schools will their clinical preparation become truly robust and will they be able to support the development of prospective teachers' urgently needed skills and learn what schools really need. It is therefore imperative to note that only through much closer cooperation with preparation programmes will districts be able to hire new teachers who are better prepared to be effective in their schools. Through effective partnerships teacher preparation programmes will be able to integrate course work, theory and pedagogy with practitioner knowledge (NCATE, 2010:3).

Cooper et al. (2010:34) synthesised principles upon which the design, establishment and maintenance of partnerships can be grounded. These include:

- A shared vision and clearly articulated values;
- Shared goals that are mutually beneficial to partners;
- Multi-level relationships based on trust and mutual respect;
- Balance of power amongst the partners;
- Multidimensional participation of multiple sectors that act in the service of a complex problem;
- Sharing of strengths and resources;
- Integrating institutional mission and support systems of the partners;
- Clear communications, decision-making processes and feedback mechanisms for all stakeholders;
- Shared credit for the partnerships' accomplishment; and
- Regular evaluation with a focus on both methods and outcomes.

Cooper et al. (2010:34-35) state that these principles have relevance for higher education for the formation of WIL partnerships as it is now time for universities to recognise that their WIL programmes provide mechanisms for establishing authentic, multidimensional relationships with their local communities and related industries, and to value them because of this potential, not merely as a means of producing work-ready graduates. Furthermore, Cooper et al. (2010:4) note that the partnerships between higher education institutions and work or community organisations are often based on goodwill alone. The new interest in WIL is provoking universities to change their systems to find ways to engage in programmes and partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

### *3.3.7 Support*

Due to the fact that there are a number of partners involved in WIL, **support** is vital throughout the programme making this the seventh dimension of WIL (Cooper et al., 2010:42). Cooper et al. (2010:42) state that students and workplaces require support before, during and after any WIL programme. This is because besides WIL being challenging, creating anxiety and uncertainty, students also come to higher education with diverse and unique experiences. So they need support in knowing how to approach organisations and present themselves to employers, as well as knowing what to expect and how learning takes place. Furthermore, Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:6) state that support should be on-going throughout the WIL programme as it accounts for and accommodates

these diverse needs and includes the practical, administrative, educational and emotional components.

Administrative support refers to the assistance with policies and procedures at all stages of the WIL process and educational support is also necessary as students learn about workplace and institutional expectations, the challenges of learning in the workplace, making sense of their experiences in working with others and developing an understanding of reflection (Cooper et al., 2010:42). Offering support within a programme can be a daunting task, thus Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:24) note that teacher preparation programmes and other partners of WIL should plan collaboratively for practical, administrative, educational and affective support components such as peer mentoring, informative materials, faculty involvement and appropriate resources. This needs to happen so that there is on-going assistance and guidance for students, their WIL supervisors (typically the teachers in the classrooms and lecturers from their universities) and each organisation that is involved in the practicum model.

The dimensions highlighted above comprise the conceptual framework for this study. These dimensions should be taken cognisance of when devising a WIL programme as it can be seen as a vehicle used to bridge the theory practice divide as highlighted in Chapter 2 (cf. section 2.4.2).

## 3.4 An international and national perspective on WIL

In the previous sections, WIL was contextualised and delineated. It can be concluded that WIL aims to provide students with unique opportunities to identify, develop and use theory to interpret, explain and intervene in authentic experiences as well as allow students the opportunity to affirm their career choices and develop intrapersonal awareness about their career choices. Furthermore, WIL also gives students the opportunity to learn the particular competencies of their specific professions and contexts whilst they assume roles within which they must function as responsible citizens contributing to a community (Cooper et al., 2010:58).

The CHE (2011:3) states that governments around the world are concerned that universities make the highest possible contribution to students' transition into the workplace once they graduate from their courses. It is therefore important that programmes have to make a concerted effort to promote graduates' successful integration into the world of work and that enable graduates to make meaningful contributions in contexts of development. The next

section illustrates what national and international efforts have been made to get preservice teacher preparation candidates ready for the workplace.

### *3.4.1 WIL within the United States*

In the United States it is recognised that prospective teachers learn just as other students do: by studying, practicing, and reflecting; by collaborating with others; by looking closely at learners and their work; and by sharing what they see. For prospective teachers, this kind of learning cannot occur in university classrooms divorced from schools or in schools which are divorced from current research (The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996:31).

However, upon investigating teacher preparation programmes, The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:31-32) found that American teacher education programmes taught theory separately from application. In lecture halls, teachers were taught to teach from texts and by lecturers who had not themselves ever practiced what they were teaching. Students' courses on subject matter were disconnected from their courses on teaching methods, which were in turn disconnected from their courses on learning and development. Thus, when they entered their own classrooms, they could not remember or apply much of what they had learnt; so they reverted to what they knew best, the way they (the teachers) had been taught. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:31-32), breaking this cycle requires that teachers are educated in partnerships with schools that are exemplars of what is possible rather than what has been done.

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:32) identified the following difficulties within teacher preparation programmes:

- **Inadequate Time –** the fact that the undergraduate degree is confined to four years makes it hard to learn subject matter, child development, learning theories, and effective teaching strategies.
- **Fragmentation –** fragmentation in courses occur because key elements that teachers have to learn are disconnected from each other. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:32) found that coursework is separate from practice teaching; professional skills are segmented into separate courses; faculties in the arts and sciences are isolated from education professors. Would-be teachers are left to their own devices to put it all together.

- **Uninspired Teaching Methods -** traditional lecture methods still dominate in much of higher education so prospective teachers do not learn active, hands-on and minds-on teaching methods which they should experience first hand in their training.
- **Superficial Curriculum -** The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:32) found that the curriculum used in teacher preparation programmes is superficial as a focus is placed on subject matter methods and educational psychology. Pre-service teachers do not learn deeply about how to understand and handle real problems of practice.
- **Traditional Views of Schooling –** a deficit in the preparation of teachers is also identified as institutions have pressures to prepare candidates for schools, most pre-service teachers learn to work in isolation, rather than in teams, and to master chalkboards and textbooks instead of implementing technology.

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:32) labelled these difficulties as "the absence of powerful teacher education" and found it to be a major problem. However, as a result of this they followed the European example of dealing with similar teacher preparation problems. Universities created graduate-level teacher preparation programmes which allowed for more extended clinical training. These efforts have focused on transforming curriculum to address the demands of teaching for greater understanding and teaching a more diverse student population, and on integrating theory and practice by creating professional development schools partnerships with schools that exhibit state-of-the-art practice. The professional development schools were created as they would serve as sites for student teaching and internships for preservice teachers where practice can be linked to coursework. These professional development schools also allow for the development of long-term relationships between the universities and school so that common programmes of teacher preparation and ongoing professional development can be developed (The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996:32-34).

The potential of the use of professional practice schools was acknowledged and the benefits thereof was widely accepted as The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996:34) states "these new programmes and partnerships have the potential to reinvent teacher education just as the development of extended medical education and the creation of teaching hospitals transformed medical education". However, it was found to be a fragile system as policy did not accommodate it and a great number of teacher preparation programmes did not adopt this model.

Furthermore, in 2010 the NCATE aimed to transform teacher preparation as the public demanded better prepared teachers who would be effective, remain in teaching, and sustain school improvement as concerns have been raised by critics, policymakers, teachers, and school district leaders about how teacher preparation programmes are inadequately preparing teachers for the new realities of the classroom (NCATE, 2010:2). Even in 2010, there was still a need to move away from a norm which emphasized academic preparation and course work loosely linked to school-based experiences to programmes that are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses (NCATE, 2010:ii).

An investigation into how teachers were prepared was conducted, and once this was concluded two major shifts took place in teacher preparation. One shift that took place was the redesign of teacher education programmes from beginning to end. This was due to the segmentation in teacher preparation programmes as subject-matter preparation, theory, and pedagogy taught in isolated intervals and too far removed from clinical practice (NCATE, 2010:2). The other factor considered in the transformation of teacher preparation programmes is the fact that teacher preparation programmes are not solely responsible for the preparation of teachers. The preparation of teachers involve stakeholders such as the university staff, school districts, teachers within schools, and all these stakeholders need to accept responsibility for the preparation of teachers through forming strategic partnerships (NCATE, 2010:3). These strategic partnerships will enable teacher preparation programmes to integrate course work, theory and pedagogy with practitioner knowledge.

In the United States, the model of professional development schools was not ignored by the NCATE, they simply called for more *clinically based preparation*, which fully integrates content, pedagogy, and professional coursework around a core of clinical experiences (NCATE, 2010:8). The NCATE (2010:8) recognise that teacher preparation programmes cannot simply adjust current models by simply increasing opportunities for clinical practice or creating longer internships and moving towards established partnerships between the parties involved in teacher preparation. Deans, higher education institutions and teachers' unions supported the creation of partnerships which focused on building strong connections between the preparation of teachers and schools. So professional practice schools were established based on this and were staffed and structured to simultaneously support student achievement and clinical preparation and, sometimes, the full continuum of teacher learning. The intention is to play a similar role to teaching hospitals in medical education. Many preparation programmes have moved in this direction (NCATE, 2010:8).

According to the NCATE (2010:8-9), clinically based approaches have numerous advantages over traditional practica and student teaching arrangements, and partnerships that exist in name only. This is because they address the context for teacher education preparation programmes and require school districts to take on shared responsibility for teacher education. However, in clinically based programmes, preparation programmes learn more directly what they need to know about what schools really need and they enable districts to hire new teachers who are prepared to be effective in their schools. This is because in these programmes, teacher preparation can more fully incorporate practitioner knowledge through the development of clinical faculty. Prospective teachers can achieve the full value of embedded clinical experience because school districts will have committed to reallocating, restructuring and restaffing schools for clinical preparation. Furthermore, students who are the primary focus can then benefit from functioning learning communities formed to support teacher learning and from the additional human resources that can be focused on their needs. Together, these partners can shift a programme's emphasis from learning about teaching to using knowledge to develop practice that effectively addresses students' needs. It also calls for stringent new accountability mechanisms and the creation of reward structures that ensure that this takes place. This shift, also better reflects the complex nature of professional practice.

### *3.4.2 WIL within Ontario*

According to Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:7)[3], teacher preparation programmes in Ontario consist of two different programme structures, namely concurrent and consecutive programmes. This was developed due to the Ontario College of Teachers Act 347/02 of 1996. In the consecutive teacher education programme, prospective teachers, otherwise known as teacher candidates, usually complete a bachelor's degree before registering in a teacher education degree programme. In a concurrent teacher education programme, prospective teachers usually complete their undergraduate bachelor's degree while completing their Bachelor of Education degree. The consecutive teacher education programme extends for approximately eight months and the concurrent education programme is usually five years in duration. Both programmes include a variety of courses related to education in Ontario, as well as a minimum of eight weeks (40 days) of practicum placements in school settings. The concurrent programmes can be based on a partnership between two faculties within one university or a partnership between the faculty of education of one university and an undergraduate faculty at a partner university. The courses and the

[3] There is a heavy reliance on this source as they are the only researchers who have conducted comprehensive research related to WIL in Canada.

practicum experiences are sometimes integrated throughout the five years of a concurrent teacher education programme. The core courses offered and minimum length of practicum placements in both consecutive and concurrent programmes must adhere to basic legislated guidelines, but the timing and structure of these programmes vary greatly across faculties of education in Ontario.

Cantalini-Williams and a team of researchers conducted a study where they explored and assessed innovative practicum models included in the pre-service concurrent teacher education programme across two campuses of a university in Ontario (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:3). The focus of their study was on the concurrent teacher education programme. Within this programme, prospective teachers pursue their Honours Bachelor of Arts or Honours Bachelor of Science courses throughout the five years of the programme. During this time and in conjunction with these undergraduate courses, prospective teachers also take courses and complete credit-based practicum placements from the faculty of education that is accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers. In addition to completing undergraduate and education courses, Ontario law requires prospective teachers to participate in at least eight weeks of practicum (Ontario College of Teachers Act 347/02, 1996). However, the concurrent teacher education programme scrutinised in their study includes an average of 18 weeks of practicum in schools, in addition to the equivalent of four weeks of alternative service learning/international placements as part of the Observation and Practice Teaching credit course. A practicum office arranges the traditional school teaching practicum placement based on teacher candidates' choices of teaching division, the availability of partnering schools and geographic preferences while teacher candidates arrange their own alternative placements. In each progressive year of the concurrent teacher education programme, prospective teachers are expected to increase their amount of teaching time and responsibilities during the practicum. Prospective teachers are supervised and assisted by the classroom teacher who is named an associate teacher within the programme. Associate teachers receive information about the concurrent teacher education programme including the peer mentorship model. Various print materials and electronic communications are distributed to associate teachers; they are also responsible for submitting evaluations of the prospective teacher's growth and performance. Faculty advisors are usually assigned to teacher candidates based on the geographic location of the practicum. They are responsible for completing a teaching evaluation based on their observations of and interactions with the prospective teachers in a practicum setting. Within the concurrent teacher education programme of the university, there are three innovative practicum models included in addition to the traditional school placements, these include: the

peer mentorship practicum model, alternative service learning practicum model, and international practicum model (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:7-8).

**i) Peer mentorship practicum model**

In addition to the traditional school placements, the peer mentorship practicum model is also included in the practicum component of the pre-service concurrent teacher education programme of a university in Ontario (cf. Table 3.2). Within this component, prospective teachers in years one, two and three of the programme participate in a peer mentorship experience as a component of their practicum placements. First-year teacher candidates participating in peer mentorship are referred to as novices or mentees and are paired with an experienced second- or third-year teacher candidate, known as a mentor. The peer mentorship practicum occurs in the second term of the novices' first academic year and the mentorship pair is placed most often in the same classroom setting for the purpose of enhancing support, collaboration and cooperative teaching skills (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:8).

According to Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:9-11), the peer mentorship model fostered collaborative practice between prospective teachers and provided support that was perceived to be very beneficial to novices' and moderately beneficial to the mentors. Both parties' engagement led to strong positive relationships. Furthermore, aspects such as collaboration in lesson planning, assessment, team teaching, teaching-related inquiries and professional development was observed to provide beneficial support to both novices and mentors. The peer mentorship model is also beneficial if both parties are willing to adopt an inquiry stance where they ask one another questions about teaching, in this situation (peer mentorship model) novices can clarify knowledge and mentors can consolidate knowledge whilst both develop professional identities. However, this model does experience challenges too, novice and mentor prospective teachers identified the need for further clarification of roles and responsibilities within the peer mentorship model and more clear communication with partnering schools/educators. Demographic constraints appear to be another challenge within this model as it may occur that mentors and novices who are partners are placed in different locations and this may reduce or eliminate the benefits of this model. Furthermore, prospective teachers who engaged with this model found that it contributed to the development of their professional skills, identities and enhanced their self-confidence as educators. This model also provided prospective teachers with the opportunity to support each other and to extend their learning by collaborating as they refined their teaching skills.

ii) **Alternative service learning practicum model**

Another facet of the practicum component of the concurrent teacher education programme is the alternative service learning practicum model (cf. Table 3.2). Prospective teachers are required to select and arrange an alternative service learning placement. Prospective teachers must have their placement choice approved by a practicum office staff member. A representative of the service learning partner (site supervisor) is responsible for completing the necessary paperwork and evaluations related to the prospective teacher's performance. This component is apparent in year four or five of study depending on the campus of the university (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:11).

Additionally, Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:11-13) state that the alternative service learning model provides a number of benefits and opportunities for their prospective teachers, these include connecting theory to practice, improving critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, developing in-depth exposure to resources available in the community, engaging with diverse community agencies, developing social values, and preparing for various life challenges. Despite these benefits and opportunities, Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:11-13) found that the ability of service learning to promote professional growth and development was dependent on the nature of the practicum placement. It was also found that this model exposed prospective teachers to more ways in which they could utilise their teaching and communication skills, and that this exposure could assist in potentially pursuing further career options and diverse employment opportunities.

iii) **International practicum model**

The concurrent teacher education programme is presented on two campuses so the structure of the programme varies. Prospective teachers in the concurrent teacher education programme of one campus may apply for an international teaching practicum placement, to be taken in lieu of an alternative service learning practicum in the fourth year of the programme (cf. Table 3.2). Choices for destination countries are Kenya and Italy, with each international practicum placement being facilitated by two faculty members. The international placements on this campus have been implemented for eight years, with approximately 30% of eligible teacher candidates participating each year (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:13).

Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:14-15) purport that the international practicum model has various benefits and challenges. One major benefit was that prospective teachers received international experience. Moreover, professional growth, cultural and community connectedness, awareness of opportunities and practical considerations are also amongst the benefits of this model.

**Table 3.2: A summary of WIL in Ontario**

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">Concurrent teacher education programme</th></tr>
<tr><th>Year 1</th><th>Year 2</th><th>Year 3</th><th>Year 4</th><th>Year 5</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">18 weeks of practicum in schools,<br>+<br>the equivalent of four weeks of alternative service learning/international placements as part of the Observation and Practice Teaching credit course</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3" rowspan="2">Peer Mentorship Practicum Model</td><td colspan="2">Alternative Service Learning Practicum Model (depending on campus)</td></tr>
<tr><td>International Teaching Practicum (depending on campus)</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

(Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:7-13).

The alternative service learning model does, however, experience a huge challenge with regard to timing and collaboration with partners. It was found that prospective teachers wanted this model earlier in their programme. There was a need for further institutional support to help candidates obtain a suitable placement within a given timeframe, especially for block practicums. Furthermore, some participants indicated that their time would have been better spent in a traditional classroom setting, especially if the placement was not directly related to the field of education. Prospective teachers sometimes questioned the value of roles not related to teaching (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:13).

In their work, Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:16-17) wanted to determine the effectiveness of these three innovative practicum models in promoting the professional growth and dispositions of prospective teachers. Professional growth and the reinforcement of pedagogical skill sets were consistent benefits across all three practicum models. An additional benefit of participation in each of the innovative practicum experiences was that prospective teachers engaged in opportunities that included diverse perspectives and contexts within the field of education, such as exposure to team teaching and cultural differences. Prospective teachers also had further access to opportunities to refine and consolidate their teaching skills in these diverse contexts. They were able to assume an inquiry stance, to develop resilience and problem-solving skills and to increase their awareness of teaching strategies in school systems of different countries and in community agencies (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:16-17).

According to Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:17), the challenges across the three models included role clarification, timing and structure issues, the need for additional support from

the institution, and the need for a paradigm shift with regard to traditional teaching practice. It also became evident that peer mentorship, alternative service learning and international practicum placements were perceived to be positive experiences for prospective teachers, however, they (prospective teachers) indicated that they could have benefitted from increased clarification of their respective roles. It was also found that the host schools and agencies desired clearer outlines of the expectations of each prospective teacher. In the case of mentorship and community practicum placements, communication between the university and participating partner schools and organizations was perceived as a challenge by prospective teachers.

Another challenge that was present across all three models related to preparation and support. Prospective teachers indicated that they and their field-based practicum partners expressed a desire for increased institutional support. In all models, the challenges of the innovative practicum were related to teacher candidates' prior perceptions of teaching specifically the preparation of lessons for classroom instruction. Most prospective teachers embraced the opportunity to apply their teaching skills in diverse settings, yet they especially appreciated those experiences that created explicit opportunities for their growth as professional educators (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:17).

The challenges reported in the findings of this study provided further considerations to enhance the future implementation of the three innovative practicum models. Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:21) state that practicum placements in teacher education programmes are considered work-integrated learning experiences because their models are based on the framework suggested by Cooper et al. (2010). This framework which consists of the seven dimensions of *purpose*; *context*; nature of the *integration*; *curriculum* issues; the nature of the *learning*; *partnerships* between the university and the workplace; and the *support* provided to the student and the workplace can be used to further refine the WIL models in Ontario as it considers and makes provision for the further implementation and alignment of the three practicum models explored in the study. This framework also provides a vehicle for categorizing and understanding WIL (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:21).

### *3.4.3 WIL within Singapore*

In Singapore, the NIE (2009:28-29) regards the purpose of education as nurturing the whole child – morally, intellectually, physically, socially and aesthetically. Thus, the key stakeholders within the education system have a responsibility to educate the children, to equip them with the essential skills and knowledge, as well as the values and attitudes to ensure their survival and success as individuals, as members of the community, and as

citizens of the nation. The NIE (2009:28-29) states that in order to achieve these goals an excellent education system is needed, additionally this too is being recognised as being determined by the quality of teachers. The NIE regards quality teachers as teachers who have a strong sense of professionalism who perform well by helping students achieve the desired outcomes of education and meet academic, governmental and societal expectations.

According to the NIE (2009:29), nurturing individual children to optimise their potential is a task at large for teachers. This is because teachers need to have a firm grasp of their knowledge discipline as well as possess the pedagogical skills for classroom teaching. So, teacher preparation programmes should build capacity and enable teachers to adapt to the different educational environments. Furthermore, the focus of this capacity development encompasses attributes, values, instincts, life skills, mental models and competencies that lead to desirable student outcomes. Thus, teacher learning should then be contextualised within complex relationships involving the 'local learning infrastructure' such as culture, structures and operational parameters. It should be seen as a continual process, where teacher learning begins from initial teacher preparation through to teachers' professional development (NIE, 2009:29).

It is in this light that the NIE embarked on a programme review and enhancement process of its teacher education programmes just so that they could ensure that their teacher preparation programmes were designed to equip the teacher population in Singapore to meet the challenges it is likely to face in the 21st century school system.

Considering the results of the review and the characteristics of the 21st century (knowledge driven economy, the rapid exchange of information and fast-moving communication technologies which have created new demands on education systems worldwide), it has also become pertinent that learners produced from this education system need to acquire new knowledge, skills and dispositions to ensure their survival and success as individuals, as members of the community, and as citizens. To achieve this, the NIE realised that teachers must be developed who are able to undertake greater responsibilities as they are at the forefront of educating the youth (NIE, 2009:22). Taking cognisance of the results of the review, the NIE enhanced their robust partnership between themselves, the Singapore ministry of education and the schools, giving rise to what the NIE (2009:40) call the "Enhanced Partnership Model". This model draws on the relationships of these three partners who are actively involved in teacher education and this relationship (between the three stakeholders) was strengthened to reinforce the theory-practice divide as well as influence proven strengths of the NIE's university-based approach to teacher preparation.

They (the NIE) found that the commitment of all key stakeholders involved in teacher preparation is required to transform teacher education to produce the teachers for the 21st century.

The gap between theory and practice is widely accepted as a prevalent shortcoming of teacher education programmes (cf. Chapter 2, section 2.4.2) and this is no different in Singapore. However, according to the NIE (2009:24), there is a need to achieve balance between theoretical knowledge and practice-based learning to "fill" this gap in teacher preparation programmes because a strengthened connection between theory and practice allows teachers to leverage on both types of learning to effectively transition to schools. The NIE acknowledges that the more common approaches of bridging this gap are through reflection, experiential learning, school-based research or inquiry projects and pedagogical tools that bring the classroom into the university.

Moreover, the NIE undertook a number of initiatives to bridge this gap. Their initiatives included strengthening the mentorship process in their practicum by infusing the NIE and school interactions. They established a structured mentorship preparation programme to equip school coordinating mentors and prepare them for their roles and responsibilities. This programme has a more developmental approach with a basic, intermediate and advanced level. Furthermore, their practicum was strengthened by enhancing the current role of the school coordinating mentors before, during and after the practicum and ensuring a continuum of mentorship from practicum to the induction period of beginning teachers. School coordinating mentors thus also have to lead the professional learning inquiry sessions which is a component of the practicum. The NIE infused the school interactions with the teacher preparation programme based on four common approaches, namely, reflection in action, school-based inquiry/research, using pedagogical tools to create a 'simulated' school environment and experiential learning. The interactions are done in a systematic and meaningful manner at both the course and programme levels. The NIE also explored (with the ministry of education) the option to second teachers (those who have the potential to be school coordinating mentors) from the schools to the NIE to teach courses as part of their professional development. Additionally, the NIE uses the reflective teaching model to provide a common framework to help teachers consolidate their experiences and guide them in systematically reflecting on their practices. School coordinating mentors are also exposed to this model which is used during professional learning inquiry sessions (NIE, 2009:24).

### *3.4.4 WIL within South Africa*

An investigation of foundation phase teacher provision by the public universities in South Africa was conducted by Green, Parker, Deacon and Hall (2011). The researchers analysed the systemic evaluations conducted in South Africa in 2009 and found that it demonstrated a significant inequality in foundation phase education provision, within the system in South Africa. Green et al*.* (2011:110) reiterate that the low results reflected in the systemic evaluations could be related to the teachers as many teachers who teach young children have not been educated and trained professionally to specialise in this pedagogy. This is due to the fact that until the mid 1990's South African Universities focused on training high school teachers. Subsequently, the training of primary school teachers was left to the provincial colleges of education (Green et al*.*, 2011:112). It was only after 2001 that foundation phase teachers were trained on a more consistent basis (Green et al*.*, 2011:112), suggesting that it is imperative that intervention in pre-service teacher education programmes occur in South Africa.

Zimmerman, Howie and Long (2008) conducted a cross-sectional survey of the Bachelor of Education degree for the Early Childhood Development/Foundation Phase teacher preparation programmes at South African higher education institutions. The aim of the survey was to be able to describe how pre-service teachers are being trained to teach literacy to South African Foundation Phase students. Eight institutions namely, the University of Pretoria, the University of the Witwatersrand, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Stellenbosch University, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, the University of Fort Hare, North-West University, the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and the University of Zululand completed the survey questionnaire and a comparative content analysis was conducted.

Zimmerman et al*.* (2008:58) found that there is wide variation in both the programme goals and the design of the programmes at the various institutions within the country. However, aspects such as time limitations, resource inadequacies and the lack of optimal opportunities for student teachers' practical exposure impeded the achievement of programme goals. Zimmerman et al*.* (2008) concluded that the learner achievement data released in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) suggest that school learners are struggling to develop reading literacy competencies, because the teachers may not have the repertoire of skills needed to prepare learners for these competencies. Because of this, Zimmerman et al. recognise that teachers' acquisition of teaching skills is necessary to bring about the development of literate language teachers (Zimmerman et al*.*, 2008).

Zimmerman et al. (2008:58) concluded that newly-qualified teachers enter classrooms around the country with varying levels of exposure to and experience in teaching. Zimmerman et al. (2008:58) suggest that guidelines from a regulatory body for teacher education in South Africa should be compiled to help ensure that student teachers receive at the very least the same amount of exposure to practical opportunities as well as the fact that guidelines should be put in place to assist and ensure consistency in the quality of learning experiences across institutions.

In July 2009, A Teacher Development Summit was held in South Africa to identify and address the challenges that teacher education and development are experiencing. This summit's findings are recorded in a document called the *Integrated Strategic Plan for Teacher Education and Development (2011-2025).* The DoBE and DHET (2011: 4) identify various challenges which teacher education and development are facing, these include:

- A lack of access for prospective and practising teachers to quality teacher education and development opportunities.
- A mismatch between the provision of and demand for teachers of particular types.
- The failure of the system to dramatically improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools.
- A fragmented and uncoordinated approach to teacher education and development.

According to the DBE and DHET (2011: 4), the main goal of the plan is to "improve the quality of teacher education and development in order to improve the quality of teachers and teaching". The DBE, the Provincial Departments of Education as well as the DHET are all agents in obtaining the goal. There are a variety of factors which impact on the quality of the education system in South Africa. Additionally, the DBE and DHET (2011:15) acknowledge that currently formal teacher education is located within the higher education system, and this system is not producing sufficient new teachers to meet the needs of the schooling system. This is reiterated as they state:

> The schooling system needs both more teachers and better teachers: more teachers, qualified and competent enough to teach specific subjects or learning areas, in specific phases, in specific languages, in all schools, including special schools, in Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres, and in rural and remote schools.
> (DBE & DHET, 2011:15)

However, the DBE and the DHET (2011:15) recognise that while almost all universities in South Africa train teachers, their capacity and reach as well as the quality and relevance of their programmes, vary widely. In the *Integrated Strategic Plan for Teacher Education and*

*Development (2011-2025)* document it is stated that the formal education system is not producing sufficient new teachers to meet the needs of the schooling system (DBE & DHET, 2011:23) and agrees with the opinion expressed in the Policy of Minimum Requirements for Teacher Qualifications which states that specific standards are to be developed which relate to the areas of expertise which teachers need. Furthermore, specific attention is also given to strengthening WIL as activity 4.5 of the *Integrated Strategic Plan for Teacher Education and Development (2011-2025)* specifies that the teaching practice/ school experience component of teacher education programmes should be strengthened (DBE & DHET, 2011:15).

Green et al. (2011) concur with the findings of the DBE and the DHET as stipulated in the *Integrated Strategic Plan for Teacher Education and Development (2011-2025).* They too agree that there needs to be a sufficient increase in the number of teachers that are produced as well as that quality teachers need to be produced. Thus, foundation phase teacher education needs to be strengthened and in doing so an integrated approach towards responding to the current shortfall will have to be adopted (Green et al., 2011:119).

In order to address the aspects around WIL, research has been conducted into the establishment of Professional Practice Schools and Teaching Schools within South Africa. Teaching schools are considered "teaching laboratories", where students can engage in learning-from-practice, such as by observing best practice, participating in micro-teaching and taking subject methodology courses (DBE & DHET, 2011:18). Additionally, teaching schools may also be used as centres for research into teaching and learning as staff at teaching schools can be developed as mentors for student teachers and who will be able to teach methodology courses. Teaching schools should also be located close to each teacher education delivery site and will consist of one primary school and one secondary school per site (DBE & DHET, 2011:18). Robinson (2015:1) describes professional practice schools as the typical schools where student teachers are placed for their practical components of their teacher preparation programmes. Additionally, at professional practice schools, student teachers will be able to engage in learning-in-practice preparation, teaching and reflecting on lessons under the auspices of mentor teachers who ensure that they receive appropriate support and guidance during their practice teaching (WIL) periods (DBE & DHET, 2011:18). Moreover, the professional practice schools will then be used to develop professional learning communities or what Lave and Wenger call communities of practice (cf. section 3.3.5).

Gravett, Petersen and Petker (2014:108-109) emphasise that teaching schools have enormous potential within teacher preparation programmes as they act as a catalyst to address the perceived theory-practice divide which seems to plague teacher education. Teaching schools provide the site where student observations can take place as well as where concerns which emanate from student involvement in the school can be addressed. Additionally, teaching schools could also serve as the basis for guided reflection in coursework or practical theorising which refers to when theoretical ideas are used to guide practice and to theorise about good practice which ideally is part of bridging the theory-practice divide. However, incorporating a teaching school into a teacher preparation programme is a complex issue. Gravett et al. (2014:114) state that "bridging the divide between the school and university is multifaceted: It requires staff from both contexts to journey out of their own organizational and professional territories and to combine their respective skills, knowledge and expertise in new ways". They found that integrating the university classroom and the school classroom as learning sites was easier said than done as there seemed to be a misalignment regarding the understanding of academic staff and teaching school staff regarding the nature and scope of student-teacher learning in each setting and their respective roles in getting the world of coursework to 'talk to' the world of schooling (Gravett et al., 2014:117). In other words, roles and responsibilities of the staff members of the both the school and university should be defined and established so that they are partners in the preparation of teachers. Defining the roles and responsibilities of the partners involved is important as the teaching schools model is dependent on staff from both the school and university to be successful. So if staff from both the school and university are clear about their role they can work together as equal professional partners to reorganise relations and coordinate their work.

However, specific guidance around what WIL periods should entail and how it should be structured are minimal. The *Revised Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* states that WIL should be spread out across the academic programme and take place in block periods of varying duration throughout the programme. Moreover, this should occur within a structured mentorship programme where there should be supervision, suitable school placements and formal assessment. Additionally, WIL must take place in functional schools (DHET, 2015:21). More specific guidelines are documented as follows:

> School-based WIL, including supervised and assessed teaching practice, constitutes an essential part of the BEd programme. In a full-time contact programme, students should spend a minimum of 20 weeks and a maximum of 32 weeks in formally supervised and assessed school-based practices over the four-year duration of the

> degree. In any given year, a maximum of 12 such weeks could be spent in schools, and at least three of these should be consecutive (DHET, 2015:25).

It appears as if teacher preparation in South Africa seems to be parlous as the quality of teacher education and development is questioned by the authorities. However, the literature does acknowledge what is being done to alleviate this situation (DBE & DHET, 2011; Green et al*.,* 2011; Robinson, 2015 & Gravett et al., 2014). Even though attempts have been made to address WIL there seems to be an absence of partnerships amongst the key stakeholders involved in WIL which raises a challenge in an attempt to strengthen teacher preparation.

The establishment of strategic partnerships seems to be the essence of WIL in the United States, Ontario and Singapore. In the United States, WIL is organised around professional practice schools. To produce effective teachers, the United States moved towards a model of shared responsibility for teacher preparation and adopted the stance of well-established partnerships amongst the partners involved in teacher preparation namely, universities, school districts, teachers and their representatives and state and policymakers. This is because the NCATE believe that when teacher preparation programmes become deeply engaged with schools, only then will clinical preparation become robust as all the parties involved will be able to support the development of teachers (NCATE, 2010:3), and give rise to programmes which integrate course work, theory and pedagogy with practitioner knowledge. In Ontario, WIL is addressed by utilising a variety of models to integrate the course work and the practicum experiences. Partnerships are established with schools so that various models of WIL can be incorporated into their teacher preparation programme. In the practicum component of their course, they draw on the traditional school placement model, peer mentorship, service learning as well as international experiences. In Singapore, teachers must be at the forefront of educating the youth as this is demanded by the characteristics of the 21$^{st}$ century as learners produced from their education system need to acquire new knowledge, skills and dispositions to ensure their survival and success as individuals, as members of the community, and as citizens. In order to achieve this, the NIE adopted an “Enhanced Partnership Model” where they enhanced the partnership between themselves, the Singapore ministry of education and the schools. This model focuses on the relationship of these three partners who are actively involved in teacher education as they believe that the commitment of all key stakeholders involved in teacher preparation is required to transform teacher education to produce the teachers for the 21$^{st}$ century. Together with the enhanced partnership, a structured mentorship programme was established to equip school coordinating mentors and prepare them for their roles and responsibilities to help the student teacher. In South Africa, research around WIL is currently

underway as work is being done regarding the establishment of both teaching schools and professional practice schools. However, the absence of strategic partnerships amongst partners involved in WIL seems to be absent. Even though the relevance of foundation phase teacher education programmes is due to be improved, guidelines have been put in place to guide programme design around WIL.

## 3.5 Summary

The integration of theory and practice is a fundamental issue in teacher preparation programmes. Teacher education has dealt with this issue by either implementing the "translating-of-theory-to-practice" approach which simply means that theory is supplied in the coursework component of teacher preparation programmes and students then apply, implement and test this knowledge through completing assignments and completing practical experiences at school which is the teaching practice/practicum component of their course. Another way how this issue was dealt with was by simply increasing the practicum component of courses (Gravett, 2012:4). However, the CHE specified that the integration of theory and practice in student learning can occur through a range of WIL approaches (CHE, 2011:4). WIL integrates and aligns academic and workplace practices as its purpose is to enable student teachers to experience all dimensions of the workplace and reflect on their experiences as well as the underpinning theory, in order to hone their own conceptual understanding of their roles and identities as teachers (CHE 2011:4). Zinn et al. (2014:104) note that the term WIL has recently been adopted in teacher education. It refers to the practicum component of teacher preparation programmes which are an important component of teacher preparation as it grants the student teacher opportunities to apply what is learnt in lectures (classroom-based and school-based learning within their teacher preparation programmes). Literature alluded to the implementation of clinical practice to bridge the gap between theory and practice as clinically based approaches have numerous advantages over traditional practica and student teaching arrangements as it addresses the context for teacher preparation programmes and demand that partners involved in WIL take on shared responsibility and form partnerships in order to produce effective teachers. By critically analysing WIL and utilising a conceptual framework, this chapter illustrates how WIL should be organised around clinical practice so that the theory practice divide can be bridged and that teacher preparation programmes can produce effective teachers who are able to learn *about* practice, *in* practice, *from* practice, *for* practice, and ultimately, *to* practise as the DHET envisages.

# CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 4.1 Introduction

Research is a process of gaining a better understanding of the complexities of human experience, furthermore, the goal of research is to describe and understand a field, practice or activity (Brown & Dowling, 2001:7). Flick (2011:4) states that science and research, their approaches and results, inform public life as they help to provide a basis for political and practical decision making. Therefore, McMillan and Schumacher (2001:5-6) regard educational research to be imperative as it provides valid information, knowledge and principles to guide the decision-making, thinking, discussions and processes in education.

When conducting research, methodology is key and is employed to execute the research. Research methodology refers to the rules and methods utilised in the study. This is the blueprint or roadmap which researchers employ to render their work open to analysis, critique and to choose research methods. Research studies are usually embedded within research methodology which is derived from and related to the larger set of assumptions and procedures. These assumptions and procedures are based in theory. Theory is extremely important in providing the initial arguments for a study, as it frames the conceptual model (cf. Chapter 3, section 3.3), guides and directs the data collection and analysis (cf. section 4.2.2.6 & 4.2.2.7). Moreover, methodology is important in studies as it consists of the actions to be taken in the study and the reasons for these actions in testing or generating theory (Schensul, 2008a:516-517).

The focus of this chapter is on the following aspects as they relate to this specific study, namely: research paradigm, qualitative research as the preferred research approach. Furthermore, methods of data gathering and also data collection procedures are discussed. In turn, research participants, data analysis and the ethical considerations that formed part of this study, are also deliberated.

## 4.2 Methodology

Greef (2011:341) states that the purpose of the research must guide the researcher to choose the most effective method. According to van Manen (1990:27-28), it is important to make a distinction between research method and research methodology. Methodology refers to the theory behind the method and van Manen reiterates that methodology refers to the “pursuit of knowledge”. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:13) state that research methodology encompasses the complete research process: the literature review, the

research approach, design, procedures and data collection methods and data analysis used in the study. However, research method refers to the tools or techniques with which researchers collect their data. These tools or techniques are usually wisely chosen only when they are derived from and related to the larger set of assumptions and procedures that constitute the overall research methodology the study utilises (Schensul, 2008a:516-517). Furthermore, these tools and techniques constitute a component of the research process followed in the study.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:13-14) note that the research process typically involves several phases. These phases are not always sequential nor are they an orderly step-by-step process. Research is more an interactive process between the researcher and the logic of the problem, design and interpretations. Figure 4.1 is a summary of the research process.

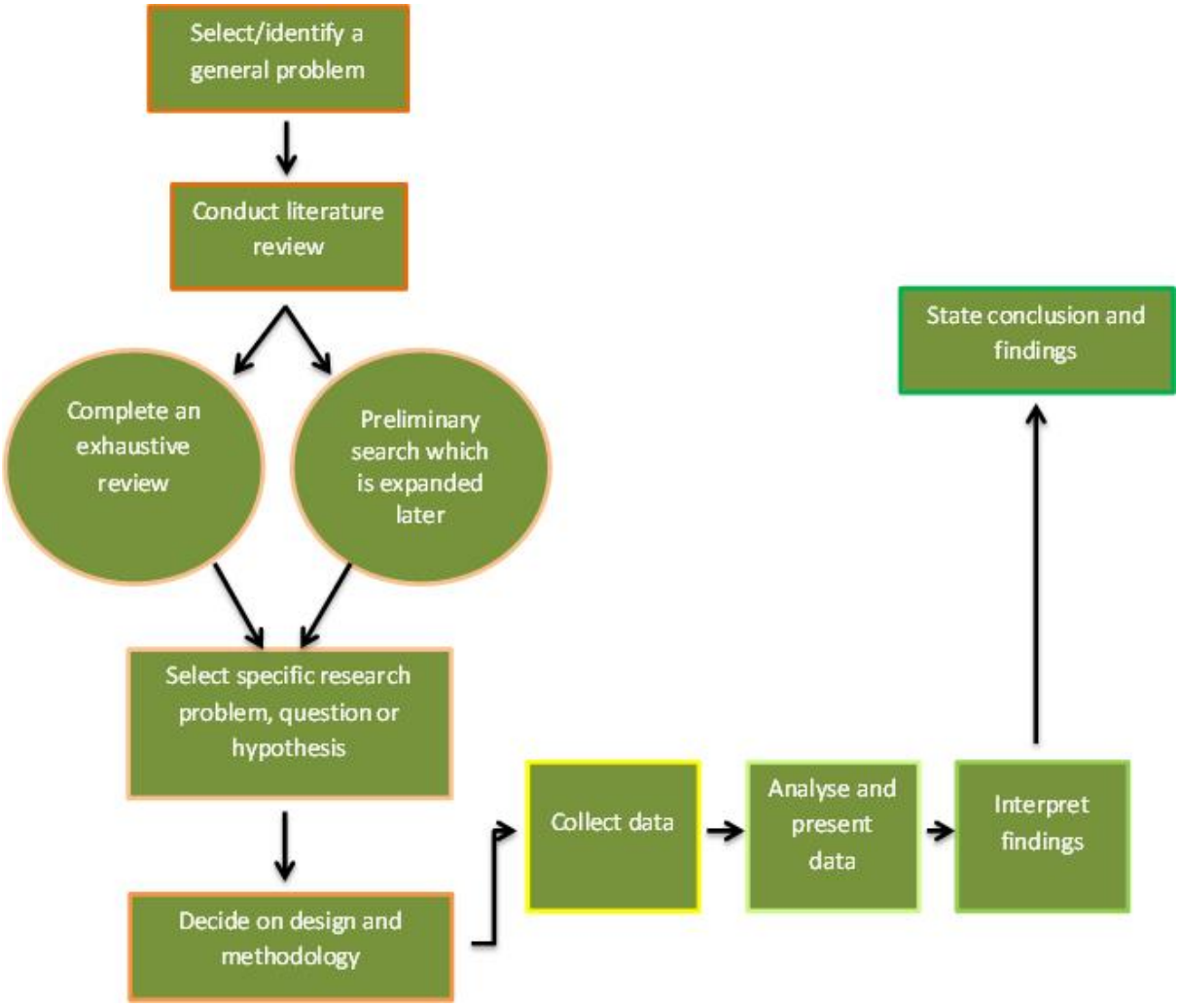



**Figure 4.1: A summary of the research process**

Adapted from McMillan and Schumacher (2001:14).

### *4.2.1 Literature review*

Babbie and Mouton (2001:565-566) state that every research report should be placed in the context of the general body of scientific knowledge so every report should be placed in this "picture". Furthermore, Flick (2009:48-49) reiterates that a literature review should be conducted so that researchers can familiarise themselves with the literature about the topic. Various databases such as EBSCHOHost, SABINET, NEXUS were consulted in order to execute an extensive literature review to achieve this and the essence can be summarised as follows:

The gap between theory and practice is a major problem within teacher preparation programmes. Literature has shown that a solution to bridging this gap is to look at the design of teacher preparation programmes; these programmes should improve their clinical practice component so that teachers are prepared to become expert practitioners who know how to use the knowledge of the profession to advance learners' learning as well as to build their professional knowledge through practice. In order to address the design of teacher preparation programmes it was first necessary to understand the knowledge base for teacher preparation programmes.

Shulman's theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge formed the knowledge base for reading literacy as it focuses on the dimensions of content knowledge for teacher preparation programmes. Furthermore WIL, which refers to the practicum component of teacher preparation programmes was critically analysed as it is implemented in teacher preparation programmes with the intention to integrate theory and practice as it grants the student teacher opportunities to apply what is learnt in lectures to practice (classroom-based and school-based learning within their teacher preparation programmes). However, the literature alluded that bridging the theory and practice divide is broader than simply implementing WIL into a teacher preparation programme. The establishment of collaborative partnerships amongst the stakeholders involved in WIL is essential to the successful integration of theory and practice.

### *4.2.2 Empirical investigation*

#### *4.2.2.1 Research paradigm*

Nieuwenhuis (2007:47) defines a paradigm as a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which give rise to a particular worldview as it addresses fundamental assumptions taken on faith, such as beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between knower and known (epistemology) and assumptions

about methodologies. Paradigms are therefore a lens by which reality is interpreted (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:47).

Creswell (2009:6) sees worldviews as a general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher holds. He reiterates that these worldviews are shaped by the discipline area of the student, the beliefs of advisers and faculty in a student's area of specialisation and past research experiences.

Fouché and Schurink (2011:309-310) state that interpretivists believe that the subject matter of the social sciences is fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences, thus a different methodology is required to reach an interpretive understanding and explanation that will enable the social researcher to appreciate the subjective meaning of social action. This study is situated within an **interpretive paradigm**. Interpretivists believe that reality is not objectively determined, but is socially constructed (Hussey & Hussey, 1997). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:59-60), the interpretivist perspective is based on the assumptions of:

- Human life can only be understood from within.
- Social life is a distinctively human product.
- The human mind is the purposive source or origin of meaning.
- Human behaviour is affected by knowledge of the social world.

Furthermore, Nieuwenhuis (2007:60) states that the ultimate aim of interpretivist research is to offer a perspective of a situation and to analyse the situation being studied to provide insight into the way in which a particular group of people make sense of the phenomena encountered. In essence, this research paradigm is concerned with the uniqueness of a particular situation, contributing to the underlying pursuit of contextual depth (Myers, 1997). In addition, Connole (1993:22-23) states that an interpretive study is based on making/finding meaning from literature from the past. Essentially, gaining an understanding of phenomenon is the interpretivists' goal as opposed to giving an explanation. The purpose of this study is to understand and examine how WIL is incorporated into teacher preparation programmes as well as understand how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into their foundation phase reading literacy teacher preparation programmes.

#### *4.2.2.2 Research approach*

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:14), there are two modes of inquiry or approaches within research, namely "quantitative" and "qualitative". McMillan and Schumacher (2001:14-15) also note that there are two levels of discourse of looking at these

approaches. Firstly, the terms quantitative and qualitative can refer to distinctions about the nature of knowledge: how one understands the world and the ultimate purpose of the research, and secondly, the terms can also refer to research methods – how data is collected and analysed – and the type of generalisations and representations derived from the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:14-15). McMillan and Schumacher (2001:15) state that quantitative research presents statistical results represented with numbers and qualitative research presents data as a narration with words. However, distinctions between these two approaches go beyond the form of data presentation as aspects such as assumptions about the world, research purpose, research methods, prototypical studies, researcher's role and the context of the study need to be considered (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:15). This is confirmed by Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:1) who state that the purpose of the research will have the most influence on the use of certain methods of data collection and analysis.

The purpose of this study is to explore WIL within the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. Thus, the researcher is trying to gain an understanding of a social situation from the participants' perspective, thus a **qualitative** approach was utilised for this study.

Creswell (2009:176) reiterates that qualitative research is a form of interpretive inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand. Creswell (2009:4) states that qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. He states that the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants' setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the data (Creswell, 2009:4). Furthermore, Fouché and Schurink (2011:317-318) state the main concern of a qualitative researcher is to understand, to observe and explore the natural reality from an insider's perspective.

Creswell (2009:175) notes that the following are characteristics of the qualitative research approach, these characteristics were employed in this study:

- Data is collected in the natural setting/site (in this study – the universities and schools where the participants are based).
- The researcher is a key instrument in the research process (the researcher gathers the data herself).

- Multiple sources of data are utilised (various sources were consulted to collect data, namely interviews, focus groups and documents).
- Data analysis is inductive as data is organised into units using patterns and categories for analysis.
- The participants' meanings are assigned to the concepts (the skills an excellent teacher possesses).
- The initial research process may change as data is collected.
- Theoretical lens is adapted to position the study (cf. Chapter 2, section 2.2).
- Interpretive inquiry is made where the researcher makes an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand. This is part of gaining an understanding of the concept.
- A holistic picture is formed of the problem at hand.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:147) state that qualitative approaches have two things in common. Firstly, it focuses on phenomena that occur in natural settings (Creswell, 2009:175) and secondly, it involves studying phenomena in all their complexity. Qualitative researchers recognise that the issue they are studying has many dimensions and layers, and so they try to portray the issue in its multifaceted form (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:147). This is vital as numerous forms of data are collected and examined from various angles to construct a meaningful picture.

#### *4.2.2.3 Research design*

*"For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other" (Freire, 1970: 72).*

This study investigated how WIL is currently organised within foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. This particular study was conducted as the current format of WIL is not sufficient to address the theory-practice divide within the reading literacy component of the teacher preparation programmes as recommended by evidence-based research. Thus, a specific problem needs to be solved. **Action research** was identified as a design which can be employed to solve this particular problem.

Research is about generating new knowledge; action research creates new knowledge based on enquiries conducted within specific and often practical contexts (Koshy, 2005:3). Furthermore, action research is a research design in which systematic procedures are used by individuals/researchers in an educational setting to gather information about, and

subsequently improve the ways in which the setting operates. Researchers employ action research to improve their practice of education by studying issues or problems they face. Researchers who employ action research reflect about the problems studied, collect and analyse data and implement changes based on their findings (Creswell, 2008:577). Babbie and Mouton (2001:63) state that action research is a form of participatory research in which action and research complement each other and where the researcher and participant are involved in the entire research process with the aim to emancipate the participant.

Furthermore, Ebersöhn, Eloff and Ferreira (2007:124-125) state that action research has various characteristics. It can be regarded as *practical* as it aims to develop solutions to practical problems which then inform practice. Action research is also focused on *change* as it is inherently transformative and developmental and the practice-research interaction is aimed at empowerment, change and emancipation of participants. It is also a *cyclical process* which constitutes *participation.* Action research comprises of an interactive cycle of planning, implementing and reflecting. This research design is also signified by partnership between researchers and participants. Furthermore, it is an *interactive form of knowledge development* as the process of carrying out an investigation becomes just as important as the emerging findings. According to Ebersöhn et al. (2007:124-125), the action research process may give rise to the following forms of knowledge:

- interaction between theoretical and practical knowledge,
- interaction between the application and development of professional knowledge, and
- the interaction between individual and collective knowledge.

In this particular study, all three forms of knowledge were developed as a theoretical knowledge base was consulted to devise a solution to an identified problem. Professional knowledge about WIL was generated and applied to develop a roadmap for WIL which will be a catalyst in addressing the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher education. With the emphasis on participation the researcher drew on the collective knowledge of the participants and reviewed evidence-based literature to address the research questions.

Ebersöhn et al. (2007:127-128) state that a practical challenge drives the action research process. This challenge becomes the focus of the research. Figure 4.2 illustrates the action research cycle.

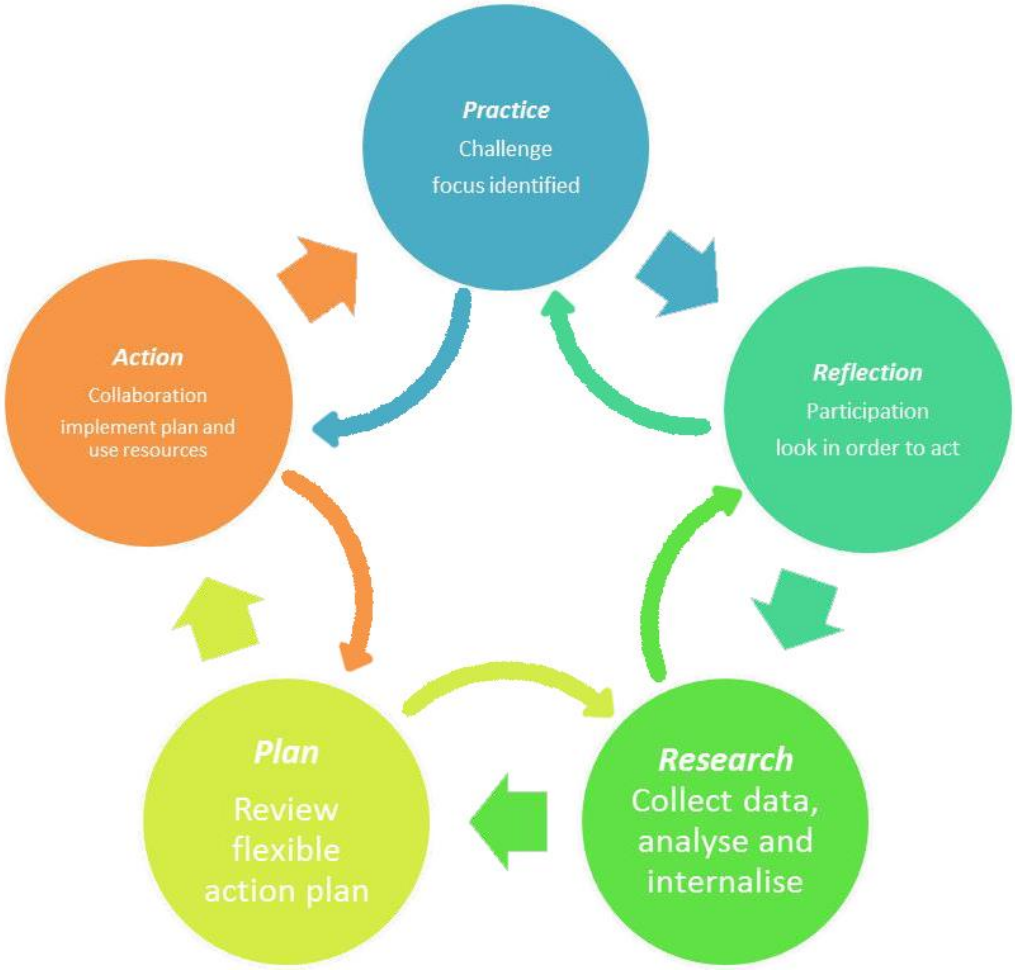



**Figure 4.2: The action research cycle**

(Ebersöhn et al., 2007:127-128).

Mertler (2011:36) purports that the general process of conducting action research consists of a four stage procedure. This includes:

1. The *planning* stage
2. The *acting* stage
3. The *developing* stage
4. The *reflecting* stage

However, Mertler (2011:37) refines these stages and includes nine specific steps which need to be followed when conducting action research. According to Mertler, action research is illustrated as follows (cf. Figure 4.3):

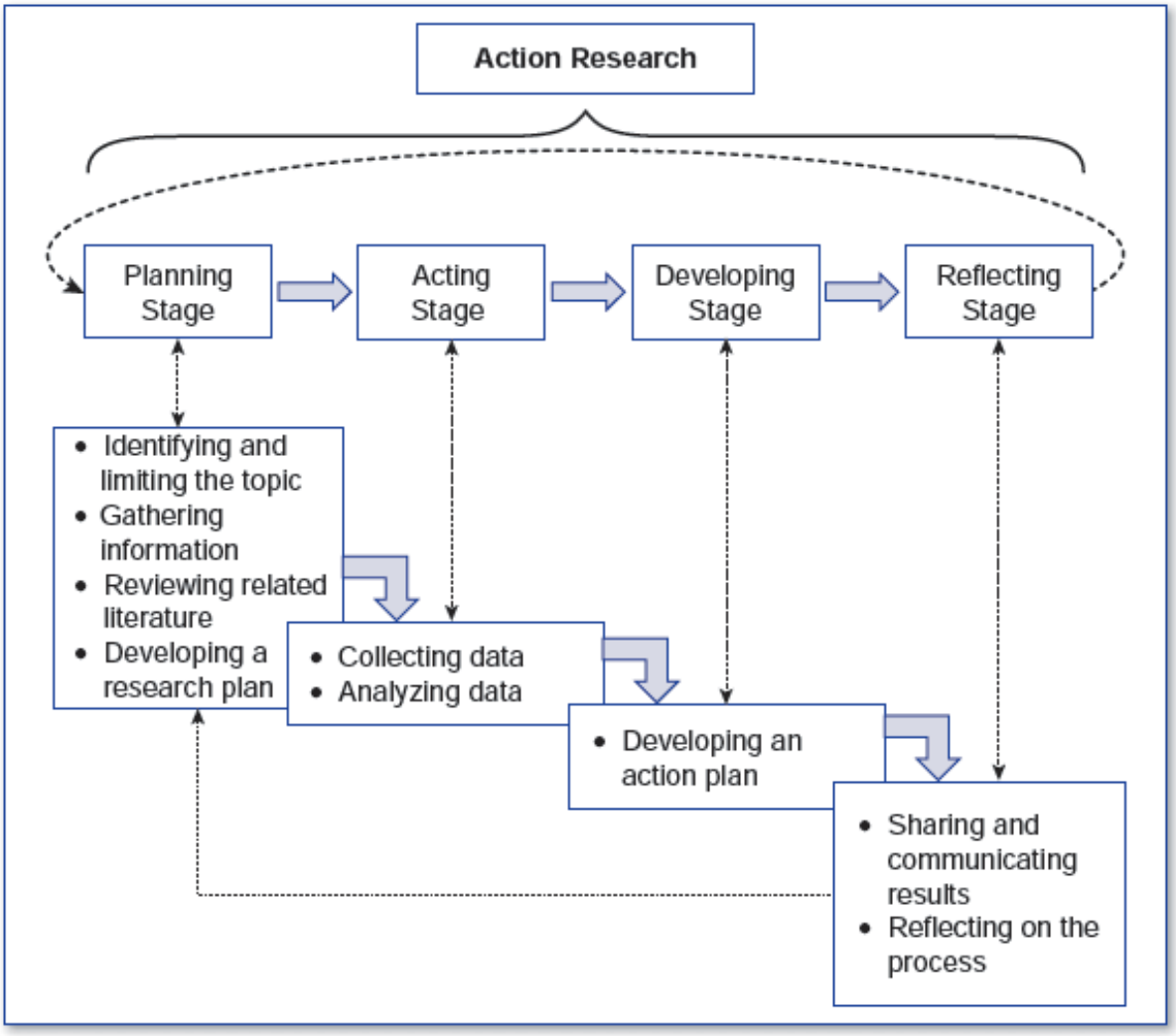



**Figure 4.3: The process of conducting action research**

(Mertler, 2011:37).

Moreover, like Mertler (2011:36), Creswell (2008:589-590) too, refines these stages and states that when conducting participatory action research certain steps need to be followed to execute the research process. Table 4.1 summarises the action research process as suggested by Mertler and Creswell, respectively.

**Table 4.1: The action research process as suggested by Mertler and Creswell, respectively**

| Mertler's specific steps of conducting an action research project | Creswell's specific steps of conducting an action research project |
|---|---|
| Step 1:<br>Identify and limit the topic | Step 1:<br>Determine if action research is the best design to use |
| Step 2:<br>Gather information | Step 2:<br>Identify a problem to study |
| Step 3:<br>Review the related literature | Step 3:<br>Locate resources to help address the problem |
| Step 4:<br>Develop a research plan | Step 4:<br>Identify information you will need |
| Step 5:<br>Implement the plan and collect data | Step 5:<br>Implement the data collection |
| Step 6:<br>Analyse the data | Step 6:<br>Analyse the data |
| Step 7:<br>Developing an action plan | Step 7:<br>Develop a plan of action |
| Step 8:<br>Sharing and communicating the results | Step 8:<br>Implement the plan and reflect |
| Step 9:<br>Reflecting on the process | |

When comparing Mertler's nine steps to Creswell's eight steps of the action research process, one can notice that it doesn't differ significantly. Each of the above-mentioned models uses different words, in essence, they each include using data to act or react to a defined problem or area of concern. Mertler (2011:37-38) reiterates that action research is not a linear process. It is cyclical in nature, it thus has a clear beginning but it does not have a clearly defined result. When conducting action research projects, researchers design and implement a project, collect and analyse data in order to monitor and evaluate the project's effectiveness, and then make revisions and improvements to the project for future implementation. Ideally, the project would then be implemented again, giving rise to the second cycle. In this case changes would have been made, either a different cohort of participants would be used or it will be implemented within a different timeframe, however, the effectivity of the revisions would be monitored and evaluated, and then new improvements would be developed for the next phase of implementation (cycle 3). Going through these cycles of implementation, evaluation, and revision gives rise to a spiral effect as one cycle leads onto another and is also dependent on one another.

Creswell (2008:579-583) alludes to the fact that there are two types of action research designs, namely practical action research and participatory action research. Practical action research is used when teachers seek to research problems in their classrooms so that they

can improve their students' learning and their own professional performance. Practical action research is used to research a specific school situation with a view to improve practice. It usually involves a small-scale research project which narrowly focuses on a specific problem or issue and is undertaken by teachers or teams within a school or district. As opposed to focussing on individual researchers solving immediate classroom problems and schools addressing internal issues, participatory action research (PAR) has a social and community orientation and an emphasis on research that contributes to emancipation or change in society. The focus of PAR is to improve and empower individuals in schools, systems of education and school communities. PAR was thus regarded as the preferred research design because this study aimed to change how WIL is incorporated into teacher preparation programmes. Creswell (2008:583) states that PAR has a distinct ideological foundation which shapes the direction of the process of the investigation; this includes the type of issue which is investigated by the researcher, the procedures of the research (data collection) and the outcomes of the investigation. PAR is based on the propositions of Lewin (1946) and subsequent researchers who have considered action research as a cyclical process which involves diagnosing a problem situation, planning action steps and implementing and evaluating outcomes, furthermore, evaluation leads to identifying new situations based on learning from the previous cycle (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:63).

According to Strydom (2011a:491), the focus of PAR is on the involvement and participation of all the role players in the research study. In PAR the research about a particular problem and the solution (action) to the problem occur simultaneously, thus researchers and participants are equally involved in the process of research. Moreover, PAR was thus an ideal research design for this study as participants and their inherent knowledge and experiences together with the researcher's abstract general knowledge was necessary to make sense of WIL and how it is incorporated into reading literacy teacher preparation programmes in universities across South Africa.

Researchers who employ PAR engage in a process of research which promotes democratic aims as they strive for an open, broad-based involvement of participants in their studies by collaborating in decisions as consensual partners and engaging participants as equals to ensure their well-being (Creswell, 2008:583).

Furthermore, Kemmis and McTaggert (2005:559-603) identified six central features of PAR. PAR can be seen as a social process in which the researcher deliberately explores the relationship between the individual and other people. Investigations where action research is employed are participatory, which allows this form of research to be regarded as practical

and collaborative. Due to the fact that PAR helps liberate people from the constraints of irrational and unjust structures that limit self-development and self-determination, PAR is emancipatory. Furthermore, PAR is critical in that it aims to help people recover and release themselves from constraints, thus PAR is reflexive and focused on bringing about change in practices.

PAR was thus used in this study to attain clarity and insight into WIL and how it is incorporated into reading literacy teacher preparation programmes, thus a practical issue was investigated and addressed followed by a possible solution. Within this research design systematic procedures were used to gather information about WIL so that the theory-practice divide in teacher preparation programmes can be addressed. Action research was also used to assist the DHET's request to review WIL within teacher preparation programmes as stipulated in the *Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (2014)* as well as the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011–2025 (2011).*

#### *4.2.2.4 Sampling*

The collection of data is fundamental in research and refers to the theory and methods used by researchers to generate data from a sampled data source in a qualitative study (Garnham, 2008:192). Examples of data sources used in this particular study include human participants, documents and organisations (universities). In addition, the process of choosing actual data sources for the particular study is sampling (Morgan, 2008a:799). According to Patton (2002:244) there are no rules for sample sizes in qualitative research as the sample size depends on the purpose of the study, what will be useful, what will have credibility and what can be done in a particular time frame.

Non-probability sampling is used in qualitative research (Strydom & Delport, 2011a:391), so the researcher purposively seeks out participants that are deemed to be the best sources of information required. However, rich data need to be collected so purposive sampling was used to obtain rich data.

Purposive sampling shows different perspectives on the problem (Creswell, 2007:74); therefore it is imperative that persons partaking in the study are knowledgeable. Palys (2008:697) sees purposive sampling as a series of strategic choices about with whom, where, and how a researcher conducts his/her research. This implies that the way that researchers sample must be tied to their objective of the study. However, because there is

no one best sampling strategy, sampling will depend on the context in which the researcher is working and the nature of the research objectives (Palys, 2008:697). Thus the judgement of researcher is demanded when employing purposive sampling as the researcher needs to sample based on elements which are representative of the population which aids the purpose of the study. Thus, Creswell (2007:125) reiterates that using this form of sampling, ensures the purposeful selection of participants and research site will inform an understanding of the research problem. Hence, the following steps were followed in the purposive sampling of participants for this study:

1. A research problem was identified.
2. The type of data needed was identified.
    - Data could be obtained from knowledgeable partners such as lecturers and other stakeholders who are involved within WIL and the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa
3. The parameters of the participants were critically defined.
    - Participants had to be knowledgeable of how WIL is incorporated into the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa
    - Permission to work with these participants for the study had to be obtained
4. Choose participants according to the parameters set for the participants.
    - WIL is dependent on schools, so besides university staff, foundation phase teachers and School Management Teams (SMT) (which included Heads of Departments (HOD) of the Foundation Phase should be considered as participants for the study
5. Reliability and credibility needed to be kept in mind when choosing participants

#### 4.2.2.4.1 Participants and research site

Particular information was needed for this qualitative study as the aim of the study was to determine how WIL is incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa. So, a deeper insight into the phenomenon of WIL and its complexities which may appear in different ways and in various units of a population had to be studied. Thus the researcher had to draw on participants such lecturers who work within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa. These universities were involved in the European Union funded Foundation Phase project on Teacher Preparation

Programmes. Approval for the project was given by the DHET. The biographical details of these participants are indicated in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Biographical information of interview participants**

| Participant | Qualification | Role within teacher preparation programme |
|---|---|---|
| Participant A | PhD | Lecturer |
| Participant B | MEd | Lecturer |
| Participant C | PhD | Head of school |
| Participant D | PhD | Senior lecturer |
| Participant E | MEd | Lecturer |
| Participant F | PhD | Programme leader |
| Participant G | PhD | Lecturer |
| Participant H | MEd | WIL coordinator |
| Participant I | MEd | Lecturer |
| Participant J | PhD | Senior lecturer |
| Participant K | MEd | Lecturer |
| Participant L | MEd | Senior Lecturer |
| Participant M | BEd Hons | WIL coordinator |
| Participant N | PhD | WIL coordinator |

Furthermore, stakeholders involved in WIL at school level were also considered as participants for the study. These stakeholders were teachers and SMT's which included HOD's of the Foundation Phase within the Blue District[4] of the North West Province as well as the Green District of the Western Cape. These participants were randomly selected (n=10) to participate in this study as students are typically placed within these schools for the WIL component of their course.

### *4.2.2.5 Data collection methods*

The data collection methods chosen for this research provide rich data specifically focused on the research questions. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis.

[4] Due to ethical reasons pseudonyms were given to universities and participants to protect their identities as well their opinions.

#### 4.2.2.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

One of the research methods utilised in this study was that of interviews with lecturers who work within the teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa. According to Seidman (1993:3), the purpose of interviewing is not to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses, and not to evaluate, but at the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of the experience. Seidman (1993:3-4) continues to say that interviewing provides access to people's behaviour and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of their behaviour. He notes that "the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience" (Seidman, 1993:3-4). Brinkmann (2008:470) states that interviews should be conducted to enable the researcher to answer his or her research questions. Moreover, in this study interviews were used to determine the essence of the phenomenon of WIL within the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes.

Merriam (2009:88) informs us that interviews are necessary when behaviour cannot be observed. Interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research. Researchers obtain information through direct interchange with an individual or a group that is known or expected to possess the knowledge they seek (Greef, 2011:342).

Greef (2011:342) continues to note that the interview is a social relationship designed to exchange information between the participant and the researcher. The quantity and quality of information exchanged depend on how astute and creative the interviewer is at understanding and managing the relationship. Greef (2011:342) emphasises that there are challenges which the interviewer might face when conducting the interview, these challenges include establishing rapport in order to gain information from participants, coping with unanticipated problems, recording and managing the large volume of data generated by the interview. However, Greef reminds us that interviewing is not confined to asking questions and recording answers, the interviewer needs to be attentive and responsive throughout the process (Greef, 2011:342-345).

Qualitative studies usually employ unstructured or semi-structured interviews. Unstructured interviews are usually conducted without utilizing any of the researcher's prior information, experience or opinions in a particular area (Greef, 2011:347-348). However, in this study, semi-structured interviews were utilized and can be described as being organized around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth.

The semi-structured interview gives the researcher much more flexibility and the researcher is able to follow up on emerging avenues as they arise in the interview. It is especially suitable when researching complexity or process. With the semi-structured interview, the researcher had a set of pre-determined questions on an interview schedule but this did not dictate the interview but was a mere guide (Greef, 2011:351-352). According to Brinkmann (2008:470), most qualitative research interviews are semi-structured as a consequence of the agenda being set by the researcher's interests yet with room for the respondent's more spontaneous descriptions and narratives.

According to Greef (2011:352), the interview schedule (addendum A), is a questionnaire that is written in advance to guide interviews and force the researcher to think explicitly about what she anticipated the interview might cover. Furthermore, the interview schedule equips the researcher with a set of pre-determined questions that may be used as an appropriate instrument to engage with the participant. Questions were arranged from simple to complex and from broad to more specific in order for participants to adjust to the pattern of the interview schedule. Questions followed a logical sequence and were limited to a few only. The researcher ensured that the topic was covered thoroughly. A focused literature review was conducted to guide the researcher to understand the topic at hand and to know what questions to ask to cover the topic. Open-ended questions were asked to allow the participants to express their opinions. Questions were also focused to ensure that the interviews gave specific information required for the purpose of the study (Greef, 2011:352).

Greef (2011:360) notes that one-to-one interviews have various strengths and weaknesses. Greef (2011:360) purports that interviews are a useful way of getting large amounts of data quickly and are an especially effective way of obtaining depth in data, but the fact that they involve personal interaction and cooperation may be problematic as participants may be unwilling to share as the researcher may ask questions which do not elicit the desired responses from participants. Moreover, interviewing is a conversational practice where knowledge is produced through the interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee or a group of interviewees.

Interviews elicit data that are not evident from documents or observation alone. Interviews provide access to multiple perspectives. An interview schedule was designed for the participants. The interview questions were designed to allow for two levels of inquiry at the same time, "satisfying the needs of [the researcher's] line of inquiry while simultaneously putting forth 'friendly' and 'non-threatening' questions in [the researcher's] open-ended interview" (Yin, 2003:90). Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 145) reiterate that whilst conducting the

interview, the researcher should listen closely as participants describe their everyday experiences related to the phenomenon, the researcher should also be alert for subtle yet meaningful cues in the participants expressions and pauses. All the interviews were audio recorded in MP3 format (with the permission of the participants) to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data. These recordings were transcribed and stored on the researcher's computer. These recordings will be saved for six years after the completion of the study after which they will be destroyed. Notes were taken during the interviews to record perceptions, observations, and things which could not be captured on the recordings. The interview questions addressed the following issues:

- the theoretical base for WIL within the teacher preparation programme;
- how WIL is constituted within the teacher preparation programme;
- how WIL is constituted within the reading literacy component of the teacher preparation programme;
- course objectives and design;
- how application of knowledge is addressed;
- structure of teacher preparation programmes;
- field experiences;
- structure of WIL within teacher preparation programme;
- evaluation of pre-service teachers within WIL component of teacher preparation programme; and
- how WIL is incorporated into teacher preparation programmes.

However, conducting these interviews was challenging as not all the universities were able to share their information as they were busy with a national re-curriculation process of the B Ed Foundation phase teacher preparation programme. Thus, interviews were conducted with as many universities as possible, but were grouped according to regions in South Africa based on where the universities reside. The following institutions participated in the semi-structured interviews:

North

- University A[5]
- University B
- University D/M
- University E/F
- University H

[5] Due to ethical reasons pseudonyms were given to universities and participants to protect their identities as well their opinions.

- University J
- University K

South

- University C
- University G
- University I
- University L
- University N

Furthermore, informal conversations based on the semi-structured interview protocol were also conducted at a local conference. These conversations were ethically sound and participants signed informed consent forms (cf. Addendum B).

#### 4.2.2.5.2 Focus group interviews

Focus groups are group interviews and are used to gain a better understanding of how people feel or think about an issue (Greef, 2011:360) or in this specific case, how they understand WIL within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes. Participants for focus groups are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic being investigated. Given the nature of focus groups and the nature of the research, purposive sampling was used as a basis to recruit participants for the focus group. Participants were selected on the basis that they have some personal attribute that was relevant to the purpose of the research. In this study focus groups consisted of members of the SMT's of randomly selected schools where foundation phase students are placed for WIL. This was done to gain knowledge and understanding into their experiences of WIL.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:90), the focus group interview strategy is based on the assumption that group interaction will be productive in widening the range of responses, activating forgotten details of experiences. Furthermore, focus group interviews also provide opportunities for the participants to build on each other's ideas and comments giving rise to in-depth views not attainable from individual interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:90). Moreover, Krueger and Casey (2009) state that a focus group interview is an interview on a topic with a group of people who have knowledge on the topic. Merriam (2009) suggests that a constructivist perspective underlies this data collection procedure, because the data is obtained from the interaction of a socially constructed group. The object is to get high quality

data in a social context where people can consider their views in the context of the views of others (Patton, 2002:386).

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:91), focus group interviews should start with a broad and less structured set of questions (cf. Addendum C) to ease the participants into the situation. The participants were granted the opportunity to give general perspectives about WIL and reading literacy as well as ease into a debate about WIL and the preparation of reading literacy teacher preparation programmes (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:91).

Furthermore, Greef (2011:361) states that it is not appropriate to use focus group interviews to test hypotheses or to draw inferences about large populations. It can be used to validate constructs. In this study, focus group interviews were used to validate data gained from the semi-structured interviews as well as gain perspectives about WIL from other stakeholders (cf. Chapter 4, section 4.2.2.4) besides those used in the semi-structured interviews. Moreover, Greef (2011:361) emphasises that the purpose of focus groups is to promote self-disclosure among participants as it is used to know what people really think and feel. Focus groups are also useful when multiple viewpoints or responses are needed on a specific topic as in the case of this particular study.

By bringing together people who share a similar background, focus groups create the opportunity for participants to engage in meaningful conversations about the topics that researchers wish to understand. This ability to learn about participants' perspectives by listening to their conversations makes focus groups especially useful for hearing from groups whose voices are often marginalized within the larger society (Morgan, 2008b:352).

Because focus group interviews were used to corroborate the data in the semi-structured interviews, the researcher found it fit to conduct focus group interviews with SMT's from the Northern and Southern region of South Africa (cf. section 4.2.2.4.1). This decision was taken because the semi-structured interviews conducted were grouped according to these criteria (cf. section 4.2.2.5.1).

#### 4.2.2.5.3 Documents

Creswell (2008:223) states that documents can be regarded as a valuable source of information within qualitative research as they help researchers to understand the phenomena at hand. Moreover, documents represent a good source for text data as it is usually already in the language and words of the participants and is also ready for analysis as transcription is not usually required. "Documents corroborate your interviews and thus

make your findings more trustworthy. Beyond corroboration, they may raise questions about your hunches and thereby shape new directions for observations and interviews" (Glesne, 1999:58). Schensul (2008b:230) is of the opinion that documents constitute the basis for most qualitative research. Documents often serve as key sources of social scientific data, their role in social research is rarely highlighted considering they are sometimes subsumed under the heading of “unobtrusive” methods (Schensul, 2008b:230).

The standard approach to the analysis of documents focuses primarily on what is contained within them. Documents are viewed as pieces of communication between a writer and a reader, which contain meaningful messages (Prior, 2008:230). Strydom and Delport (2011:377) state that document analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings which may be revealed by their style or coverage.

Since there are such a variety of documents one can use in qualitative studies, researchers need to be very careful on how they select documents intended for the study. Creswell (2008:223) guards against this and recommends that certain guidelines are followed when selecting documents for analysis. Within this study the researcher made sure that the types of documents used would provide useful information to answer the research questions, sought permission to use the documents and examined them for accuracy, completeness and usefulness in answering the research questions.

The documents collected in this study included course outlines, assessment tasks and assignment tasks which stipulate expectations, instructions and guidelines specific to WIL for reading literacy. Creswell (2008:223) alludes to the fact that documents are sometimes difficult to locate and obtain as information might not be available to the public. This was a challenge experienced in this study. In light of the fact that the universities participating in the study were busy with the re-curriculation of the BEd Foundation Phase teacher preparation programme, obtaining documents from them was a rather difficult task. Due to the nature and relevance of the study the new developments around WIL was needed. Not all the participants were able to share their documentation as their new documentation was not ready for dissemination. It was also found that because the process of re-curriculation was still in the development stage, participants were also resistant to share documentation as it was part of their own research material. However, the following universities shared documentation pertaining to WIL and reading literacy:

North

- University A
- University B
- University D/M

South

- University C
- University D

#### *4.2.2.6 Data collection procedure*

Data collection commenced in 2014 and ended in February 2015, this was in the middle of a national re-curriculation process of the B Ed foundation phase teacher preparation programme. This affected the nature and level of participation from the various universities (cf. section 4.2.2.5).

Data was collected by interviewing various lecturers who were involved with WIL within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes, and focus group interviews with various other stakeholders of WIL were also conducted. Documents were collected as a final stage of the data collection procedure. Multiple sources of data are used to better understand the scope of the problem; furthermore, when using multiple sources of data one needs to ensure that all the pieces of information point to the same conclusion, thus employing multiple sources of data helps the researcher to achieve convergence of the data (triangulation) (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:150). Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:238) state that triangulation is a method used to verify and increase trustworthiness of qualitative research. It involves combining several different research methodologies, in this case, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis, to investigate the same phenomenon. The data collection procedure is illustrated in Figure 4.4.

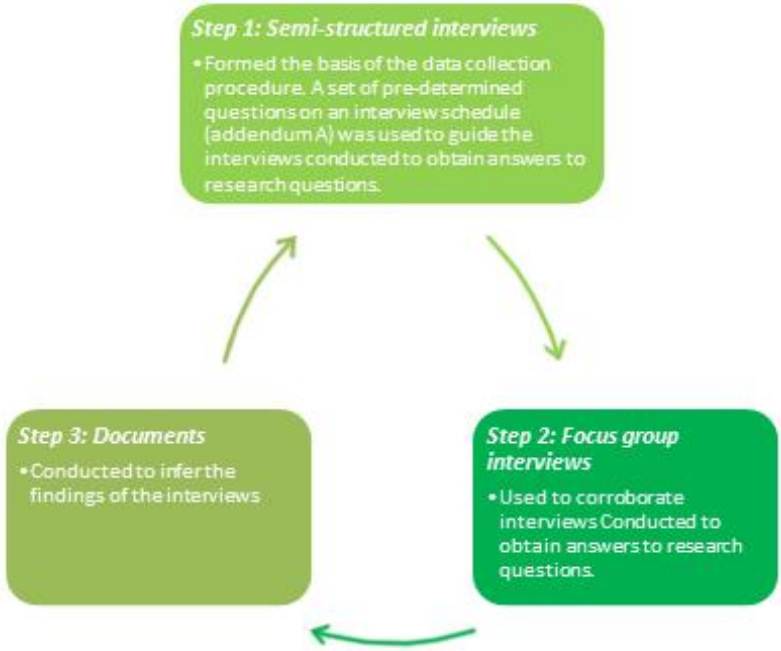



**Figure 4.4: The data collection procedure**

### *4.2.2.7 Data analysis*

*"You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. And—to extend the aphorism— you can't make an omelette without beating the eggs together. 'Analysis' too involves breaking data down into bits, and then 'beating' the bits together" (Dey, 1993:31).*

Data analysis is multifaceted and includes organizing data, generating categories and themes, coding data, and interpretation. Maxwell (1996:77) suggests that the "qualitative researcher begins data analysis immediately after finishing the first interview or observation and continues to analyse the data as long as he or she is working on the research". Silverman (2010:221) agrees with Maxwell and suggests that data analysis should start as the data is being collected and suggests that data should be reviewed in light of the research questions. Ultimately, the researcher must look for convergence (triangulation) of the data: many separate pieces of information must all point to the same conclusion (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:150).

Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007:101) state that qualitative data analysis can be messy and complicated as it involves taking in the data, digesting it, taking it apart and then putting it back together. Creswell's (2008:244-245) steps to analysing qualitative data were followed in this study. These steps included:

i) The researcher collecting the data.

ii) The data is prepared for analysis which involved transcriptions and field notes.

iii) The researcher reads through the data to obtain a general sense of the materials and coding is done afterwards.

iv) Whilst coding the data the researcher should remember to code the rest for themes to be used in the research as well as code for the description to be used in the research.

Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2001:146) state that the central task of data analysis is to identify common themes in people's descriptions of their experience. After transcribing the interviews, the researcher typically employed the following steps:

1. *Identified statements that related to the topic* – the researcher separate relevant from irrelevant information and then broke the relevant information into smaller segments which reflected a specific thought.
2. *Grouped statements into "meaning units"* – the researcher grouped the segments into categories that reflected various aspects of the phenomenon as it was experienced.
3. *Sought divergent perspectives* – the researcher looked for and considered the various ways in which different people experienced the phenomenon.
4. *Constructed a composite* – the researcher used various meanings that were identified to develop an overall description of the phenomenon as people experienced it.

#### 4.2.2.7.1 Content analysis

Whilst following Creswell's steps to data analysis, a method of content analysis was used to arrive at the categories emanating from the data in light of the research questions. According to Grbich (2007:112), content analysis is a systematic coding and categorising approach which can be used to explore large amounts of textual information in order to ascertain the trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships and the structures and discourses of communication. Julien (in Given, 2008:120) defines content analysis as the intellectual process of categorizing qualitative textual data into clusters of similar entities, or conceptual categories, to identify consistent patterns and relationships between variables or themes.

Jullien (2008:121) reiterates that a qualitative approach to content analysis is inductive as it starts with deep close reading of text and attempts to uncover the less obvious contextual or latent content. Moreover, a researcher seeking to understand participants' experiences or

understandings of a phenomenon of interest is likely to use such an inductive approach to an analysis of interview data. As an analytic method, content analysis is very flexible, as it provides a systematic way of synthesizing a wide range of data (Julien, 2008:121).

According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994:126-127), a defining characteristic of qualitative research is an inductive approach to data analysis. An inductive approach refers to the fact that data is collected that refers to the research question, generating a hypothesis is not a priority and the variables for the data collection are not predetermined.

According to Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007:111), the nature of the documents being analysed have important implications for the analysis. They emphasise the value of documents in research as it can open up and explore a field and it can conclude and consolidate research. In this study documents are used to explore how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into their reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007:111) note that searching for meaning in documents is a matter of interpretation, therefore no document should be judged at face value.

Prior (2008:230) notes that the most straightforward approach in which to document content involves the adoption of some form of content analysis. Content analysis concentrates on word and phrase counts as well as numerical measures of textual expression. Denscombe (2007:221) and Prior (2008:230) both state that content analysis is a method which helps the researcher to analyse the content of documents. It is a method that can be used with any 'text', whether it is in the form of writing, sounds or pictures, as a way of quantifying the contents of that text (Denscombe, 2007:221).

Denscombe (2007:221) suggests that content analysis should be a logical and relatively straightforward procedure. The researcher employed Denscombe's content analysis procedure in the following manner:

- An appropriate sample of texts was selected and the criterion for the choice of these samples was explicit. The criteria included specific categories pertaining to the WIL, reading literacy, assessment of WIL, and knowledge application activities of reading literacy with WIL.
- The content was broken into smaller component units such as units which addressed content, teaching methods and assessment of students.
- Relevant categories for analysing the data were developed as the researcher needed to have a clear idea of the kinds of categories, issues and ideas that she is

concerned with and how these might appear in the text. This might take the form of 'key words' associated with the theme. Key words included WIL, teaching practice, reading literacy, collaboration, integration, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, assessment (cf. Figure 4.6).

- The units were coded in line with the categories - meticulous attention to the text was needed to code all the relevant words, sentences, etc. Denscombe (2007:221) suggests that these codes should either be written on the text and subsequently referred to or entered via computer programme specifically designed for the purpose. In this study the ATLAS-ti computer programme was utilised for this specific purpose (cf. Figure 4.5).

According to Denscombe (2007:236), the strengths of content analysis are that it provides a means for quantifying the contents of a text, and it does so by using a method that is clear and, in principle, replicable by other researchers.

#### 4.2.2.7.2 Data organisation

The collection of thick, rich, descriptive qualitative data requires a well-organized data collection plan that will support analysis, thus the researcher utilised the powerful software tool, ATLAS-ti as a database. ATLAS-ti is a Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis software (CAQDAS) programme. This programme, like any other CAQDAS programme does not analyse the data for you but is a tool to support the process of qualitative data analysis (Friese, 2014:1).

This software tool was considered as searching for meaning in a collection of raw data can be a messy and a time consuming task. Qualitative research software like ATLAS-ti helps the researcher to manage, shape and make sense of information as it provides a sophisticated workspace to work through material – discovering patterns, identifying themes, gleaning insight and ultimately, delivering informed, robust findings (Friese, 2014:1-2).

This CAQDAS is a powerful workbench for qualitative data analysis. ATLAS-ti uses a hermeneutic unit to house a project that the researcher is working on. A hermeneutic unit is used to store, organize, and manage the data. It houses documents such as interview transcripts, audio recordings and observation field notes. Within the hermeneutic unit, any form of data can be systematically coded and categorised according to the trends and patterns which emerge from the data (Friese, 2014:2-23).

#### 4.2.2.7.3 Coding

In order to interpret data, the raw data needs to be prepared and the researcher needs to be thoroughly familiar with the data. A point of departure in this process is coding. Codes are tags or labels that are attached to the 'raw' data. They can take the form of names, initials or numbers; it does not matter as long as the code is succinct and is used systematically to link bits of the data to an idea that relates to the analysis (Denscombe, 2007:292).

Glesne (1999:135) describes coding as "a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting those scraps of collected data". The goal of coding in qualitative analysis is to separate or "fracture" (Strauss, 1987) the data into meaningful analytical units and assign a category or descriptive words in order to aid data retrieval. Sorting and comparison of smaller units of data eventually makes sense of the data as a whole, ultimately leading to the development of new theoretical concepts (Maxwell, 1996). In this study, data coding took place as each piece of data was collected.

Codes and coding are integral to the process of data analysis. In qualitative research coding is the process of generating ideas and concepts from raw data such as interview transcripts and documents. The coding process refers to the steps the researcher takes to identify, arrange, and systematize the ideas, concepts, and categories uncovered in the data. Coding consists of identifying potential features, phrases, of a process and distinguishing them with labels. Initially, the researcher used *open coding* as a technique to code the data. In this process, codes were made up as the researcher worked through the data (Henning et al., 2004:105). Through close examination the data was named and categorised. When open coding is used as an initial step of the data analysis, the data is "opened up" to uncover ideas and meanings it holds. Whilst doing so, the researcher asks questions like "what, where, who, when". In other words, the data is broken down into discrete parts or segments in order to interpret them. When doing open coding the researcher reads the data in a detailed fashion (word-by-word and line-by-line) in order to determine what is going on within the data. As the researcher progresses he/she discovers, names, defines, and develops as many ideas and concepts as possible (Benaquisto, 2008a:581-582; Henning et al., 2004:131). *Axial coding* was utilised post the open coding process. Axial coding is the phase where concepts and categories that begin to stand out are refined and relationships among them are pursued systematically. The researcher put the parts of the data identified and separated in open coding back together in new ways to make connections between the codes. As major categories begin to emerge, the researchers are advised to ask questions of the data that concern them in a focused manner (Benaquisto 2008b:51; Henning et al.,

2004:132). Figure 4.5 illustrates the coding procedure with the help of the CAQDAS programme ATLAS-ti.

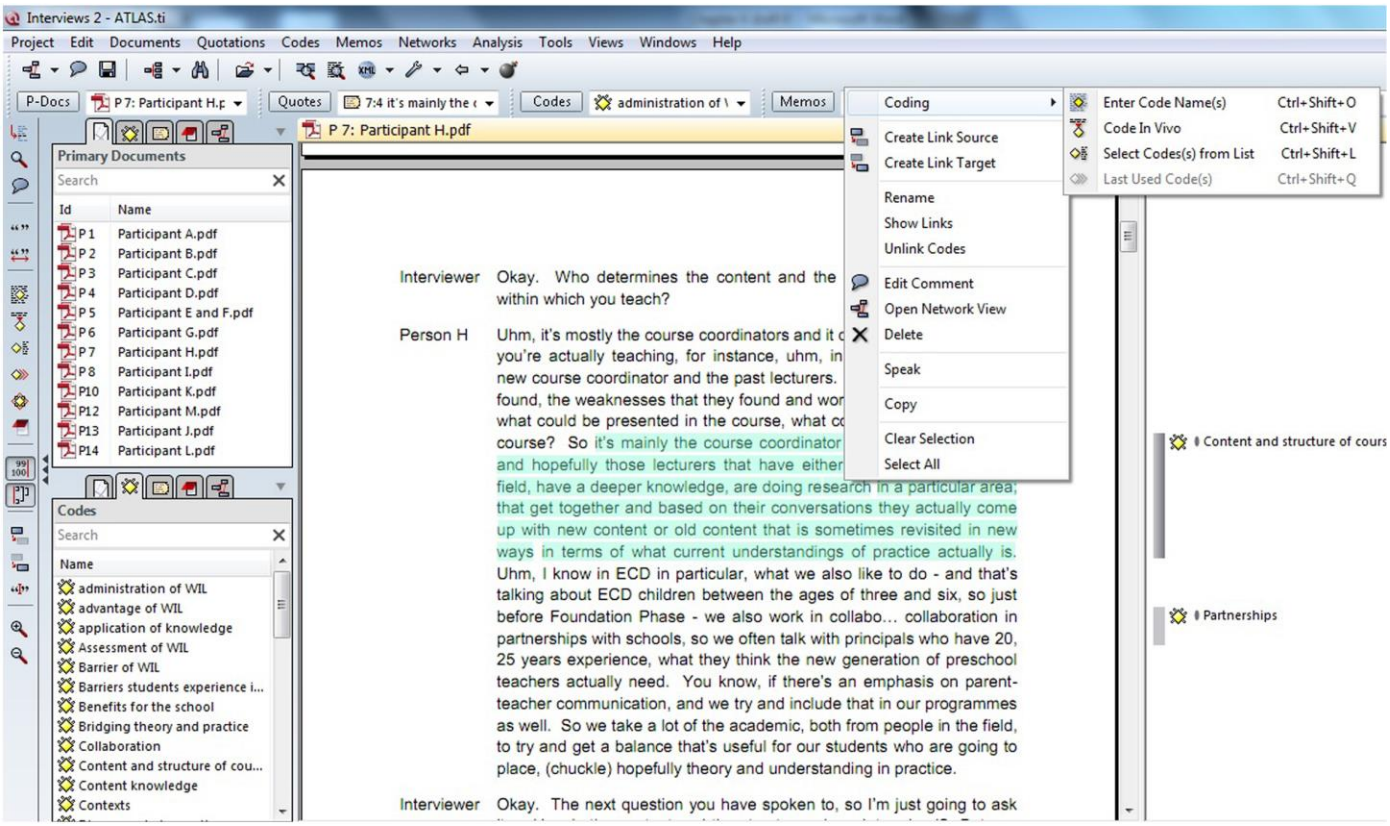



**Figure 4.5: Coding in the CAQDAS programme ATLAS-ti**

#### 4.2.2.7.4 Categories and themes

Once the data has been coded, these codes can be categorised. Categories are different codes which can be grouped together or as Green (2008:72) states, "Categories are analytic units developed by qualitative researchers to conceptually organize findings related to a phenomenon or human experience that is under investigation". Categories act as an umbrella term under which a number of individual codes can be placed (Denscombe, 2007:292). Figure 4.6 illustrates this process.

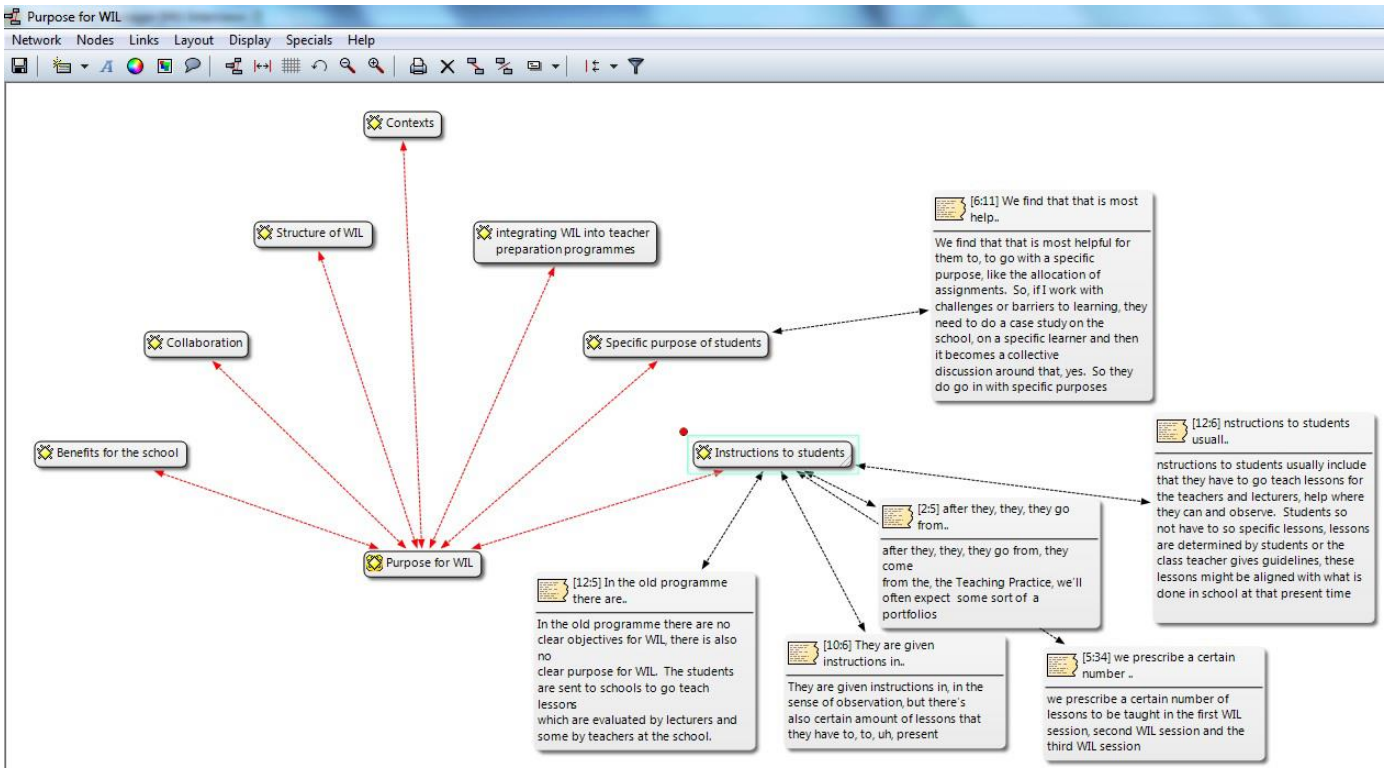



**Figure 4.6: Categories**

Green (2008:72) states that categories can be developed either inductively or deductively. When researchers generate categories inductively, they approach the data analysis without a preset list of categories and analyse the data to identify analytic units that conceptually match the phenomenon being investigated. When categories are generated deductively, they emerge not from the data but rather from prior studies, relevant literature, research questions, and the researcher's own experience with and knowledge of the phenomenon. In this study categories were developed both inductively and deductively as this helped to fully interrogate the data.

Once the data has been coded and categorised, researchers can identify or become aware of patterns in the data, this is called themes. This is a further stage in data analysis. The task for the researcher is to 'make the link' (Denscombe, 2007:292).

The coding document in ATLAS-ti was the initial list of codes derived from the literature review and research questions. For each type of text data, initial coding consists of highlighting sections of text in colour, to indicate topic categories. As categories and patterns emerge, analysis shifts toward more analytical node coding. After the initial coding, the ATLAS-ti search tool was used to locate words and phrases relating to specific categories as a way to check that nothing was missed. As categories emerged, it was possible to look for

what ATLAS-ti calls “families” which is data that relates in meaningful ways. Coding made it possible to ask questions, make comparisons, look for connections between components, and create additional nodes. Figure 4.7 illustrates how codes and categories were grouped together to form a family for the theme “Purpose for WIL”.

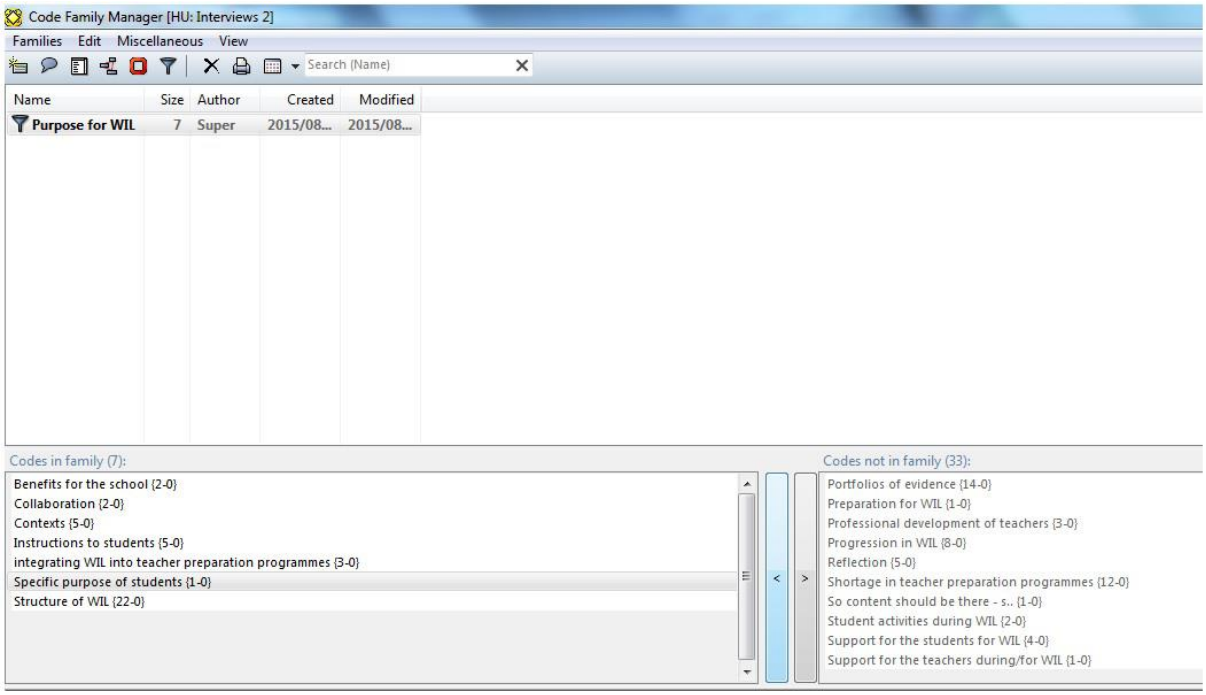



**Figure 4.7: Families**

#### 4.2.2.7.5 Interpretation

The result of data analysis is the ability to interpret and give meaning to the data at one point in time. The interpretation of the data can happen once the data has been coded and categorised into themes. Once this has occurred *concepts can be developed and the researchers can arrive at some generalised statements* based on the relationships, patterns and themes that have been identified in the data. This action is known as interpretation and may take the form of concepts or hypotheses (Denscombe, 2007:292).

Maxwell (1996:32) refers to interpretation as "an account of the meaning given to some situation or event by the people studied in their own terms". Denzin (1994:504) described interpretation as a "productive process that sets forth the multiple meanings." Furthermore, he states that interpretation is transformative, interpretation illuminates, and it refines: "Meaning, interpretation, and representation are deeply intertwined in one another". This research moves from the descriptive level to the interpretive level in order to deepen the understanding of how WIL should form an integral part of the curriculum and programme design of teacher education. The first level was to systematically classify the data into

categories and themes and the next level involved making inferences and developing a roadmap at a conceptual level.

#### *4.2.2.8 Validity*

There are distinct differences between qualitative and quantitative studies. Quantitative studies measure a composite and it is therefore required of the researcher to develop measuring instruments. Once these instruments are developed it needs to be determined whether they measure "correctly". In other words, would these instruments give the same result in a constant way (reliability) and does it measure what it is supposed to measure (validity). However, in the case of qualitative studies there are no hypotheses to test and the emphasis is on understanding a certain phenomenon within its natural context (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013:236). Bless et al. (2013:236) state that due to the fact that the methodology employed in qualitative studies is more flexible and doesn't demand measurement, concepts such as reliability and validity lose their meaning when applied to qualitative research. However, in qualitative researcher still needs to evaluate the quality of their research but this done in terms of how much trust can be given to the research process and the findings. This determining factor is known as trustworthiness.

##### 4.2.2.8.1 Trustworthiness

The aim of trustworthiness in qualitative research is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). This is quite different from the conventional experimental precedent of attempting to show validity, soundness, and significance. In any qualitative research project, four issues of trustworthiness demand attention: *credibility, transferability, dependability*, and *confirmability*.

Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a "credible" conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:296). Bless et al. (2013:236) state that studies with high credibility are those in which a researcher has convincingly demonstrated the appropriateness of the empirical investigation, thus the researcher must be able to defend the methodology employed within the study in that of theory and knowledge about the field.

Transferability is the degree to which the findings of this inquiry can apply or transfer beyond the bounds of the project (Jensen, 2008:886). In order to accomplish transferability, the researcher should provide detailed descriptions of the context in which the data was collected, information about the researcher is vital as well as the relationships with the participants (cf. section 4.2.2.5). Once we understand the context from which the findings

emerge we can imagine several other contexts where the findings can be meaningful (Bless et al., 2013:237)

Dependability is an assessment of the quality of the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis, and theory generation. Bless et al. (2013:237) reiterate that dependability demands that the researcher thoroughly describes and precisely follows a clear research strategy. Studies needs to have high dependability so that reviewers will have trust in the results derived from the study.

Confirmability is a measure of how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, researchers should be able to obtain similar findings by employing a similar research process in a similar context, thus a critical evaluation of the methodology used in a study is critical (Bless et al., 2013:236).

In this study, trustworthiness will be enhanced by using strategies such as member checking, peer review, keeping of paper trails, and an independent audit of my research methods by a competent peer.

#### *4.2.2.9 Rich data*

Rich data provides a complete picture of what is going on, allowing the reader to enter the research context (Glesne, 1999). Verbatim transcripts of interview notes that are full of descriptive words provide rich data. Qualitative research must take particular care to address the potential for researcher bias and the phenomenon of reflexivity. In addition, such research must acknowledge and address the influence of the researcher on the setting or the individual studied, (i.e., reactivity to the researcher) (Maxwell, 1996). Two methods that address these phenomena are member checks and peer review.

##### **4.2.2.9.1 Member checks**

Guba and Lincoln (1989) described member checking as systematically soliciting feedback about data and conclusions from the people who are subjects of research. Member checking can help identify researcher bias. In this study, participants reviewed their interview text, provided feedback, corrected inaccuracies, and/or clarified ambiguities in the text. Another form of member checking took place during the focus group at the conclusion of the data collection phase. Maxwell (1996:94) states that member checking "is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpretation of the meaning of what they say and perspective they have on what is going on".

#### 4.2.2.9.2 Peer review

A group of three teacher educators, who are outside the study, reviewed a draft of the report on this study, and provided feedback. Their external review and input on the research helped identify validity threats and raise awareness of the researcher's own biases and assumptions.

## 4.3 The role of the researcher

According to Leckie (2008:776), when undertaking qualitative research, the researcher has a multiplicity of roles and responsibilities, often enacted simultaneously. Many of these roles are so intuitive and commonly understood that they are rarely discussed. Furthermore, qualitative research is interpretive research as the researcher is involved in a sustained and intensive experience with the participants (Creswell, 2009:177). Within this study, the researcher employed PAR as a research design, utilising this design demands that the researcher engage in a process of research which promotes democratic goals, thus the researcher strived for an open, broad-based involvement of participants in the study by having the participants collaborating in decisions as equal partners to ensure their well-being (Creswell, 2008:583). In doing so, the researcher needs to be aware of his/her own biases, values and background when conducting a study as participants should not be influenced in any way.

In this study the researcher collected data by conducting interviews, focus group interviews and completing a document analysis. Ethical clearance was needed to pursue these methods and the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the North West University (NWU) Faculty of Education Ethics Committee before the commencement of this study. Ethical clearance needs to be obtained so that it can be ensured that participants are not harmed in any way when research is conducted. Furthermore, the researcher developed a roadmap for WIL. When conducting qualitative research it is important for the researcher to remain an instrument within the research study, thus he/she should be self-critical, thoughtful, curious and trustworthy.

## 4.4 Ethical aspects

Research involves several ethical issues. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000:170) noted, "Ethical matters shift and change as we move through an inquiry. They are never far from the heart of our inquiries no matter where we are in the inquiry process". According to Strydom (2011b:114), "Ethics is set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural

expectations about the most current conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students". Furthermore, Strydom (2011b:114) emphasises that ethical guidelines serve as standards and acts as a basis upon which each researcher ought to evaluate his or her own conduct. These guidelines are also referred to as ethical issues, and include harm to experimental subjects/participants, voluntary participation, informed consent, deception of subjects, violation of privacy/anonymity/confidentiality, compensation, debriefing of participants and publication of findings. Furthermore, Punch (1994:89) stated that "most concern revolves around issues of harm, consent, deception, privacy, and confidentiality of data".

The researcher dealt with ethical issues in the following manner:

**Informed consent and voluntary participation**

Prior to commencement of the study, the researcher informed the participants of the nature of the study as well as the purpose of the study. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the research was only for academic purposes. Participants were given the reassurance that participation is voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they choose to do so. Participants also signed informed consent forms to acknowledge this (cf. Addendum B).

**Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity**

Data collected from participants should be kept under secure conditions at all times. The researcher went to all efforts to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants would be maintained through the removal of any identifying characteristics before dissemination. The researcher made it clear that the participants' names would not be used for any other purposes, nor would information be shared that revealed their identity in any way (cf. Addendum D).

**Harm and risk**

Babbie (2007:27) states that the fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to participants. Participants can be harmed in a physical and/or emotional manner but researchers should ensure that this does not occur. In this research study the researcher guaranteed that no participants were put in a situation where they might be harmed as a result of their participation,

**Honesty and trust**

Ethical guidelines are standards which should be adhered to maintain standards (Strydom, 2011b:114). Adhering to these ensured honesty and trustworthiness of the data collected

and the accompanying data analysis. Throughout the study the researcher ensured that the participants were not be misled about the facts of the research and information regarding the study was not withheld from them.

**Ethical clearance**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the NWU Ethics Committee:

*Number:* NWU-00084-14-A2

*Approval date:* 19 June 2014

## 4.5 Summary

This chapter illustrated the research methodology and methods for this study. The qualitative research approach was used to explore WIL by implementing participatory action research as research design. Embedded within this research design was the use of document analysis, semi-structured interviews as well as focus group interviews which further helped to triangulate the data findings so that a true representation of the data could be interpreted to address the research questions. Therefore, a deeper understanding of how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into their reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes could be obtained.

Apart from the research approach and design, this chapter also gave a detailed account of the research process (i.e., aims of the study, participant selection, data collection and data analysis procedures for this study) and how it was used to address the research questions.

# CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

## 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to systematically examine how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into the reading literacy component of their foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. This chapter aims to present and discuss the results of the data collected through interviews, focus group interviews and documents. The content analysis method was employed to analyse the data as the data was coded to identify possible themes and categories. The findings are discussed under the themes and categories which emanated from the data and as they relate to the research questions as stipulated in Chapter 1 (cf. Chapter 1 section 1.3).

## 5.2 Identification of the problem area

When deciding to pursue a research journey or in this case a PhD, it is important to explore avenues that demand change. Considering the context of Education in South Africa, there are numerous opportunities that need this change and where a contribution is needed. But having to identify what issues are worthy of investigation is a point of departure when pursuing a PhD. However, working within higher education institutions and having the responsibility of teacher education made the identification of this issue somewhat easier.

Teacher educators have been concerned and confronted with the low teacher capacity and ability which confronts the South African Education system, especially within the foundation phase. This is reiterated by Elbie Henning who reported in the Mail and Guardian that:

> They were also concerned about the status of teachers in South Africa, specifically those in the foundation phase. We know how strongly the early learning foundations of a child direct all future learning and we all entrust our children to the care and the instruction of teachers, yet society no longer accords teachers the status that recognises this.
> (Henning, 2011).

On a previous occasion also in the Mail and Guardian, Elbie Henning and Whitfield Green indicated that foundation phase teacher education is in dire straits.

> The thrill in the air was about the education of the teachers of the young. Without talking about it we all knew that this component of teacher education needs an immediate and powerful intervention. Policy and top-down directives are not achieving it for so many children in our country whose teachers are not adequately prepared.
> (Henning & Green, 2011).

Additionally, teaching is often identified as ineffective and learners fall progressively behind the expectations of the curriculum with each year. The cause of this poor performance lies not with teachers but with the teacher education system that produced them (JET Education Services, 2014:4). Since 2009, there has been a great interest in the challenges that teacher education and development are facing. These challenges include a lack of access to quality teacher education and development opportunities for prospective and practising teachers; a mismatch between the provision of and demand for teachers of particular types; the failure of the system to achieve dramatic improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in schools and a fragmented and uncoordinated approach to teacher education and development (DBE & DHET, 2011:1).

Former Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, puts this simply by stating that "[W]e recognise, however, that teachers still struggle to translate the curriculum into good classroom practice. Teachers need support to implement the curriculum" (Pandor, 2008: 45). However in 2009, the South African Department of Education (DoE) (2009) appointed a panel of experts to investigate the nature of the challenges and problems experienced in the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). One factor which became apparent was that "[C]ertainty and specificity about what to teach and how to teach it will help to restore confidence and stability in the system" (DoE, 2009:61). From this it is possible to deduce that teachers do not know **what** to teach or even **how** to teach it. Additionally, teacher education has been criticised as teachers lack depth and breadth of content knowledge required to teach literacy (Layton & Deeny, 1995; Nolen et al., 1990).

Furthermore, teacher education is located within the higher education system. The DBE and DHET (2011:15) acknowledge that this system is not producing sufficient new teachers with adequate in-depth knowledge to meet the needs of the schooling system. "University courses fail to provide novices with adequate procedural knowledge of classrooms, adequate knowledge of pupils or the extended practica needed to acquire that knowledge, or a realistic view of teaching in its full classroom" (Snow et al, 1998:289). Previous research has indicated that there is great variation in the courses of teacher preparation programmes, different institutions expect and demand different things from their students. Furthermore, conversations with colleagues about the focus and development of novice foundation phase teachers would somehow always allude to the professional identity of teachers. Aspects of these conversations would highlight how teachers should adhere to professional ideals such as being committed to the learning of children, making apparatus, how important the school curriculum is, being punctual, functioning well in a school environment and behaving responsibly, especially in

public, at all times. This was also highlighted in some of the interviews I conducted for this study:

> *so because it is foundation phase, we have focused on action songs, action rhymes, stories with action, lots of pictures and that kind of thing*[6].

This was further reiterated in a study conducted by JET Education Services who found that many participants taking part in their study regarded effective teaching as the importance of students being able to manage a class, students should be able to design resource material, engage with learners and reflect and learn from their experience (JET Education Services, 2012:4).

It seems as though the act of teaching is seen as a mere skill and not a profession which was the argument of Levine (cf. Chapter 1 section 1.1). Considering all these factors, one aspect became very clear, there seems to be a disillusion around the entire notion of foundation phase teachers. There are no clear specifications on what they have to know and how they are supposed to do things, yet they have the most important job, to teach and shape the foundation stage of learners of this country. This highlighted one aspect for me namely, the development of knowledge and skills for foundation phase teacher education.

Currently, teacher preparation programmes have the following format, students are trained to become teachers by being exposed to theory within the university classrooms and then they go out to schools for WIL and apply this theory learnt in school classrooms. This model has been used for decades within many teacher preparation programmes. However, due to the nature of implementation it has caused fragmentation in teacher preparation programmes and has given rise to the perennial issue of the theory and practice divide (cf. Chapter 2, section 2.4.2). This is because there are seldom clear objectives for WIL or how it should connect back to the university classroom and student learning.

As part of the journey about exploring the potential topic, I consulted various official departmental documents which I assumed would give guidance around what WIL should entail and how it should be structured. *The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ)* does indicate the various types of knowledge that underpin teachers' practise. The types of learning encapsulated in the knowledge for teaching is that of disciplinary learning, pedagogical learning, practical learning, fundamental learning and situational learning (DHET, 2011:7-8). However, there are no specific distinctions made for practical learning within

[6] The quotes generated from the interviews have been used verbatim so sentence construction, tenses and concord errors have not been corrected.

which WIL is situated. According to MRTEQ, the only stipulation which universities have to curriculate WIL around is:

> *Practical Learning* involves learning in and from practice. Learning from practice includes the study of practice, using discursive resources to analyse different practices across a variety of contexts, drawing from case studies, video records, lesson observations, etc., in order to theorise practice and form a basis for learning in practice. Learning in practice involves teaching in authentic and simulated classroom environments. Work-integrated learning (WIL) takes place in the workplace and can include aspects of learning from practice (e.g. observing and reflecting on lessons taught by others), as well as learning in practice (e.g. preparing, teaching and reflecting on lessons presented by oneself). Practical learning is an important condition for the development of tacit knowledge, which is an essential component of learning to teach (DHET, 2011: 8).

Furthermore, as a teacher educator I have had experience in and worked with programme evaluations and the re-curriculation thereof. Since 2010, programme evaluations have indicated that WIL needs to be restructured as it was found that it was defeating its purpose of helping students to connect theory and practice. Programme evaluations have highlighted that there is an absence of mentorship, students lack sufficient content knowledge, the absence of clearly defined partnerships between schools, universities and the districts have also been identified and assessment of WIL has also been emphasised. Moreover, conversations with colleagues about WIL always seemed to emphasise how well the students taught their lessons even though it was also acknowledged that students lack sufficient content knowledge when teaching their lessons.

In an attempt to address these concerns the DBE and DHET (2011:1) put together the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011–2025*. This framework was put together to improve the quality of teacher education and development in order to improve the quality of teachers and teaching in South Africa (DBE and DHET, 2011:1). To achieve this, this framework intends to create "an expanded and accessible formal teacher education system that both develops practising teachers and produces sufficient numbers of new, quality teachers with the specialised and differentiated competences that are required by the schooling system will be established" (DBE & DHET, 2011:15). In order to attain this, the DBE and DHET (2011:16-18) has identified that knowledge and practice standards need to be developed, foundation phase teacher provision needs to be strengthened, and the teaching practice/school experience (WIL) component of teacher preparation programmes should be strengthened.

This is then where this study is situated, within a national need of South Africa as it latches onto an integral part of the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011–2025*, namely, the teaching practice/school experience (WIL) component of teacher preparation programmes which needs to be strengthened. This is an avenue which demands change within teacher education as it is a national issue worth investigating.

The process outlined above lead to the formulation of the following research questions:

1. What is the theoretical knowledge base for WIL in reading literacy teacher education?
2. What constitutes an aligned WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education?
3. How, according to evidence-based research, should WIL be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes?
4. How is WIL incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa?

Chapter 2 of this study has highlighted the knowledge base teachers need to teach reading literacy. Chapter 3 has illustrated WIL in foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. The next step in the action research process is to determine what kinds of data need to be collected as well as which methods should be used to collect it; this is illustrated in section 5.3.

## 5.3 Data collection and organisation

Schreiber (2008:185) reminds us that the term data refers to a collection of information. This collection of data also forms an integral part of qualitative research as it constitutes an essential stepping-stone toward both gathering data and linking one's findings with higher order concepts. Data collection also forms the next step in the action research process. The data collection in this study had to focus on helping the researcher answer the research questions so suitable data collection methods had to be used as the data sources have to help to answer the research questions.

The data collected for this study should give an indication of how WIL is incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa. In order to collect this data, **semi-structured interviews** and **focus group interviews** were conducted and **documents** were collected and analysed. These multiple sources of data were used to better understand the scope of how WIL is incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. Multiple sources of data also help researchers to corroborate findings or as Leedy and Ormrod (2001:150) state "to achieve convergence of the data (triangulation)".

### *5.3.1 Semi-structured interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with various lecturers who were involved with WIL within foundation phase teacher preparation programmes across South Africa. These interviews were used to generate perspectives and experiences on the phenomenon of WIL within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes. Some of the questions and responses are illustrated below and are organised according to the categories and themes which emanated from the analysis of the data as well as the conceptual framework.

The following answers to the questions posed indicate the *nature* or put simply the *structure* and *format* of WIL. These themes relate to that of **purpose** and **context** which are two dimensions which are highlighted in the conceptual framework of this study. The next question highlights aspects of these dimensions.

**What is the structure and format of WIL within your foundation phase teacher preparation programme?**

> *…[W]e have two Teaching Experiences per year, normally around three weeks each. It depends on the school calendar, school holidays, sometimes it's one day less but generally it's a 15 day teaching block. We have had discussions around the first year programme and what the structure does look like. The questions we're asking ourselves is, should first year BEd. Foundation Phase teacher educators be teaching? Should they not be teaching? Should they be supervised or not? And that's a question I don't think we've actually answered, but a question we looking to kind of debate around. In first year generally the first three weeks they are in a Foundation Phase setting – grade 1, grade 2, grade 3 – where they generally have an intensive observation task to get familiar with the programme, the daily routine, teacher practice, communicating with children, school surroundings, and culture of the school. The second teaching prac they spend two weeks in a foundation phase classroom and a compulsory one week in a grade R classroom because of government's move towards making it universal.*

Another participant stated:

> *There is no structured syllabus, only 1 credit is allocated for WIL. What is currently being done in the programme depends on the practice teaching programme leader. Currently there is no alignment between the course content and teaching practice. Students are only required to present lessons and there is no progression over the four years. The students are introduced to professional competencies in the course, one week at the beginning of the first year students are orientated around discipline, how to dress, where to sit in the staffroom. There is not much emphasis on ethics.*

Another participant indicated:

> *What we do in the first term is we take them to a rural school environment. We go as a group; all the Foundation and Intermediate Phase students go together with the lecturers. We stay in a village in the Amatole Mountains and we do home-stays for the students and they get to teach, but in a highly structured way in the local schools; there are three local schools. So we use the methodology of lesson study and we develop prior to going, lessons with the students as part of initiating them as well, into lesson planning. So it's part of the induction into lesson planning and what we do is we work together with the students and develop lessons that focus on learning English as a First Additional Language because the environments that we're taking the students into are isiXhosa environments, and it's a particular issue for the Foundation Phase. So when we get there the students have already prepared a lesson for the grade that they're going to be in, and in their groups they choose one person who will teach the lesson and that person then teaches while the rest of them observe. This time is short, a week actually, because it's expensive but it is valuable, because for most of our students it's the first experience that they've ever had in a rural environment, you know, and doing a home-stay where the conditions there isn't just running water and electricity, when they come back we try and build this collage of schooling. So the first teaching practice is about induction – we're inducting the students into the profession of teaching, the second is collaborative. The second Teaching Practice we continue with lesson study. Lesson study runs throughout the course but it's got different requirements, and it's, it's linked to a module in Education Studies, called teacher's research. So in the second term students group together according to the grades they will teach during teaching practice even though it is different schools and develop lessons together a single lesson but without lecturer support except. We support them in the sense that we go through the lessons as lecturers but we don't give them the same kind of support that we did in the induction phase.*

The following answers to the questions posed illustrate *how theory and practice are connected* and *how students have to apply their knowledge*. These themes relate to the dimension of **integration** which is another dimension of the conceptual framework which refers to the process of connecting formal learning and productive work.

**How is the Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) component integrated into your programme?**

> *Our work-integrated component is fully integrated into our programme, because whatever we are doing in methodology or we're doing in the content subjects or the education subjects, is all aligned to our work-integrated learning. Students have to learn*

*about method of teaching and through methods of teaching, it's how you going to apply those methods and methodologies in practice.*

Another participant stated:

*Apart from going out those few weeks that they do during the year, I don't separate in my class. I don't separate theory and practice, so in a sense, I deal with practice and theory in my class. Going out on work integrated learning is for me in a sense a physical removal from the campus, but it shouldn't be, the only real difference is that they are now physically with kids. But I do in my class make a lot of effort to try and bridge the theory-practice gap by showing videos and having students actually participate in discussions.*

Another participant indicated:

*As from 2014 we have a different programme, prior to this, our fourth years specifically were in context for three days and would come back to the university for two days. Uh, it worked a lot better than what we have now. We are planning for the students to go out on block sessions for the whole of the second semester where they would basically be in school. But the challenge with that is that there's very little reflection that feeds back into their understanding of what is happening in the classroom.*

Another participant specified:

*We have weekly teaching, where our students are placed in classrooms to teach lessons planned and prepared in conjunction with their lecturer on campus. The teachers of the classrooms in which they are based communicate the topics to the lecturer and the lecturer has to help the student prepare for their weekly teaching. Weekly teaching is for our first, second and third year students. Our students also engage in practice teaching twice a year which take place in April and July. This is from first to fourth year students. In this time students spend a minimum of 2 weeks in a classroom under guidance of a classroom teacher.*

**Are the experiences gained during WIL sufficient to bridge the theory-practice divide?**

*If you ask me WIL generally – no, but I think the Teaching School may hold some of the answers. Having said that, I think it depends on how WIL is organised, because there have been fantastic examples presented where there are close cooperation that may even be better than our Teaching School concept. So I think it is all about the relationships, the shared understanding of the product we want to create in the teacher*

*education programmes and how we work in a collaborative fashion with the schools – whether it's a Teaching School or a WIL school.*

Another participant stated:

*I think so. I think it's imperative. I think it helps to create the relation between theory and practice. They enter a different space in which education is occurring – so not at the university level but on the ground so to speak as they are in classrooms practicing what they're learning, they're developing their own teaching style, they're trying, they're becoming innovative, they're trying things that maybe they were afraid to try. So I think it's definitely, I mean it, our students have to be on teaching practice to experience the reality of teaching that we can't always necessarily present all the time in classrooms.*

The learning which develops in WIL occurs in a situated context; however, this has implications for the curriculum of teacher preparation programmes as this learning should be embedded throughout the coursework of the programme. The *completion of assignments/tasks* and the *application of knowledge* are indicators as to how learning occurs. The following questions thus highlight aspects of **learning** and **curriculum** which are dimensions of the conceptual framework.

**Do you give your students specific tasks to complete during the WIL component of their course?**

*When our students do the home stays in the first term they participate in lesson study in groups and one student then teachers the lesson and rest observe. Part of this developmental approach is also to do a situation analysis of the school; getting a sense of the schools: how they function, you know, how they organised relationships, who they work with policies, the work of teachers, the work of a principal, the work of the SGB. So we have this assignment which is a situation analysis and, and the students are in groups for their lesson study, and each group does a different component of it, and then we also have a group that follows the children around for a day noting what they do, we also have a group that interviews parents in the in the community. So when they so this, they are fully immersed in the community by doing this task.*

Another participant stated:

*Yes we do but we make sure that the students aren't overwhelmed as they should have time to prepare their lessons. So we try to put the emphasis on Literacy and the Numeracy because we regard these as the two strongest programmes but since the implementation of CAPS we have become very worried about life skills as it has become*

*like something that has been swept under the carpet. Assignments are different for each lecturer, I think if you talking FP trained lecturer, they tend to steer on the side of too practical. I think there is still a lot to be done in getting students to theorise especially towards their third and fourth year because they should take their practical and theorise from there. I think there is quite a bit to be done there, you know there is too much lesson planning and you know and we struggle with the reflective practice. Because we see the reflective practice as a very good way of integrating theory and practice but unfortunately we have been confronted with the negative comments on evaluating reflective practice.*

Another participant indicated:

*We find that that is most helpful for them to go with a specific purpose, like with the allocation of assignments. So, if I work with challenges or barriers to learning, they need to do a case study on the school, on a specific learner and then it becomes a collective discussion around that, yes. So they do go in with specific assignments which then also serve as part of the purpose.*

**How are students expected to apply their knowledge gained in classes within WIL?**

*Well obviously they are expected to integrate the theoretical component into the practice component when they go into classrooms, but it's not happening for two reasons. When they get to the schools they enter a conflict situation because many schools do not necessarily agree with how teachers are trained currently, they don't subscribe to the philosophy we're using. So now these students are in a conflict. That's the one side of the story. The other side of the story is when they are with us at the university, we as different subject discipline lecturers also don't communicate with one another as to what the shared expectation is. So teaching practice is a very generalised thing as the emphasis is on file this lesson there, plan a sport activity and reflect.*

Another participant stated:

*Okay. What we do in our lesson plan is they've got to reflect how they use the theory in the lesson so, are they applying Piaget's theory? Are they using social constructivism? They also need to stipulate what activities have been given, or how can they relate that practice to theory because we have found that they need to link that theory to practice else they haven't got a foundation to work from.*

Another participant indicated:

> *Well, the lesson plan format that they are given makes provision for things like how does the lesson articulate with ones done before, where is it taking you, what research have you done, what are the resources and how are the resources integrated, what is the introduction and why is this the introduction, what is the conclusion and why is this the conclusion? Also, in what way do you assess and why, what is the content of the lesson, you know. So it's basically that and reflects on the critical incident during the teaching of this particular lesson. I think that is more or less what we do.*

Another participant stated:

> *What we do a lot of content knowledge teaching as well as methodology. So for instance an example in the literacy discourse we'll talk to them about reading aloud so that's the content knowledge which will include what is phonemic awareness, what is phonological awareness, and how does that help children learn and how does the child develop holistically through that? And then we look at through what mediums do we teach that to children in developmentally appropriate ways, so we'll look at things like singing songs, compiling rhymes, and then we ask our students to compile a songbook while on Teaching Experience, which helps them integrate to a certain extent what they want to learn and how.*

There are various *role players* involved in WIL, the following answers indicate the *role and relationship* of the various role players. These themes allude to the aspect of established **partnerships** which is another dimension of the conceptual framework. This is highlighted as follows:

**Does your university engage in Department of Education or school partnerships?**

> *Well we could not have done the Teaching School without it. It had to be through the Department; it's a memorandum of understanding. There's no way we can work without that. Although there are some inconsistencies and misunderstandings, but I think we getting closer to a better understanding now. It's harder with the schools where there are no formal partnerships, so the institutional collaborative schools in other words, we work with them but it's not the same. Although I must say being new in the Soweto community, we've had to force relationships. I haven't come across one school that said to us "we don't want your students here". Most of the teachers we spoke to in the Foundation Phase felt that it was important for them to play a role in educating the next generation of teachers, but that's at a school level. I'm not sure what their arrangements are like at, uh, district level, because it's very difficult; the district has their own set of*

*criteria. In the Foundation Phase it's about ANAs, ANAs, ANAs… So we find difficulty actually even placing our students because the teachers are under such pressure with the ANAs, they don't want our students there at a certain time of the year.*

Another participant stated:

*We work with both of them. I think collaboration is very important, and then trusting our students to different settings. The department plays a role because at the end of the day they are the job providers to our students so… I think it's important that they form part of our discussions on collaboration in terms of our students going post-university which is classrooms.*

Another participant indicated:

*It's not strong enough when it comes to the department, but there's a lot of contact between schools in the sense also that we invite teachers. You know, there are teachers that come with their whole group of children and then they come do and present lessons and so on. So we have that, in other words, we have a stronger relationship with schools than with the Department of Education.*

My reflection on these extracts of the interview data is summarised as follows. There seems to be no structured syllabus regarding WIL as all the institutions have a different model and way of going about it. It seems as if the focus is to get the student teachers into schools and no measure is put in place to make sure student teachers are exposed to different environments besides the comfort of the school environment which they have become accustomed to. Only one institution indicated that an effort is made to ensure that student teachers, for example, are exposed to rural environments and are fully immersed into this environment. It appears as if the focus of WIL is that student teachers have to go to schools to teach lessons and generate evidence of particular cases at schools which is also an indication of how student teachers connect theory and practice. There was no evidence of students being required to teach lessons specific to reading literacy. Additionally, there is no explicit indication of how students are expected to connect theory and practice as in some cases the teachers guided the students on what lessons to teach, some institutions have simply extended WIL time so that this can happen, and one institution has a model where students spend certain days of the week in schools and the rest at campus. Another institution uses a teaching school where they together with school teachers work closely with the students; this could be a good model if managed effectively. However, Gravett, Petersen and Petker (2014:114) highlight that the integration of a teaching school into a teacher preparation programme is a complex issue as there is a

dissonance in the roles that need to be undertaken by the academic staff and the staff of the teaching school.

### *5.3.2 Focus group interviews*

Focus group interviews were held with various other stakeholders involved in WIL. These stakeholders were comprised of the School Management Teams (SMT) (which included Heads of Departments (HOD) of the Foundation Phase) within the Blue District of the North West Province as well as the Green District of the Western Cape as students are typically placed within these schools for the WIL component of their course. The focus group interviews were conducted to obtain any additional information on how WIL is incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. Some of the questions used in the focus group interviews and the responses are recorded below and are ordered according to the categories and themes which emanated from the analysis of the data as well as the conceptual framework.

**Purpose** is a dimension which is highlighted in the conceptual framework of this study. The purpose and objectives of various role players as well as the context of WIL is highlighted in the answers to the next question.

**How have you been experiencing accommodating students for WIL within your school?**

> *Students are generally much better behaved than in the past. They are very helpful and their overall teaching behaviour is good. However, they refuse to get involved in extra-mural activities because they are not checked by university lecturers as there is nothing in it for them. Schools typically want them to become involved in these activities. Students are sent by universities to schools to observe but because they aren't evaluated they are bored by these observations and don't really participate actively in school activities or learn from expert teachers.*

Another group indicated:

> *It's actually a privilege to have them some of them work really well, and then it's to our advantage to have them. It is also an advantage for them because they're learning from the teachers whom they're with, but we have had experiences where there are students who don't know anything – and even though they are fourth year students.*

The integration of knowledge is a key dimension of WIL, this is usually indicated by how students have to apply their knowledge. This also highlights the dimension of learning and the curriculum as these two dimensions allow for knowledge application. The following questions

illustrate how students are expected to apply their knowledge as well as how they integrate their knowledge of theory and practice. These themes allude to the dimensions of **integration**, **curriculum** and **learning** which is part of the conceptual framework.

**Do you think the structure and format of WIL within your foundation phase teacher preparation programmes is sufficient to prepare novice teachers?**

> *There is a lack of alignment between the reality of classroom teaching as the students don't know how to manage the daily routine in the classroom in terms of literacy content, maths and life skills. They simply cannot plan time wise. They are very good at planning a single standalone lessons for evaluation purposes, these lessons are also written out according to the university guidelines. Students cannot plan complete two-weekly schedules according to CAPS. It seems as if their knowledge is compartmentalised they don't see the bigger picture, so no it's not sufficient as students are not developing into the teachers we need.*

**Do you think that the WIL component of teacher preparation programmes as organised currently grants students sufficient opportunity to apply their knowledge of reading literacy?**

> *I think it does, because, when they are in classroom they learn a lot. They will learn more from the teacher teaching than they will actually from theory, so the practical experiences are what count a lot.*

Another person indicated:

> *Yes, we are asked by the University to accommodate them; so then they come to our school, But they don't give us any guidelines as to what the objectives are for the students stay, besides the fact that the students have to, they themselves will say "I have to teach so-many lessons". That's all that we actually are informed about so we don't know what else they must learn and do.*

The other group indicated:

> *Their disciplinary knowledge is not up to standard especially the problems with identifying where/with what learners have problems. They can't implement specific interventions; they rely only on CAPS and move through it systematically. Students also don't know how to integrate assessment with instructional decision.*

Another person in the group indicated:

> *Universities are so removed from the schools that they do not know what we as teachers have to do so students come for prac and with these instructions from universities and then students have negative experiences because universities don't expose them to the reality of the classroom. Sometimes you find them teaching a lesson and they themselves cannot explain to the children what they are doing. Or in some cases they try to teach the lesson or content to the children but they cannot relay the content to the learners at their level.*

The following responses to the questions posed indicated the nature of the relationships amongst the role players within WIL. This also highlights the dimension of **partnerships** within the conceptual framework.

**Do you think that the Department of Education should form partnerships with the university for optimal teacher preparation or should the university and the school simply liaise in terms of partnerships?**

> *I think it would help a lot because we don't know how much the university is told about the new curriculum, or how, you know… We sort of just in the middle. So we don't know how much communication there is. So if the Education Department did come in and speak to us and to the universities then I think there would be more coherence between the different parties.*

The other group indicated:

> *There is a discrepancy in terms of what the local district requires and what is being told at university what files should look like; how assessment should be done; recording and reporting of assessments. Districts should play a greater role in training especially regarding what they expect of teachers.*

My reflection on the data generated from the focus group interviews seems to substantiate the data generated from the interviews. Because the focus of WIL appears to be on the teaching of lessons, students seem to only focus on this because it is credit bearing for them as they generate marks for this. So everything else like the participation in extra-curricular activities and lesson observation, seem to be of less value to them because it is not necessarily assessed. Lesson observations are very generic and do not require aspects specific for reading literacy. The data shows that stakeholders are of the opinion that student teachers who engage in WIL aren't able to manage the daily routine of the classroom, they can however teach individual lessons but progressive work, adaptive practice and the integration of aspects such as the reading literacy components (language structure), assessment and progress monitoring seems

to be lacking. Another factor which was highlighted in the interviews too is that of relationship and the role of the stakeholders and role players in WIL. It appears as if the schools do not always know what is required of them or how they should support the student teachers so that optimal learning can take place. The stakeholders indicated that student teachers also seem to be baffled with confusion as the data shows that they experience conflict once they get to the schools because what they are confronted with at university is not usually what happens in the schools.

### *5.3.3 Documents*

Documents were collected as a final stage of the data collection procedure. The documents collected in this study included course outlines, assessment tasks, assignment tasks which stipulate expectations, instructions and guidelines specific to WIL for reading literacy within teacher preparation programmes. However, Creswell (2008:223) states that documents are sometimes difficult to locate and obtain as information might not be available to the public. This was the case in this study; sourcing the particular documents was difficult as institutions were busy with the re-curriculation of the BEd Foundation Phase teacher preparation programme so not all the participants could share the information (cf. section 4.2.2.5.3). In this section, extracts are included as taken from the documents analysed and organised according to the categories and themes which emanated from the analysis of the semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews as well as the conceptual framework.

The following extracts indicate the various outcomes and objectives set by the institutions that were willing to share their documents. Outcomes and objectives relate to the dimension of **purpose** of the conceptual framework.

An extract from University K, indicating their outcomes or objectives for WIL:

> *The idea of this course is to prepare you to act with self-confidence in all teaching situations. The course will also assist you in discovering your strong and weak points. In this way you will enhance and develop your teaching practice.*

An extract from University L, indicating their aims for WIL:

**1. AIMS OF PRACTICE TEACHING**

The aims of practice teaching are that students will:

1.1 Observe the work procedures, teaching methods and techniques, general classroom organisation and disciplinary methods employed by the mentor;

1.2 Be exposed to a variety of organisational and administrative aspects of secondary education;

1.3 Be exposed to the extra-curricular activities of a school;

1.4 Get limited exposure to teaching, provided that they are guided by a teacher in the preparation and presentation of lessons.

An extract from University K, emphasising information to schools regarding the students stay for WIL.

**TEACHING PRACTICE: 21st JULY – 1st AUGUST 2014**

Thank you for agreeing to accommodate our B.Ed. for their compulsory teaching practice from the 21st July – 1st August 2014. There are 10 practical teaching days and the students will report to the office at 8:00 on the first day. **First year students** should be at school during the 1st week (21st -25th of July 2014).

It is expected of each student to be present throughout the school day and to become involved with administrative, facilitative and extra-mural activities where possible.

The student will submit an evaluation form to her guardian teacher for completion at the end of the teaching practice session. Please give the evaluation form back to the student upon completion. The marks awarded by the guardian teacher will contribute to the student's final practical teaching mark. Constructive comments made by guardian teachers are extremely valuable as these issues are addressed during the students' professional training sessions.

Your valuable contribution towards preparing our students for the teaching profession is highly appreciated.

Kind regards.

An extract from University N, indicating their outcomes or purpose for WIL:

> *The purpose of Teaching and Learning, with particular reference to the school visit component, is to give students the opportunity to observe and experience the practice of teaching within an authentic school context, and to integrate teaching theory and practice. In order to achieve this goal, students are oriented with regard to the total teaching programmes of the relevant schools through participating in teaching-learning situations and extra-curricular and other activities, initially under supervision, but later independently.*

The following examples of extracts from the documents indicate the roles of the schools and the university as well as the format and structure of the WIL experience. This relates to the dimensions of **context** and **partnerships** of the conceptual framework.

An extract from University N, indicating the roles of the school and the university for WIL:

**1.2 The school**

- provides access and exposure to a variety of school contexts;
- guides the student(s) as far as possible to develop into skilled teachers;
- appreciates and nurtures the partnership with as provider of teachers in order to help ensure a high standard of teacher training;
- provides feedback to through mutual communication on the strengths and weaknesses and possible areas for improvement in the teacher training programmes.

**1.3 The University**

- maintains a professional relationship with the schools involved in practice teaching;
- is involved in developing a system of mentors and in facilitating training and developmental opportunities;
- ensures quality assurance with regard to your training.

An extract from University K, indicating how their WIL is arranged for the year:

| | January | 9-19 April | 15-26 July |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1ST YEARS**<br>**19 days school visit (own arrangement)** | No Practical teaching | 9 days – classroom observation in schools | 10 days (5 days classroom observation in schools and 5 days Diversity Workshop) |
| **2ND YEARS**<br>**27 days school visit (own arrangement** | 10 days (compulsory and own arrangement)* | 9 days (compulsory) | 10 days |
| **3RD YEARS**<br>**27 days school visit (own arrangement** | 10 days (compulsory and own arrangement)* | 9 days (compulsory) | 10 days |
| **4TH YEARS**<br>**27 days school visit (Department of Curriculum Studies arrange)** | 10 days (own arrangement) | 10 days | 10 days |

**Micro-teaching**

During micro-teaching, the actual teaching situation is simulated so that the student can be schooled in teaching skills. The learning material and the course of the lesson are divided into phases and only one aspect is dealt with at a time. Two students are indicated, who must each present a lesson, while the rest of the micro-group act as learners. The lesson is taped on video and played back after the lesson, while the lecturer and students evaluate the "teacher". Presentations last for a maximum of 10 minutes for mini lessons. If there are just certain aspects to be dealt with, the presentation will last for a maximum of 5 minutes.

Because micro-teaching is a practical exercise, attendance is compulsory and 5% will be deducted from your total mark for every absence.

Micro-teaching classes take place weekly, unless other arrangements are made.

An extract from University N, indicating how their WIL is arranged for the year:

**2. STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURE**

- 2014: Second and third year students visit schools at the beginning of the school year for two weeks of observation in specific phases.
- **Second, third and fourth year students visit the school full-time for the period 21 July 2014 to 19/26 September 2014. Students have a holiday during the week of 22 - 28 September and must report back to on Monday 29 September 2014. Wednesday 24 September is Heritage day and thus a public holiday.**
- **Take note that students will therefore only have 4 days to catch up on lessons or days missed.**
- **Students who missed days during the time of school visit must catch up during the week of 22 - 26 September with the approval and co-operation of the Faculty of Education and the school. Contact in this regard.**
- **NB: has a recess from 6 – 14 September 2014, but students must remain at the allocated schools for the duration of this recess. This means that students do not have a holiday during that period, because they will be fully integrated into the school programme. <u>No exceptions will be made in this regard.</u>**
- Students will be placed with teachers who will act as mentors. Normally, this placement will be linked to the relevant phases and curriculum specialisation fields for which they have registered. Students will therefore be supervised by the teacher(s) involved as well as by the principal for the full period.

Learning is a key factor in WIL. Assessment and the portfolio generated to serve as proof of evidence gives an indication of how learning takes place. The following extracts indicate how assessment takes place in WIL in the institutions that were prepared to share their documentation. The themes and categories illustrated here highlight **learning** as a dimension of the conceptual framework.

An extract from University N, indicating what the students have to do whilst they are at the schools specifically pertaining to Literacy:

### 5.1 BEd FOUNDATION PHASE STUDENTS

#### 5.1.1 Lesson observation of BEd 3- and 4-students

- will discuss the observation in class with you. No individual written lesson observation forms will be required for your journal. You must however write a short report on all the lesson observations that you have done during this school visit period, especially during the first week of school visit. Describe the most successful and least successful lessons and refer to the reasons in your opinion. Firstly discuss strategies on how to achieve success and secondly discuss strategies on how to avoid making mistakes and solving the problems with your own lesson presentation. See assignment for your specific year group.
- This reflective report must be 1-2 A4-pages long. Type the assignment in Arial, 12pt font, 1.5 spacing.
- **Every single observation is a learning opportunity. Make use of the opportunity to observe school subjects other than those of your own specialisation field.**
- This report must be handed in **separately** on the same date as the journal. Please ensure that it has a cover page containing the same information as the cover of the journal. Please staple your report – no binding.

#### 5.1.2 Lesson presentation of BEd 3- & 4- students in Grade 1, 2 or 3 classes

In the first week, students will merely observe and provide assistance. No written lesson preparation and presentation is necessary unless the school already expects it of you. There are 7 weeks that remain during which you must present the prescribed number of lessons. At the end of the school visit period you will have to present proof of a minimum of 49 lessons in total that you have presented. You must therefore present a minimum of 7 lessons per week as follows:

**Language & Literacy** – Home language and additional language lessons must be presented with full written planning. (Use the new lesson plan format please). You must present 21 Literacy lessons in total in the following categories over the entire school visit:

- Listen and talk – 5 class lesson presentations in total (4 home language and 1 additional language)
- Sound recognition – 5 class lesson presentations in total (4 home language and 1 additional language)
- Reading – 5 complete lesson presentations in total (4 home language and 1 additional language)
- Language structure and use – 3 class lesson presentations in total (2 home language and 1 additional language)
- Hand writing – 3 class lesson presentations in total (BEd III FP-students only)
- Creative writing - 3 class lesson presentations in total (BEd IV FP-students only)

Students can decide in consultation with their class teachers which lessons they want to present, but it must be a minimum of 3 Language & Literacy lessons per week. Indicate at the top of the lesson planning form in which category the lesson falls, otherwise you will forfeit the marks for these lessons.

An extract from University L giving specific guidelines regarding observations which students have to complete:

## LESSON OBSERVATION FORM 1

**GRADE** _____ **DURATION OF LESSON** _____ **DATE** _____

**SUBJECT** _____ **TEACHER** _____

**TOPIC** _____

1. State the lesson outcomes/objectives.
2. Did the teacher link up with prior/existing knowledge during the introduction of the lesson? If yes, **explain how** and what knowledge was used.
3. Which teaching **method**/s was/were used?
4. Explain how the learners participated in the lesson.
5. Which teaching **media** were used? **Explain** what the teacher used the media for.
6. How did the teacher **conclude** the lesson?
7. How much time did the teacher approximately spend on the following parts of the lesson:
   Introduction _____ minutes
   Development _____ minutes
   Conclusion _____ minutes
8. Explain how the teacher **summarized** the lesson. (E.g. by repeating the main points on the writing board, on transparency, by questioning the learners, etc.)
9. Were the learners given work to do in class or at home, or both? **Explain** what the learners had to do in each case.
   Class:
   Home:
10. Did the teacher ask the learners any questions?

10.1 Yes / No

10.2 Give an example of a question that was asked and **comment** on how the learners answered the questions?

10.3 Describe the way in which the teacher reacted to the answers.
   Correct answers:
   Incorrect answers:

11 How did the teacher **keep on course / remember the sequence of what had to be taught** in the lesson? (e.g. on transparency, checklist with main points, textbook, relying on memory)

12 Discuss the extent to which the lesson was **teacher** or **learner centered**.

13.1 What did you learn **about teaching** from the way this lesson was taught?

13.2 What, if anything, did you learn about the **subject**?

An extract from University K, indicating how WIL is assessed for the year:

A pass mark of 50% is required for Teaching Practice.
Your continuous assessment will comprise of the following:

| Assessment task | 101 | 201 | 301 | 401 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attendance | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Practice teaching | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Micro – teaching | | | √ (2nd semester) | √ (1st semester) |
| Reports from schools in respect of teaching practice | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Experimental classes | | | | √ |
| Assignments given during the classes | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Portfolio | √ | √ | √ | √ |

An extract from University K, indicating the roles of the portfolio, what it should consist of and how it will be assessed:

**Portfolios**
During your training as a teacher, you will be obliged to compile a portfolio on a yearly basis. It is suggested that you acquire a ring binder so that you can place all of the information below therein. The portfolio must be reflective of the seven roles of the teacher, as explained in Addendum A. Once you have placed the information as detailed below into this portfolio, you will have fulfilled the various roles. If you feel that you have any other information that may reflect the seven roles, you may add this to the portfolio.

The following information must be in the portfolio:

| **PORTEFEULJE / *PORTFOLIO*** | |
|---|---|
| **Van en voorletters van student:** *Surname and initials of student* ..... | **Studente nommer / *Student number:*** ..... |
| **STUDIERIGTING / *FIELD OF INTEREST:*** ..... | |
| 1. INHOUDSOPGAWE / *LIST OF CONTENTS:* | |
| 2. CURRICULUM VITAE: | |
| 3. BESTE PRESTASIES IN GRAAD 12 BEHAAL: *BEST ACHIEVEMENTS IN GRADE 12:* | |
| 4. VISIE AS ONDERWYSER/ES / *VISION AS TEACHER:* | |
| 5. PROEFONDERWYSVERSLAE VAN SKOLE *TEACHING PRACTICE REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS* | |
| 6. VYF UITGESKRYFDE LESSE / *FIVE WRITTEN OUT LESSONS* | |
| 7. VERSLAE VAN DOSENTE-ASSESSERINGS (2 VOORBEELDE): *REPORTS OF LECTURER ASSESSMENTS: (2 EXAMPLES):* | |
| 8. SERTIFIKATE EN + DIPLOMAS / *CERTIFICATES + DIPLOMAS* : | |
| SPORT | |
| KULTUUR / *CULTURE* | |
| NOODHULP / *FIRST AID* | |
| REKENAARGELETTERDHEID / *COMPUTER LITERACY* | |
| 9. ENIGE ANDER UITSTAANDE PRESTASIES EN TOEKENNINGS (SLEGS VAN TOEPASSING OP PRESTASIES VERBONDE AAN DIE UNIVERSITEIT) (Bewyse moet aangeheg word.) ANY OTHER ACIEVEMENTS AND AWARDS (ONLY APPLICABLE TO UNIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENT) (Proof must be attached) | |
| 10. AKADEMIESE REKORD / *ACADEMIC RECORD:* | |
| 11. GETUIGSKRIFTE / *TESTIMONIALS* | |
| 12. AANBEVELINGS VAN WERKGEWERS/SKOOLHOOFDE OF ANDER PERSONE *RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EMPLOYERS/PRINCIPALS OR OTHER PERSONS* | |

| | |
|---|---|
| 13. AKADEMIESE KURSUSSE WAT U BYGEWOON HET WAT NIE IN U KURSUS VOORKOM NIE (Heg bewyse aan, asb.) *ACADEMIC COURSES ATTENDED THAT DO NOT FORM PART OF YOUR COURSE (Proof must be attached)* | |
| 14 LEIERSKAPSPOSISIES BEKLEE (SLEGS VAN TOEPASSING OP PRESTASIES VERBONDE AAN DIE UNIVERSITEIT) (Bewyse aangeheg) *LEADERSHIP POSITIONS (ONLY APPLICALBE TO UNIVERSITY ACIEVEMENT) (Proof must be attached)* | |
| 15 ENIGE ANDER PRESTASIES WAT NIE ONDER BOGENOEMDE AANGEDUI IS NIE. *ANY OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS NOT MENTIONED ABOVE.* | |
| 16. GEMEENSKAPSBETROKKENHEID / *COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT* | |
| 17. **BEWYS** VAN VAARDIGHEDE IN DIE SEWE ROLLE SOOS VOORGESKRYF DEUR DIE NORME EN STANDAARDE VIR DIE OPLEIDING VAN ONDERWYSERS: ***PROOF*** *OF COMPETENCE IN THE SEWEN ROLES AS PRESCRIBED BY THE NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS* | |
| Fasiliteerder van leer. *Learning mediator* | |
| Vertolker en ontwerper van leerprogramme en leerstof. *Interpreter and designer of learning programs and materials* | |
| Leier, administrateur en bestuurder *Leader, administrator and manager* | |
| Vakkundige, navorser en lewenslange leerder *Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner* | |
| Gemeenkapslid, burger en berader *Community, citizenship and pastoral role* | |
| Assessor | |
| Deskundige, spesialis op leerarea/vak dissipline/fase *Learning area/subject discipline/phase specialist* | |
| **ALGEMENE OPMERKING / *GENERAL REMARKS*:** **DATUM / DATE:** | |

An extract from University N, indicating how the journal (portfolio) should be compiled:

## 1. THE JOURNAL AS A MECHANISM FOR DEVELOPMENT

### 1.1 Purpose of a journal

The main purpose of a journal is to give you the opportunity to reflect critically, and in a structured manner, on the different elements of the school visit in order to demonstrate the growth and development that has occurred. This provides a complete view of the academic growth, development and learning that has taken place. Therefore, the journal is more than merely a collection of documents and evidence. Proof must be furnished of reflection in the form of short reports in which the reflection is recorded, photos and/or any other kind of evidence (e.g. reports, feedback from learners, etc.). Ultimately, the journal is a personal document in which your own growth and development ought to be reflected so that you will be able to accept responsibility for your own learning.

### 1.2 Features of a journal

Your journal must

- be neat and systematic;
- be organised according to the guidelines so that the reader will be able to look up or find any relevant information to which you referred. (You should, therefore, number the pages or use dividers so that it will be easy to access the information.);
- be as complete as possible
- contain **no media or hand outs.**

### 1.3 Nature and structure

Each student is expected to submit a complete portfolio consisting of the following:

#### 1.3.1 Title page

- UNIVERSITY
- FACULTY OF EDUCATION
- BEd (YEAR e.g. II, III OR IV) & PHASE
- 45616 TEACHING AND LEARNING (SCHOOL VISIT)
- INITIALS, SURNAME AND STUDENT NUMBER
- NAME OF SCHOOL
- NAME OF MENTOR(S) / RESPONSIBLE TEACHERS

**Spinal insert**

- INITIALS, SURNAME AND STUDENT NUMBER
- BEd (YEAR e.g. II, III OR IV) & PHASE

#### 1.3.2 Documentation

**The school visit journal must include the following documentation and it must be organised in the under mentioned order in your school visit file. If the documentation is not organised in this order, your file will not be assessed and you will have to repeat your school visit during the following year.**

**Place first in your file:** Contents page and name your specific specialisation fields
**Section A:** The class or school timetable
**Section B:** A weekly reflection of 1 full A4 page per week
**Section C:** The official form with evidence of where you were involved in co-curricular activities
**Section D:** A record of the lessons presented with your reflection and assessment forms where applicable, in the following way **(Foundation and Intermediate Senior Phase)**

- The subjects should be arranged in alphabetical order. Each subject must have A4 sized cardboard divider stating the subject's name.
- **B.Ed 2 and 3 students only:** Within each subject, there must be two further cardboard dividers: Firstly "assessed lessons" and secondly "non-assessed lessons". You may have an optional third divider of "substitute lessons". For example, "Mathematics": assessed lessons; non-assessed lessons, substitute lessons. Within all of the sections, the lessons must be arranged according to date of presentation.
- **B.Ed 4 students only:** Within each subject, there must be three further cardboard dividers: Firstly "lessons assessed by lecturer", secondly "lessons assessed by teacher", and thirdly "non-assessed lessons". You may have an optional fourth divider of "substitute lessons". For example, "Mathematics": lessons assessed by lecturer, lessons assessed by teacher, non-assessed, substitute lessons. This will be followed by the same format for each of your other subjects. Within all of these sections, the lessons must be arranged according to date of presentation.
- If there are no lessons assessed by the lecturer in a particular subject, this divider is not necessary.

An extract from University L giving specific guidelines regarding the portfolio of evidence:

### 3.3 Teaching portfolio

Students have to teach as many lessons as possible but at least **ONE** lesson should be **evaluated by a teacher.** First year students will **NOT** be evaluated by a **lecturer**.

First year students should not be expected to teach lessons without the teacher being present in the classroom. If this is expected of you, and if you feel uncomfortable doing so, you have to voice your objection in a careful and professional manner. Explain to the teacher(s) that you are a first year student and that this is your first ever experience of teaching. If your objections are not taken seriously you must contact your Teaching Practice lecturer or the Teaching Practice Coordinator.

**Foundation phase students** should teach in a **Grade 1,2 or 3** classroom. Students must **ask the teacher's assistance** with lesson planning and the development of learning material and teaching media. Students should start with lesson planning early enough so that they can show the teacher their progress and their planning a day or two before the lesson. By doing this, there will be enough time for the student to make corrections or changes that the teacher may recommend.

Building up to the teaching of the evaluation lesson, the student should ask the teacher to **get involved in the teaching of other lessons** taught by the teacher. The student could offer to introduce a lesson, to prepare the media for a lesson or to set up an activity for the learners. In other words, the student should offer to get involved as the **teacher's assistant**. This will help students to build their confidence and to get to know the level at which lessons are pitched for a particular grade in a particular school.

It would be to students' advantage to observe a large number of lessons during the first and second week of Teaching Practice, and then to arrange with a teacher to teach their lessons from the third week.

Students have to prepare some form **of teaching media** as well as a **classroom activity** that they have to set up and produce for the lesson (e.g. a worksheet or activity sheet).

After the lesson the student has to fill in a **reflection form**.

The following documentation must be handed in, in this order:

- Lesson plan form
- Activity designed for the lesson
- Media designed for the lesson (or photo/copy thereof)
- Reflection form
- Lesson Evaluation form

The **teacher's signature** and the **school stamp** must be on all documents.

An example of how University L assesses the student teachers' lessons:

| STUDENT: | | SCHOOL: | DATE: __ / __ / 201_ |
|---|---|---|---|
| TEACHER'S NAME: | | SIGNATURE: | |
| SUBJECT: | GRADE: | TOPIC: | |

| Aspect | Performance Indicators | Remarks* | Mark |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Lesson Planning** | Plans according to **subject didactic principles.**<br>Clearly states **lesson outcomes/objectives.**<br>Provides sufficient **detail.**<br>Clearly indicates **teacher's and learners' actions.** | | /5 |
| **Lesson Presentation** | **Introduction** arouses interest and links with previous knowledge/experience.<br>Develops **content** logically and systematically.<br>**Conclusion** sums up and reinforces.<br>**Motivates** learners to participate in learning process.<br>Promotes **meaningful learning.**<br>**Paces** lesson according to plan. | | /5 |
| **Subject Knowledge** | Displays **sufficient knowledge** of subject.<br>Deals **accurately** with **facts.** | | /5 |
| **Teaching and Learning Media** | Media of good **quality. Layout** is neat and systematic. Media used **correctly.**<br>Media used **functionally** within the lesson and **effectively** to facilitate learning. | | /5 |
| **Communica-tion Skills** | Communicates with **confidence.**<br>Uses **fluent** and **correct language,** pronounced in a manner which is easy to follow.<br>Uses appropriate **facial expressions** and **body language. Moves** comfortably. | | /5 |
| | | **TOTAL** | /25 |

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:**

- This is a student doing an **integrated** education course, i.e. the student has **not** completed a bachelor's degree yet.
- The **purpose** of this evaluation is to:
  - **guide** the student to improve his or her teaching skills.
  - **encourage** the student on his or her learning path.
  - **build** the student's **confidence** for future teaching.

**Mark Allocation:** **1 = Poor**
**2 = Needs attention**
**3 = Satisfactory**
**4 = Good and 5 = Very good**

An example of how University D/M assesses the student teachers' lessons:

## ASSESSMENT OF LESSON: WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING

**PR 26E**

**Subject**……**School:**……**Theme:**……**Gr**……**Date:**……

**Name:** ……
**Student number:** ……
**Course:** ……

| | | CRITERIA | A EXCELLENT | B ABOVE AVERAGE | C SATISFYING | D BELOW AVERAGE | E UNSATISFYING | REMARKS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Written planning | | Is the outcome **SMART**? {Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Traceable} | | | | | | |
| | | Has the outcome been aligned with the Critical Outcome/Learning Outcome/Assessment Standard? | | | | | | |
| | | Are teaching and teaching activities aligned with Lesson Outcome? | | | | | | |
| | | Is assessment aligned with the Lesson Outcome(s)? | | | | | | |
| | | Has the lesson been planned thoroughly? | | | | | | |
| Teaching and Learning | Introduction | Is the introduction linked to learners' prior knowledge and experience? | | | | | | |
| | | Are the learners actively involved? | | | | | | |
| | | Do(es) the Lesson Outcome(s) become clear to the learners? | | | | | | |
| | | Appropriate problem statement? | | | | | | |
| | | Appropriate contextualization? | | | | | | |
| | Teaching and learning phase | Effective application of teaching strategies? | | | | | | |
| | | Does active learning take place? | | | | | | |
| | | Are opportunities created for the application of new knowledge (Individually or in groups)? | | | | | | |
| | | Are learners scaffolded during activities? | | | | | | |
| | | Are learners being monitored throughout in a formative way? | | | | | | |
| | | Do the learners receive continuous feedback? | | | | | | |
| | Conclusion | Is there any consolidation of new acquired knowledge/skills | | | | | | |
| | | Are homework activities attainable and relevant? | | | | | | |
| | | Have the desired outcome(s) been reached? | | | | | | |
| Teaching Skills | | Does the student portray thorough knowledge of the subject? | | | | | | |
| | | LTSM - is it used effectively? | | | | | | |
| | | Attitude towards learners: positive / accommodating/ open/inviting/ supportive | | | | | | |
| | | Quality of communication with learners: Listening skills/speaking skills/writing skills e.g. on the board/ body language | | | | | | |
| | | Affective experience in the classroom: are learners empowered to be successful? | | | | | | |

**Remarks:**

**Symbol achieved for lesson:**

**A =80% and above; B =70% - 79%; C = 60% - 69%; D = 50% - 59%; E = 0% – 49% REPEAT LESSON;**

**Lecturer/Teacher:**…… **Signature:**……

A reflection on the data generated from the documents seems to validate and support the data gathered by the interviews and focus group interviews. It appears as if the aims and objectives like the structure and format of WIL differs across the institutions. Some institutions allow first year student teachers to teach and some do not. The documents do, however, refer to tasks such as the extra-curricular activities and lesson observations but guidance about why it should be done and how it is of value to the student teachers is either absent from the document or kept to the minimum. The nature and focus of lesson observation seems to differ across the institutions. It appears as if lesson observations demand that students simply report on what happened in the lesson as well as highlight didactic occurrences in the lessons but not specific to reading literacy. Because the lesson observations are structured like this it is highly unlikely that students will be able to see the value of lesson observations as it is merely an opportunity to report on what has happened instead of an opportunity which students engage in as part of their learning. Furthermore, the assessment of students is also very different for each institution. Students' lessons are assessed using rubrics; however, these rubrics only focus and measure their teaching ability as the rubrics only incorporate the skills attached to teaching. Rubrics are not specifically designed to assess lessons particular to reading literacy. In the interviews and focus group interviews it was found that WIL focuses on the teaching of lessons, however, there seems to be a divide between lessons which focus on reading content and generic lessons. The documents have indicated that lesson plans are generic, this is an indication that coursework and practice still is not integrated or aligned. In addition, there is no indication of the engagement into official partnerships between the schools and universities. The relationship between the schools and the institutions seem to exist in name only, the districts which represent the Department of Basic Education (DBE) seem to be absent in this regard.

## 5.4 Analysis of the data and discussion

Dey (1993:31) compares qualitative data analysis to the making of an omelette. He states that "You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. And, you can't make an omelette without beating the eggs together". This is simply because analysis involves breaking data down into bits, and then 'beating' the bits together. Data analysis is a process of putting data into its essential components, to reveal its distinctive elements and structure. In doing so, data cannot simply be described; references within the data should describe which forms the bedrock of any science (Dey, 1993:31). When analysing data, data isn't simply described, it is interpreted, explained and predictions are made as questions involving how, why and what must be answered. Thus, data must be transformed into something it was not, data needs to be "broken down and beaten together" into something quite different from what it was upon collection. Considering the conceptual framework of the study and the evidence of the data, the following themes (indicated in italics) were identified and the analysis has been organised accordingly.

### *5.4.1 Purpose of WIL*

An analysis of the data indicates that the *outcomes* and *objectives* set for WIL across the various institutions should be articulated more clearly so that all the stakeholders are included and considered. Even though there are clear outcomes and objectives for WIL, they are not clear to all the stakeholders involved. Additionally, Cooper et al. (2010:39) state that the purpose of WIL is to ensure that the students "learn by doing" in a community of practice. So, all the stakeholders involved in WIL should devise these outcomes and objectives collaboratively so that the purpose of WIL is clear to all and that the *roles and responsibilities* of the various stakeholders are defined as all the stakeholders involved create the community of practice. This collaboration needed by all the stakeholders involved will demand that outcomes and objectives are clear and expectations are well articulated giving rise to strong partnerships among all the stakeholders involved and student learning can thus be optimised. The participants interviewed in both the semi-structured interviews and focus groups are highly invested in the success of the student teachers and are very committed to their development. However, there seemed to be some confusion around who is responsible for what as participants in the focus groups indicated that the requirements change every year. If the purpose for WIL is articulated clearly and collaboratively with all the stakeholders involved, this will be prevented.

### *5.4.2 Context*

Context refers to the workplace which is a site for learning vocational, professional, disciplinary and service expertise and should allow for collaboration and reflection among student teachers and their supervisors (Cooper et al., 2010:39). This is a great advantage for student teachers. For WIL, the workplace is schools. In some cases, universities have established relationships with neighbouring schools where students go for WIL. The data indicates that in some cases the students decided themselves where they would like to be placed (based on the schools available) and some choose and make the necessary arrangements. It appears as if most schools are urban schools as they are close to the universities. The universities do, however, include some "township" schools and rural schools too; these schools are identified as schools suitable for students to be placed, so that students are exposed to different contexts. However, this has an impact on student supervision as staff members have to evaluate students and also have to pursue journeys into these different contexts. In some cases, staff are hesitant to enter certain contexts due to social circumstances which does become a matter which needs to be resolved. Despite this problem, universities do encourage students to explore contexts which they are not familiar with but there are no systems in place to monitor or enforce this except for one institution who makes it compulsory for student teachers to fully emerge themselves in a rural community during a WIL camp. Evidently the context of the school is the workplace where

students learn about the profession through work in a situated context by being immersed in what is called a community of practice. A community of practice is where a group of people come together (community) to work on a problem together. In this case the community of practice would be created by the departmental/district official, student teacher, their classroom teacher and university lecturer, these parties should work together to help the students learn within the context within which they are immersed either through guided learning, mentoring and coaching (Cooper et al., 2010:39). It appears as if WIL is an area with great variation amongst institutions. The contexts (workplaces) are different for each institution, the requirements for choosing the workplaces vary, and the duration is different for each institution too.

Aspects of *mentorship* surfaced in the data. Classroom teachers and lesson evaluators were labelled as the mentor. These teachers act as a classroom supervisor and offer the students lesson support whilst they are placed in their classrooms. Only one institution has started to implement a short course to train teachers to become mentors. These mentors will thus be able to help facilitate the students learning as they will understand their role as a mentor but specifically their role as a mentor for a student teacher. However, instances proving the contrary do exist as mentors have been found to not be able to facilitate the process of *reflection* or use it as a tool to help student teachers learn from experience. Had these mentors been offered some sort of training they could use reflection as a tool to facilitate student learning. This would then also prevent reflection from simply being a report of what happened as seen in the documents. There is an indication that the mentors are eager to collaborate with university lecturers to help students learn, however there seemed to be some uncertainty as to what their role is, thus, they do not always know how to help.

### *5.4.3 Integration*

Cooper et al. (2010:40) describe integration as the process of putting together formal learning and productive work or simply *connecting theory and practice*. The literature consulted has proven that there is a great dissonance between theory and practice in education (cf. Chapter 2). Participants indicated that they follow an integrated approach in all their work with students as the two cannot be separated. One participant mentioned:

> *But I do in my class I make a lot of effort to try and bridge the theory-practice gap by showing videos, and having students actually participate in discussions*.

This was but one response which elaborated on attempts made to help students' link theory to practice. Some participants indicated that they link theory and practice by having the methodology follow the content. An example would be that reading strategies would be discussed in the lecture followed by how to teach for example, guided reading.

From the data it is possible to deduce that the teaching of lessons seems to be a focus of WIL, so there is a strong focus on the development of practical skills and techniques even though participants in the interviews recognised that teaching is knowledge based as most of the participants referred to the importance of teachers' *content knowledge*. Despite the recognition given to content knowledge, it appears as if government policies are a determining factor as many participants felt that they have to get students ready for practice so aspects of the school curriculum (CAPS) and policies was constantly mentioned. Part of the *assessment* for WIL is a rubric to assess students ability to teach their lessons. An evaluation of these rubrics indicates that the students are rated against a list of criteria which depicts that teaching is simply a collection of skills. *Generic aspects of teaching* such as lesson planning, principles of assessment and teaching strategies are assessed. Considering the *instructions* given to both the students and schools, the *nature of the assignments* given to students for WIL, indicate that they are in no way required to put any knowledge into action or develop the ability to act knowledgeably and responsibly in the classroom as this is not explicitly expected of them. From this it can be seen that universities are placing great emphasis on equipping students for classroom practice to satisfy government policy. However, this compliance to satisfy governmental policy (by focussing on getting student ready for practice) may be at the expense of theory as there is such a focus on developing the skill of teaching. Moreover, government policies (like MRTEQ) do make provision for a balance between theory and practice in teacher preparation programmes but universities or more specifically, lecturers seem to be interpreting it differently.

### *5.4.4 Curriculum*

WIL integrates theory acquired in coursework and workplace practice (Cooper et al., 2010:40; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5), therefore, learning in the workplace should be embedded throughout the coursework at universities and the work-based curriculum. Cooper et al. (2010:40-41) suggest that curriculum should be aligned by defining intended learning outcomes, choosing teaching and learning activities that result in achieving the outcomes and assessing students on the outcomes set. The *outcomes* and *objectives* for WIL are set by the various institutions but most institutions have their own agenda concerning WIL. Even though the outcomes and objectives speak to and acknowledge bringing theory and practice together, this however is not assessed specifically. The tools used to assess students do not necessarily measure this. *Assessment* is focused on the skills of teaching in general and does not explicitly address reading literacy competencies. Unfortunately, coursework was not analysed so it is not possible to comment on how the coursework addresses and connects to WIL. Assessment is both formative and summative. When students are evaluated for WIL, *rubrics* are used and feedback is given after the evaluation. This feedback happens through *reflection* between the

student and their respective *mentor*. This mechanism is general practice amongst the institutions; students together with their mentor and in some cases some of their peers, through the practice of reflection, review their practice or in most cases their lessons. This is done so that students can understand their own learning and skill development regarding the teaching of lessons (assessment for learning). Furthermore, as students participate in these feedback/reflection situations there are no opportunities created for them to go and apply what they have learnt from this reflection immediately as individual lessons are evaluated and no mechanism is put in place for students to refine their practice or even monitor their own progress and development. Emphasis is also placed on the marks which students are allocated for the teaching of lessons which is the summative component of assessment and also illustrates assessment of learning.

Similarly, within many institutions, *portfolios* are used to assess the students' learning. Students have to gather evidence of how their time was spent at the schools whilst they are out for WIL. A general analysis of what the portfolios entail includes personal teaching philosophy, timetables, reflection journals, proof of involvement in extra-curricular activities, records of lessons and their teaching media as well as observation reports. It appears as if portfolios are used to exhibit evidence of the students WIL but it is not used to bring teaching, learning and assessment together as suggested by NIE (2009:98). Students are not required to explain or reflect on why certain artefacts are included in their portfolio or how it relates to their learning and development as a teacher. However, some institutions required that students compile their portfolios around the seven roles of a teacher but there was no indication of how these roles are used to help the student bring teaching, learning and assessment together or even how these roles are relevant for reading literacy teachers. Moreover, Little et al. (2009:10) state that portfolios do not just contain exemplary work but should also illustrate evidence that the student is able to reflect, identify problems, modify aspects of their work and use information to plan future activities. There was no evidence to indicate that students have to use the material in their portfolio as an instrument for learning but rather an instrument for reporting.

### *5.4.5 Learning*

According to Cooper et al. (2010:37), WIL takes the strengths of theory of academic education and blends these with rich, tacit practice knowledge of workplaces and communities. This means that the learning which develops in WIL takes place in a situated context within a community of practice. Looking at the *outcomes and objectives* set by the institutions for WIL, it seems as if WIL only draws on the tacit practice of the classroom and the school environment. The *outcomes and objectives* name the blending of the theory and practice but the analysis of

the data illustrates that these two aspects seem to function in isolation. The following extract from university K illustrates this.

> *The purpose of Teaching and Learning, with particular reference to the school visit component, is to give students the opportunity to observe and experience the practice of teaching within an authentic school context, and to integrate teaching theory and practice. In order to achieve this goal, students are oriented with regard to the total teaching programmes of the relevant schools through participating in teaching-learning situations and extra-curricular and other activities, initially under supervision, but later independently.*

Even though teacher preparation programmes argue that tools such as *observation* and *reflection* are used to bring theory and practice together (*bridge the theory and practice divide*), there was no indication of how these tools are used to achieve this goal.

WIL takes place in a situated context so the learning is dependent on a community of practice. In the WIL context a community of practice would consist of the key stakeholders namely, the student teacher, university staff (lecturers and mentors) and the schools staff (teachers who would be mentors too). There seemed to be absence of this particular community as teachers within the schools displayed insecurities about their role within WIL for the students. Teachers indicated that they do not know the extent of their role for the students and what they are supposed to do to help and guide students. In some cases some teachers indicated that they are so confused as requirements and instructions from the institutions change every year. Some university staff felt that because practice is a school forte they would like to be guided by the teachers and some teachers indicated that the university isn't clear about what their role within WIL should be so there seems to be dissonance between two key stakeholders which inhibit effective learning from occurring. Communication between the institutions and the school was clear because the intuitions use a teaching practice coordinator to liaise with the liaison teacher at the schools. However, this is not enough to ensure the establishment of the community of practice. School staff and university staff should work together to establish what WIL will entail and how it should evolve so that all parties have the buy in from the onset. This will lead to establishing a community of practice where all involved can work together to ensure that learning takes place for all.

The conceptual framework highlights experiential learning as part of situated learning. Experiential learning is learning that has meaningful student (learner) involvement and involves the process of making meaning from direct experiences but also involves learning through

reflection of these experiences (CHE, 2011:72). Many institutions incorporate *service learning* and *micro-teaching* into their WIL which are two teaching activities included in experiential learning and lead to implicit learning. These activities if structured well can add to the students learning experience optimally however, each institution has a different agenda for utilising these activities as part of their WIL. Even though lecturers indicated that *reflection* and *observation* are used to help the student make meaning of these activities for learning there was no documentary evidence to substantiate this. One institution used weekly teaching instead of micro-teaching, but the focus of the weekly teaching was only to develop teaching skills. Whilst analysing the data for the use and role of experiential learning, there was minimal evidence to indicate how it is used to ensure that students learn from this process. Even though *observation*, *reflection* and review processes were in place for this to happen, no opportunity was given to students to refine practice after they had observed, reflected and reviewed.

Learning is an integral aspect of WIL which occurs through learning by doing in a community of practice (Cooper et al., 2010:39). Similarly, the CHE (2011:41) state that this can only happen if WIL is aligned with the intended outcomes of the subject or programme, the teaching and learning activities as well as assessment. As mentioned earlier, curriculum alignment exists in name only. An analysis of the *nature of assessment in WIL* indicates that assessment of learning and assessment for learning are dealt with. *Examples of assessment tasks* for WIL make reference to generating case studies of learners, compiling a situation analysis of the school, using teaching strategies and writing reports on the implementation thereof, observation tasks which focus specifically on the foundation phase class routine as well as the planning of an event for the school.

Furthermore, assessment is used to determine the learning that has taken place. The assessment used for WIL makes reference to aspects of teaching and learning styles, teaching and learning materials, assessment, language use, communication abilities, learner diversity and teacher professionalism. There is no indication as to how assessment is used to measure/determine whether learning has taken place. Moreover, there is no indication of how the assessments are used to determine how students have drawn on their *content knowledge* for learning. The assessment instruments seem to look at the students' presentation skills and their ability to draw on a fairly general pedagogic knowledge base. The assessment instruments do in no way assess aspects specific to reading literacy such as using assessment data to make instructional decisions, how to communicate assessment results to parents so none of the assessment instruments considered specific *pedagogical content knowledge* related to reading literacy.

Universities also rely on the schools staff (mentor teachers) to help assess students' during WIL. Some institutions indicated that only in some cases do they collaborate and reflect with the mentor teacher about a student's progress but only in the cases where there is a discrepancy between the mark allocated to the student by the lecturer and mentor teacher. From the focus groups it was also clear that the school staff are confused as to how students should be assessed because when lectures collaborate with them about a student's progress, it appears as if they are looking at and for different things. So a discrepancy will surface as mentor teachers are only able to judge the student's practice in their classrooms because they are far removed from what happens in the university lectures, whereas university lecturers are able to see how students are able to draw on their content knowledge gained in their courses to inform their teaching. This, on the other hand, may not be linked to the reality of the classroom.

### *5.4.6 Partnerships*

An analysis of the data has highlighted a serious disconnection between the key stakeholders involved in WIL. WIL builds links between workplace knowledge and the academic curriculum as it helps students to transfer academic knowledge to workplaces and for this reason, it cannot occur without partners who represent the different knowledge fields (CHE, 2011:51; Cooper et al., 2010:42). However, an analysis of the data alludes to the absence of these partnerships. Uncertainty exists amongst key stakeholders of WIL which affects the success thereof in student learning. This is indicated in the confusion in the *roles and responsibilities* of the stakeholders, no one is sure of what they have to do and the *outcomes and objectives* for WIL do not illustrate or define this either so there is a definite need for synergy between stakeholders. Even though all the stakeholders involved in WIL namely, the student teachers, university staff (lecturers and mentors) and the schools staff (teachers who may be mentors too) are all interested and committed to WIL, they appear to be "disconnected observers" (Cooper et al., 2010:34) of one another. So, the development of effective teachers is compromised through the absence of effective, collaborative partnerships.

### *5.4.7 Support*

It is clear that there are a number of partners involved in WIL and support to these stakeholders is vital for learning to take place through WIL. The analysis of the data indicates support happens in various forms. *Mechanisms of support* are in place for the key stakeholders for WIL. Students are orientated about WIL before they leave their respective institutions for WIL. One participant mentioned:

> *The students are introduced to professional competencies in the course, one week at the beginning of the first year students are orientated around discipline, how to dress, where to sit in the staffroom. There is not much emphasis on ethics.*

This is but one indication of how students are supported for WIL. Students are also given an information pack which gives them explicit instructions regarding their WIL experience. These booklets include logistical arrangements regarding assessments, assessment rubrics, portfolio guidelines, absence from WIL, the structure and procedures of WIL, lesson plan templates and observations templates. School staff are supported by receiving information packs/letters outlining their roles and responsibilities. They also have the luxury of direct interaction with the teaching practice/WIL coordinator who is the liaison between the schools and universities. Most institutions indicated that they use a WIL coordinator. University staff are supported by a teaching practice coordinator who corresponds with the schools. The teaching practice coordinators also place students at schools if student placements are used by the institution, additionally they are also in charge of logistics for the assessment of the students at the various schools.

WIL depends on stakeholders and these stakeholders require support before, during and after any WIL programme. WIL can be challenging to implement, it can create anxiety and uncertainty among stakeholders. Additionally, students also come to higher education with diverse and unique experiences and their uniqueness needs to be accommodated through support. So students would typically need support in knowing how to approach organisations and present themselves to employers, as well as in knowing what to expect and how learning takes place (Cooper et al., 2010:42; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:6). Additionally, the literature indicates that support should be on-going throughout the WIL programme as it accounts for and accommodates these diverse needs and includes the practical, administrative, educational and emotional components. The data indicates that there are aspects of support for all the stakeholders. However, the support offered to the students cover aspects that relate to how students fit into the school for WIL. There is no evidence of how support is offered for learning to take place similarly; there is no evidence to indicate how students are supported to teach reading literacy. The absence of support for learning could be due to the misinterpretation of the *roles and responsibilities* of the various stakeholders involved in WIL. Cooper et al. (2010:42) state that learning in the workplace is challenging as students have to make sense of their experiences and develop an understanding of reflection which could serve as a tool to support learning however, it is actually used as a learning activity. So all the stakeholders involved in WIL should plan collaboratively for WIL. In this way they can ensure that there is practical, administrative, educational and affective support for all involved in WIL. If this surfaces there could be on-going assistance and guidance for all the WIL stakeholders.

Based on an analysis and interpretation of the data as well as my reflection embedded in the data analysis discussion, the following aspects can be highlighted. The discussion of the themes which emanated from the data analysis indicates a disconnection amongst key

stakeholders involved in WIL. This highlights the absence of partnerships illustrated in the analysis of the data as well as the literature consulted and compromises the development of effective teachers. The absence of partnership amongst the key stakeholders of WIL is the basis for the next step in action research, namely the action part of the study.

## 5.5 Action based on the data

Action research has various characteristics; it can be regarded as *practical* as it aims to develop solutions to practical problems which then inform practice and it is also focused on *change* as it is inherently transformative and developmental as the practice-research interaction is aimed at empowerment, change and the emancipation of participants (Ebersöhn et al., 2007:124-125). Empowerment, change and the emancipation of the participants occur through the implementation of **an action plan** which is the next step in action research. The action plan was to develop a mechanism which highlights and enables the establishment of collaborative partnerships amongst the key stakeholders of WIL.

The analysis of the data as well as the review of national and international literature indicated that the establishment of collaborative partnerships is imperative. The data explicitly indicated that some form of intervention is needed between especially the schools and universities. However, the DoE should not be ignored as it mandates schools regarding what has to happen and how.

Action research is an interactive form of knowledge development as the process of carrying out an investigation becomes just as important as the findings which emerge based on the investigation. Furthermore, the action research process helps to construct different forms of knowledge namely, theoretical and practical knowledge, the application and development of professional knowledge, and individual and collective knowledge (Ebersöhn et al., 2007:124-125).

In this particular study, all three forms of knowledge were developed as a theoretical knowledge base was consulted to devise a solution to an identified problem. Professional knowledge about WIL was generated and applied to develop a road map for the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL with a specific focus on reading literacy teacher preparation programmes. Additionally, I drew on the collective knowledge of the participants as well to address the research questions. Considering these knowledge forms, a metaphor was developed for the implementation of an action plan - a road map for the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL.

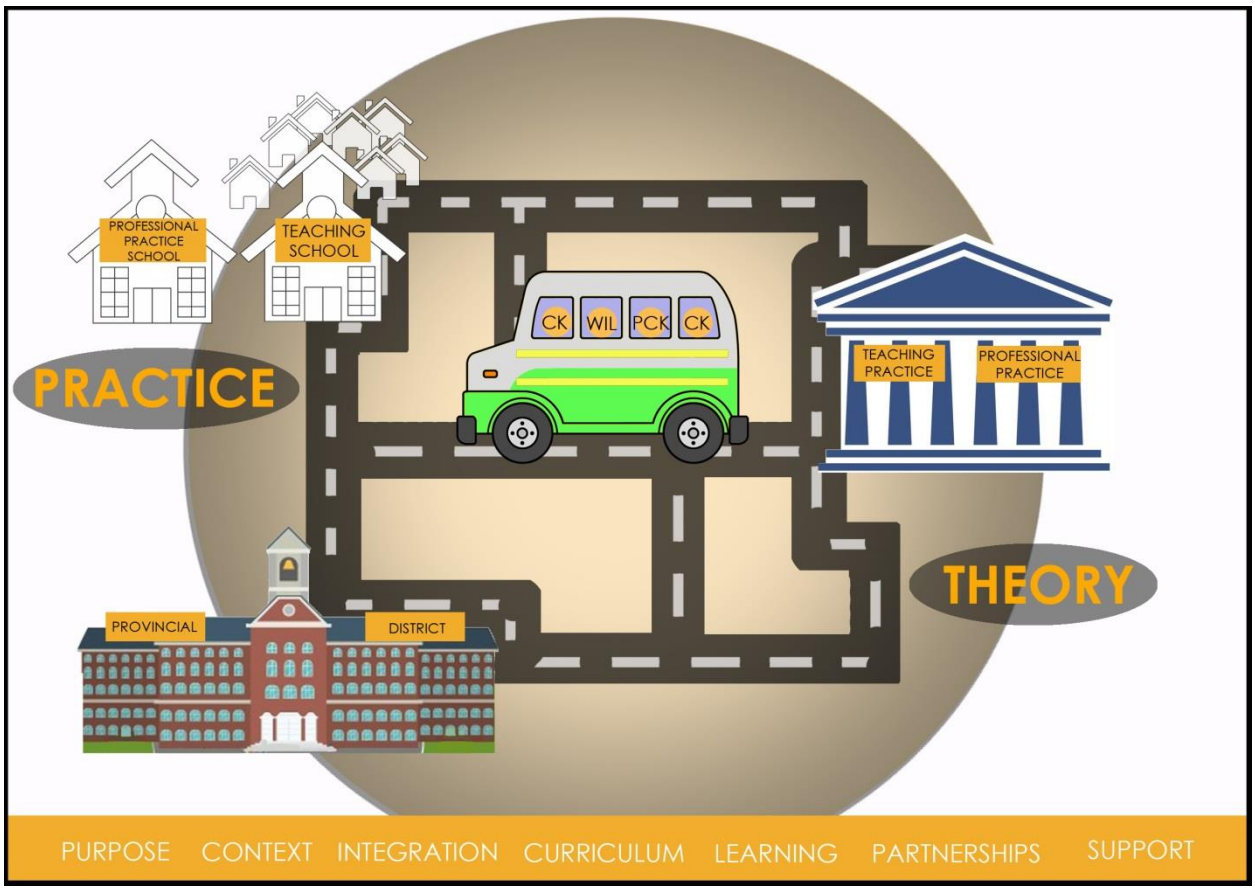



**Figure 5.1: A road map for the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL**

Using the metaphor of a road map was ideal to indicate that the key stakeholders for WIL are all equal partners who depend on each other for WIL. Put simply, the road map illustrates how these equal partners are dependent on one another so that the vehicle facilitating the knowledge base for reading literacy teachers can effectively bridge the divide between theory and practice.

### *5.5.1 The establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL*

This road map encompasses the university, the school and its community and the Department of Education at both provincial and district level which allude to a community of practice and illustrates the collaborative **partnership** which should exist between these stakeholders. Within WIL, a community of practice is needed as the learning which develops from it is situated in the workplace or in this case the school classroom. A community of practice thus refers to a group of people who are willing to work together and are prepared to support each other's learning. The group of people who should form the community of practice needed for WIL should be the university lecturers, the school staff, representatives from the Department of Education and the students themselves. These stakeholders (community of practice) will have to work collaboratively as the students are dependent on them (the community) to work to learn whilst

being guided by learning to work as they are immersed within this community of practice (Cooper et al., 2010:1-2; Lave & Wenger, 1991:29-30).

The blue building represents the university where the development of professional practice is integrated into courses as students engage in teaching practice/practicum experience. The white buildings on the left represent the teaching schools as well as the professional practice schools. Teaching schools are the "teaching laboratories" where students engage in learning-from-practice. This will be done by observing best practice, participating in micro-teaching and putting theory into practice. Teaching schools may also be used as centres for research into teaching and learning as staff at teaching schools will be trained as mentors for student teachers and who will be able to teach methodology courses. A professional practice school is where student teachers will be able to engage in learning-in-practice preparation. This will be done by teaching and reflecting on lessons under the auspices of mentor teachers who ensure that they receive appropriate support and guidance during their practice teaching (WIL) periods (DBE & DHET, 2011:18). Student teachers will be placed at professional practice schools for their practical components of their teacher preparation programmes (Robinson, 2015:1). The brown building on the left represents the Department of Education. The provincial and district levels are highlighted as they mandate the schools and employ the teachers who are needed as mentors. So they too are very important stakeholders for WIL as they will help to expose students to the professional expectations of teachers like administration and day-to-day duties. The black road connects all the stakeholders involved in WIL. The inter-leading roads link to each other to indicate the dependence of the stakeholders on each other as the university needs the schools together with their teachers to aid and develop professional practice through teaching practice, and the Department of Education needs their teachers to continue their own professional development which occurs as they act as mentors to the student teachers. Additionally, the road joining all the stakeholders illustrates how they are not able to function in silos within this community of practice. The car in the centre of the community transports the knowledge base of teacher preparation programmes. The passengers in the car (CK, PCK and CK) represent the content knowledge (subject matter knowledge), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and curricular knowledge which Shulman distinguishes as the different kinds of content knowledge teachers need (Shulman, 1986:9-10). However, professional education should be based both on the academic disciplines that form the knowledge base of the profession, and on the world of professional practice, for which students should be prepared (CHE, 2011:9). So university courses should be curriculated around both scientific disciplinary knowledge, as well as knowledge for professional practice (CHE, 2011:9; Shulman, 1986) (cf. Section 2.2). Additionally, WIL is also a passenger because WIL seeks actively to build links between the world of teaching and learning, and the world of professional practice (CHE,

2011:9). Similarly, WIL takes the strengths of the theoretical orientations of academic education and blends these with the rich, tacit practice knowledge of workplaces and communities. This integration is achieved through focusing on the seven key dimensions of *purpose*; *context*; nature of the *integration*; *curriculum* issues; the *learning*; *partnerships* between the university and the workplace or community; and the *support* provided to the student and the workplace when planning and implementing work integrated learning (Cooper et al., 2010:37). The entire community, through a collaborative partnership, balances on these dimensions highlighted in yellow as this indicates their importance in linking theory and practice.

In order for this collaborative partnership to be successful and to illustrate how WIL should be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes, a number of aspects need to be in place.

### *5.5.2 Collaborative partnerships - A catalyst to illustrate how WIL should be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes*

All the stakeholders (the students, the workplace, the university, the Department of Education which includes the provincial and district officials as well as the community as illustrated in the road map, cf. Figure 5.1) need to get together to define a clear **purpose** for WIL. Defining a clear purpose for WIL entails clarifying the goals of WIL, articulate the expectations and intended outcomes for all the stakeholders involved in WIL. The stakeholders need to be involved and give input in this activity of developing and articulating outcomes as well as clarifying their role within WIL (cf. Table 5.1) (Cooper et al., 2010:39; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:23). This will also ensure that all the stakeholders are clear about their roles and responsibilities for WIL. Additionally, this activity will set the basis for a working relationship between the stakeholders and should be an on-going and interactive occurrence amongst stakeholders where the WIL component for reading literacy teacher preparation can be co-constructed together.

This has major implications for the preparation of reading literacy teachers. The stakeholders involved in reading literacy teacher preparation would include classroom (mentor) teachers, curriculum advisors (districts), and university lecturers. All these stakeholders would need to get together to form a community of practice where they could then determine a clear purpose for WIL. A clear purpose for WIL, specifically envisioned for reading literacy should address the diverse reading literacy needs of learners in the foundation phase. Once the purpose has been

defined with all the stakeholders involved they will have a clearer idea of their role within WIL and will be able to contribute to the students learning.

Furthermore, if WIL is co-constructed with the stakeholders the importance of WIL in diverse **contexts** will also be scrutinised because the partnership amongst the stakeholders will highlight the importance of expanding student teachers' perceptions of teaching beyond the traditional classroom. Cantalini-Williams et al. (2014:23) state that contexts are "the diverse workplace settings that allow for the direct application of teaching and pedagogical skills". Furthermore, South Africa is rich with diversity and each classroom context adds value to the preparation of reading literacy teacher preparation so student teachers need to be immersed in the authentic South African context so that their teacher training can be more realistic and provide a stronger link between theory and practice (Robinson, 2015:12). However, this cannot happen without implementing strategies such as guided learning, mentoring and coaching as these strategies are important to facilitate learning which occurs through work (Lave & Wenger, 1991: 34-35). This means that mentors will have to be trained who will be able to guide student learning through mentoring and coaching in various contexts.

Exposure to various contexts is vital in reading literacy teacher preparation. Students need to be exposed to various contexts so that they can apply their content knowledge but also develop PCK. The exposure to diverse contexts such as urban and rural schools, as well as schools from various quintiles, also grants students the opportunity to be confronted with realistic/real-world situations where they will be able to connect theory to practice.

Through implementing guided learning, mentoring and coaching, the mentor will play an active role in helping the student teacher put together formal learning and learning through work. Put simply, the **integration** of theory and practice. This involves the application of theory with real-world problem solving, abstract thinking, practical actions and discipline specific skills or PCK (Cooper et al., 2010:40; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5). This is not a mere action but a process which should be facilitated and encouraged for student learning in the workplace context and the university through *dialogue*, *reflection*, *tutorials* and *assessable work* by a mentor. Cooper et al. (2010:40) state that when students engage in dialogue, reflection, tutorials and assessable work they should be able to put knowledge into action and develop the ability to act knowledgeably and responsibly in the workplace context. For this reason, it is important to note that dialogue, reflection, tutorials and assessable work should be used as an essential tool to link theory and practice (cf. Table 5.1).

Like the dimension of context, integration also grants students the opportunity to apply their content knowledge with PCK. Especially in South Africa where classrooms are so diverse, reading literacy teachers could be confronted with situations where learners inherent language structure prohibits them from acquiring the knowledge and skills for reading literacy if English is their Language of learning and teaching (LoLT). Through dialogue and reflection with the mentor teacher, the student is thus able to make sense of this situation and use their knowledge to adjust their practice to help and accommodate the learner. So, students should learn to teach by teaching, alongside expert teachers for extended periods of time where they are granted multiple opportunities to engage in teaching practice which is embedded in the reality of the classroom.

Linking theory and practice has a major impact on how the **curriculum** should be structured. Teacher preparation programme curricula should be constructively aligned so that theory which is acquired in coursework and workplace practice are integrated into the WIL experience (Cooper et al., 2010:40; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5). So the learning in the workplace should be embedded throughout course work at universities as well as the work-based curriculum and the only way to achieve this is through constructively aligning the curriculum (Cooper et al., 2010:40-41). The practice of constructively aligning a curriculum requires that the intended learning outcomes are defined, teaching and learning activities are chosen which aid to achieve the outcomes set and assessment of students entails measuring whether the set outcomes have been mastered. However, because WIL entails the re-contextualisation of both academic and professional knowledge domains, and the alignment of workplace and academic interests (CHE, 2011:13) curriculum development needs to address the multiple interests of all the partners involved so the programme design, implementation and evaluation should be done in partnership with academics, workplace representatives, and students. So the stakeholders need to be actively involved in the curriculum design for WIL.

Within WIL, students participate in a spiral learning process where theory and practice are conceptualised and reconceptualised with each spiral deepening the students understanding (Cooper et al., 2010:41). What this implies is that **learning** happens at various levels through WIL. Knowledge is acquired at universities through the traditional academic lecture but it does not transfer to practice in the workplace in a straightforward manner. Students experience difficulties in grasping the relevance of this disciplinary knowledge and struggle to transfer what they learnt in the lectures to the workplace (CHE, 2011:11). This raises a complex issue, but within WIL the learning is situated, so the community of practice should aid the student to comprehend what they are doing and learning, interpret theory, practice it and develop personal dispositions (Lave and Wenger, 1991:29; Cooper et al., 2010:41). This can only happen if

teacher preparation programmes use experiential learning and learning through work experiences within WIL. Together with this, opportunities for observation, review, reflection and refinement need to be created to ensure that student teachers learn through WIL. A way to achieve this is through co-teaching. Mentor teachers and students can co-teach and through co-teaching both the mentor teacher and student assume responsibility for the planning and enacting of the teaching. Thus an opportunity for on-going problem solving and interaction about the learning is created and take place.

WIL is challenging and creates anxiety and uncertainty not only due to its intensity but also because of the number of partners, who are diverse and unique, involved in WIL. **Support** is thus very important before, during and after any WIL programme. Support should thus be on going and may occur at different levels. Offering support within a programme can be a daunting task, but because teacher preparation programmes and other stakeholders of WIL plan collaboratively so there should be on-going assistance and guidance for students, their WIL supervisors (typically the teachers in the classrooms and lecturers from their universities) and each organisation that is involved because each stakeholders' role and responsibility has been defined collaboratively (Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:24). Support can take a variety of forms; it ranges from practical and administrative assistance to educational and emotional support. Students need practical support (e.g., understanding the policies and procedures for WIL) and educational support (e.g., understanding how learning occurs in the workplace and help with making sense of experiences) as they need to be guided in how to approach the workplace and present themselves to employers. Students need to be orientated about what to expect and how learning takes place in WIL so that they will be able to link theory and practice.

By considering the aspects of purpose, context, integration, curriculum and learning as important dimensions to enable collaborative partnerships to be a catalyst in how WIL should be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes a checklist was compiled which could be used to ensure that the WIL experience will bridge the divide between theory and practice (cf. Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1: A checklist for how WIL should be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes**

| Activity/Item | An outcome for an aligned curriculum would be: |
|---|---|
| Enter into a collaborative **partnership** with WIL stakeholders<br>• University<br>• School community<br>• Department of Education<br>• Student representatives<br>• Does the partnership exist on the basis of a group of people who are willing to work together and are prepared to support each other's learning?<br>• Has a community of practice been established?<br>• Are all the partners committed to WIL?<br>• Is there synergy amongst partners? | The reading literacy subject lecturer, curriculum specialist, mentor teacher, student need to enter into a collaborative partnership with WIL stakeholders to form a community of practice which will give rise to synergy amongst the partners (cf. extract from university D/M pg. 175). |
| All the stakeholders (the students, the workplace, the university and the community) need to get together to define a clear **purpose** for WIL.<br>• Clarifying the goals of WIL<br>• Articulate the expectations for all the stakeholders involved in WIL<br>• Articulate intended outcomes for all the stakeholders involved in WIL.<br>• Were all the stakeholders involved in this activity?<br>• Did all stakeholders give their input in this activity?<br>• Are the roles and responsibilities well defined for all the stakeholders involved in WIL?<br>• Has a working relationship been established between the stakeholders? | An example of a clear purpose for the WIL period could be that ***Students should be able to teach phonology in a foundation phase classroom.***<br>In essence because a collaborative partnership had been established this purpose would be clear to all the partners involved in WIL. So, goals will be clearly articulated, expectations and intended outcomes will be clear to all, roles and responsibilities of partners will be defined creating working relationships which will contribute to achieving and supporting this clearly defined purpose. |
| Scrutinise diverse **contexts** to expand student teachers perceptions of teaching<br>• Are students exposed to diverse contexts for WIL?<br>• Do these contexts expand student teachers' perceptions of teaching beyond the traditional classroom? | Students should be exposed to different contexts to use their content knowledge in these contexts. ***If a student teacher has to teach reading to a Setswana child he/she needs to understand why the learner might spell cat c-a _.***<br>Exposure to diverse contexts will grant student's opportunities to be |

| | |
|---|---|
| • Will this context help make teacher training more realistic for the student?<br>• Have the mentors within these contexts been trained to use strategies such as guided learning, mentoring and coaching to facilitate learning?<br>• Are the mentors able to accommodate the students in these diverse contexts and facilitate their learning? | confronted with realistic and real-world situations where they will be able to connect theory and practice and develop PCK as described by Shulman (cf. section 2.4.2). This will occur under the supervision of a trained mentor. |
| **Integrating** theory and practice within WIL contexts<br>• Is a trained mentor used to help the student integrate theory and practice?<br>• Will the mentor be able to implement guided learning, mentoring and coaching, to help the student teacher put together formal learning and learning through work?<br>• Is theory applied to real-world problems, abstract thinking, practical situations and discipline specific skills (PCK)?<br>• Is there evidence that the mentor is able to use dialogue and reflection as tools to facilitate student learning?<br>• Are the students required to complete tutorials and tasks to facilitate and demonstrate their learning?<br>• Are students required to put knowledge into action and develop the ability to act knowledgeably and responsibly in the workplace? | Students have to put their knowledge into action and develop the ability to act knowledgeably in the workplace. ***So when students are tasked to teach and assess aspects of language structure, they should also be able to use their experiences, integrate it into their formal learning and knowledge of teaching with their knowledge of adaptive practice which can be gained from working with experienced teachers.***<br>So, a trained mentor is needed to help the student with this integration as theory is applied to real-world problems, practical situations and discipline specific skills (PCK). In addition, tutorials and tasks should be given to facilitate and demonstrate student learning for this integration to take place. |
| Align the **curriculum** so that theory which is acquired in coursework and workplace practice are integrated into WIL.<br>• Define the intended learning outcomes.<br>• Structure teaching and learning activities so that they achieve the outcomes set.<br>• Use and structure assessments of students so that it measures the set outcomes.<br>• Is the theory which is acquired in coursework and workplace practice are integrated into WIL?<br>• Does the curriculum address the needs of all the stakeholders involved in WIL?<br>• Were all the stakeholders' active partners in design, | A well-aligned curriculum will consist of learning activities that require the integration of disciplinary and workplace knowledge and skills, it will also make practice an organiser for both theoretical and practical learning. ***An example of this is attached to students' knowledge around assessment. Students don't know how to set up assessment tasks or even how to interpret the results. A well aligned curriculum would make provision for this. So when dealing with disciplinary knowledge around assessment, students should then be expected set up assessment tasks, implement it during WIL and then use the results for interpretation and progress monitoring.***<br>Through aligning a curriculum like this, students will benefit from theory which is acquired in coursework and workplace practice which |

| | |
|---|---|
| implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum? | are both integrated into WIL. |
| **Learning** happens at various levels through WIL.<br>• Does the learning which develops in WIL takes place in a situated context?<br>• Are there opportunities for the community of practice to help the student comprehend what they are doing and learning, interpret theory, practice it and develop personal dispositions?<br>• Are activities like observation, review, reflection and refinement used for learning?<br>• Does the teacher preparation programme use experiential learning within WIL?<br>• Does the teacher preparation programme use learning through work experiences within WIL? | Learning must happen at various levels, so students should go through continuous reflection, and variations of trial and error to gain the confidence to teach, thus developing their teaching repertoire for reading literacy.<br>***So, students need to fully engage in the WIL experience over extended periods of time where they are confronted with real-world experiences under the supervision of a trained mentor and immersed in a community of practice. They also need to attend professional practice workshops.*** So, the nature of the supervision and the interaction with the community of practice will also help the student to comprehend what they are doing and learning, interpret theory, practice it and develop personal dispositions.<br>They should be exposed to conferences etc. |

This checklist can be used to improve WIL experiences so that divide between theory and practice in reading literacy teacher preparation programmes can be narrowed. The dimension covered in this checklist and highlighted in section 5.5.2 allows prospective teachers to learn *about* practice, *in* practice, *from* practice, *for* practice, and ultimately, *to* practise as desired by the DHET.

### *5.5.3 Implementing and designing a WIL curricula for reading literacy*

WIL is predominantly envisioned to enhance student learning by integrating formal learning (theory) and workplace learning (practice). The integration of theory and practice can be achieved by incorporating a road map for the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL (cf. Figure 5.1) as well as taking cognisance of the checklist (cf. Table 5.1) when designing the WIL experience. This road map illustrates how the stakeholders involved in WIL are equal partners who are dependent on one another so that the vehicle facilitating the knowledge base for reading literacy teachers can effectively bridge the divide between theory and practice. In addition, the checklist can be used to improve WIL experiences so that the divide between theory and practice is narrowed.

The road map and the checklist were implemented by a university in a province in South Africa in the development of the reading literacy component of their foundation phase BEd Curriculum. Examples of the implementation are presented below.

**i) Establish collaborative partnerships**

The stakeholders involved in WIL, namely staff from the university, the school and its community and the Department of Education at both provincial and district level need to enter a collaborative partnership which would create a community of practice. This community of practice would make sure that student learning takes place in the situated context. It is vital that this community of practice work collaboratively as the students are dependent on them. A memorandum of understanding should be entered to ensure that all the partners are committed to WIL and that there is synergy amongst the partners. WIL takes the strengths of the theory gained in academic education and blends it with practice, but for this integration to happen the collaborative partnership needs to address the dimensions of *purpose*; *context*; nature of the *integration*; *curriculum* issues; the *learning*; *partnerships* between the university and the workplace or community; and the *support* provided to the student and the workplace as highlighted in the conceptual framework (cf. Chapter 3).

**ii) Defining a clear purpose for WIL**

When implementing and designing WIL, all the stakeholders need to get together to define a clear purpose for WIL. When defining a clear purpose, the goals of WIL should be clarified, the expectations and intended outcomes for all the stakeholders involved in WIL need to be articulated and this should be done collaboratively (cf. Table 5.1). A collaborative effort has been put into the implementation of WIL in a province in South Africa. Furthermore research is also being conducted around the implementation of WIL in this specific province. The following example indicates a clear **purpose** for WIL which was extracted from the B Ed Curriculum of the university implementing WIL in a province in South Africa:

> The BEd (FP Teaching) qualification also consists of eight Work Integrated Learning modules. These WIL modules will contribute to practical learning of students in the schools. Students will, from their first year, have the opportunity to spend six weeks per year in a school gaining practical experience in a classroom. These modules were developed in such a way that they cohere with each other.
>
> WIL is understood as work-based and work-place learning, which provides opportunities for action learning, experiential learning, inquiry learning, inter-professional learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, scenario learning and co-operative learning. These learning styles form part of the epistemological theories of the various teacher-training programmes offered by the . Several innovative curricular, pedagogical and assessment forms are part of the study and programme material issued to all relevant stakeholders with the aim of contributing to employability and community responsibility of teacher students on exit level.
>
> For WIL, students are placed at partnership schools that have been identified in all nine of the provinces as well as in Namibia. The relevant academic overseeing entity is assisted by the Provincial Education Department and the district offices in their selection of suitable schools. The selection includes diverse public and private schools.
>
> The relevant academic overseeing entity accepts responsibility for student placements in partnership schools. In each partnership school they must identify a mentor/s that has been trained by the relevant academic overseeing entity so that they can make a contribution to the preparation of students as teachers. Students are visited and assessed during the WIL period by lecturers responsible for the different modules. To help with the assessment, the relevant academic overseeing entities make use of retired or free-lance teachers or lecturers with appropriate professional qualifications. These mentors must attend the mentorship training of the to qualify as a generalist/phase specialist and/or a subject specialist. During the WIL period, students must be assessed once by a generalist/phase specialist and once by a subject specialist. Regular contact sessions for these mentors will be scheduled.
>
> A formal assessment report will be completed by each school after each WIL session. This feedback as well as the feedback from visits by lecturers to students will make it possible for lecturers to provide support to help students to reflect effectively on their teaching competence.

(University D/M, 2014:8-9)[7]

The purpose for WIL is very clear within this extract. Students engage in WIL to gain practical experience within a situated context, namely the school. The schools used are partnership schools which evidently will become teaching schools and professional practice schools. As part of the collaborative effort to implement WIL within this province, the university initially relies on the schools and involves them as partners, this is done to identify which schools will be able to fulfil the role of teaching schools and professional practice schools. The roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders are clearly indicated within the purpose. Furthermore, the dimension of **context** is also illustrated which also highlights how provision is made for students to be exposed to diverse contexts as well as how this will be supported.

This clear purpose for WIL, which clarifies the roles and responsibilities of WIL and all its stakeholders, has originated from the implementation of the roadmap. The roadmap was used

[7] University D/M has not published this data as of yet, however permission to use the data was obtained but the identity may not be disclosed for this reason.

to facilitate the design of the new BEd programme which specifically pertains to the reading literacy components.

### i) Integrating theory and practice in WIL

The **integration** of theory and practice is not a mere action but a process which is facilitated by in the workplace context and the university through *dialogue, reflection, tutorials* and *assessable work*. The outcomes below are an example of how theory and practice are situated for these two domains to be integrated through WIL. Furthermore, from the purpose statement for WIL it is also clear how the stakeholders should be involved to make sure that theory and practice are integrated.

> The expected learning outcomes of the WIL component envisage that students will have:
>
> - sound knowledge of a variety of and an ability to apply teaching skills (lesson presentation including formative and summative assessment) and managing (subject and learning qualifications), selecting and performing learner assessment (formative and summative) including guided problem-based learning tasks (in practice and from practice);
> - sound integrated academic and educational knowledge and the necessary school subject curriculum knowledge (subject and learning qualifications);
> - sound integrated subject and pedagogical knowledge and the applicable school subject curriculum knowledge;
> - knowledge to teach his/her subject(s) (lesson design, lesson planning, lesson preparation and lesson presentation) and how to select, determine the sequence and pace content in accordance with subject, learner and school needs;
> - knowledge of who his/her learners are and how they learn and to understand their individual needs and tailor their teaching accordingly, and demonstrate the ability to identify, analyze, evaluate, and critically reflect on problems related to teaching, both verbally and in written form;
> - understand diversity in the South African context in order to teach in a manner that includes all learners and display proof, both verbally and in written form, of the required language proficiency;
> - the ability to manage classrooms effectively, creating learning space and enhancing learner involvement across diverse contexts in order to ensure a positive and conducive learning environment;
> - a positive work ethic, display appropriate values and conduct themselves in a professional manner (educator and learner relations) that benefits, enhances and develops the teaching profession;
> - sound knowledge of creating a positive learning environment and the ability to apply a variety of teaching skills, understand learner needs and demonstrate the ability of school community involvement (in practice and from practice);
> - the ability to execute guided education-orientated, project-based tasks (service learning);
> - the ability to perform extra-curricular activities (sport, culture, leadership and coaching, organization and administrative) in professional practice; and
> - explain and argue the value of extra-curricular activities.

(University D/M, 2014:8-9).

Additionally, the reading literacy subjects also need to incorporate WIL into the modules to highlight the process of the integration between theory and practice (cf. Table 5.1).

At University D/M, eight modules, one per semester, over four years were developed for English Home Language. The Home Language modules are offered over a four year period with a total of 96 credits of which 12 credits are on level 8. The First Additional Language modules will be offered over a period of three years with a total of 48 credits. These modules were carefully planned in an integrated and progressive manner. In the first year, the outcomes focus on providing students with an overview of the core foundational concepts relevant to emergent and developmental language/literacy. Students are also introduced to multicultural children's literature in order to provide them with a contextualised view of the two core disciplinary aspects relevant to English home language teaching and learning which is language and literature. In the second semester, students are provided with an in depth knowledge and practical application of phonetics, phonology and phonemic awareness so that they can teach the speech-sound system and its important relationship to reading, spelling and oral language (cf. Chapter 2, section 2.3.1.1). Their literature knowledge is also built on as the outcomes stipulate that students will be given a bird's eye view of the history of children's literature to ensure that they are familiar with the characteristics of children's literature so that they can use children's literature to link language and literature.

In the second year outcomes indicate the progression in these modules as the focus ties up with the content mastered in the first year. The focus is on a structured system of word study and advanced decoding which builds on the foundation of phonics (cf. Chapter 2, section 2.3.1.2) laid in the first year. Students are also exposed to the importance of selecting and evaluating children's literature for developmentally appropriate practice. In the second semester this is extended as emphasis is placed on the picture book and the teaching of reading as well as the elements, styles and media of the visual arts. Furthermore, outcomes focus on the emphasis of the linguistic meaning of words, phrases and sentences as well as phrase and sentence meaning as it relates to vocabulary teaching and learning. Students are also introduced to various methods and techniques for vocabulary instruction.

In the third year of study the focus of the course is to equip students with the knowledge about English syntax and how it relates to vocabulary, fluency and comprehension (cf. Chapter 2, section 2.3.1.3 – 2.3.1.5). The outcomes also highlight the exposure to various types of children's literature, such as traditional literature, poetry, historical fiction and biographies. Moreover, the critical engagement with informational texts is the focus in the second semester

together with a deliberation on reading comprehension which focuses on the skills, processes, and abilities that influence reading comprehension.

Year four of study focuses on the students gaining integrated knowledge and application skills related to writing. The purpose of the literature section is to ensure that students have in depth theoretical and applied knowledge of all children's literature genres, including fantasy, science fiction and contemporary realistic fiction. In the second semester of the fourth year, the purpose of the module is to provide students with a comprehensive knowledge of, as well as critical reflection and ability to ethically implement school-based assessment in classrooms to accommodate learners with diverse needs and skills. The purpose of the literature section is to enable students to converse in a critical, academically appropriate and ethically responsible manner (NQF level 8) on various issues within children's literature.

WIL is integrated into these modules throughout the four years of study so that theory and practice can be integrated. The following extract indicates how theory and practice can be integrated for reading literacy for one year of study.

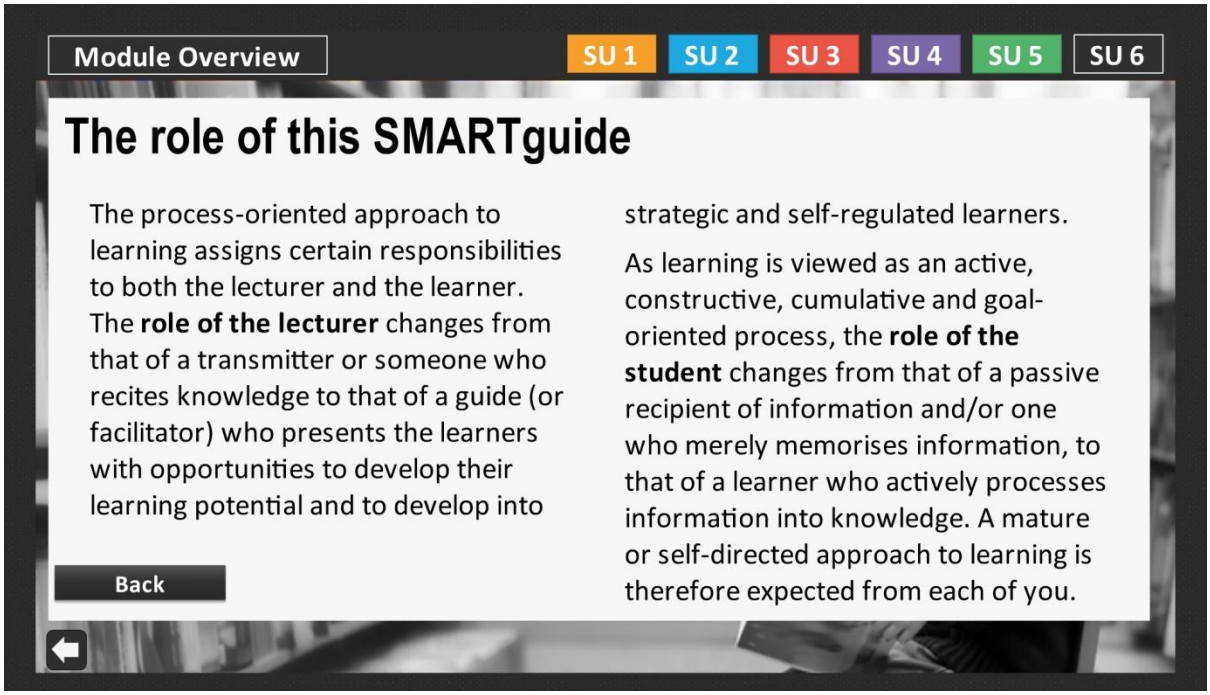
| SPECIFIC OUTCOMES | ASSESSMENT CRITERIA |
|---|---|
| On successful completion of this module the student should be able to demonstrate:<br>• Knowledge and an informed understanding of major theories, models and empirical research that describe the cognitive, linguistic, motivation, and socio-cultural foundations of reading and writing processes, components and development.<br>• The ability to work in a group to complete a project in an ethically responsible manner reflecting their understanding and interpretation of the historically shared knowledge of the profession and changes over time in the perceptions of reading and writing processes, components and development.<br>• The ability to gather and verify information from scientific evidence-based research findings related to the typical developmental progression of:<br>➢ Oral language (semantic, syntactic, pragmatic)<br>➢ Phonological skill<br>➢ Printed word recognition<br>➢ Spelling<br>➢ Reading fluency<br>➢ Reading comprehension<br>➢ Written expression<br>• The ability to communicate information on the language processing requirements of proficient reading and writing reliably, accurately and coherently:<br>➢ Phonological (speech sound) processing<br>➢ Orthographic (print) processing<br>➢ Semantic (meaning) processing<br>➢ Syntactic (sentence level) processing<br>➢ Discourse (connected text level) processing<br>• The ability to distinguish between and evaluate the multiple factors (e.g., environmental, cultural, social, linguistic, play, etc.) affecting learners' development and learning and utilising developmentally appropriate practices to address these factors in the classroom.<br>• The ability to manage all learners in a classroom while working with whole class/groups/individual learners as well as selecting and implementing methods and activities relevant to learners who are performing at multiple instructional levels.<br>• Knowledge and an informed understanding of relevant theories and empirical research underlying learners' responses to children's literature and the value of multicultural children's literature. | Students have mastered the outcomes if they are able to:<br>• Explain, interpret and ethically report on the major theories of reading and writing processes and development to understanding the needs of all learners in diverse contexts.<br>• Explain the research and theory for effective learning environments that support individual motivation to read and write.<br>• Discuss the characteristics of scientifically conducted reading research.<br>• Identify and critically evaluate trustworthy sources of research reviews.<br>• Explain language and reading development across the early childhood years.<br>• Explain the transfer of skills from L1 to L2 as it affects literacy learning across the reading components.<br>• Identify major milestones in reading scholarship and interpret them in light of the current social context.<br>• Match examples of learner responses and learning behaviour to phases in language and literacy development.<br>• Identify the most salient instructional needs of learners who are at different points of reading and writing development.<br>• Develop and implement instructional activities that appropriately utilise and demonstrate the concept of the continuum of skills in reading, writing and oral language proficiencies.<br>• Apply developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments.<br>• Discuss the domains of language and their importance to proficient reading and writing.<br>• Discuss a scientifically valid model of the language processes underlying reading and writing.<br>• Compare spoken and written language.<br>• Identify and explain major research findings regarding the contribution of environmental, cultural, social, etc. factors to literacy outcomes.<br>• Select, develop and implement developmentally appropriate activities taking into consideration the effect of factors such as the environment, culture,<br>• Discuss learners' characteristics and needs at various developmental levels.<br>• Create learning environments that provide support for individual learner needs.<br>• Balance whole class/group/individual instructional activities to address multiple instructional levels.<br>• Provide small flexible group instruction to learners who are below grade level benchmarks.<br>• Explain and interpret relevant theories of children's literature by analysing books according to the child's physical, cognitive and social development |

(University D/M, 2014:1-2).

These outcomes list how students are to use the knowledge gained in the theoretical component of the course to practice in the classroom. However, this also has implications for how teacher preparation programmes should structure their curricula.

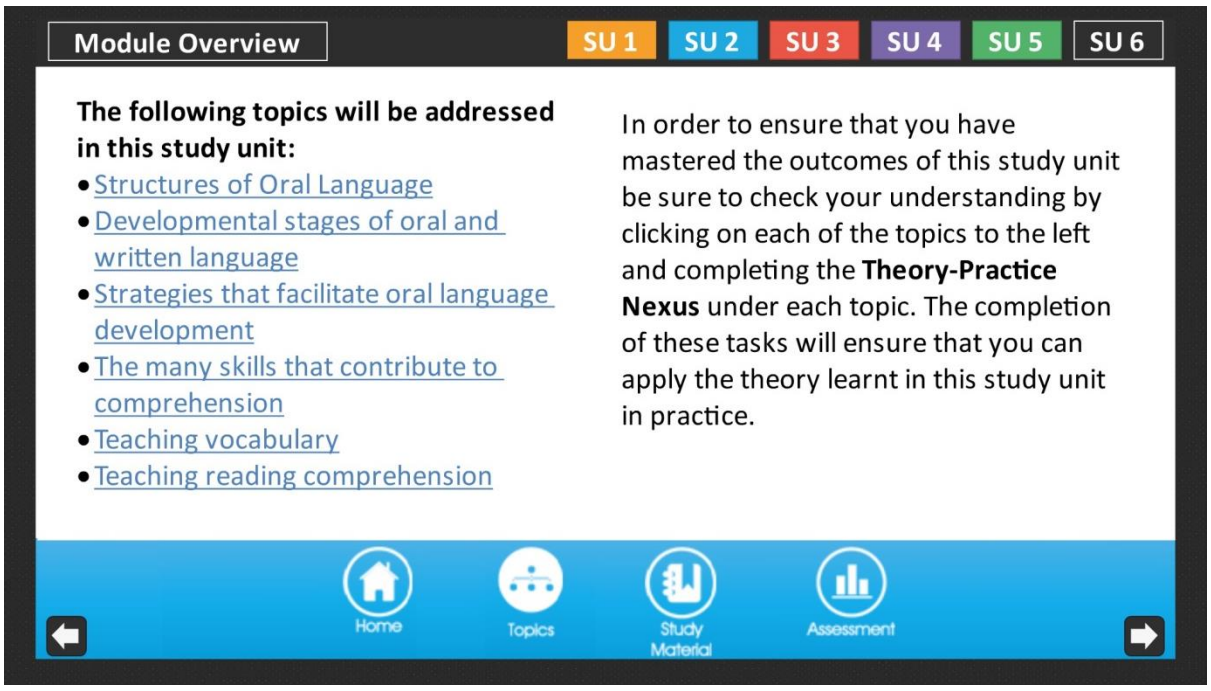
### i) Curriculum structure

Because the integration of theory and practice is a process and not simply an action, the **curriculum** also needs to be structured to allow for this to happen. Teacher preparation programmes should constructively align curricula so that the theory which is acquired in coursework and workplace practice integrate into the WIL experience; this can happen by drawing on activities such as reflection and assessable work (Cooper et al., 2010:40; Cantalini-Williams et al., 2014:5). Examples of assessable work which incorporates reflection and demands of the student to integrate theory and practice are illustrated in the inserts below extracted from the students' SMART guides. Students are required to interact in blended learning environment thus, contact students are given SMART guides which they can access anywhere to guide their learning.



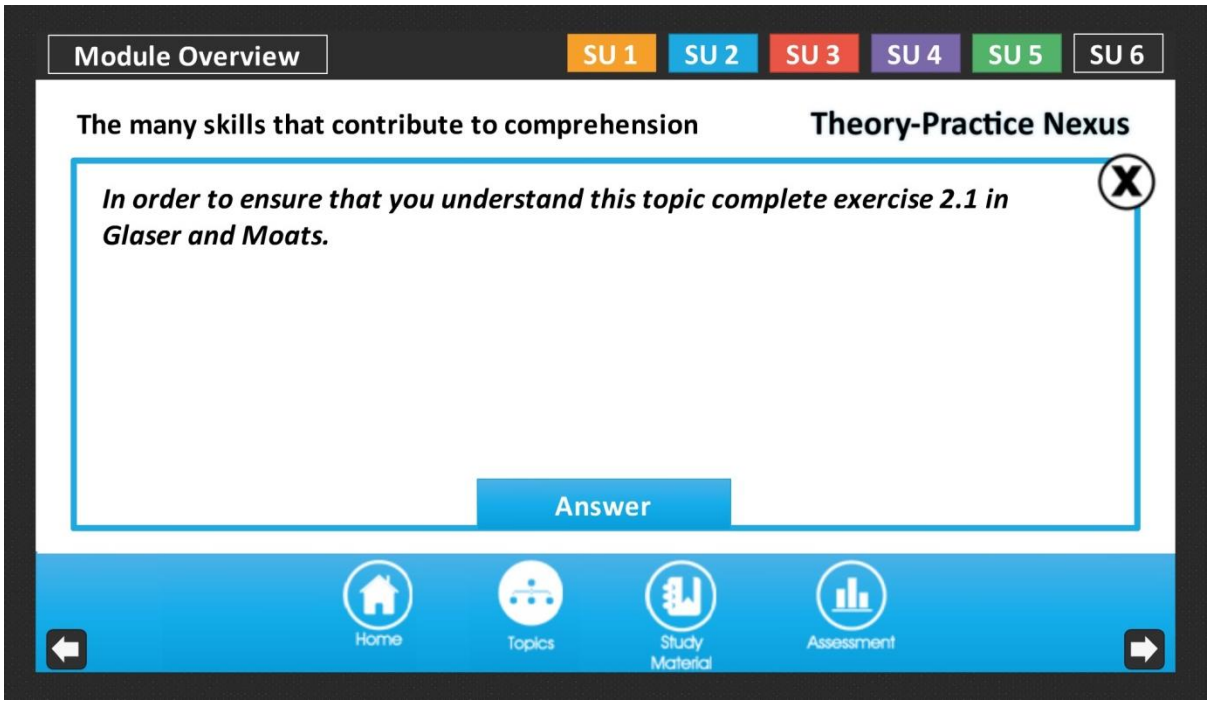

(University D/M, 2014).

The following extracts indicate how the university has used the knowledge base indicated in Chapter 2, to incorporate evidence-based research into their reading literacy teacher preparation programme. The content highlighted draws on an integrated body of research used to indicate how learners become successful readers and how teachers should support readers in reading instruction.




(University D/M, 2014).

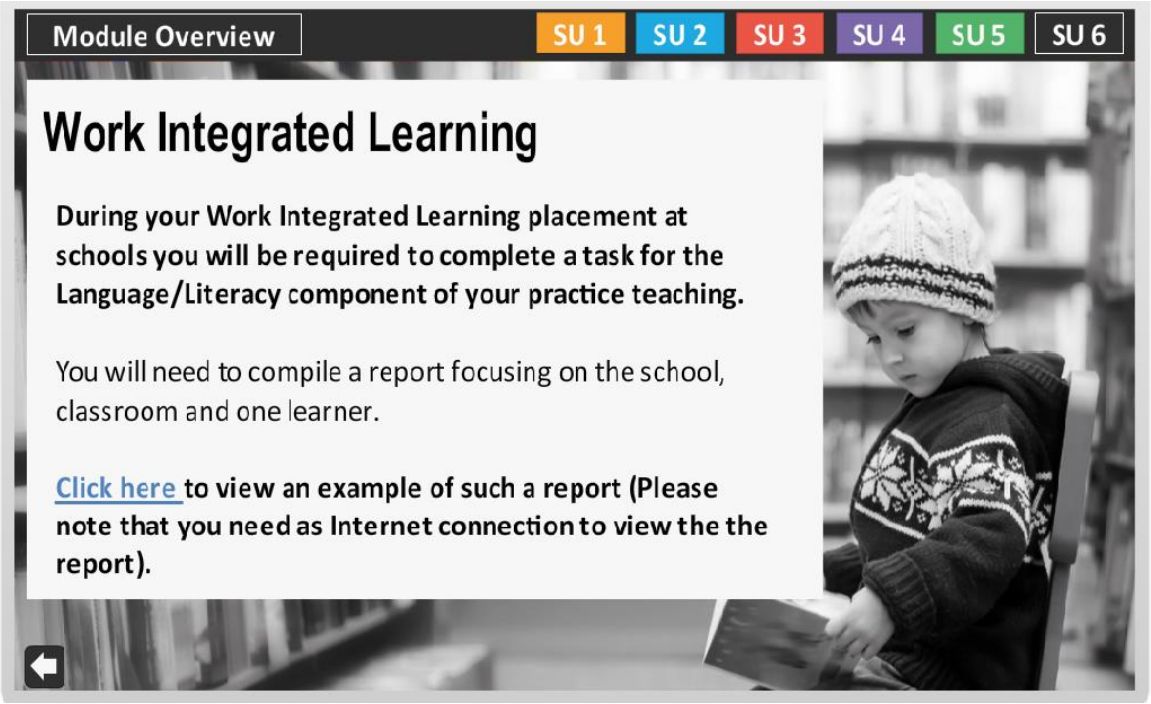
The following extract indicates the theory-practice nexus. A task like this is planned after each topic to ensure that students can apply what they have learnt in the particular section to practice.




(University D/M, 2014).

This theory-practice interconnection is extended into WIL. A specific task concerning the content covered in that particular semester is devised for the WIL session. So students are not

expected to simply present lessons but to rather integrate the content they were exposed to, in practice.




(University D/M, 2014)

**Example: Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Report**

| | Criteria | Mark allocated |
|---|---|---|
| **Introduction** | A succinct statement of what the paper is about and how it is organized. 2-3 sentences should be sufficient | 5 |
| **Observation and Description** A brief overview of where (the school, the classroom and a learner in the class) you were placed. | Name of school<br>Quintile level of school<br>Does the school offer a feeding scheme (how many meals are provided?)<br>Grade/age group<br>Number of children in Gr R class<br>Number of adults (eg. teacher, assistant) and their roles<br>Description of children in the programme what can you say about the developmental level and language of the children attending the school/classroom observed | 5 |
| **Description of the Physical Environment** | Describe the actual physical environment, summarize the elements<br>You may include sketches or pictures without children that you can refer to.<br>2-4 pages, pictures and sketches can be placed in the appendix<br>Is there a reading corner in the class?<br>Are there any other corners in the class (eg fantasy corner etc.)<br>What children's literature books are available to the learners or used in the class?<br>Is there a theme table? (if so, how does it look for example, real life representations, pictures and flashcards supporting the theme)<br>Discuss how your observations are congruent or oppose what you would expect to see<br>Make a brief focused concluding statement about the developmental appropriateness of the environment within the program you observed<br>Support your statement with evidence from course readings or lecture notes<br>4 pages maximum | 20 |
| **Teachers role in Storybook Reading** | What questioning strategies did the teacher use?<br>Describe what the teacher did to support or direct the children.<br>Discuss why this might be important to note<br>Support your statement with evidence from course readings/ curriculum documents/lecture notes<br>3 pages maximum | 25 |
| **Oral language development during play** (one child) | What strategies that support oral language development does the teacher use?<br>Identify in what typical developmental stage of oral language the one learner (you identified to work with) is at, with observational support for your answer.<br>Describe how you made use of the language-stimulation techniques to interact with the child (with observational support for your answer).<br>Describe how the child's oral language was the same or different during interaction with you and during interaction with other children during play?<br>Give a brief description of what play activity the child was engaged in (eg. what was the child doing with whom, what did the child say and how) maximum 3 pages<br>Discuss how your observations are congruent or oppose what you would expect to see<br>Make a brief focused concluding statement about the quality of the program.<br>Support your statement with evidence from course readings/ curriculum documents and lecture notes. | 25 |
| **Conclusion** | What general conclusions can you make about your observations as a result of your discussion covered in this paper<br>No new observations are to be introduced here<br>2 page max | 10 |
| **References and editing** | | 10 |
| **Total** | | **100** |
| Overall Comments: | | |

(University D/M, 2014)

The practice of constructively aligning a curriculum requires that the intended learning outcomes are defined; teaching and learning activities are chosen which support to achieve the outcomes set and assessment of students entails measuring whether the set outcomes have been mastered. The task illustrated in the extract above is an indication of a teaching and learning activity which is aligned with the outcomes set and can be used to determine to what extent the outcomes set have been mastered. This task also shows how the community of practice is needed throughout the entire process of integrating theory and practice as well as to ensure that **learning** is taking place. This task displayed in the extract indicates what is expected of a first year student during WIL in the first semester. So first year students no longer present lessons, they have to observe and work with one learner. The aspects which the student has to report on are also an example of what was covered in terms of content in the first semester.

The examples highlighted above, together with the road map for the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL (cf. Figure 5.1) and the checklist for how WIL should be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes (cf. Table 5.1) indicate how WIL can be used to alleviate the perennial issue of integrating formal learning (theory) and workplace learning (practice) within teacher preparation programmes.

## 5.6 Evaluate results

According to Mertler (2011:37-38), action research is not a linear process; it is cyclical in nature, and has a clear beginning, but it does not have a clearly defined result. Action research demands that researchers design and implement a project, collect and analyse data (cf. section 5.4). This can be found in section 5.4. The final step in the action research process is to evaluate the project's effectiveness, and then make revisions and improvements to the project for future implementation. In this case I would have to evaluate the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships as a catalyst to illustrate how WIL should be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes.

The data presented in section 5.5 highlight the need for the implementation of the specified action plan, namely the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL. Similarly, the literature (cf. Chapter 3, section 3.4) identifies the need for this.

Unfortunately, this study completed only one cycle of the action research process so the action plan was developed and is currently being implemented at one university. The results of this will be tracked longitudinally. So its effect can only be evaluated by considering the data analysis and the literature consulted. However, because action research is on-going, the action

plan will be evaluated, revisions and improvements can then be made which could lead to future research.

## 5.7 Summary

This action research study has addressed a national need of South Africa. The *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011–2025*, noted that the teaching practice/school experience (WIL) component of teacher preparation programmes needs to be strengthened and the results of this study indicate that this can be achieved through the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL.

Teacher preparation programmes use WIL as a tool to integrate theory and practice. However, the data suggests that the successful utilisation of this tool for this particular purpose has not been attained. Students are trained to become teachers by being exposed to theory within the university classrooms and then they go out to schools for WIL and apply this theory learnt in school classrooms. However, due to the current nature of WIL, implementation fragmentation occurs in many teacher preparation programmes, and thus the perennial issue of the theory and practice divide persists. This is because there are seldom clear objectives for WIL or how it should link back to the university classroom and student learning. Furthermore, stakeholders involved in WIL are also not always clear of what their role is and how they should contribute to student learning.

The road map for the establishment of collaborative partnerships among the key stakeholders for WIL alludes to a community of practice. This community of practice refers to a group of people who are willing to work together and are prepared to support each other's learning and should consist of the stakeholders involved in WIL. These stakeholders will have to work collaboratively as the students are dependent on them (the community) to work to learn whilst being guided by learning to work as they are immersed within this community of practice. The road map also indicates how all the stakeholders are equal partners who are dependent on each other so that WIL can be used to effectively bridge the divide between theory and practice.

The establishment of collaborative partnerships among the key stakeholders for WIL is not the only predictor to narrow the divide between theory and practice. It is, however, a catalyst and can even be considered as the point of departure for WIL. So, stakeholders will have to collaborate on the dimensions of *purpose*; *context*; nature of the *integration*; *curriculum* issues; the *learning*; *partnerships* between the university and the workplace or community; and the *support* provided to the student and the workplace when planning and implementing WIL.

# CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

## 6.1 Introduction

The integration of theory and practice is a major concern in teacher preparation (cf. Chapter 2 & 3). Evidence has shown that in order to bridge this gap, the practice component of teacher preparation programmes should be improved so that expert teachers can be produced.

Expert teachers know how to use the knowledge of the profession to advance learners learning as well as to build their professional knowledge through practice. This is confirmed by Shulman (1987) who refers to the work of Fenstermacher who argues that the goal of teacher education should not be to indoctrinate or train teachers to behave in prescribed ways, but to educate teachers to reason soundly about their teaching as well as to perform skilfully. Sound reasoning requires both a process of thinking about what they are doing and an adequate base of facts, principles, and experiences from which to reason. Teachers must learn to use their knowledge base to provide the grounds for choices and actions. Therefore, teacher education must work with the beliefs that guide teacher actions, with the principles and evidence that underlie the choices teachers make (Shulman, 1987:13). Thus, skilful teaching involves facilitating in depth analysis of ideas through reading, writing and discussion; scaffolding students' knowledge and skill development through assignment and projects that require in-depth explanation, the use of argument and evidence, and the employment of technology; and the development of interpersonal skills through group work (Ball & Forzani, 2011:20).

However, in order to produce these expert teachers, teacher preparation programmes should make provision for programmes which are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses. This is because clinically based programmes will create varied and extensive opportunities for pre-service teachers to connect theory with practice, while under the expert guidance of skilled mentors (NCATE, 2010:ii).

In addition, Darling-Hammond (2010:40) states that learning to practice in practice, with expert guidance, is essential to becoming a great teacher of students with a wide range of needs. Thus, the NCATE emphasise that in order to bridge the conceptual divide or gap between theory and practice, practice must be placed at the centre of teaching preparation. In order to achieve this, teacher preparation must be turned upside down and instead should be conceived as an academically taught clinical practice.

This final chapter concludes with a summary of the research results. An overview of the major findings of this action research is illustrated; the contribution thereof, as well as the implications of the findings is defined. Additionally, the recommendations and limitations of the study are discussed.

## 6.2 Results

The purpose of this study was to examine how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into the reading literacy component of their foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. In order to do this, the following research questions were addressed, namely:

1. What is the theoretical knowledge base for WIL in reading literacy teacher education?
2. What constitutes an aligned WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education?
3. How is WIL incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa?
4. How, according to evidence-based research, should WIL be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes?

The results of this action research are summarised according to the research questions.

**What is the theoretical knowledge base for WIL in reading literacy teacher education?**

The knowledge base for WIL in reading literacy teacher education is situated within Shulman's theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge which consists of content knowledge (subject matter knowledge), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), and curricular knowledge (Shulman, 1986:9-10).

The NRP and the DoE found that the inclusion of the five components in the teaching of reading namely phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension should form an integral part of foundation phase reading literacy teacher preparation programmes (NRP, 2000:1-1; DoE, 2008:12 ). Ball (2000:244) reiterates that content knowledge (subject matter knowledge) for teaching should not be defined as the subject matter knowledge that learners have to learn as it is dangerous to assume that what teachers need to know is what they teach. Teacher's **content knowledge** (subject matter knowledge) for reading literacy has been highlighted by research to reflect considerable knowledge of language structure in order to teach reading effectively and to differentiate instruction for diverse learners which they will be confronted with (Moats, 1999:14).

Teaching phonemic awareness requires knowledge of phonology. This is because phonology is the science of vocal sounds and refers to the study of the sound system within a language

(Moats, 2009c:10). Knowledge of the language system includes understanding the order in which phonemes are combined; where accents are applied to words and phrases and the way in which speech sounds change when they are combined with other sounds. If teachers have knowledge of phonological manipulations they will be able to effectively instruct, teach and help their learners acquire phonemic awareness. The English language has a complex spelling system due to its multi-layered origin. Thus, the teaching of phonics is embedded in knowledge of orthography, etymology and the morphological structure of words (Moats and Foorman, 2003; Moats, 2009b & Moats, 2009d). Consequently, Moats (2009b:385) states that phonics and spelling instruction requires the teacher to know and explain this multi-layered orthographic system. English orthography represents sounds, syllable patterns, and meaningful word parts (morphemes), as well as the language from which a word originated. Reading fluency is both a cause and a consequence of reading experiences and reading habits and occurs when readers recognise words instantly and use phonic decoding skills easily and accurately (Moats & Davidson, 2009:16). Similarly, the skills needed to develop reading fluency include the accuracy and automaticity of language comprehension (which includes aspects syntax, semantics) and word recognition (which entails aspects of language structure such as phonology, morphology and orthography). So, teachers need knowledge of these aspects of language structure in order to develop learners reading fluency. Vocabulary refers to words which learners fully understand the meaning of (Smartt & Reschly, 2007:4) and occupies an important position in learning to read (NRP, 2000:4-15). So, phonology plays a role in vocabulary acquisition as knowledge of phonology will enable teachers to be sure that students pronounce words accurately as well as break the words into syllables or morphemes (Moats, 2009b:385). Semantic organisation and the relationships among word structure (morphology), grammatical rule and meaning (etymology and orthography) is also vital in vocabulary instruction (Moats and Foorman, 2003:24). Comprehension is focussed on constructing meaning thus making it challenging and multi-faceted as it involves many cognitive processes (Moats & Hennessy, 2009:5-6). Comprehension instruction requires the teacher to know and explicate linguistic concepts such as text organisation, genre, inter- and intra-sentence references, figurative and idiomatic language (pragmatics) and complex sentence structure (syntax) (Moats and Foorman, 2003:24).

Even though aspects of language structure have been highlighted to form the foundation of reading literacy teacher preparation programmes literature appreciation which includes the exposure to a variety of texts should not be ignored (Moats, 1999:7-8). Knowledge of literature is an important domain which teachers should possess for reading instruction as it is a proxy for reading activities (Cunningham et al., 2004:160).

**PCK** refers to knowing *how* to teach this subject matter in the classroom. Consequently, teachers need to know how to take the complex content knowledge and break it down into understandable units and use that in teaching for their diverse learners. However, subject matter is the basis for PCK as effective teachers need subject matter competence to know how to solve problems which they pose to learners and to know that there are multiple approaches to solving these problems. In addition to this, teachers need to make the right decision when working with learners, they need to know what kinds of mistakes learners are likely to make so that they must be prepared to address the bases of learners' errors in a way that will contribute to their learning. (Grossman et al., 2005:205).

For example, in order to teach comprehension, teachers need to have knowledge of pragmatics (i.e., teachers should know how to explain how texts are organised, different types of texts, the use of figurative and idiomatic language) and syntax (i.e., teachers should have knowledge of and be able to explain text structure) (Moats & Foorman, 2003:24; Moats et al., 2010:30 & Moats & Hennessy, 2009:23). So knowledge of pragmatics and syntax is the subject matter or content knowledge needed by teachers in order to teach reading comprehension. But, this content knowledge needs to be made accessible to learners so it should be "deconstructed into teachable forms". Subsequently, we need to look at what knowledge teachers have about their subject matter which will allow them to transform knowledge of pragmatics and syntax into representations, explanations and learning opportunities that will make this content accessible to learners. This can be done by setting clear instructional purposes, selecting appropriate texts, activating learners' relevant prior knowledge around aspects relating to the text and posing questions about the text which learners have to comprehend. Additionally, interpreting learners thinking, using their contributions, modelling and verbalising the reading process and attending to complex discourse routines are all aspects of PCK for reading comprehension (Scott, 2009:174).

Grossman et al. (2005:205) reiterate that teachers can begin to develop PCK in professional education which is better known as the practicum component (practice) which relates to the **curricular knowledge** teachers need. Curricular knowledge gives teachers the "tools" to teach particular content and remediate or evaluate student achievements (Shulman, 1986:10). Thus, teachers need to be given tools to teach and conduct their work. Opportunities for this need to be created so that subject matter can be learnt that will enable teachers not only to know but to learn to use what they know in the varied contexts of practice (Ball, 2000:244).

The NCATE (2010:ii) suggested that teacher preparation programmes consider clinical practice for the practice component of the courses as it ensures varied and extensive opportunities for

students to connect theory and practice. So teacher preparation programmes should be fully grounded in practice and interwoven with academic content and professional practice.

This knowledge base speaks to the knowledge types which the DHET envisage for teacher education qualifications. According to the DHET, teachers competent learning depends on a mixture of theoretical and practical learning and this can be achieved by acquiring, integrating and applying disciplinary learning, pedagogical learning, practical learning, fundamental learning and situational learning. Furthermore, this knowledge base accommodates disciplinary learning and pedagogical learning as it draws on language structure, literature and knowledge of assessment as the content knowledge (subject matter knowledge) for reading literacy. Practical and situational learning demands learning in and from practice and within teacher preparation programmes this happens when students engage in WIL. WIL is situated within the workplace (schools) and includes aspects of learning in practice as well as from practice.

**What constitutes an aligned WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education?**

WIL is an approach which can be used to actively build links between the world of teaching and learning (theory), and the world of professional practice (practice) (CHE, 2011:9). In order to do this it should be based on the dimensions of *purpose*; *context*; nature of the *integration*; *curriculum* issues; the *learning*; *partnerships* between the university and the workplace or community; and the *support* provided to the student and the workplace (Cooper et al., 2010:37). Additionally these dimensions also formed the conceptual framework for this study. If WIL is based on these dimensions it will take the strengths of the theory acquired in academic education and blend it with the rich, tacit practice knowledge of schools.

**How is WIL incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes of the universities in South Africa?**

The data generated from the semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents indicate that there is absence of a clear purpose for WIL as the aims and objectives, structure and format and curricular differ across all the institutions. Furthermore, it appears as if the focus of WIL is to ensure that students develop the skills (competencies) associated with teaching. Furthermore, assessment of WIL focuses on the skills of teaching (i.e., managing classroom discipline, the use of teaching strategies, using technology in lesson presentations) in general and does not explicitly address reading literacy. Even though aspects of observation and reflection were apparent in the data, it was not used to ensure student learning or the integration of theory and practice. Additionally, stakeholders involved in WIL were also uncertain about their role in WIL and what their responsibility is in student learning.

An analysis and interpretation of the themes which emanated from the data indicates a disconnection amongst key stakeholders involved in WIL which highlights the absence of partnerships amongst these key stakeholders. The establishment of collaborative partnerships among these stakeholders was suggested as a means of intervention to address the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher education. So the data confirmed that WIL, as currently organised within foundation phase teacher preparation programmes, is not sufficient to address the theory-practice divide within the reading literacy component of the programme as recommended by evidence-based research (cf. Chapter 1, section 1.4).

**How, according to evidence-based research, should WIL be incorporated into the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes?**

Darling-Hammond (2006:302) accentuates that schools of education must design programmes that help prospective teachers to understand deeply a wide array of things about learning, social and cultural contexts, and teaching and be able to enact these understandings in complex classrooms serving increasingly diverse students. If prospective teachers are to succeed at this task, Darling-Hammond (2006:302) suggests that schools of education design programmes that transform the kinds of settings in which novices learn to teach and later become teachers. Thus, teacher education must venture out further from the university and engage ever more closely with schools in a mutual transformation agenda, with all of the struggle and messiness that implies. It also means that teacher educators must take up the charge of educating policy makers and the public about what it actually takes to teach effectively in today's world—both in terms of the knowledge and skills that are needed and in terms of the school contexts that must be created to allow teachers to develop and use what they know (Darling-Hammond, 2006:302). Put simply, teacher preparation content should be aligned with practice. In order to achieve this, a metaphor was developed to indicate how WIL should be incorporated in the reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes.

The metaphor draws on the symbolism of a road map to illustrate how the stakeholders involved in WIL are equal partners and should establish a collaborative partnership. This road map incorporates the university, the school and its community and the Department of Education at both provincial and district level which allude to a community of practice and illustrates the collaborative partnership which should exist between these stakeholders. These stakeholders (community of practice) will have to work collaboratively as the students are dependent on them (the community) to work to learn whilst being guided by learning to work as they are immersed within this community of practice (Cooper et al., 2010:1-2; Lave & Wenger, 1991:29-30). This collaborative partnership would not be the only predictor to narrow the divide between theory

and practice. It is, however, a catalyst and can even be considered as the point of departure for WIL (cf. Figure 5.1).

The IRA (2007:1) have identified essential features for constructing teacher preparation programmes which produce teachers who teach reading well. These programmes should draw on an integrated body of research which highlight how learners become successful readers and how teachers should support the instruction of reading. University lecturers involved in these programmes should be committed to effective instruction by utilising appropriate content and teaching and learning models which advance their student learning. Additionally, such programmes should expose students through a systematic array of practicum experiences (WIL) that is integrated with coursework under the auspices of excellent mentors. Consequently, diversity and the awareness thereof should also be developed in programmes which produce teachers of reading as students need to learn how to teach diverse learners in diverse settings.

Similarly, the results of this study have affected the re-curriculation process of a university in South Africa. The knowledge base devised in Chapter 2 was used to incorporate evidence-based research into the reading literacy curriculum. The analysis of WIL (Chapter 3) aided the WIL programme design. WIL has now been designed to ensure that students are progressively exposed to practice which is interwoven in their coursework.

## 6.3 Contribution of the study

The motivation for this study stemmed from a national need to strengthen the teaching practice/school experience (WIL) component of teacher preparation programmes as stipulated in the *Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa, 2011–2025.* The results of this study provided insight into how collaborative partnerships can be used to strengthen WIL.

The major contribution of this study is embedded in the road map (cf. Figure 5.1) which illustrates the establishment of collaborative partnerships amongst the key stakeholders for WIL and how it could become a critical catalyst in integrating theory and practice in reading literacy teacher preparation. The establishment of these partnerships will ensure that all the stakeholders get together and define a clear purpose for WIL. These partnerships will also contribute to and support the learning of students as all the stakeholders should accept their responsibility in WIL as well as contribute to the integration of theory and practice.

Moreover, the road map was used to totally rethink and turn the way WIL is viewed, at a university and among the education community (school, and district), on its head. Currently, collaborative partnerships and communities of practice are being established and a sense of coherence is being established among the key stakeholders.

In addition, the findings of this study were also used in the re-design of a teacher preparation programme and thus it has also contributed to the debates around the professional learning of teachers as it provided insight into arguments around the establishment of teaching schools and professional practice schools and how they can be used in teacher education to bridge the theory and practice divide in teacher education.

## 6.4 Limitations of the study

In light of the fact that universities across South Africa are re-curriculating their BEd foundation phase teacher preparation programmes could be seen as a limitation in the study. Universities were very keen to participate in the interviews conducted for the study but generating the necessary documentation was obstructed because of this. However, the trustworthiness of the study was strengthened by triangulation in the data made available for the study.

Action research is cyclical and comprises of an interactive cycle of planning, implementing and reflecting. Only one cycle of this action research study was completed due to the re-curriculation of the BEd foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. The action plan focussed on the development of a road map for the establishment of partnerships among key stakeholders for WIL, and is currently being implemented in a teacher preparation programme; its effectiveness cannot be assessed as yet which makes it a limitation of this study.

## 6.5 Recommendations for future research

The results of this study are currently being implemented within a teacher preparation programme in South Africa. The effectiveness of the new approach to bridging the theory-practice divide should be tracked longitudinally. In addition, the impact of collaborative partnerships on WIL needs to be investigated.

The implementation of collaborative partnerships is dependent on numerous dimensions as highlighted in the conceptual framework of this study (cf. Chapter 3). These dimensions highlight aspects such as the formation of communities of practice, the need for trained mentors and the lack of coherence in the curricula of teacher preparation programmes across HEIs. The formation of communities of practice is needed as stakeholders will have a shared interest in WIL and will benefit from the knowledge of others. Support will be needed in establishing these

communities of practice as its focus should be to attain coherence and convergence in teacher preparation programmes. Additionally, WIL is an essential part of the BEd programme and includes supervised and assessed teaching practice (DHET, 2015:21-23). Teacher preparation programmes are dependent on mentors to help as HEIs do not necessarily have the capacity to service all the students, the classroom teacher may take on the role of the mentor. The role of the mentor is crucial in helping students apply what they have learnt in teacher preparation programmes to particular contexts and learners as well as to ease the transition to classroom teaching. Literature has indicated that a skilled mentor can then provide such on-going consultation and evaluation to students thus; mentors will have to be trained to do this. Research regarding mentors and knowledge they should possess to fulfil this role remains to be researched.

The stakeholders involved in WIL will contribute to the development of teachers who are well versed in their curricula, know their communities, apply their knowledge and effectively engage learners in learning but the effects of WIL on their (the stakeholders) professional development remains unknown. Thus, the effects of participation in the collaborative partnership on the stakeholders' professional development should be researched.

## 6.6 Conclusion

This study addresses a major problem within teacher preparation programmes namely, the divide between theory and practice. Because of this divide teacher education has produced technicists for teachers. These teachers do not know their subject matter, nor can they present it in a challenging, clear, and compelling way for the diverse body of learners which they should accommodate in their classrooms.

According to Lyon (2002:7), teacher preparation is the key to teaching children to read as the quality of the teacher is consistently found to be an important predictor of student achievement. Moreover, we need teachers who are well versed in their curricula, know their communities, apply their knowledge of child growth and development, use assessments to monitor student progress and effectively engage students in learning. Similarly, teachers need collaboration, communication, and problem solving skills to keep up to speed with rapidly changing learning environments and new technologies (NCATE, 2010:1). The absence of this teacher knowledge is evident in South African foundation phase teacher preparation as the low results reflected in the systemic evaluations could be related to the teachers as many teachers who teach young children have not been educated and trained professionally to specialise in this pedagogy (Green et al., 2011:110). Thus, it became imperative that intervention in pre-service teacher education programmes occur in South Africa (Green et al., 2011:112).

As part of the process to improve the teacher quality, the DHET have published *The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications*. This publication provides the basis for the construction of core curricula for initial teacher education (DHET, 2011:5). Furthermore, the DHET (2011:7) state that teaching is a complex activity that is premised upon the acquisition, integration and application of different types of knowledge practices or learning. These knowledge types were considered to establish a knowledge base for foundation phase reading literacy teacher preparation. Shulman's theoretical framework for teacher content knowledge formed the knowledge base as it focuses on the dimensions of content knowledge for teacher preparation programmes.

Additionally, literature indicated that the implementation of clinical practice to bridge the gap between theory and practice as clinically based approaches have numerous advantages for teacher preparation. A conceptual framework for WIL was utilised to illustrate how WIL should be organised around clinical practice so that the theory practice divide can be bridged and that teacher preparation programmes can produce effective teachers who are able to learn *about* practice, *in* practice, *from* practice, *for* practice, and ultimately, *to* practise as the DHET envision. In order to achieve this, a roadmap for WIL was devised which acted as a catalyst to address the *changes* needed so that students can optimally benefit from WIL in reading literacy teacher education.

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# ADDENDUM A

Interview Schedule

**Interviews will be used to generate <u>perspectives</u> and <u>experiences</u> on the phenomenon of WIL within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes.**

**General**

1. How have you been experiencing lecturing the reading literacy component of the foundation phase teacher preparation programme?
2. Who determines the content and structure of the course which you teach?
3. How is it determined?
4. How is the Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) component integrated into your programme?
5. What is the structure and format of WIL within your foundation phase teacher preparation programme?
6. How is WIL administered within your foundation phase teacher preparation programme?
7. Do your students go out on WIL from their first year?
8. Do the WIL requirements change from the 1$^{st}$ to the 4$^{th}$ year of study?
9. Does your university engage in Department of Education or school partnerships?

**Course material and Content**

10. Do you give your students specific tasks to complete during the WIL component of their course?
11. What is the nature of these tasks?

**Application of knowledge**

12. How are students expected to apply their knowledge gained in classes within WIL?
13. Are there opportunities within your teaching time for students to apply their knowledge of reading literacy? If so, how does this happen?
14. Are the students provided with opportunities to practically implement their knowledge of the reading literacy within WIL?
15. Within the WIL component of the course, what tasks and assignments are given to the students for this time?
16. How is content of the modules infused with practice?
17. How is this process facilitated and how are students guided through this?
18. How do students have to demonstrate their level of competence regarding reading literacy? How is evidence of this displayed?

**Assessment**

19. How are students assessed within WIL?
20. How are students assessed when they have to demonstrate their level of competence regarding reading literacy? How is evidence of this displayed?
21. Do your students have to complete specific portfolios as proof of their learning for WIL? If so, what would these portfolios consist of?

**Teacher Preparation**

22. What do you regard as a "shortage" within reading literacy teacher preparation programmes?
23. What do you regard as a "shortage" within WIL as related to reading literacy within teacher preparation programmes?
24. What, according to you, are the greatest shortcomings/barriers which the student experience's regarding the WIL?
25. Are the experiences gained during WIL sufficient to bridge the theory-practice divide?

***An example of how the data will be collated:***

| | Question | Follow up questions | Additional notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Researcher:** | 1. How have you been experiencing lecturing the reading literacy component of the foundation phase teacher preparation programme? | | |
| **Participant A:** | | | |
| **Participant B:** | | | |
| **Participant C:** | | | |
| **Researcher:** | 2. Who determines the content and structure of the course which you teach? | | |
| **Participant A:** | | | |
| **Participant B:** | | | |
| **Participant C:** | | | |

course objectives and design
programme philosophy
personal philosophy
external programme factors
course methods
field experience
evaluation of pre-service teachers
beliefs about teacher preparation

# ADDENDUM B

## INSTITUTION CONSENT OF PARTICIPATION

### STUDY TITLE

Foundation phase BEd Teacher Education: Bridging the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher preparation through Work-Integrated Learning

### STUDY PURPOSE AND RATIONAL

To determine what constitutes an aligned WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education. The explication of the importance of WIL in curriculum design and development for reading literacy teacher education will also be determined as well as systematically examine how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into their reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. The findings of this empirical study will be utilised to develop a model/framework for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) which addresses the reading literacy theory-practice divide.

### INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The participants anticipated for the study will be foundation phase lecturers who work within the teacher preparation programmes of universities in South Africa as well as School Management Teams (SMT) (which includes Head of Departments (HOD) of the Foundation Phase) within the Blue District of the North West Province as well as the Green District of the Western Cape were randomly selected (n=10).

### PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES AND DURATION:

The research procedure utilised in this study will be that of interviews with the lecturers who work in the foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. Interviews will be conducted on a one-to-one basis and will continue for approximately 45 minutes. All interviews will be audio taped (with the permission of the participants) to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data. These tapes will be transcribed and destroyed at the completion of this study to ensure confidentiality of the school and participants. Notes will be taken during the interviews to record perceptions, observations, and that which might not be captured on audiotape.

Focus group interviews will be conducted with randomly selected SMT's within the Blue District of the North West Province as well as the Green District of the Western Cape. These interviews will continue for approximately 45 minutes and will be audio taped (with the permission of the participants) to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data. These tapes too will be transcribed and destroyed at the completion of this study to ensure confidentiality of the school

and participants. Notes will be taken during the focus group interviews to record perceptions, observations, and that which might not be captured on audiotape.

Various documents (i.e. syllabi, textbook(s), course outlines, course handouts, evaluation tools) will be analysed. This document analysis will not form part of the literature review as there is a distinct difference between the Literature Review and Data Collection.

## DATA CONFIDENTIALITY OR ANONYMITY

All data will be maintained as confidential and no identifying information such as names will appear in any publication or presentation of the data.

## STORAGE OF DATA

Paper data will be stored in a locked steel cabinet in the researcher's office and will then be destroyed after six months. The data will also be entered into a software programme and stored on the researcher's password protected computer for one year and then deleted. Only members from the research team will have access to the data.

## RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS

No possible risks to participate are envisaged. However, in the event of questions that may be perceived as threatening or causing discomfort, participants may decline to answer such questions without providing any reason for doing so.

## BENEFITS

No direct benefits or compensation will be due to any participant.

## VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. Participants may at any stage, refuse to participate and or withdraw at any time.

## CONTACT DETAILS

The research is conducted by PhD student, Zelda Barends, under the supervision of Prof Carisma Nel, from the School of Human and Social Sciences for Education: North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. Prof Nel can be reached at 018 285 2639 (o/h) for questions regarding this research project. The research has been ethically approved by the North-West Ethics Committee.

**CONSENT**

I, _____, agree to participate in this research project entitled, Foundation phase BEd Teacher Education: Bridging the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher preparation through Work-Integrated Learning. I have had the study explained to me and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have read the description of this project and give my consent to participate. I understand that I will receive a copy of this informed consent form to keep for future reference. To the best of knowledge, the participant meets the inclusion/exclusion criteria for participation (described on the previous page) in this study.

_____ _____

Name Signature

_____

Date

## INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**RESEARCHER:** Barends, Z.

### TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Foundation phase BEd Teacher Education: Bridging the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher preparation through Work-Integrated Learning

### PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

To determine what constitutes an aligned good WIL programme within reading literacy teacher education. The explication of the importance of WIL in curriculum design and development for reading literacy teacher education will also be determined as well as systematically examine how universities in South Africa incorporate WIL into their reading literacy component of foundation phase teacher preparation programmes. The findings of this empirical study will be utilised to develop a model/framework for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) which addresses the reading literacy theory-practice divide.

### DURATION

Interviews will be conducted on a one-to-one basis and will continue for approximately 45 minutes. Focus group interviews will be conducted and will continue for approximately 45 minutes. Various documents (i.e. syllabi, textbook(s), course outline, course handouts, and evaluation tools) will be analysed.

### PROCEDURES:

The interviews will be conducted on a one-to-one basis and will be arranged at a time which is convenient for the lecturer and interviewer. The focus group interviews will be conducted at a time when most convenient for the group and interviewer. Various documents (i.e. syllabi, textbook(s), course outline, course handouts, evaluation tools) will be analysed.

### POSSIBLE RISKS

No possible risks to participate are envisaged. However, in the event of questions that may be perceived as threatening or causing discomfort, participants may decline to answer such questions without providing any reason for doing so.

## BENEFITS

No direct benefits or compensation will be due to any participant.

## VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. Participants may at any stage, refuse to participate and or withdraw at any time.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All data will be maintained as confidential and no identifying information such as names will appear in any publication or presentation of the data.

## CONTACT DETAILS

The research is conducted by PhD student, Zelda Barends, under the supervision of Prof Carisma Nel, from the School of Human and Social Sciences for Education: North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. Prof Nel can be reached at 018 285 2639 (o/h) for questions regarding this research project. The research has been ethically approved by the North-West Ethics Committee.

## CONSENT:

I, _____ have read and understand the nature of my participation in this research project and agree to participate.

_____ _____

Name Signature

_____

Date

# ADDENDUM C

## Focus Group Interview Schedule

**Focus group interviews will be used to gain knowledge and an understanding into participants lived experiences of WIL**

**General**

1. How have you been experiencing accommodating students for WIL within your school?
2. Who determines the objectives of their stay and how does fit into your school?
3. How is it determined?
4. Do you think the structure and format of WIL within your foundation phase teacher preparation programmes is sufficient to prepare novice teachers?
5. Do you think students should go out on WIL from their first year?
6. Do you think that the WIL requirements for students change from the 1st to the 4th year of study? Should this happen? Why do you say so?
7. Do you think that the Department of Education should form partnerships with the university for optimal teacher preparation or should the university and the school simply liaise in terms of partnerships?

**Course material and Content**

8. Do you think that the students should be given specific tasks to complete during the WIL component of their course?
9. What should the nature of these tasks be?

**Application of knowledge**

10. Do you think that the WIL component of teacher preparation programmes as organized currently grants students sufficient opportunity to apply their knowledge of reading literacy?
11. Within the WIL component of the course, what tasks and assignments are given to the students for this time?
12. Is this sufficient to infuse the content of the modules with practice?
13. How is this process facilitated and how are students guided through this whilst they are under your supervision during WIL?
14. How do students have to demonstrate their level of competence regarding reading literacy? How is evidence of this displayed?

**Assessment**

15. How do you assess students whilst they are under your supervision during WIL?

16. How are students assessed when they have to demonstrate their level of competence regarding reading literacy? How is evidence of this displayed?

**Teacher Preparation**

17. What do you regard as a “shortage” within reading literacy teacher preparation programmes?

18. What do you regard as a “shortage” within WIL of reading literacy teacher preparation programmes?

19. What, according to you, are the greatest shortcomings/barriers which students experience regarding the WIL?

20. Are the experiences gained during WIL sufficient to bridge the theory-practice divide?

***An example of how the data will be collated:***

| | Question | Follow up questions | Additional notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Researcher:** | 1. How have you been experiencing lecturing the reading literacy component of the foundation phase teacher preparation programme? | | |
| **Participant A:** | | | |
| **Participant B:** | | | |
| **Participant C:** | | | |
| **Researcher:** | 2. Who determines the content and structure of the course which you teach? | | |
| **Participant A:** | | | |
| **Participant B:** | | | |
| **Participant C:** | | | |

# ADDENDUM D

## INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP CONFIDENTIALITY (NON-DISCLOSURE) AGREEMENT

**STUDY TITLE**

Foundation phase BEd Teacher Education: Bridging the theory-practice divide in reading literacy teacher preparation through Work-Integrated Learning

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview/focus group to discuss WIL within the reading literacy component of teacher preparation programmes. The ideas, opinions and attitudes shared are sensitive and should be shared only in this interview/focus group.

I, _____ hereby agree to maintain the confidentiality of information disclosed during the interview/focus group as follows:

a) To hold in confidence any and all information about the university and school's information concerning WIL which is disclosed, or made available to you directly or indirectly, or if information you otherwise receive incident to your participation in this discussion.
b) That any ideas, or suggestions contributed by you during the discussion, as well as any ideas, developments, or interventions conceived by you or others participating in the Focus Group, shall be held in confidence until the group sees fit to disseminate the information.
c) That you, shall at all times hold in trust, keep confidential and not disclose to any third party or make any use of the Confidential Information beyond those activities that are part of the interview/focus group.
d) All notes, reference materials, memoranda, documentation and records in any way incorporating or reflecting any of the Confidential Information shall belong exclusively to the undersigned or if the undersigned agrees to distribution.
e) Also included as confidential is any participants Personally Identifiable Information ("PII"). PII shall mean a person's identity or information that might reasonably allow identification of the person. I shall at all times hold in trust, keep confidential and not disclose to any third party or make any use of the identity or PII of any Respondent involved in the interview/Focus Group.

f) That you, hereby give permission to the research study for an audio recording to be made of this session. That you understand a transcription of this tape may be used by the research project for research purposes only.

By submitting this form you will be entering a confidentiality agreement with:

Researcher (PhD Student):
Name and surname: Mrs Zelda Barends
Contact number: (021) 864 5552
Email: zeldavdm@gmail.com

Research supervisor:
Name and surname: Prof. C. Nel
Contact number: (018) 2852639
Email: carisma.nel@nwu.ac.za

Participant:
Name and surname:
Signature: _____