CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter concludes with a brief summary of the key research findings, and the implications thereof for the DBE, educator training institutions and schools. Recommendations for the DBE to ensure appropriate teaching of phonological awareness by educators in the Foundation Phase are also made. The contribution of this study is defined and limitations are discussed. Lastly suggestions are made for future research.

7.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RESULTS

In this section the key findings of the research as explored under the research questions will be highlighted.

7.2.1 Primary research question

What knowledge, skills and perceptions do educators have of phonological awareness as determinants for developing a support programme for Foundation Phase ESL educators to improve phonological awareness teaching skills?

In the following table the key findings are summarised.

Table 7.1: Summary of key findings

Key finding	Reference to empirical data	Examples of participant quotes	Reference to Literature review
Participants demonstrated a definite confusion between phonological awareness and phonics, and showed little knowledge of	*cf.* 5.2.1.1 *cf.* 5.2.1.2	SB PA Q: *The study of phonic. words*. SR PD Q: *Teaching phonics.* SR PC Q: *To divide phonics into pieces.*	*cf.* 3.5.1.1 (McCutchen, Abbott, Green, Beretvas, Cox & Potter, 2002; Chessman, 2009; Spear-Swerling, Brucker and Alfano,

terminology linked to phonological awareness in Phase 1, prior to the training. Phonological awareness was generally described as phonics opposed to sounds of speech			2004)
Participants unassumingly acknowledged that they have a limited knowledge of phonological awareness and were enthusiastic to learn more about phonological awareness and terminologies linked to the concept). During the training in Phase 2, participants gained knowledge of phonological awareness and this was portrayed in their lessons presented after training. The findings of this study revealed that with appropriate training,	*cf.* 5.2.1.1 *cf.* 5.2.1.2	Phase 2 SB PB F: *"Yes. Much better. We were very unsure in the beginning but now we know what to do. We feel better."* SR PC F: *"Phonological awareness is knowing the sounds of speech."*	*cf.* 3.5.1.1 McCutchen, Abbott, Green, Beretvas, Cox and Potter (2002); Chessman (2009); Spear-Swerling *et al.* (2004) Wessels (2011)

phonological awareness can be understood and aptly taught			
Regarding educators' skills when teaching phonological awareness, it was obvious in Phase 1 that the participants were more focused on phonics instruction opposed to phonological awareness teaching, although they believed they were teaching phonological awareness Participants' lesson plans affirmed this (Appendix F).	*cf.* 5.2.2.1 *cf.* 5.2.2.6	*Then the teacher write some few letters on the board. The learners read them one by one on the board. The teacher read them first then the learners read after the teacher. There after they write sentences. They look at the pictures. They point out phonics from the picture.*	*cf.* 3.5.1.1 Chessman (2009) Litt, *et al.* (2014)
A critical aspect that the participants struggled with was syllabification. This can be attributed to differences in orthography of the languages English and Setswana	*cf.* 5.2.1.1 *cf.* 5.2.2.3 *cf.* 5.2.2.6	SR PA F: "We understand it much better now but when we have to break the werds into syllables, it's very confusing." SB PD F: "Yes. Very difficult."	*cf.* 3.3 Lane, *et al*. (2002) Noble (2002) *cf.* 3.10 Noble (2002) Broom (2004) Le Roux (2005)

Stories seemed to be the most popular teaching tool among participants to teach phonological awareness. However after the training, songs and rhymes were also employed and seemed to be a favoured teaching tool.	*cf.* 5.2.2.1 *cf.* 5.2.2.5 *cf.* 5.2.2.6	SB PA F: *"Yes, and we use lots of pictures with the stories."* SR PD F: "*We did a lot of sounds with songs in the programme. The children like to sing and dance."*	*cf.* 3.3 Moats and Tolman (2009) *cf.* 3.2.4 Schunk (2008) *cf.* 3.5.1.2 Stempleski (2007) *cf.* 3.9.1; 3.9.4 DBE (2011b)
Participants' knowledge of "what" and "how" to assess phonological awareness emerged as inadequate in Phase 1. Assessing phonics seemed to be an easier form of assessment, even after training, as learners were given worksheets to complete instead of phonological awareness activities throughout Phase 2.	*cf.* 5.2.2.2 *cf.* 5.2.2.6	SB PB Q: *Fill in the letters. Writing about the phonics sounds/missing. Talking about different phonics and meaning.* SB PA I: "*Ya assessment um is a big problem. It is difficult for me. Especially where the assessment of English or phono or what?"*	*cf.* 3.4.3 McBride-Chang (1995) Morais (2003) Geudens (2010) Gillon (2004) Gillon (2006) Geudens (2003) Geudens et al. (2005)
Support strategies for learners who struggle	*cf.* 5.2.2.4	SB PA Q: *Drilling of sounds and vowels.*	*cf.* 3.2.2

with phonological awareness were described by the participants in the questionnaires and individual interviews in Phase 1 as a combination of drilling sounds and vowels, and using lots of pictures and words. However, no support to struggling learners during Phase 1 and Phase 2 of this study was observed. Participants claimed that there was no time for support.	*cf.* 5.2.2.5 *cf.* 5.2.2.6	*Lots of picutres and sounds. Pictures and letters. Picture and a werds.* SR PD F: "There is no time for support." SB PA F: "We don't get time."	Vygotsky, (1978) *cf.* 3.2.3 Schunk (2008) *cf.* 3.5.1.2 Snow *et al*. (2005) *cf.* 3.5.1.2 Johnson and Roseman, (2003); Gillon (2004); Siegel (2004); Konza (2006); Brown (2007); Passy (2007); Schuele and Boudreau (2008)
Participants' perceptions of the reason why learners struggle with phonological awareness skills were mainly contributed to learners not being exposed to hearing sufficient English at home	*cf.* 5.2.3.1 *cf.* 5.2.3.3	SR PD Q: *They don't hear it at home. Their parents don't even know or go to school.*	*cf.* 2.4.1 Murtin (2013) *cf.* 2.4.5 Pflepson (2011); O'Connor and Gieger (2009)
Although this was observed participants	*cf. 5.2.3.1*	SB PB Q: *It is not their first/home*	*cf.* 2.4.3 Ebersohn *et al*.

did not mention that ineffective teaching strategies could also be a possible reason why learners struggle with phonological awareness	*cf.* 5.2.3.3	*language. Parents are mostly illiterate and can't support them - Most do not have access to the media newspapers, magazines and radios – only listens to music.*	(2014); De Jager and Evans, (2013) and Howie, (2007) *cf.* 3.2.3 Schunk (2008) *cf.* 3.5.1.2 Passy (2007)
Participants reiterated their need for further training and support with regard to teaching phonological awareness In Phase 2. After the training participants concurred they understood what and how to teach phonological awareness as well as what activities to employ. They asserted the training assisted them and had a positive impact on their teaching of phonological awareness	*cf.* 5.2.3.2 *cf.* 5.2.3.3	SB PA Q: *We need training. We need exactly material that can help us to make easy for them.* SR PD Q: *Teachers need more training.* SR PC F: *"We understand everything now."* SB PB F: *"You really helped us a lot."*	*cf.* 3.5.1.1 McCutchen *et al*. (2002); Chessman *et al*. (2009); Spear-Swerling *et al*. (2004) *cf.* 3.9 Engelbrecht (2006) Wessels (2011)

In order to operationalise the above primary research question the following questions were asked:

7.2.1.1 What is the language in education scenario in South Africa?

South Africa has 11 official languages and this poses a huge challenge to ensure that all of them are treated equally as a LoLT (*cf.* 2.2.1). Currently, English and Afrikaans still take precedence above the other official languages as LoLT (*cf.* 2.2.1). Although mother tongue education is preferable to ensure academic achievement and success of learners, this ideal scenario has not yet materialised in South Africa in spite of the government's efforts (*cf.* 2.2.5.1). Since English seems to be predominantly chosen as the LoLT by schools from Grade 4 onwards, the DBE regarded it as important to make English as EFAL compulsory from Grade 1 in order to make the transition from a Mother Tongue LoLT to an English LoLT easier (DBE, 2011a) (*cf.* 2.2.3) However, this study revealed that the participants in the Grade 1, 2 and 3 ESL (EFAL in CAPS) classrooms do not have adequate knowledge or skills to teach phonological awareness skills in English. This could result in these learners most likely experiencing difficulties with reading and learning in English (as LoLT) in Grade 4 onwards. My literature review affirmed that over the past twenty years, studies found that the sudden transferal from Mother Tongue LoLT in the FP to a second language LoLT in Grade 4 has resulted in poor academic performance (Patterson, 2008; Keeves & Darmawan, 2007; Heugh, 2007; Ball, 2010). It is therefore essential that all knowledge and skills (including phonological awareness), important for attaining a good foundation for learning in a language, is established in the Foundation Phase. Issues such as the participants' own limited English language proficiency (*cf.* 5.2.1.1; 5.2.1.2), limited exposure to English at home (*cf.* 5.2.3.1), inadequate training (*cf.* 5.2.3.2) to teach and support learners experiencing language barriers, overcrowded classrooms (*cf.* 5.2.4.2; 5.2.2.6) and limited resources (*cf.* 5.2.2.1) aggravate the language in education scenario.

7.2.1.2 What is phonological awareness?

The most widely accepted definitions of phonological awareness can be defined as the study of language and the awareness of knowing that spoken words are made up of sounds (Siegel, 2004). It is a broad term that refers to the ability to focus on the sounds of speech and the several ways sounds function in words, (Manning & Kato, 2006). Schuele and Boudreau (2008) describe phonological awareness as the ability to analyse, make judgments about or manipulate sounds in spoken words. It can be further defined as a person's awareness of the phonological structure of his or her own

language. It is more auditory as it focuses on the learner's awareness of the sounds that letters make as well as the sound that they hear in the words (Siegel, 2008) (*cf.* 3.3).

In Phase 1 of the research, participants appeared to have an inadequate understanding of phonological awareness. They provided irrelevant answers to the definitions and kept replacing phonics with phonological awareness (*cf.* 5.2.1.1). This can be attributed to their own limited English proficiency or because they probably did not have the knowledge (*cf.* 5.2.1.1). However, after the training and support during the implementation of the support programme, there was a clear indication that their knowledge had improved and they understood what phonological awareness is and why it is important to teach it accurately (*cf.* 5.2.1.2).

7.2.1.3 What does teaching phonological awareness in English as a second language entail?

Teaching phonological awareness in ESL entails several challenges (Konza, 2006). Rote learning was employed regularly by the participants of this study, where learners tried to learn English by parroting everything the educator says. This impedes learning the meaning of language (Hayes, 2005) (*cf.* 2.3.1). Since the participants and learners had different mother tongues than English code-switching (CS) was observed as a frequent occurrence in this study (*cf.* 5.2.2.1; 5.2.2.6). When educators lack proficiency in English, CS could result in learners using words or phrases not always used or pronounced correctly (Haynes, 2005) (*cf.* 2.3.1). Nel and Muller (2010) found that learners make phonological errors when ESL educators teach sound, intonation and pronunciation and language usage erroneously (*cf.* 2.4.3). Fossilizing incorrect pronunciation and language patterns in ESL learners must be avoided and a solid foundation on which learners build their language skills should be provided in order for them to develop as proficient ESL speakers (Wallace Nilsson, 2011) (*cf.* 3.5.1.2).

The participants own limited language proficiency in English was noted from the beginning of the study. This seemed to add to them struggling to answer the questions in the questionnaire and interviews (*cf.* 5.2.1.1). However, after the training workshop, and during the implementation of the support programme, the pronunciation of English short vowels and alphabet sounds were observed to have improved (*cf.* 5.2.2.6), which also impacted positively on their teaching of phonological awareness. This is a good

indication that appropriate training and follow-up support can have a constructive effect to enhance quality teaching.

As phonological awareness involves sound and not print, Siegel (2004) asserts that teaching of phonological awareness should be more verbal and aural (*cf.* 3.5.1.2). Konza (2006) affirms that phonological awareness should be taught by using a literacy programme that includes language development and comprehension activities (*cf.* 3.5.1.2). Every step of phonological awareness needs effective planning and teaching (Passy, 2007) (*cf.* 3.5.1.2) and phonological awareness skills need to be taught progressively from the most basic skill to the most advanced (Moats & Tolman, 2009) (*cf.* 3.3). Prior to the training workshop, participants taught phonics as phonological awareness (*cf.* 5.2.2.1). Lessons comprised of handing out worksheets for learners to complete and no phonological awareness aural activities were employed (*cf.* 5.2.2.1; 5.2.2.5). A reason for the phonics instruction could be due to the errors in the CAPS EFAL document. Participants rely on the CAPS document as a guideline but the document uses the terminology; phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics interchangeable and incorrectly at times (*cf.* 5.2.5.4). Participants also criticised CAPS for confusing them and not providing sufficient and explicit guidelines for teaching phonological awareness (*cf.* 5.2.4.1).

7.2.1.4 Why is phonological awareness important for learning to read?

Participants in this study displayed adequate knowledge and understanding of skills needed to read as indicated in the questionnaire and interview in Phase 1 (*cf.* 5.2.2.3). However, no phonological awareness skills imperative to learning to read such as rhyming words, alliteration and syllabification were observed being taught in observations during Phase 1 (*cf.* 5.2.2.6). Phonological awareness is shown to be the most important precursor in developing reading ability and is important for the transfer from spoken language to written language (Gillon, 2004). Research has shown that focus on intensifying and establishing phonological awareness skills at an early age, leads to better reading performance (De Sousa & Broom, 2011; Zhang & McBride-Chang, 2010; Mahdavi, Lewis & Menzies. 2008; Wood, 2006; Hogan *et al*., 2005; Hatcher *et al*., 2004; Bryant, 2002; Snowling, 2001) (*cf.* 3.5). Reading depends mostly on phonological decoding, making phonological awareness imperative (*cf.* 3.5). Following the training workshop and during the implementation of the support

programme, participants used rhyming words and alliteration in lessons successfully but teaching syllabification remained challenging for participants (*cf.* 5.2.2.6).

7.2.1.5 How equipped are educators to teach phonological awareness?

At the start of this study prior to training, it emerged that the participants lacked knowledge and skills to adequately teach phonological awareness (*cf.* 5.2.2.1; 5.2.2.6). As stated in 7.2.1.3 they predominantly depended on rote learning. Several other studies revealed that many educators do not have the necessary knowledge or skills to teach phonological awareness effectively (McCutchen *et al*., 2002; Chessman *et al*., 2009) (*cf.* 3.5.1.1). However, after the training workshop and implementing the support programme, they asserted that they now understood what phonological awareness entails as well as feeling better equipped to teach phonological awareness (*cf.* 5.2.1.1; 5.2.1.2). This affirms that training, support and having an appropriate guideline at hand for educators need to be regarded as a critical catalyst in preventing learners from experiencing language barriers and consequently not achieving academically.

7.2.1.6 How equipped are educators to assess phonological awareness?

Participants' knowledge of what and how to assess phonological awareness appeared as inadequate in Phase 1. They were inclined to only give learners spelling tests or ask them to fill in the missing letters on worksheets during the phonological awareness lessons (*cf.* 5.2.2.2; 5.2.2.6). Participants felt uncertain of what and how to assess phonological awareness. Assessing phonics seemed an easier form of assessment even after the training workshop in Phase 2 as learners were still given worksheets to complete instead of employing auditory assessments (*cf.* 5.2.2.2; 5.2.2.6). Although participants had been trained on how to utilise suitable assessment strategies and tools for phonological awareness, they could not show evidence of appropriate assessment during Phase 2 (*cf.* 5.2.2.2; 5.2.2.6). Findings from the literature review reveal assessment in general seems to be challenging for many educators, because they grapple with interpreting assessment polices, what is expected to be assessed, assessment planning, implementation of assessment, the use of a variety of methods in assessment as well as the time requirements for assessment (Lumadi, 2013). Participants in this study underestimated the importance of assessment (*cf.* 5.2.2.2) as

assessment allows educators to not only identify learners' delays in phonological awareness but what educators should reteach (Gillon, 2004), (*cf.* 3.4.3).

7.2.1.7 What is needed to improve phonological awareness teaching and learning in ESL?

Throughout the data collection it was emphasised by the participants and observed by me that they need thorough training, constructive in-service support as well as a support programme to help them understand what phonological awareness entails as well as how to teach it (*cf.* 5.2.2.1; 5.2.2.3). Although the participants did say that the DBE are doing workshops for FP educators they could not recall (*cf.* 5.2.3.2) workshops explicitly focusing on phonological awareness. The support from the DBE also seemed to be restricted to scrutinizing files (*cf.* 5.2.5.1; 5.2.5.3). Based on the findings in Phase 1, I designed a support programme, trained the educators on how to implement it and then supplied in-service support, while continuously listening to the educators' needs. All of these activities as a collective support action seemed to make a positive difference in enabling these participants to understand and teach phonological awareness better. It is therefore important that this is taken note of by the DBE. Regular visits to schools by the DBE, with the intention of providing guidance and not restricting visits to scrutinizing preparation files and learners' workbooks, will offer a consistent and more productive result in improving teaching skills and consequently learners academic progress (*cf.* 5.2.5.1) (*cf.* 7.4.1).

After an analysis of the CAPS (EFAL) documentation, and other DBE supportive learning material (*cf.* 5.2.5.4) for teaching ESL, it was evident that phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics, as terminology, are used interchangeably and were therefore confusing the participants (*cf.* 5.2.1.1). It is consequently essential that all policy as well as supportive documents should be reviewed. All relevant concepts need to be defined correctly, the correct sequence of teaching phonological awareness must be systematically indicated and sufficient examples of phonological awareness teaching and assessment activities ought to be given. This study and the consequent developed support programme could provide valuable assistance for this.

7.3 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The results of this research cannot be generalised and are limited to this study only. As it was a qualitative study, the purpose was to explore and understand a specific phenomenon namely knowledge, perceptions, and skills of ESL Foundation Phase educators, in two purposefully selected schools, as determinants for developing a support programme to improve their phonological awareness teaching skills.

There were five participants in this study, from two rural schools in Hartbeespoort in North West Province and employed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). This size sample is a limitation, as they do not necessarily represent all classrooms in South Africa. However, the depth of this study together with the findings arising from it could facilitate future research in the field of educator knowledge, perceptions and skills regarding phonological awareness.

Various implications exist for different stakeholders.

7.4 IMPLICATIONS OF RESULTS

The results of this study can have implications for different stakeholders in education such as the DBE, educator training institutions and schools.

7.4.1 Department of Basic Education

The document analysis on the CAPS for EFAL revealed that phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics are used interchangeably as one concept. Participants also expressed phonological awareness teaching and assessment activities in support documents provided by the DBE do not flow and were regarded as confusing to them. Explicit explanations of phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics, should therefore be provided in departmental documentation. Sufficient examples of phonological awareness teaching and assessment activities for every stage of phonological awareness ought to be provided in sequence as participants felt they do not know where to start or how to teach it (*cf.* 7.2.1.5).

The DBE should set measures in place to improve educator training for pre-school educators and Foundation Phase educators regarding phonological awareness teaching, assessment and support. Nevertheless, only training of educators in itself will

be insufficient. Support systems within the DBE need to be established to support and enhance educators' understanding and teaching of phonological awareness through regular visits to the schools consisting more of guidance for educators, rather than scrutinising educator preparation files and learner workbooks (*cf*. 5.2.5). Routine feedback sessions between educators and the DBE regarding loopholes and queries experienced in practice should be arranged by the DBE. Since assessment appears to be a critical issue that the participants struggled with, it needs urgent attention (*cf.* 5.2.2.2; 5.2.2.6).

Referring back to Passy (2007) every step of phonological awareness needs effective planning and teaching (*cf*. 3.5.1.2) making the need for educator training and effective DBE support essential.

Recommendations for support of FP educators

The following recommendations for the DBE will contribute to appropriate teaching of phonological awareness in the Foundation Phase with English as FAL (*cf.* 7.4.1).

- The DBE should explicitly explain phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics in support documents;
- Documents should systematically indicate the correct sequence of teaching phonological awareness;
- Sufficient examples of phonological awareness teaching and assessment activities should be provided;
- Phonological awareness and the importance thereof should be reiterated in documentation provided by the DBE in all eleven languages to benefit effective acquisition of phonological awareness as the building block for reading ability;
- Regular visits to schools with the intention of providing guidance and not restricting visits to scrutinizing preparation files and learners' workbooks; and
- Arranging continuous feedback sessions with educators to determine loopholes and confusion experienced by educators in practice.

7.4.2 Educator training institutions

The results of this study have implications for institutions offering education for educators. Education programmes for educators need to remain informed and updated on current research. This study indicates the need for educators to be trained regarding knowledge of phonological awareness, their teaching and assessment thereof. The support programme designed by the researcher could be used in educator training curriculums to indicate the sequence of phonological awareness teaching together with suitable activities to implement for each stage of phonological awareness.

There are further implications for schools.

7.4.3 Schools

Schools need to ensure sufficient time is spent on English FAL teaching. Time guidelines are stipulated in CAPS for EFAL teaching but school principals need to ensure that time to teach EFAL is utilised to the maximum. Educators ought to be adequately prepared which the support programme attempted to do. Principals and relevant management staff also have the responsibility to ensure their Foundation Phase staff implement EFAL lessons daily and effectively.

Contributions of the study will now be discussed.

7.5 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

Some key issues have been highlighted by this study. This includes:

- Foundation Phase educators need to be supported in improving their English proficiency; specifically with regard to pronunciation and the continuous use of code switching. In this study it appeared to have a crucial impact on their incorrect teaching of phonological awareness and other related language skills in English. As has been found with other studies (Shintani; 2013; Littlewood & Yu, 2009; Probyn, 2009;) this can contribute to learners not having a good academic language proficiency (CALP) (*cf.* 2.3) to learn in English from Grade 4;
- Curriculum documents and relevant support documents need to be reviewed in ensuring that issues pertaining to phonological awareness are corrected. This study identified limitations regarding phonological awareness in documentation provided

by the DBE and suggested improvements to the documentation. All support documents need to explicitly differentiate between phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics. This is imperative as an introduction to phonics, which is written work, before introduction and reinforcement of phonological awareness, which is aural and oral work, could impede development of reading skills of learners (Gillon, 2.4) (cf 3.3.1). Additionally, documentation of the DBE fail to display the correct sequence of phonological awareness teaching which is imperative as these skills form the foundation for development of phonemic awareness which leads to phonics skills (Gillon, 2004) (cf 3.3.1).

- Assessment of phonological awareness was identified in this study as an area of concern. Educators need to assess phonological awareness accurately and regularly to identify learners who are in need of further phonological awareness support. If learners with phonological awareness difficulties are identified early in the Foundation Phase, sufficient support can be provided to these learners to assist their acquisition of phonological awareness skills that will provide solid building blocks for reading ability (Gillon, 2004), (*cf.* 3.4.1; 3.4.2).
- Foundation Phase educators need effective pre-service as well as in-service training and continuous constructive support to teach phonological awareness as well as support learners who experience barriers with regard to phonological awareness; and
- The requirement of policy documents but more essentially the contexts of schools and learners need to be taken into consideration when choosing learning support material.

However, the main contribution of this study is the development and implementation of an educator training workshop on phonological awareness as well as the design, development and implementation of a support programme with regard to teaching phonological awareness in Grades 1, 2 and 3 for English as FAL.

The support programme is based on research findings and presents an explicit and systematic sequence for teaching phonological awareness coupled with carefully selected practical and relevant activities to implement when teaching phonological awareness. This support programme therefore enhances educator preparedness to

teach phonological awareness with fun activities actively involving learners. The researcher considered the requests of the participants who required activities utilised in English schools and the DBE support material and not activities only relevant to the Setswana culture or the living contexts of the learners *per se*. The participants did not want me to include traditional Setswana stories or vocabulary pertaining to their culture alone in the programme, but rather an array of stories and activities relevant to a more Western English culture.

Not only does the support programme explicitly depict sequence of stages of phonological awareness development but it could save educators preparation time as a sufficiency of teaching activities have been provided to teach phonological awareness. Although the content and activities have been developed to address the needs of the study's sample it has been designed in such a way that activities can be adapted for other contexts also. The value of this for other contexts, however, needs to be further explored.

The support programme can also be easily integrated into all four components of literacy namely, listening and speaking, phonological awareness (phonics as indicated in CAPS), reading and writing (DBE, 2011).

Recommendations for future research are made below.

7.6 FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research is recommended:

- To determine the extent of confusion among a wider population of FP educators regarding phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and phonics. This is necessary to rule out any assumption that confusion lies with English Second Language educators in underprivileged rural schools only.
- The impact of incorrect teaching of phonological awareness on literacy development for learners who learn English as a second language (CAPS EFAL) and then have to transfer to English as LoLT in Grade 4;
- The kinds of effects of FP educators' limited proficiency in English, when teaching phonological awareness, on learners' acquisition of literacy skills;

- The influence of code switching on the teaching of phonological awareness; and
- The effectiveness of the support programme in more and different school contexts.

7.7 CONCLUSION

This study accentuated the necessity of equipping Foundation Phase ESL educators with sufficient knowledge and skills to teach and assess phonological awareness in the Foundation Phase effectively. Phonological awareness lessons should be in the form of play with developmentally appropriate phonological awareness activities for learners.

> "Educators play a key role in promoting phonological awareness as they know that its development will contribute to a child's successful launch into literacy and deserves thoughtful and careful attention."

(Yopp & Yopp, 2009: 9)

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