THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BAND AT SCHOOLS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

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The impact of English as medium of instruction on the academic performance of second language learners in the Further Education and Training band at schools in KwaZulu-Natal

by

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Thesis in compliance with the requirements for the Doctor's degree in Technology: Language Practice in the Department of Media, Language and Communication, Durban University of Technology

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other institution.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

Approved for final submission:

Promoter: Professor D.D. Pratt, DTech Language Practice

Signed: _____   Date: _____

ABSTRACT

This study, in adopting a phenomenological approach, provides an overview of the contextual realities surrounding language choice and usage as it impacts on the academic performance of English second language learners. There have been concerns that the majority of learners with indigenous mother tongues can be seen to fare badly in a post liberation educational system in which English or Afrikaans is still used as medium of instruction. The focus of this study was therefore the impact of English as the medium of instruction on the academic performance of English second language learners. Using a mixed method approach, through a case study, data from questionnaires, interviews and observations were analysed using various statistical packages and the findings were reported on. It was established that it was not so much the language per se which had a negative impact on the academic performance of English second language learners: it was rather the efficacy of usage of the chosen language and other periphery issues in the formal environment, such as lack of interactions with target language speakers, code-switching, and teacher competence, which resulted in the poor academic performance of English second language learners. Furthermore, it was also established that the informal environment, consisting of learners' culture and traditions, family educational qualifications, absenteeism and appropriate resources at home and community libraries, which also had a negative impact on academic performance. It was therefore recommended that, amongst other things, the Language in Education Policy be amended to provide for more opportunities for learner interaction with the target language. Furthermore, given that the efficacy of education is contingent upon the competence of the teachers, relevant skills and competencies among teachers should be developed to enhance their performance in class. It was also found that code-switching was counterproductive to learning the target language, thus holding back ESL learners' acquisition of content knowledge. As such, code-switching should be used very restrictively, if at all, in the Further Education and Training phase. It was also recommended that necessary lexicons and registers of the indigenous languages be developed sufficiently so that these are worthy of use as media of instruction, without necessarily being seen as a replacement of English as medium of instruction. There should also be greater involvement of all stakeholders in the choice of and availability of resources which are relevant to the context of learners. Other issues requiring intervention from a broader stakeholder involvement include

interdepartmental integration to alleviate poverty, and provision of transport so that learners might report regularly and timeously to school, thus reducing absenteeism. The solution to improving learner academic performance requires concerted and co-ordinated inter-governmental, community and other stakeholders' effort and the necessary will of the government to ensure that learners receive quality education.

PREFACE

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, RAJENDREN SABAPATHY DORASAMY, declare that this thesis is my own work and all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. Part of this study, however, has previously been used in conference presentations, as listed below.

PRIOR PAPERS PRESENTED ARISING FROM THIS STUDY

Dorasamy, R.S. (2010). Interaction, motivation and attitude – a key to ESL teaching. In proceedings of the *7th International Conference 2010, Pathways in EIL: Explorations and Innovations in Teaching and Research*, Bangkok, Thailand, 1 - 3 December 2010.

ABSTRACTS ACCEPTED ARISING FROM THIS STUDY

Dorasamy, R.S. (2010). Reading - a recipe for success or failure for second language learners. Abstract accepted for the *2nd Baltic Sea Conference 2010, & Added Language Literacy*, Abo/Turku, Finland, 11 – 13 August 2010.

Dorasamy, R.S. (2011). Interaction, code-switching and motivation – key to ESL teaching. Abstract accepted for the *1st Teaching of English as a Second Language: One Special Topic (TESL 1 Stop) National Seminar: Roadmaps to Success for English Language Teacher Education*, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia, 10 December 2011.

Dorasamy, R.S. (2011). Critical period hypothesis: Interaction, code-switching, motivation – key to ESL learning. Abstract accepted for the *3rd International Conference on Language and Communication: Interdisciplinary Discourses in Language and Communication*, Philippines, 15 - 16 December 2011.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my late father, Mr Sabapathy Dorasamy, who inspired in me the pursuit of excellence and the desire to learn more.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

BICS   -   Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

CALP -   Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CPH   -   Critical Period Hypothesis

ESL   -   English Second Language

FET   -   Further Education and Training

LAD   -   Language acquisition device

L1   -   First/Target language – in the context of this study – English

L2   -   Language 2 – in the context of this study - isiZulu

MoI   -   Medium of Instruction

SL   -   Second language

SLA   -   Second language acquisition

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CHAPTER ONE: RATIONALE AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter portrays the scene, both historically and contextually, of the discourse of this study. Democratization of South Africa (SA) ushered in huge challenges, most of which focused on the emancipation of the citizenry. Changes in the education milieu for the provision of education to the highest standard were seen to be the primacy of politics after the fall of apartheid (Jansen & Christie, 1999). As education is mediated through language, various acts were promulgated to promote African languages, in spite of the marginalised status of many of these languages. However, most schools opted for English as the medium of instruction. This study, within the parameters outlined, will therefore investigate the impact of English as medium of instruction on learner performance. Chapter 1 provides justification for an in-depth study of this particular phenomenon. It outlines the background, purpose, problem statement, research aims and objectives, critical questions, elucidation of terms and de-limitations. This chapter concludes with its limitations and overview of subsequent Chapters.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This study seeks to investigate the impact of English used as medium of instruction (MoI) on the academic performance of English Second Language (ESL) learners; specifically isiZulu-speaking learners. This emanates from a feature of post-liberation education in South Africa where the majority of learners with indigenous mother tongues (e.g. isiZulu) are seen to fare badly in an educational system in which English or Afrikaans is used as MoI. This is corroborated in University of Witwatersrand's report on Language Policy, where it was reported that "millions of South Africans do not complete their schooling, partly because they are taught and assessed through the medium of English or Afrikaans and have no access to concepts in a language that they fully understand" (Witwatersrand, 2003). However, most School Governing Bodies (SGBs) in South Africa through democratic processes as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 Sec 29 (1), National Education Policy Act, Act 27 of

1996 and the South African Schools' Act, 84 of 1996, Sec (6) (2), opted for English as the MoI without any consideration as to whether considering their students were able to learn effectively though of English medium (Din Yan, 2003, p. 4). Such a decision appear to be justified in terms of the need for English language skills for either local or international career advancement (Witwatersrand, 2003, p. 3) which is why English is generally regarded internationally as the "power language" of commerce, industry and education. Apart from the lack of suitably qualified teachers, students avoided studying indigenous languages at tertiary level because they feared that these qualifications would not lead to job opportunities (Ramphele, 2009, p. 19). In a sense, then, most South Africans with indigenous mother tongues have been "democratically subdued" into using English as MoI. Congruent with the dictates of multilingualism in the Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS), with high recognition of African languages, emphasised that learners should reach high levels of proficiency in at least two languages. Yet IsiZulu instruction takes place only in foundation phase; thereafter English is used. To exacerbate the problem, 80% of teachers in this situation are not fluent in English themselves (EMIS & Research Strategy Policy Development, 2005). This could have a direct bearing on the quality of teaching languages, especially English, as has been articulated by Roper and Koekemoer, who complained that the quality of language teaching in high schools had dropped (Ferreira, 2008).

In spite of the fact that the post democracy era in South Africa ushered in educational reform favouring emancipation of the masses, matric results are generally poor (Gambu, 1999; Ramphele, 2009). Most poignant of the differing reasons for poor performance, was the ANC's slogan and strategy of "liberation before education'" (Gambu, 1999, p. 2). This strategy is manifest by concerns raised by markers and principals who were pressured to inflate pass rates (i.e. through marking and moderation), which, Ramphele asserts, could surpass in magnitude the apartheid information scandal in "socially engineering the continuation of inequalities that leave the majority of black poor children behind" (Ramphele, 2009, p. 19). That very little has changed is evidenced by the fact that 80 % of the poor young citizens of South Africa are failing under the Outcomes Based Education system (Ramphele, 2009, p. 19; Smook, 2008). The salient point raised by Gambu (1999) was that the causes of the poor results would not be

determined without proper investigation. Delivery failure of curriculum has been attributed to many different factors, for example:

- OBE (Gambu, 1999; Smook, 2008)
- Teacher competence (Dorasamy, 2005; Msimango, 2008)
- Infrastructure and Resources (Godden, 1996; Msimango, 2008)
- Administration (Godden, 1996; Msimango, 2008)
- English as MoI (EMIS & Research Strategy Policy Development, 2005)

While all of the above obviously impact on student performance, the MoI is considered a key factor in academic performance, because concepts are grasped and articulated mainly by means of language. Academic performance is performance of a learner which is "adjudged by the examinee and some other significant as falling below an expected standard" (Asikhia, 2010, p. 231). Lofthouse argued that "all schools exist to provide pupils with quality learning experiences" through the formulation and implementation of sound curriculum strategies (in Bush & West-Burnham, 1994, p. 125). Curriculum strategies are dependent on curriculum effectiveness; the curriculum can be effective only if appropriately interacting with teachers' competence to facilitate learner and teacher performance (Dorasamy, 2005). Thus, one of the key factors likely to influence curriculum effectiveness in South Africa is the teachers' and learners' subject content knowledge; which happens to be facilitated through a language used as MoI.

Language forms the basis for communication. De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2005, p. 28), argue that concepts are labelled with words allowing us to communicate with others. The process of categorising and labelling words specific to a language is called "conceptualisation" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 28). It is implicit in the contention of De Vos et al. (2005) that people of different linguistic groups might well conceptualise the same phenomenon differently, leading to the assigning of different words to the same phenomenon. Thus it can be argued that some misunderstandings are attributable to "cultural differences that assign different words to different things or assign different meaning to similar phrases" (Gerson, 2003, p. 1).

If true, then by extrapolation, one can see the inherent barrier to communication between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, is linguistic. This was also raised by Deumert (2004, p. 1) arguing that workers from rural areas face difficultires with employment and social service access in cities due, in large part, to language barrier because migrants have "minimal contact with English". Language barrier can therefore be defined as primarily indicating the difficulties faced when people, who have no language in common or due to cultural differences, attempt to communicate with each other, (Gerson, 2003, p. 1). Therefore, it stands to reason that language and cultural barriers negate effective "communication and create complications in the workplace" (Morris, 2002, p. 3) resulting in little communication unless one or both parties learn a new language, requiring investment of time and effort.

In South Africa most schools have chosen their MoI to be English despite 80% of teachers having been found not to be fluent in English (EMIS & Research Strategy Policy Development, 2005). This challenge is somewhat mitigated by provisions in the curriculum allowing for code-switching to mother tongue to facilitate learning. However, it is argued that SLA must achieve the same flexibility and creativity as that possessed by the native speaker to "attain sufficient bilingual competence to manage oral code-switching" (Witwatersrand, 2003). On the other hand, attaining equivalent proficiency in any indigenous language with English, for code-switching or for use as MoI may prove a challenge. This is because historically disadvantaged South African indigenous languages, lacking necessary lexicon and registers required for conceptual work, have not been used in academic settings nor has the language been developed to meet the needs of such communication (Witwatersrand, 2003). Oxford universal dictionary (1981:405) defines lexicon as "a dictionary of certain languages" and Thorne (2001) proposes that the "analysis of context is broken down into field, tenor, and mode, which collectively constitutes the register".

This raises an interesting issue in terms of ESL learners - both teachers and learners - and the language in which they conceptualize their experiences. How does conceptualisation in a language other than English, e.g. isiZulu, act as a barrier to communication when using English as MoI? At the General Education and Training (GET) level dealing with reception year to grade 9, the concepts developed; albeit in different languages (e.g. isiZulu) could easily be bridged as a result of directly

observable similarities of experiences and perceptions, i.e. thinking at the concrete level. Translation into English in GET phase may not pose too challenging due to the concrete nature of the curriculum. However, higher order thinking where "concepts are combined into higher-order concepts" called "constructs" (De Vos et. al. 2005, p. 29) poses a major challenge to ESL learners in the Further Education and Training (FET) band where the curriculum demands more abstract thinking. These combinations of concepts into constructs take place as "more abstract concepts" (De Vos et. al. 2005, p. 29). Constructs differ slightly where they have "added meaning of having been deliberately and consciously invented or adopted (from ordinary language) for a special scientific purpose" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 29). The ability for ESL to think critically and comprehend at an abstract level, when immersed late into English, poses a major challenge.

This was shown by Din Yan (2003, p. 3) reporting that English-medium Chinese students were weak in understating abstract concepts, experienced difficulty in discriminating between and using reflexively scientific terms and knowledge. This raises questions on the efficacy of language policies which may cause students who are not fluent to "drop out" of school, and such policies may prove to have more negative than positive results for the nation (Katie, n.d.). However, undue consideration to emancipation of the masses may lead to global isolation because of the importance of English language skills for local and international career advancement (Witwatersrand, 2003). Furthermore, the promotion of English can result in a diminution of literature written in indigenous languages, as educated people have learned to write in non-native languages (Katie, n.d.). At the same time, one must be cautious of "providers and evaluators of poorly conceived early transition to English … second language programmes in African countries" (Chisholm, 2006, 6). The challenges of English as MoI to ESL is not uniquely South African as is evidenced in China where "English-medium students were handicapped in science learning by their low levels of English proficiency" (Din Yan, 2003, p. 3).

It is not clear exactly how the MoI affects academic progress, and what other factors are involved. This study, then, will investigate how/why English used as MoI affects academic progress at secondary level, to establish what is working and what is not working for stakeholders, and suggest possible solutions.

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research is to explore how/why English as the MoI affects the performance of ESL, especially isiZulu learners, at schools in the FET band in KwaZulu-Natal. Furthermore, this research envisages exploring and suggesting alternative approaches which may be initiated in improving performance of ESL while still using English as the MoI.

1.4   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A strong home language foundation can operate as a support in learning a SL, thus making the learning process easier and faster (Hendricks, n.d.; Van Tonder, 1997). Moreover, as Van Tonder (1997) argues, most academic learning taking place in the first language can be transferred to the SL relatively easily if a strong foundation has been provided in the home language. However, during the apartheid era, only two official languages were used as MoI (i.e. English and Afrikaans) in all spheres of schooling including tertiary level. This meant that indigenous languages were denied any developmental opportunities, resulting in these languages not having the capacity for academic discourse (Van Tonder, 1997; Witwatersrand, 2003). This tendency seems to have been perpetuated in the democratic South Africa. Janks highlights the paradoxical relationship which exists between English and the official African languages where the education system which gives learners access to the power language, English, while at the same time failing to consider the consequent marginalisation of African languages (Janks, 2001:6, in Hendricks, n.d.). This disempowerment is manifested in the results of an international reading literacy study, conducted in all 11 official languages of South Africa, where South African grade 4 and 5 learners, were reported to have achieved the worst mean performance scores (Howie & Van Staden, 2008; Long & Zimmerman, 2008). Furthermore, large numbers of South African learners are failing grades repeatedly or are leaving school reportedly because of poor basic learning skills or inadequate language skills (Howie & Van Staden, 2008). The paradox of language acquisition is that parents have a major role to play in selecting the MoI, as contained in the South African Schools Act (Act no 84 of 1996). However, Biseth (2006) argues that there appears a discord between policy and practice in language policy where on paper parents decide on the MoI but it is mostly the influence of teachers who decide what is good for the child. Therefore, according to

Biseth (2006) a contributing factor to the apparent poor performance of indigenous mother tongue learners, where English is the MoI, is the mistaken belief that teaching and learning is taking place through English. There is now evidence which supports the connection between loss of home language and the educational difficulties experienced by many of the learners who use a difficult polyglot SL such as English for learning (Parry, 2006; Van Tonder, 1997).

While the status of indigenous languages depends on their use and development as home languages, the number of learners offering isiZulu at home language (L1) at matriculation has been declining at a faster rate than the number of learners doing isiZulu as additional language (Hendrick, n.d.). This indicates that there has been a decrease in number of children developing written competence in isiZulu in school. Consequently it brings into spotlight the issue as to whether children who have not developed their first nor SL can exploit the advantages of educational opportunities available in a language foreign to them, i.e. English (Van Tonder, 1997). Thus Parry (2006) argued that learners are disempowered because of the language content and the social conventions are foreign to them and therefore very difficult to understand. The challenge is that the majority of learners with indigenous languages (e.g. isiZulu) fare badly in an educational system in which English or Afrikaans is used as MoI. The research problem which will guide this research can be formulated as follows:

What impact does English as medium of instruction have on the academic performance of second language learners at FET band?

1.5   RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.5.1   Research aim

The aim of this research is to explore how and why English used as the MoI affects the academic performance of ESL at schools in the FET band in KwaZulu-Natal. Furthermore, this research envisages exploring and suggesting alternative approaches that may be initiated in improving performance of ESL while still using English as MoI.

1.5.2   Research objectives

The researcher will also strive to meet the following objectives:

- To determine the ESL proficiency of the learners
- To investigate the language background of learners
- To determine the relationship of communicative English within the community and the impact on academic performance of learners
- To determine the various variables within the formal and informal environments that impacts on the academic performance of ESL learners.
- To investigate the various strategies teachers initiated and their efficacy on the academic performance of ESL learners

1.6   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In facilitating the achievement of the specific aims and objectives of this research the study will be guided by the following specific research questions:

(1)   How does English, as a medium of instruction, affect academic performance from the point of view of the following stakeholders:
learners and teachers?

(2)   What do answers to the above suggest about ways of improving ESL performance while still using English as a medium of instruction?

In order to answer these questions, other subsidiary questions arose in the course of the research, namely:

(3)   What are teachers' perceptions on the relationship between the learners' environment and learner performance?

(4)   What are learners' perceptions on the relationship between their environment and performance?

1.7   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.7.1   Orientation

Due to the nature of this study and as exemplified by various authors, a methodological triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, which are inextricably intertwined (De Vos et al., 2005), will be adopted. Within these approaches and utilising a phenomenological inquiry, a snap shot case study will be undertaken. In order to appreciate fully the impact of English as MoI on learner performance, a phenomenological study is considered appropriate as it provides the researcher an avenue to generate a synopsis of the meaning of experiences of a phenomenon, topic or concept for various individuals (Creswell, 1998).

Further, given that a phenomenological approach views the world from a human consciousness point, attempting to understand and interpret how people make sense and give meaning to their everyday lives, a snap shot case study is appropriate at it provides an opportunity to view contexts which are unique and dynamic. Case studies also provide opportunities to report on the complex dynamics of real people's interactions and other factors that enable readers to understand clearly ideas being studied (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2001, p. 181; De Vos et al., 2005, p. 264).

1.7.2   Sampling

While the target population remains high schools using English as MoI, time, human and financial resource constraints restricts this research to a purposive sample of isiZulu learners in 3 schools in the FET band in KZN. All teachers teaching non-language subjects and a non-probability convenience sample of approximately 25 learners per school, was included in the sample.

1.7.3   Data collection and analysis

Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation. Triangulation of data collection methods is considered appropriate as the strength of one method makes up for the shortcomings of others (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2001). Triangulation makes getting a fix on the true location of the

studied phenomenon easier by using different types of sources providing insights about the same events and by observing something from different stances (Cohen et al., 2001; De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, and Delport, 2002, p. 341). Questionnaire data were, using simple and grouped frequency distribution tables, coded and captured using Excel spreadsheets. Interviews and observations were categorised into themes and coded using frequency distribution tables. Using univariate and bivariate analysis, data were analysed and presented in graphical representations. These data was thereafter interpreted to draw conclusions.

1.8   SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study, while it considers factors other than language proficiency impacting on academic performance, is intended to contribute to language policy development in South Africa. It is intended to contribute towards equity in status of all 11 official languages of South Africa transforming to effectiveness and fairness of the system. The ultimate beneficiaries should be the learners, using indigenous languages, to improve their academic performance and occupy their rightful places in academia, socio-political; socio-economic and community at large. This, it is envisaged, is achievable through enhancing both the status and proficiency of indigenous languages equivalent to that of native English proficiency to enhance the constitutionally defining characteristic of being multilingual. This therefore creates an enabling environment for effective code-switching allowing for English as MoI. This is critical if the citizenry of South Africa are to remain, if not improve, their competitiveness internationally. Thus, the relevance of these issues should extend beyond the national boundaries of protectionist theories of South Africa and contribute to valuable insights for education and language policies, for educational effectiveness regionally and internationally (Webb, 2001: 10).

The value of the study - and its original contribution - is thought to lie in the fact that it focuses on the connection between language proficiency on academic performance, whereas other studies tend to focus either on language proficiency or on academic performance. Such studies do not necessarily clarify the connection between the two or other key factors involved. It is also thought that the phenomenological approach used has value in considering the experiences of various stakeholders rather than imposing a position - or educational or linguistic approach - on them.

1.9   DELIMITATIONS

The sample of this research study consists of 3 schools in the FET band situated in the Phoenix North district within the Ethekwini Region in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. The focus of this study is on the proficiency of ESL learners, specifically isiZulu, in English and its impact on their academic performance.

1.10   LIMITATIONS

This research, while being informed and guided by universal norms and standards on English SLA and learning, draws its conclusions from interactions with isiZulu first language speakers who are currently using English as their MoI. Therefore, the findings may not be generalisable to the entire cohort of learners and teachers in South Africa where 11 constitutionally equally recognised official languages exist.

1.11   ELUCIDATION OF TERMS:

1.11.1 Mother tongue (L1)

This term should not be interpreted to mean that it is the language of one's mother but rather the local language spoken by the majority of inhabitants in the local community. Thus for this study, isiZulu will be considered mother tongue for African learners in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. It is presumed to be the major language that a person learned at home and considered first language learned at home in childhood.

1.11.2 Native language

This is a language that a person is as proficient in as a native inhabitant of that language's base country. Thus, for the purposes of this study, the terms mother tongue, mother language and native language will be viewed as synonymous. These will therefore be referred to as first language or L1. A person's 1st language is deemed to be the basis for his/her socio-linguistic identity.

1.11.3 Second language (L2)

This is any language learned in addition to or different from your native language (Singhal, 2011). Second language is consciously acquired and is a long process.

1.11.4 Foreign language

This is a language not spoken by the people of a certain place. It is also a language not spoken in the native country of the person referred to.

1.11.5 Diglossia

Diglossia refers to "a situation where two varieties of a language (or different languages) exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play" (Hendricks, n.d., p. 3).

1.11.6 Cognition

Cognition is generally accepted to mean the process of thought. It refers to mental processes involved in "gaining and comprehension, including thinking, knowing, remembering, judging and problem-solving. These are higher-level functions of the brain and encompass language, imagination, perception and planning" (Cherry, n.d.). It is a faculty of processing of information, applying knowledge and changing preferences. Cognition is considered an abstract property of advanced living organism. It deals particularly with specific mental processes such as comprehension, inferences, decision-making, planning and learning. Recently, advanced cognitive research has been especially focused on the capacities of abstraction, generalization, concretization/specialization and meta-reasoning.

1.11.7 Language attrition

This is a process of earliest language being lost. This happens when young children move, to a new language environment.

1.12   ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

Chapter Two outlines the literature review which provides perspectives on this study. A review of studies on ESL and its impact on learner performance in other countries as

well as in developing countries, such as South Africa is elucidated. This provides the theoretical location of this study.

Chapter Three focuses on methodology, providing motivation for and justification of a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches and the rationale for a once off snap shot case study. It also examines case study as a research tool and its limitations. Detailed description of sampling, research instruments, data collection and data analysis is provided.

Chapters Four and Five outline the bringing together of the qualitative and quantitative data gathered. Findings and interpretations of data pertaining to the formal environments are presented in Chapter Four, whereas Chapter Five presents findings and interpretations of data regarding the informal environments.

Chapter Six concludes this research by presenting a cohesive whole of the entire process entitled "Conclusions and Recommendations". This chapter presents a way forward on the MoI and the rightful place of English in the curriculum and in the socio-economic/political milieu.

1.13   CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on setting the scene for this research in discussing the background and problem statement regarding English as MoI. Attempts to improve learner attainment should not be oblivious to English as MoI being a causal factor. There is a great need to explore transformative models for the selection and use of a particular language as a medium of instruction.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

While other research in South Africa has concentrated on the competence of teachers (Dorasamy, 2005; Msimango, 2008) and on statistical data of English competence of teachers (EMIS & Research Strategy Policy Development, 2005) in using English as MoI, little attention has been invested in studying the impact of English as MoI on learner performance and on the social implications of education. The focus of this study, therefore, is on language, specifically academic performance of ESL learners using English as MoI, discourse and various contributing factors that impact on the academic performance of ESL. Language will be discussed from a poststructuralism perspective as this is embedded in larger socio-political, economic and cultural systems. The following will be discussed: concepts on discourse, theories of SL learning, culture in SL teaching and learning, culture and language, linguistics and its constituent offerings, and English as MoI and its impact on academic performance. A consideration of bilingualism and code-switching in South Africa and its impact on the academic performance of ESL learners will be included.

This chapter, unfolds from an exploration of what constitutes academic performance, what language is and how it affects performance. It proceeds to investigate how policies in a country play a facilitative or restrictive role in promoting language and language instruction for education. The review offers a perspective of the South African context in terms of language policy, language planning and implementation. The focus then narrows down to the province of KwaZulu-Natal where most schools use English as a MoI with SL learners. Here, specifically the impact of English as MoI will be brought under close scrutiny in term of what impact it has on the academic performance of isiZulu learners.

It is hoped that this literature review will achieve the following:
- set the tone for an enquiry on the impact of English as MoI on the academic performance of ESL (isiZulu) learners in KwaZulu-Natal.

- align perspectives for a conceptual platform on which to build the research data collection plan for this study.

- develop appropriate research instruments to be used in this study and

- provide the basis for the data-analysis strategies used (Msimango, 2008, 15).

2.2   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Patton, while acknowledging that the strength of qualitative methods is its inductive inquiry strategy, which entails open-mindedness, argues for an organising image of the phenomena to be investigated, called a conceptual framework (Patton, 2002, in De Vos, Strydom, Fouchè & Delport, 2005, p. 5). It is proposed that the set of ideas may be vague or clearly formulated ideas or theories or frameworks about the nature of the phenomena (De Vos et al., 2005, pp. 34-35). It is thus against this background and from a phenomenological perspective that this study explores concepts such as academic performance, language policy, language, bilingualism, second language acquisition hypotheses/theories and second language models, as represented in fig 2.1.
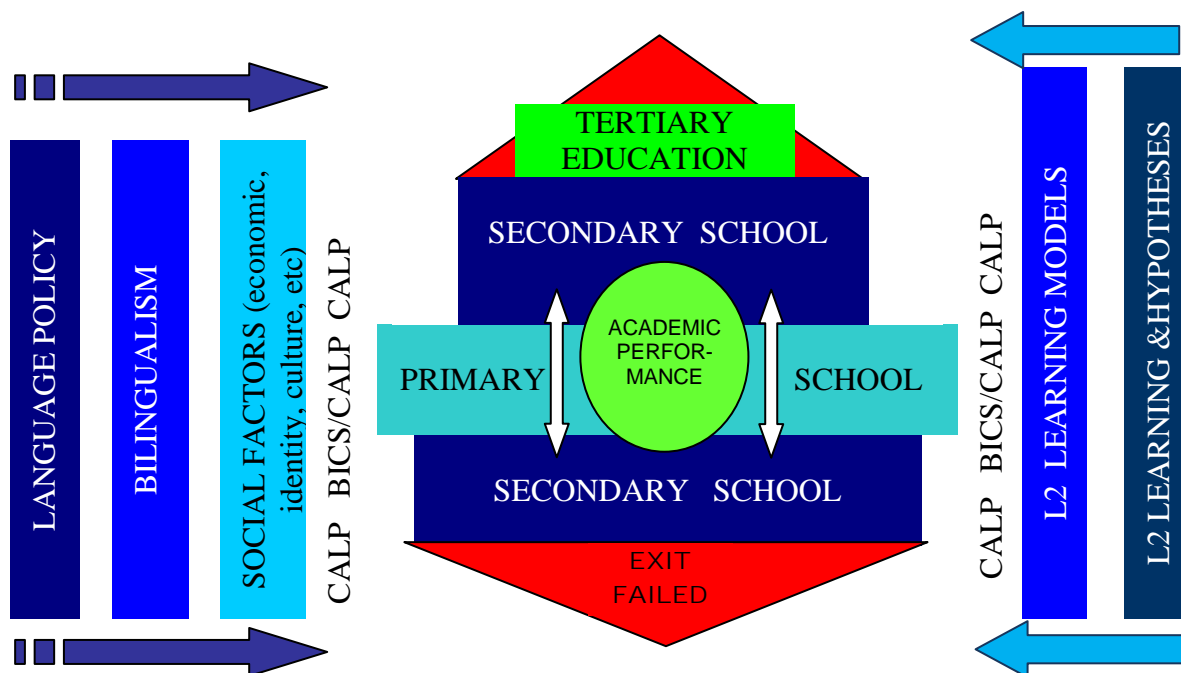
Fig. 2.1   **Researcher's conceptual framework showing factors impacting on academic performance**

Various researchers concerned with language development in respect of academic performance postulate that the better the child's language development, the better his learning progress at school, as tasks remain inseparable from language ability

(Makgalemele, 2005, p. 16). Since most ESL learners in South Africa have English as their MoI, an examination of various SLA hypotheses/theories is essential. Of course, choices of MoI which people make are constrained by language policies which are influenced by discourses on bilingualism or multilingualism in nations with multilingual societies, as is the case in South Africa. There are no paucity of discourses on language and its impact on academic performance of learners but consensus among researchers/authors is difficult. This is because discourses are often shaped by contexts which were relevant at the time of their conceptualisation and may become irrelevant as they progress on the continuum of time, complicated by consequences of struggle (Heugh, Siegrühn, & Plüddemann, 1995; Naicker & Balfour, 2009; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000; Weedon, 1987, p. 24). Thus, over time, discourses on concepts under scrutiny may appear confusing or even become conflated. This review seeks clarity of understanding by exploring these concepts.

2.3   ASSESSING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Academic performance, while related to test scores for grade progression of learners, demands a more academic definition when rethinking discourse on proficiency in a SL which is used as MoI. One of the critics of test scores as measures of learners' academic performance, using reading tests as an example, argues that this does not test reading but rather "test similarity to the test writer" (Edelsky, 1991, p. 143). In other words, the learner may fail for non-conformity to test writers' wants, although the answers may be right from other perspectives. Research findings show that there are no relationships between reading ability (Edelsky, 1991). It has been advocated that test scores do not mean the same thing from one period to another, presumably because test scores improve as learners become familiar with format and context of tests because teachers' focus and materials are geared to the test (Edelsky, 1991, p. 145). For these reasons, it is argued that tests and examinations as they are used today do not adequately assess learners' academic performance. It is argued that various other factors, such as intelligence, aptitude and language proficiency, impact on academic performance in ways which are not necessarily assessed. Therefore Edelsky (1991) offered alternative assessment procedures to establish what she terms a multi-tiered approach whereby both the product and process data should be collected.

Sterns (1983) maintains that learning involves general academic or reasoning ability, which is often referred to as "intelligence", and specific cognitive qualities needed for SLA, referred to as "aptitude" (Ellis, 1985, p. 152). Gardner (1985) and McDonough (in Ellis 1985) define intelligence as a general class of abilities that underlie the ability to master and use a range of academic skills, such as reading, writing, speaking, analysing and understanding utterances and the "ability to solve problems and ability to engage in high level thinking tasks" (Madileng, 2007, p. 10). Language aptitude, on the other hand, is considered as a specific set of learning abilities relating to the acquisition. These authors refer to the capacity rather than the contents of the mind inferring that it is the "ability to learn, rather than the actual knowledge that is supposedly measured by intelligence tests" (Madileng, 2007, p. 10). It is hypothesised that a positive correlation exists between intelligence and achievement in the SL, as intelligence is an important factor determining how well and how quickly individuals understand a learning task or an explanation (Madileng, 2007, p. 11). Larson-Freeman & Long (1991, p. 169) also share the notion that ordinary tests do not aptly assess learner performance as they do not necessarily measure innate aptitude for communication in the SL.

It has been argued that critical literacy, concerned with teaching learners understanding and management of the "relationship between language and power", is required for successful academic performance (Janks in Ralfe, 2009, pp. 306-307). Hall (in Ralfe, 2009) cautions that without basic literacy, critical literacy is not possible and thus basic literacy enables critical literacy. It is also argued that learners must become proficient in four related areas of language in order to become truly literate, namely, code-breaking; text participation; text usage and text analysis (Luke & Freebody, 1997). Ralfe (2009) contends that critical literacy requires learners to make use of all these skills. Thus Bharuthram (2006, p. 55) has argued that, although a student may have good word recognition skills, with poor inferencing skills one still encounters difficulties with comprehension because he/she "will not be able to fill in the missing links in a text". Pretorius (in Bharuthram, 2006, p. 55) has argued that poor readers are "generally poor scholastic performers". This is particularly pertinent for Black South African learners as they come from an oral or story-telling tradition where challenging a text is not a normal academic activity, thus finding them encountering difficulties in academic settings (Bharuthram, 2006, p. 69). We are challenged with the notion that learners whose code-breaking skills are inefficient and read slowly have compromised

comprehension so much so that they cannot engage critically with any texts (Ralfe, 2009, p. 307) thus having a negative impact on their academic performance and faring badly in an educational system in South Africa where English or Afrikaans is used as a MoI (Alexander in Singh, 2009, p. 283). It has been reported that many South Africans are not able to complete their schooling because of the MoI, which they do not understand, and, as a result, do not have access to concepts expressed in that language (Witwatersrand, 2003, p. 5). Din Yen (2003, p. 3) supports this finding by putting forward the case of Chinese students who were found to be particularly weak in problems dealing with abstract concepts and application of scientific knowledge attributable to language.

It is therefore implicit in this discussion that critical literacies of language impact on academic performance of learners. The dichotomy between basic/functional and critical literacy is somewhat synonymous with Cummins' distinction between BICS and CALP as two kinds of language abilities that should be viewed as distinct abilities affecting language proficiency (Ellis, 1985, p. 153).

- Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency is the dimension of language proficiency strongly related to cognitive and academic skills or general intelligence. Such skills develop in a formal classroom situation.

- Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills is the basic skill required for oral fluency as well as sociolinguistic aspects of competence developed naturally (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 170; Madileng, 2007).

It has been argued that these constructs account for failure or success in the academic performance of SL learners. This distinction was intended to draw attention to the different time periods required by SL learners to acquire conversational fluency in their SL as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language. Cummins (1979) also warned that failure to take account of the BICS/CALP distinction results in discriminatory psychological assessment of bilingual students and premature exit from language support programmes into mainstream classes.

Wright (in Venzke 2002, p. 16) maintains that BICS allow learners to converse in undemanding natural situations. The context in which conversations is held provides a great deal of information about the meaning of what is said as communication is

context-embedded (Cummins, 1984, p. 3). The context acts as a prop to support the learner which makes communication at this level cognitively relatively undemanding.

CALP, on the other hand, enables learners to understand academic concepts and to perform higher cognitive operations required of a student. Cummins (in Venzke (2002, p. 20) warns that proficiency in BICS should not necessarily be misconstrued as learners' proficiency in L2. This is because learners sometimes are able to express themselves well in English in natural settings, but still perform very poorly academically. Poor academic performance could be attributable to deficiencies in cognitive abilities as the learner may not have developed adequate levels of CALP to muddle through academic application (Madileng, 2007, p. 10). Lemmer (in Venzke, 2002, p. 20) concludes that the mastery of both BICS and CALP enhances language proficiency. Improvement in CALP is possible when limited proficiency ESL learners interact with L1 English speakers and/or more proficient ESL learners during the language scaffolded activities (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 348).

CALP include aspects of language proficiency which relate to the development of literacy skills which include "vocabulary-concept knowledge, metalinguistic insights" and knowing how to process context reduced language where abstract tasks are done which are therefore cognitively demanding (Cummins, 1979, p. 242). Hence a child who develops proficiency in BICS alone cannot achieve scholastically because "school contexts do not provide as much support as ordinary communication contexts do" (Mchazime, 2001, p. 41). Cummins (1986) further postulated that it does not matter what the MoI is, as long as learners have acquired CALP in their L1. These skills, it is argued can automatically be transferred to their L2 and thus enable them to make academic progress. Therefore it does not matter what the MoI is: what matters is whether the child reached CALP in L1 or not. This assertion is problematized by Cummins' silence on whether this theory holds true where the L1 and L2 (isiZulu and English respectively within South Africa) are considered non-cognate languages (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 354; Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 363). Furthermore the interdependence between CALP in L1 and L2 is compromised when home language is not used for learning in the early years which results in limited skills and proficiency level development in the additional language (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan 2009, pp. 361-362). Cummins (1986) argues that the problem is that learners

transit to the use of L2 before they reach CALP in L1. Again, there are no clear indications on the appropriate age at which CALP in L1 can be acquired. This is arguably why language has been identified as one of the main factors which led to poor academic performance and high failure rate in South Africa (Mabiletja, 2008, p. 29).

However, Cummins' theory seems to oversimplify the complex situation within the educational milieu where other factors, such as cultural differences and identity, might impinge on the L2 learners' performance both at school and in the communities. Cummins' theory has been strongly criticized, for reasons ranging from children's cognitive learning strategies and their learning styles not being recognised to the difficulty of disentangling the "contextual" from the "cognitive" dimensions of learning (Mchazime, 2001, p. 42). Edelsky describes the distinction between CALP and BICS as "a spurious language deficiency dichotomy" reportedly working against the very children it explicitly supports (Edelsky, 1991, p. 71). Edelsky's contention is that instead of strategising for improving instruction or remedying obstacles to more meaningful learning for the child, the theory locates the problem of failure in the learner (Mchazime, 2001, p. 43).

Although valid criticisms abound, Cummins' position still holds some credibility, as education depends on communication. It is accepted that a large part of classroom interactions is mediated through language. For the learner to receive and transmit knowledge lucidly, a certain level of language proficiency is therefore essential (Mchazime, 2001, p. 43). From the foregoing discussion, it has become apparent that one of the key factors in the African child's academic performance in Africa is linguistic (Brocke-Utne, 2005).

2.4   LANGUAGE AND ITS CONSTITUENT COMPONENTS

Language matters have been in the centre stage for many educational policy discourses, but what exactly is language? Humans, as linguistic beings, "live, think and understand in language" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 424), therefore language cannot be disassociated from meaning. With respect to classroom practice, it has been pointed out that language is integral to learning as it plays "a major role in the development of an appropriate culture of learning" (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 342) and thus "Language is indeed

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crucial to academic performance" (Mchazime, 2001, p. 99). Subjects contain a unique and demanding technical vocabulary through combination of concepts into higher-order constructs, becoming more complex where they have the added meaning serving a special scientific purpose (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 29). Therefore the development of academic language is vital for student success in the classroom. With the process of conceptualisation being language specific (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 29), and the fact that cultural differences may assign different words to different things or assign different meaning to similar phrases (Gerson, 2003), familiar words can be used in completely different ways (Bradley & Bradley, 2004).

In getting a fix on what language is, Weedon's (1987) poststructuralist theorising of the relationship between discourse and how it constructs the social, as well as the relationship between language and academic performance, has bearing on this study. Poststructuralists argue that the common factor in the analysis of social organization/ meanings, power and individual consciousness is language (Weedon, 1987, p. 21).

Language is not the expression of unique individuality, but is constructed by and manifest in socially specific contexts. This is corroborated by Hinkel (1999, pp. 2-3) who states that language cannot be analysed separately from culture, as members of a community share systems of beliefs which give meaning to their worlds and which are ultimately communicated through language. This establishes a connection between language and the culture of a community. What then is language? The main objective of conceptualisation, is "simply communication" (De Vos et al., 2005), which, within the context of language and from the perspective of Boyle, (1971, p. 29) will rest with the definition as the "intentional transmission of a meaningful message"; used to interact with one another and to maintain interpersonal relations. According to De Vos et al., (2005) the fact that concepts can be expressed in words allows us to think about them and communicate them to other people. It is a means whereby we can interpret and represent the world for one another and for ourselves (Matthiessen & Halliday, 2003).

Structuralists view language as simply a vast network of signs (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 434) which on their own do not derive meaning, but rather do so from their context and in relation to the other signs. The linguistic network is not simply a collection of signs,

however, but rather similar to "a spider's web" (De Vos et. al, 2005, p. 434), implying that when a single sign is activated, the whole web is set in motion. This brings into presence other signs which were overtly absent, thus "contributing to the specific meaning of the activated sign" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 434). Saussure (in Weedon, 1987, p. 25), expands on the concept of a sign; claiming it is made up of a signifier (sound or written language) and a signified (meaning), arbitrarily related with no natural connection between the sound image and the concept it identifies. Thus meanings of signs are not intrinsic but relational through the arbitrary coming together of signifiers and signified, and thus deriving their meaning from their difference from all the other signs in the language chain. According to Weedon (1987) poststructuralists hold the notion that signs cannot have intrinsic, fixed meanings or stable identities, which corresponds with Matthiessen and Halliday's (2003) assertion that language is a tool for representing knowledge and for constructing meaning. Thus language, giving meaning to the world, cannot be explicated in a simplistic manner (Nongogo, 2007).

However, one of the challenges of Saussure's theory (in Weedon, 1987, p. 24) is that it cannot account for the plurality of meaning or why the signifiers can have many conflicting meanings which can change over time. Derrida (1973) developed the concept of "difference" which means the endless process of production of meaning through the dual strategies of "difference and deferral" (Weedon, 1987, p. 25). It is argued that signifiers are always located in a discursive context and the fixing of meaning to signifiers is temporary within a discursive context. From this it can be extrapolated that meanings can never be said to be fixed as they remain pliable through contextual usage. Therefore "there are no fixed intrinsic meanings which language reflects or expresses" (Nongogo, 2007, p. 14). Given that meaning is produced within language rather than reflected by language, this makes language truly social and contextual. Meanings are thus not fixed by a natural world nor reflected in the term itself but rather constituted socially and contextually within the language and subject to change existing in historically specific discourses (Hinkel, 1999, p. 4).

It is argued that to gain the full benefit of Saussure's theory of meaning, language should be viewed as always existing in historically specific discourse; at variance in giving meaning to the world implying "differences in the organization of social power; thus "language becomes an important site for political struggle" (Weedon, 1987, p. 25).

Poststructuralists agree with Saussure's principle that meaning is produced within language, rather than reflected by language, and that individual signs do not have intrinsic meaning, but acquire meaning through the language chain and their difference within it. Much has been reported on making meaning through language, but what exactly is meaning? For the purpose of this study meaning has a twofold definition: firstly, it is simply the sense that one makes of the universe and secondly, the ability to display that sense to someone else (Boyle, 1971, p. 38).

In demonstrating dependence between learning specific elements of language and cognitive development of the learner, linguists have argued that semantic learning depends on the conceptual growth of the individual (Slobin, 1986). Bloom's contention was that "what children know will determine what they learn about the code for both speaking and understanding messages" (Bloom, 1976, p. 37). Thus cognitive underpinnings are a factor in what children learn, and cognitive development is viewed as a factor that influences intellectual development (Mchazime, 2001). Extrapolating from the suggested symbiotic relationship that exists between language and cognitive development, it would appear logical that a learner's linguistic development is contingent upon the child's cognitive capacities being sufficiently developed. It is also suggested that the level of a child's repertoire of language development is correlated to his or her intellectual development (Mchazime, 2001, pp. 98-99). Mchazime (2001, p. 99) therefore argues that it is through the deliberate engagement of the learner in intellectuatl abilities that allows him or her to develop skills in abstractions, generalisations and critical judgements that are necessary for academic work. Therefore language is indeed crucial to academic performance. Mchazime (2001) finds it no surprise that research on the SL as vehicular language in education tends to associate learners' failure to attain the expected learning outcomes with the MoI.

Acknowledging that language exists in historically specific discourses (Weedon, 1987, p. 24) directs this study to look at what situations prevail in the research context. This will be done by examining the discourses expressed in different languages, different discourses expressed within the same language, and the resulting effects thereof on the academic performance of ESL learners.

2.5 THE POWER TENSIONS OF LANGUAGE

Language in multicultural societies, because of the linguistic and cultural diversity, has the potential for conflict due to intolerance. Malaba argues that the exposure of African individuals to European influence through the advent of colonial languages into the African continent, has created the tension "between an imperative of a Black African identity" and seeking affirmation and acknowledgement of Western societies "embedded in European education" (Malaba, 2006, p. 4). This tension of identities has resulted in hybrid identities of African elite that bred degrading stigmas as "cultural half-casts" (Malaba, 2006, p. 5). This dichotomous tension between "Africanism" and colonial affirmation may create consternation among the young Black South Africans using English as MoI.

The functional value and the prestige of the language also play a role. Languages with higher status provide greater social power status; while indigenous languages enjoy neither functional value nor the general social status that majority language, such as English, enjoys (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 42). One implication of this is that those who are not very proficient in the mainstream language are socially disadvantaged due to limited access to life options within the given society and will therefore seek employment outside their communities where English is the language of access (Egbo, 2001; Sookrajh & Joshua, 2009, p. 333; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 39). It is postulated that English, being the power language used in "all the important domains of public life", probably contributed to the socio-economic inequality between race groups in South Africa because languages play a fundamental role in the educational process (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, pp. 38-39; Webb, 2001). Language is therefore, to a large extent, the key to educational efficacy. Bernstein and Bourdieu (in Egbo, 2001) argue that the "hegemonizing power of language" is achieved through symbolic power, which, Fairclough argues, is exercised through "consent" rather than coercion "through ideology, and through language" (1989, p. 4 & p. 233). Janks (1993, p. iii) argues that families, religions, schools and the media are often tasked with "convincing and persuading people to consent to society's rules". All these institutions use language through which "meaning is mobilised to defend the status quo" (Janks, 1993, p. iii). Language used at schools prescribes and assigns greater status to it, and is therefore inextricably linked to control of power (Egbo, 2001). Bernstein (in Egbo 2001) and

Cummins (1979) theorizes that working class groups often develop restricted linguistic codes, enabling children to gain conversational fluency in the SL to a functional level, but which are not commensurate with the language of the school and are therefore more susceptible to failure. Bernstein (1997) contrasted this with the middle class, who provide their children with more academic and grade-appropriate proficiency in the language thought to lead to a greater degree of academic success. Literacy, or even biliteracy, is insufficient as an educational goal if it remains at the level of "functional literacy" and fails to promote critical literacy (Cummins, 2000). In other words, reading and writing alone are not sufficient, but rather reflexive and critical understanding is necessary for empowerment. In educational circles the current public focus and political will to improve literacy seem to overlook the need for learners to acquire total cultural and critical literacy, thus challenging society's power structure from critical discourses (Cummins, 2000, p. 1). This obscuring of the necessity to acquire critical and cultural literacy appears to maintain the existing power structure vis-à-vis status and resources in society. The imposition of a language mode or style foreign to the masses in a province where English is used as MoI, despite the existence of a pre-dominance of isiZulu, is considered a coercive relation of power which may well be a fundamental cause for academic failure in ESL students (Cummins, 2000).

2.6 ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

While acknowledging that the terms "majority" and "minority" language are often understood only quantitatively, the size of the speaker population is but only one dimension of the phenomenon. The language's functional value and the prestige (social status) of the language also play a role (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, pp. 41-42). Thus, while isiZulu may have a much higher number of first language speakers than English in South Africa, it was considered a minority language during the apartheid regime and still does not enjoy the status of English, even in KwaZulu Natal. While the term "English as a Second Language" refers to the role that English plays in the life of immigrant and other minority groups in English-speaking countries (Richards & Rodgers, 1986), paradoxically, in South Africa it is for the indigenous majority. People of these majority groups in South Africa use their first languages at home and among friends, but use English at work and at school. In this context, their first language is the "minority" language, and English, the dominant language from an international

perspective, occupying first place (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 27), is therefore the language of everyday use in public places.

The second context in which the term is used is that where English is widely used but is not the first language of the majority population. For instance, 11 official languages, with 9 indigenous languages, exist in South Africa, (Allford, Broady, & Pachler, 2009, p. 278) - the other two being English and Afrikaans - but the spheres of public power and influence are dominated by English. Immigrant and other minority groups in English-speaking countries use English at school and at work in very similar fashion to the context of South Africa, where language practice in public life is becoming very monolingual with English being the major language (Singh, 2009, p. 282). English may be the language of everyday communication by some, but not all the people in that specific country. The third context is exemplified in South Africa, where the most commonly spoken language is isiZulu, the mother tongue of 23.8 % of the population as compared to English, the mother tongue of only 8.2 % (Allford, Broady, & Pachler, 2009, p. 278; here the terms "majority" and "minority" language are used quantitatively). The distinction between English as a SL and as a first language has resulted in the development of specific methods for the ESL classroom discussed later.

2.7 LANGUAGE POLICY

Within the South African context, the changed and changing political landscape have influenced discourses over the years, which explains how the status of discourses changed over time, this process being facilitated by language policies. While an interrogation of language policies, specifically the South African Language-in-Education-Policy of 1997 (LiEP), was not the focus of this study, such policies do have relevance because it impacts on the academic performance of SL learners. In fact language policies play a vital role in the landscape of emancipation as they impact on the linguistic competence of the population. What language should be used has created some interest among scholars concerning the effects on the academic performance of learners who use a SL as MoI (Mchazime, 2001, p. 89). Alexander (in Heugh et al., 1995, p. 38) asserts that "language planning … is necessary and even inevitable". This section therefore reviews literature on policy considerations that impacts on the use of a SL as MoI.

Acknowledging that language possesses power-conferring properties (Egbo, 2001), Brocke-Utne (2005) proposes that policy-makers should be devoted to strengthening of the African languages as MoI, given that the African child's learning problem is linguistic. It is proposed that learners should experience the chosen language by hearing the language or observing it being used in their everyday life, it should be teachable, and should enable learners to react to learning experiences covertly and overtly. Learners should use such language to think logically, to conceptualise in that language and afford them the opportunity "to examine critically what others say and enable them to express and elaborate their point of view" (Mchazime, 2001, p. 90). This suggests that ex-colonial languages have no relation to the learners' everyday experiences and it increases the difficulty of constructing the meaning of concepts, thus contributing to the failure of modern science and technology in the African continent (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 362). Failure to cater for the above issues amounts to instructions being given in a language that is not normally used in the African child's immediate environment; a language which neither the learner nor the teacher understands and uses well enough (Brock-Utne, 2005). This problem is not specific to South Africa, as pointed out by Din Yan (2003, p. 3), who refers to problems experienced by Chinese students taught in English. This raises questions on the efficacy of language policies which may inadvertently result in learners who do not reach the necessary level of English proficiency and consequently drop out of school. On the other hand, language policies in South Africa focusing essentially on emancipation of the masses (i.e. using indigenous language as MoI) may lead to global isolation in view of the importance of English language skills for successful local and international careers (Witwatersrand, 2003). Trappes-Lomax (1990) points out that, if society's goal of educating the youth is to be achieved, an appropriate MoI must be chosen which does not discriminate against any particular group of the youth.

Even if there is not something officially called a "language policy", a policy exists inasmuch as the linguistic status quo becomes policy implicitly, as in South Africa, where English once enjoyed, and now continues to enjoy dominance. Herriman and Burnaby (1996, p. 8) argue that the "arbitrariness of this situation indeed provides grounds for the argument that policy should be specified". The official language of a country can also engender fears about access to the standard language among speakers of community and indigenous languages. The official language with inherent rights

may cause status problems for competing languages and inequalities. Languages that are afforded higher status than others provide greater social power status. Thus, it is proposed that such a language should be accepted by all, is "suitable for its assigned role and of such functional importance as worth the effort of acquiring" (Trappes-Lomax, 1990, p. 95) fulfilling the functions of "communion, expression, conceptualisation and communication" (Mchazime, 2001, p. 89).

Explicit or implicit policies on the status of the official language affect the viability and stability of other languages used in the community (Herriman & Burnaby, 1996). Indigenous languages, being important cultural repositories and a critical means of communication for their communities, risk extinction, with no other source from which to be revitalised if they are not sustained through policy (Herriman & Burnaby, 1996). It is posited that, in multicultural societies where cultural resources need protection, a threat to a language is a threat to the culture (Alexander, 1999, p. 4; Herriman & Burnaby, 1996, p. 10). Underlying the issues addressed above, and inherent in the peculiar instrumental and symbolic functions which language has, are four language-based problems which Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000, pp. 3-4) have identified, namely: restricted access to knowledge; low productivity and ineffective performance in the workplace; inadequate political participation by the public; and linguistic and cultural alienation. Restricted access to knowledge and skills has a negative impact on the effectiveness of education. Language-based problems are not actually language problems, rather "they are problems in the domain of education" (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 3), but language plays a central role in their occurrence.

Various statistical information presented by Webb & Kembo-Sure (2000, p. 5; see Appendix I) clearly indicate that the cognitive development of many Black South Africans was far below its full potential due to the lack of knowledge of the MoI (Brock-Utne, 2005, p. 549). This prevented them from using the MoI to access education to such an extent that the poor performance of South African learners in 1995 and 1999 in Mathematics and Science examinations can be attributed to the use of English as MoI (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, pp. 5-7; Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 362). That not much has changed is evidenced in Naicker and Balfour's research, where it was found that "even in 2008, the linguistic barriers encountered by children then were still clearly present in AC classrooms" (2009, p.

341). The overall matric pass rate has in fact declined steadily, dropping from 73.3% in 2003 to a mere 60.6% in 2009 (Appendix J, section A, ETDP-SETA, 2010, p. 52,) and from 70,16 % in 2010 to 68.1 % in 2011 (Appendix J, section B). There seems to be little reprieve in this regard including the 2011 National Senior Certificate examinations where it is shown that a mere 23 15 % and 30.80 % passed Mathematics and Physical Sciences at 40 % and above (Appendix J, section C). Acknowledging that English as a language, and more especially as MoI contributed to the underdevelopment of many South Africans, authors challenge linguists to persuade Black parents that academic success remains in choosing a language as MoI which their children know well, while studying high-quality English as a subject (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 7). This strategy was also adopted in other non-English speaking countries (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 2000), which is contradictory to Villegas' (2000) claims, that English should be used as MoI if it is to play any emancipatory role at all. However, Brock-Utne (2005, p. 549) suggested that two important considerations must be addressed. The first is whether learners should be immersed in the foreign language chosen as MoI as early as possible or should first develop the commonly spoken language further. The second is the consideration of developing the self-respect and identity of the community, if it is found that the L1of the community is not considered suitable for use as MoI.

It is argued that this position must not be confused with an anti-English prejudice, but rather, while acknowledging that access to English is the key to power at certain levels of South African society, that commitment should be made to a policy of promoting multilingualism simultaneously modernising African languages (Alexander, 1999, p. 10). The importance of language policies is highlighted where rights, freedoms and power are associated with language. Herriman and Burnaby (1996, p. 8) warn us that language policies can be used deliberately to suppress indigenous languages. Given the prevalence of the difficulties of choosing a MoI in Africa where multi-languages co-exist, policy-makers must carefully weigh the potential of such a language in nation building, as well as anticipate the possible resistance that such choice will create in other sub-groups whose languages are not chosen (Kelman, 1971, p. 48; Trappes-Lomax, 1990). This dilemma is not unique to Africa, as it is argued that the choice of MoI is the "least appreciated of all the main education problems that come before international forums" (Mchazime, 2001, pp. 91-92). According to Mchazime (2001), there are very few cases, if any, in which there is universal acceptance of a single MoI

on the African continent. Thus, Hornberger (2004) and Webb (2002) argue that the concept of having one language identifying with a single national ideology of language policy and national identity is not the only one available any more. Alexander (1999, p. 10), therefore suggests that there must be immediate empowerment through use of foreign language as MoI but simultaneously enhancing democracy through the continued development of indigenous languages worthy of use as MoI, thus suggesting multilingualism at all social levels.

It is argued that multilingual language policies which recognize ethnic and linguistic pluralism as resources for nation-building open up new worlds of possibility for marginalised indigenous languages, providing for a meaningful and relevant education (Herriman & Burnaby, 1996; Hornberger, 2004; Pride 1979, p. 160). The prevalent trend is then towards diversity and emancipation: language planning is regarded as an instrument in the development of the human resources of the nation (Webb, 2002). It is argued that the concept education for all "becomes a completely empty concept if the linguistic environment of the learners is not taken into account" (Brocke-Utne, 2005, p. 549). Language policy can therefore play a central role in enabling citizens of a country to participate in the socio-political, educational, and economic life of the country or it can deny them that right (Desai, 2004). Achieving these aspirations in South Africa is articulated in the Language-in-Education-Policy (LiEP) of 1997 which was designed to "guarantee pupils the best possible access to and proficiency in another language … alongside the language best known by pupils upon entry to school" (Heugh, 2002, p. 3).

However, this policy, while not rigorously implemented, has been met with several arguments against its implementation. It seems that the government remains inert on this matter, thus consciously or unconsciously allowing for the discriminatory policy of the former apartheid government to continue to be practiced through use of English as MoI (Heugh, 2002, p. 3; Maphalala, 2006, p. 152). Herriman and Burnaby (1996, p. 10) argue that while these arguments having explicit, planned and inclusive language policies appear convincing, the reality is that no policy can solve all of these issues. It is posited that a "strict set of policies may create more problems than a tacit policy" (Herriman & Burnaby, 1996, p. 10). Thus, in South Africa, while LiEP gives general prescriptions, tacit discretionary interpretation and implementation of such policy for local contextualization is articulated through the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996,

Sec (6) (2) (Department of Education, 2003) within the broader constraints of the constitution of South Africa. One of the cornerstones of this policy is "its commitment to an additive bilingualism approach" (Alexander, 1999, p. 11). It is argued that policies, being a consequence of difficulties, are shaped by such difficulties. Policy formation must therefore be viewed as a dynamic but responsive reaction which should always be "seen as a form of corrective feedback" (Herriman & Burnaby, 1996, p. 10). However, Du Plessis cautions that not much success has been achieved in implementing multilingual policies in Africa, where "a central role is assigned to the indigenous languages" (2000, p. 108). Alexander cautions that one cannot implement changes to language policy to suit one linguistic group to the detriment of others, but that rather MoI should benefit all learners (in Singh, 2009, p. 283).

2.8 RATIONALE FOR ENGLISH AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

The policy decision that the once oppressive use of English as official language during colonial rule should be continued by choice is found throughout the independent African states, the primacy of the ex-colonial language thus being accepted (Alexander, 1999, p. 6). One example of this is the unfavourable perception of Africans of the mother tongue language policy, which was rejected supposedly because of the perception that such a language policy was designed to keep indigenous people impoverished. Africans therefore demanded to be educated according to exactly the same standards as Whites, including the language of instruction (Mchazime, 2001, p. 93).

South Africa, being no exception in adopting the above rationale, instituted educational reform intended to emancipate the masses and enable South Africans to respond to the challenges of the 21st century. However, this was done without the necessary capacitation of teachers (Dorasamy, 2005, p. 21; Msimango, 2008, p. 20) or acknowledging the reality that Black learners in South Africa experienced difficulty in English used as MoI for cognitive development, thus faring badly (Amuzu, 1992; Du Plessis, 2000, p. 96; Naicker & Balfour, 2009; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 6-7). Policies also did not consider that many South Africans did not complete their schooling because learners had no access to concepts in a language they did not fully understood (Witwatersrand, 2003).

To offer a somewhat divergent view on the efficacy of English as MoI on the academic performance of learners, it was found that the difference in learners' performance was not so much dictated by language per se but rather by the environment in which they found themselves, i.e. that of teachers not using the MoI during class activities (Amuzu, 1992; Nascimento, 2008; Mabiletja, 2008, p. 29). However, despite the UNESCO declarations, and as is generally accepted, cognitive development can occur effectively only in and through a language the learner knows very well, namely, the learner's first language (Alexander, 1999; Marivate, 2006; Mchazime, 2001, p. 92; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 135). Implicit in this is the acknowledgment that English as MoI has most likely contributed to the unacceptably low level of individual development in the country. Despite this, Black parents in South Africa overwhelmingly prefer English as MoI for their children (Chick, 1998, p. 93; Ridge, 1996; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 6). Vesely (in Sookrajh & Joshua, 2009) found that Black South African learners value their own languages for ethno linguistic identity and for use in low status usage in the transmission of indigenous cultures and traditions, whereas English is viewed as a high status language with power. It is further acknowledged that developing competence in English acts as a key to access prosperity and social mobility (Du Plessis, 2000, p. 103; Mchazime, 2001, pp. 94-95; Sookrajh & Joshua, 2009, p. 331). Thus, according to the linguistic version of the law of maximum return, "people tend to learn only the languages that are socially and economically useful to them" (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 42).

Numerous researchers, concerned about the language development versus the academic performance of learners, argue that language development correlates with learning progress. This infers that meaningful learning is aided by sound language development and vice versa. The rationale for this is that the tasks required of the child remain inseparable from language (Makgalemele, 2005). While it is accepted that language is linked to academic performance, other researchers express doubts as to which language to adopt as MoI. Yet it is not important at this point to identify which wins over the other. The reality is that English is used as a MoI in most schools around the world and in South Africa (Makgalemele, 2005; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 6 & 27; Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 361). Empowerment was to come through English being a universal language (Makgalemele, 2005, pp. 13-14). Arguments marshalled to justify the adoption of English as official language in various independent

African states suggest that the alternative choice of any indigenous languages may cause divisions in the country and may destabilise the country (Alexander, 1999, p. 5). Du Plessis argues that, given Africans' concerns for restoring the dignity of their race, they therefore accept an artificial linguistic solution by accepting a foreign language as their official language (2000, p. 95). South Africa, with 11 official languages, and being obliged to establish a common language, opted for an endoglossic solution by declaring that Afrikaans and the major African languages should be the media of government alongside English (Du Plessis, 2000, pp. 96-105; Makgalemele, 2005, pp. 13-14). It has been advocated that the said languages should not only facilitate communication within the South African nation but should empower people without language being used for the purposes of domination or division (Du Plessis, 2000). Geingob rationalised the situation of English as official language by stating that it serves as harmonizing the nation by steering people away from linguo-tribal affiliations and differences, thus creating conditions conducive for national unity in the "realm of language" (in Alexander, 1999, p. 6). Language and language learning empower people to develop in all of the estates of language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and viewing, writing, thinking and reasoning, and understanding of language structure and use. Therefore, economically and technically speaking, the choice of English made more sense, as it was already in existence and had the appropriate infrastructure, such as books, dictionaries and trained professionals, and hence, did not necessitate duplication of these in any of the indigenous languages (Alexander, 1999, p. 5).

Heugh from a global perspective argued that language choices were influenced by larger structural forces which inform "international and domestic economic and development policies" which are generally opposed to multilingualism (in Sookrajh & Joshua, 2009, p. 331). Webb & Kembo-Sure showed preference of English attributable to it being a world language and of work; providing access to almost all the sources of knowledge; and it was the "language of the struggle against apartheid" (2000, p. 6). Hence in South Africa English was chosen as the language of both official communication and empowerment (Makgalemele, 2005, pp. 13-14). Transformative legislation such as the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (Department of Education, 1997) provided the framework to enable schools, through the South African Schools' Act, 84 of 1996, Sec (6) (2), to formulate appropriate language policies in terms of choosing the MoI (Department of Education, 2003; SASA). The choice of English as

MoI by most schools in South Africa reflects the fact that social and political factors influence and complicate decisions in schools, as do community/parental attitudes towards languages and literacy, home language and resources (Sookrajh & Joshua, 2009, p. 331). Such choice was also in part due to the lack of suitably qualified and adequately prepared teachers (ETDP-SETA, 2010, p. 11; Mchazime, 2001, p. 120).

Other reasons for ESL use against vernacular languages are given by researchers as being that, at academic vocabulary level, the necessary lexicon and registers of the indigenous languages have not been so fully developed as those of the European languages (Mchazime, 2001, pp. 117-118; Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, pp. 366-368). Furthermore, use of indigenous languages as MoI hinders understanding, as opposed to use of European languages, which are said to have logic and a level of abstraction which the indigenous languages do not (Makgalemele, 2005, p. 17; Strydom & Pretorius, 2000, p. 116; Witwatersrand, 2003). Teachers also expressed difficulty in teaching concepts through the home language, especially given that assessments were conducted in English (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 366-367).

Another study found conflicts between resource books in standard isiZulu and use of township varieties of colloquial indigenous languages which permeated the school environment because learners have "not been exposed to more 'academic' uses of the language" (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 367). Moreover, as the orthography of written isiZulu is still in the process of being standardised (Ndimande-Hlongwa, 2010, p. 207), there is by no means common agreement about the standard format of written isiZulu. Thus it became axiomatic that the wealth of creative, scientific and technical literature in the European languages placed them as being superior to the indigenous languages (Alexander, 1999, p. 5).

Cele also reported that "the political merits and economic demerits of the present language policy cannot be understood in isolation from the historical perspective of the development of English as an official language in South Africa" (1999, p. 182). This view is not peculiar to South Africa, as Villegas has pointed out that there can be little contestation that "few can surpass the Japanese in nationalistic fervor" (2000, p. 2). Despite this, the Japanese have begun to accept the pragmatic view that mastery of the English language by its populace is critical to its survival as an industrial leader. This

begs the question as to why the mastery of the English language is critical, and what impact this has on the socio-economic and socio-political landscape of nations. A similar awakening is happening in other Asian countries, many of which are highly industrialized and enjoy economic successes. According to Mitchell and Myles (1998, p. 17), recent estimates in the late twentieth century suggest that the target language is highly likely to be English, with around 300 million people around the world speaking English as their first language, with another 700 million or so using it as a second language.

Some expatriates in Hong Kong fear that the deterioration in English proficiency, due primarily to English being removed as MoI, could seriously jeopardize Hong Kong's pivotal financial role (Villegas, 2000). Villegas (2000) therefore argues that the experiences of the East should make policy makers circumspect about removing English as MoI. While one is sympathetic to the plight of the financially challenged masses, who are seemingly being prejudiced by use of English as MoI (i.e. in terms of slowing down their intellectual development), conceding their right to mother-tongue instruction alone could be even more damaging (Villegas, 2000). Lack of proficiency might worsen the inequity in economic opportunities of the masses, as other well-to-do children would have access to alternative means of English proficiency acquisition. Thus it is advocated that indigenous languages should be sufficiently developed to enjoy equitable language status with English, while at the same time the economic viability of the citizenry should be improved by assisting them to develop proficiency in English. One's opportunities in life are affected by ones proficiency in the use of a language. These opportunities include schools, jobs, positions, memberships and clubs (Egbo, 2001, p. 49). People will therefore have ample opportunities to speak and listen to indigenous language in different social contexts, but at schools should be restricted to the MoI chosen. The use of English as MoI among NNS of the language is based on theories of bilingualism, and SLA and learning. All these examples and arguments serve to illustrate the observation that language choice in education is complex, which is why it is not surprising that the ideal situation that Trappes-Lomax (1990) alludes to is not attainable in many African countries. It is within this context that Bamgbose argued that there will always be collateral isolation of minor languages in multilingual countries (Mchazime, 2001, p. 95).

Given the challenge of having to reconcile universalizing factors such as science, technology and rationality, with the particularizing factors such as local traditions and beliefs, and the fact that teachers and learners still want access to the language of economic opportunity, most schools in South Africa subscribe to the notion that opportunities to practice speaking English is optimized when the language is used as MoI (Alexander, 1999; Singh, 2009, p. 367; Villegas, 2000). In order to put the use of English as MoI in perspective, some of the theories of bilingualism and their related hypothesis as well as theories of SL learning are examined.

2.9   BILINGUALISM

The definition of bilingualism is based on the specific perspective that one takes about it. Bilingualism has been defined as the knowledge and alternate use of two languages by the same person or having competence in dual languages (Anderson & Boyer, 1970, p. 12; Pride, 1979, p. 74). The alternative definition of bilingualism is the "native-like control of two languages" (Mchazime, 2001, p. 21). This definition suggests that one is not bilingual in a SL if one's performance/competence in the target language does not sound like or is not equal to that of the native speaker. Owens (1988, pp. 378-380) contends that bilingualism differs with the age and manner of acquisition, and makes a distinction between simultaneous and sequential acquisition of bilingualism. Simultaneous acquisition is the development of two languages prior to age 3 with the rate and manner of development appearing to be the same (Owens, 1988, pp. 378-380). Sequential acquisition occurs where the child develops one language at home and a second, such as English, with peers or in school, usually after the age of 3 (Owens, 1988, p. 380). Proficiency in two or more languages, it is argued, is attainable if the learners are provided with opportunities for active interaction with the language (McLaughlin (1987, p. 42). Mgqwashu (2009, p. 298) and Villegas (2000, p. 1) found compelling evidence that teachers were not providing learners with such opportunities to speak or listen to English, nor any access to or talk about texts through the medium of English. It is argued that the rationale for learning a SL is to compensate for deficiencies in the first language that may retard the speaker's communicative needs.

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2.9.1   Dangers of bilingualism

It is also important to note that, if a "functional separation of languages is not maintained, intragroup bilingualism is likely to die out" (Pride, 1979, p. 117) attributable to cultural assimilation. This is facilitated by, in the first stage, extensive borrowing on the lexical level from the dominant language, followed by subsequent stages affecting higher orders of complexity, namely, grammatical and semantic levels (Pride, 1979, p. 117). This cycle continues in direct proportion to the shift in cultural context reflecting the ongoing acculturation process. Simultaneously with progressing acculturation, indigenous languages become restricted to their social use and functions, leading to the demise of the mother tongue when assimilation becomes complete (Pride, 1979, p. 117; Singh, 2009, p. 282).

2.9.2   Advantages of bilingualism

While evidence of the effects of bilingualism on intelligence is still not conclusive (Lambert, 1990), there is enough evidence to conclude tentatively that, under specified conditions, bilingualism has tremendous advantages, not only in terms of language competencies, but also in terms of cognitive and social development. The condition under which such advantages exist is that the two or more languages involved "have enough social value and worth that *both* can be permitted to flourish as languages of thought and expression" (Lambert, 1990, p. 210). It is arguably against this contention that the language policy of South Africa has been conceived to promote equitable use of all official languages and the right to thrive in the new democracy (Singh, 2009, 282). It is also contended that bilinguals score significantly higher than monolinguals on both verbal and nonverbal measures of intelligence (Peal & Lambert, 1962), showing definite cognitive and linguistic advantages, as these are reflected in greater cognitive flexibility, creativity, divergent thought, or problem solving (Heugh, 2002; Lambert, 1990, p. 211). Research in South Africa also revealed another advantage bilinguals displayed, that of separating word meaning from word sound (Lambert, 1990).

However, the benefits of bilingualism, being contingent upon equal status of both languages, are contested by various authors claiming that English has become the language of power and access, thus creating language imbalances in South Africa (Du Plessis, 2000, p. 106; Mgqwashu, 2009, p. 293; Singh, 2009; Sookrajh & Joshua, 2009,

p. 333). Furthermore, bilingualism's correlation with academic excellence has also been contested, since there is evidence to suggest that bilinguals are intellectually and scholastically handicapped, which could lead to intellectual impoverishment and alienation in becoming bilingual (Boyle, 1971, pp. 25-26; Pride, 1979, p. 72). This state of affairs has been ascribed to attempts for teaching children by means of a language which they have not fully mastered, with resulting confusions (Boyle, 1971, pp. 25-26). This brings into focus two additional considerations regarding bilingualism, namely, additive and subtractive bilingualism.

2.9.3 Additive and subtractive bilingualism

Bilingual proficiency is correlated to self-identity, which, depending on the dynamics of the intergroup context, will result in additive or subtractive bilingualism (Bourhis in Harley, Allen, Cummins, & Swain, 1990, pp. 139-140). Where bilingualism involves the mastering of both English and an indigenous language which has social value and respect, and this is consensually valued as a desired goal, additive bilingualism results (Harley et al., 1990, p. 136). It is also conditional that such addition to one's repertoire of skills does not signal the slow replacement of the home language (Lambert, 1990, p. 213; Luckett, 1993). Such additive forms of bilingualism are considered to result in positive effects on a child's social and cognitive development (Luckett, 1993). The fundamental principle of the additive bilingualism approach is based on the notion that the learner's home language "should be maintained throughout the educational career of the learner" (Alexander, 1999, p. 11).

However, when individuals are expected to develop high-level skills in English at the expense of indigenous languages, subtractive bilingualism results, and this may lead to loss of cultural identity and social alienation (Lambert, 1990, p. 212; Luckett, 1993). In subtractive bilingualism, one's degree of bilinguality at any time would reflect a gradual disuse of the ethnic home language and its associated cultural accompaniments, and its replacement with another more "necessary" language (Harley et al., 1990, p. 141). This approach has a negative impact on a child's social and cognitive development, implying the child's L2 will not develop sufficiently to enable him/her to make sound judgements about the content in L2 (Luckett, 1993).

Within the South African context, while policies may at face value foster additive bilingualism, it is the assertion of this study that in practice we erroneously subscribe to subtractive bilingualism (Mabiletja, 2008, pp. 11-12; Ngubane, 2005, p. 14; Sookrajh & Joshua, 2009, p. 336). Bilingualism, a reality in South Africa, is facilitated through code-switching.

2.9.4 Code-switching

One of the consequences of multilingual societies is "the development of cross-linguistic communication strategies, such as code-switching" (Webb & Kembo-Sure 2000, p. 41). While code-switching from isiZulu to English often occurs for the motives of social and economic recognition, this study looks at the role of code-with regard to language acquisition and development, as in Zungu's study (1998, p. 44). It has been argued that the key to the bilingual's linguistic competence lies in alternating his codes, a process usually referred to as "switching" (Pride, 1979, p. 77). Switching involves alternating use of two or more languages within the same conversation (Kamwangamalu, 2000, p. 91). It is argued that switching involves code-switching, referring to "language alternation across sentence boundaries, and code-mixing to language alternation within sentence boundaries" (Kamwangamalu, 2000, p. 92). However, more recent studies tend to use code-switching as inclusive of code-mixing, as adopted in this research. Code-switching occurs in response to different kinds of triggering (Pride, 1979, pp. 77-78). Entry into the conversation of a new listener will necessitate switching if the new recipient does not understand the current language or the current language may not be appropriate to the new recipient (Kamwangamalu, 2000, p. 100). Also a new topic may necessitate a switch if the speaker or his listener is more comfortable in speaking about this topic in a more appropriate language, such as English; this serves the social function of replacing concepts and words considered "culturally taboo" or "embarrassing" to listeners when uttered in the indigenous language (Mchazime, 2001, p. 233). Certain domains of life, too, demand one language rather than another, either because they are more appropriate or better known.

Finally, the internal needs of the speakers themselves may trigger the switch, which is referred to as "expressive switching". These needs could include wanting to: express a mixed identity by using two or more languages concurrently; enhance individual

prestige through the superabundant use of English or Afrikaans; maintain a shared academic code; provide a solidarity function by asserting solidarity or stressing in-group identity (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 362; Zungu, 1998, pp. 44-45). According to Owens, code-switching is the result of functional and grammatical principles (1988, p. 382). It has been suggested that code-switching facilitates the acquisition of bilingualism while being a "viable means of maintaining a language" (Owens, 1988, p. 383). Thus the function of code-switching may be two-fold: as an aid for retention of the first language while a second is learned, and to ensure that both are used once two languages have been learned (Owens, 1988, p. 383).

In concluding this section on code-switching, this study assumes the position of Ndayipfukamiye, who argues that as a communicative phenomenon, code-switching "plays a crucial role in reconciling two contradictory demands in classroom interaction": namely, using indigenous language in domains where MoI is expected to ensure understanding; and abiding by the official policy which requires the teaching of the second language (1994, p. 91). Therefore, while code-switching by learners is facilitative of language learning, teachers should be patient with the child's code switching, and should model proper grammar in both languages for purposes of clarification and extending students' understanding. Zungu (1998, p. 45) suggests that those who are "in favour of code-switching to English do so in order to keep pace with technical, social and institutional developments". For whatever purposes code-switching is used, however, it should be used with circumspection.

2.10   BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY MODELS

Six social process models impacting on bilingual proficiency concentrating on factors that motivate or prevent learners from learning languages have been put forward. These models are social, since learning a language involves both contact with the linguistic features of the target language and some contact with the cultural products of that language, including interpersonal relations with speakers of the target language group (Harley, et. al, 1990, p. 138). These models are concerned with the following factors:

1.   Linguistic aptitude;
2.   Academic aptitude;

3.   Predictors of language proficiency such as attitudes and orientations toward the target language and its speakers;

4.   Motivational processes for learning and using the target language;

5.   Formal and informal language learning contexts; and

6.   Outcome variables such as linguistic and non-linguistic communicative proficiency.

Understanding the tenets of these models equips teachers and other language practitioners to develop strategies for more efficient and effective language acquisition and learning, especially among ESL learners, with the intention of improving learners' academic performance. These models include Lambert's model; Schumann's model; Clement's model; Giles and Byrne model; the Hamers and Blanc model and the Gardner model. For a more detailed account refer to Appendix A.

2.11   LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESSES

Before an in-depth discussion on language learning theories is conducted, certain key concepts and issues on SL learning processes must be borne in mind.

2.11.1 Nature and nurture

SL learning has always been connected with fundamental issues of human learning, particularly the nature-nurture debate, which revolves around the amount of learning deriving from innate predisposition as opposed to the social and cultural expressions which influence us as we grow. It is argued that essentially language learning is facilitated by copying and memorizing behaviours from the surrounding environment where children gain language through exposure to "scraps" of adult language (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 7; Owens, 1988, p. 41). Thus language learning arises out of learning how to carry on a conversation, and knowledge of syntax develops as a result of conversations (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 75). This is problematic within the context of South African education, in that ESL learners do not live in such environments where exposure to English is available. There is therefore no spontaneous reinforcement of what learners would have acquired by rote learning in the classroom (Singh, 2009, p. 283). On the other hand, it is argued that human language is too complex to be learned in its entirety from the performance data actually available to the child, and researchers

have proposed that there must be an innate pre-disposition or capacity whereby natural languages are organised (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 7).

2.11.2 Competence and performance

The dual focus in language is performance and competence (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 6). Performance refers to the actual utterances which people e produce, which is an important phenomenon for this study, as it is believed that SL learning evolves out of learning how to carry on a conversation (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 75; Owens, 1988, p. 9). Competence refer to the rules and grammatical representations of language knowledge which are held inside our head, and/or a language user's underlying knowledge of language and about the system of rules from which syntactic constructions develop (Ellis, 1984, p. 697; McLaughlin, 1987, p. 75; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 6; Owens, 1988, p. 9). Competence is further understood to mean the ability for appropriate language usage in context, and the potential to create and understand original utterances in a given language (Mitchell & Myles, 1998). Furthermore, communicative competence embraces all forms of knowledge that learners must have in order to communicate effectively, including both speaking and behavioural competence (Hinkel, 1999, p. 4). It is argued that learners from isiZulu-medium primary schools have experienced "limited communicative competence and performance skills in English" causing them to become silenced due to lack of confidence to perform verbal tasks (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 341).

A closely related concept, but distinguished from competence, is proficiency, referring to the learner's ability to use this knowledge in different tasks. Proficiency development strategies should entail building confidence in learners (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 341). However, this dualism poses certain challenges in studying competence, as it is held that language performance data are imperfect reflections of competence. Learners who can recite verbatim grammatical rules are not always able to use such knowledge reflexively, nor are they necessarily able to use that knowledge contextually in daily language performance (Hinkel, 1999, p. 155). This can be attributed partly to the processing complications involved in speaking or other forms of language production, which could lead to errors and slips. More importantly, it is believed that the infinite creativity of the underlying system can never be reflected adequately in a finite sample of data (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 6). Many linguists of

language competence believe that it can be accessed only indirectly and under controlled conditions, e.g., as "grammaticality judgement" (Mitchell & Myles, 1998). The split between performance and competence has not been accepted by all linguists. This research subscribes to the notion that the performance/competence distinctions are equally important, as they seem to have a reciprocal influence on each other impacting on the academic performance of SL learners, especially isiZulu speaking learners.

2.11.3 Incomplete success and fossilization

It is argued that despite the differences in socio-economic/political challenges found among young children, there seems to be a degree of uniformity of success in learning their first language by the end of 5 years or so. This claim cannot be made of SL learning embarked on after these critical early years, which is why few adult learners come to blend indistinguishably with the community of the target language (Mitchell & Myles, 1998). Most remain deviant in their pronunciation, although with practice and motivation considerable fluency can be achieved, complete native-like control of the SL is never achieved. SL learning then, is typified by incomplete success, referred to as fossilization, where a learner seems to "freeze" or become stuck at some more or less deviant stage (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 13). Fossilization occurs when language errors become a permanent feature (Canale & Swain, 1980; Johnson, 1992; Selinker, 1972; Selinker & Lamendella, 1978). Extrapolating from Heugh et al., (1995), within the context of South Africa, this may be attributable to "subtractive bilingualism", coupled with the hegemony of English as the MoI, which presumably has a negative impact on the cognitive development of the child who speaks a language other than English. This may be as a result of the abrupt disconnecting of the natural cognitive development in the primary language, which ends when the L1 is taken out of the learning environment (Heugh et al., 1995, pp. 44-46). Furthermore, in South Africa where English is the dominant language and MoI in most schools, while not the language of the majority, this impacts heavily on bilingual education programmes as the curriculum becomes more cognitively demanding. This is corroborated by studies where it was found that learners in subtractive programmes fall "rapidly behind their peers who are in primary language maintenance" (Heugh et al., 1995, p. 46).

This phenomenon of incomplete success or fossilization is significant in the process of SL learning with two possible explanations. The first is psycholinguistic, where the language specific learning mechanism which was available to the young child simply ceases to work for the older learners, at least partly, and no amount of study or effort can re-create this aptitude. The second explanation is sociolinguistic, whereby older SL learners do not have the social opportunities or motivation to identify completely with the native speakers (NS) community, but may instead value their distinctive identity as learners or as foreigners (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 13). To address this state of affairs, Cummins suggests that teachers can empower learners more if they add a SL and cultural affiliation to the learners' repertoire; this is preferable to seeing the teacher's role as replacing or subtracting the learners' primary language and culture through the processes of assimilation (Heugh et al., 1995, p. 48).

2.11.4 Cross-linguistic influence in SL learning

Observations reveal that learners' performance in a SL, i.e. pronunciation with foreign accent, is influenced by traces of the phonology of their first language or languages that they already know. Coupled with errors of phonology are errors and interference in L2 learning, attributable to language transfer where L1 "habits were so tenacious and deeply rooted" (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 13). However, inter-language theorists, concentrating on the creative side of L2 learning, have downplayed the influence of L1 in L2 learning, subscribing to the notion that cross-linguistic influences play an important role on L2 learning, while differing widely as to opinions on the extent and nature. From a Universal Grammar perspective it is argued that, if L2 learners have continuing direct access to their underlying Universal Grammar, then only the more peripheral areas of L2 development would be influenced by the L1. If, on the other hand, learners' only access to Universal Grammar is indirect, then L1 influence would lie at the heart of L2 learning.

2.11.5 Relationship between SL use & SL learning

SL use refers to performance, while learning refers to developing one's competence in that same language. Most theorists of language accept that for normal language development to take place it is necessary to interpret and process incoming language

data; hence the argument for the "comprehensive input hypothesis" of Krashen. According to the input theory, all that was needed for SL acquisition was language input at the right level of difficulty (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 15 & 126), which process, however, recent linguists have found to be inadequate. While Krashen saw no central role for language production in SLA, other theoretical viewpoints support the common-sense view that speaking the language helps in learning it (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 15), which is presumably why Chomsky conceded that children gain language through exposure to "scraps" of adult language (in Owens, 1988, p. 41).

A strongly contrasted view of the input hypothesis argues that, since most of the incoming L2 input is comprehensible without any need for analysis, there is therefore no need to learn it (Swain, 1985; Swain and Lapkin 1995). Thus the output hypothesis is based on the notion that articulating our utterances in our chosen SL forces us to make grammatical choices and to experiment with how target grammar actually works and affords us feedback (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 15). Thus far, language learning from a language input and language output perspective has been discussed. However, current theorists of L2 learning from a "performance" perspective hold the notion that in L2 interaction both speaking and listening, in which the learner is engaged, are viewed as an integral and mutually influential whole. Two perspectives on interaction are found, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic. From a psycholinguistic perspective, L2 interaction provides opportunities to SL individuals to fine-tune the language input they are receiving, thus ensuring that the input is appropriate to their present level of development of their L2 knowledge. This means that learners need the chance to interact with NS openly and freely, and ask for clarification immediately when they do not understand; this results in utterances at the right level of difficulty needed to promote language learning (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 16). This has particular relevance to the context of this study, as the envisaged sample of learners do not live in an English environment and thus there is no "spontaneous reinforcement" of what they have learned (Singh, 2009, p. 283).

A controversial view of interaction is the notion that negative evidence is necessary or helpful to L2 development. Negative evidence entails language input which lets the learner know of unacceptable forms according to target language norms. Here corrections are offered formally by teachers or informally through conversations with

NSs; this process is controversial because corrections do not seem effective or have any direct influence on learning a SL. It is argued that children do not respond to systematic correction by teachers as corrective feedback is apparently erratic, vague, and inopportune, and is therefore ineffective (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 228). Current theorists believe on positive evidence and find corrective feedback irrelevant. The psycholinguistic view is that of the learner as operating and developing a relatively autonomous L2 system. This dichotomy of positive, and negative evidence will not be elaborated any further as it is to the notion that both can have some influence in L2 learning that the researcher subscribes.

Sociolinguistic views of interaction are different, in that they see the language learning process as essentially social, as both the identity of the learner and their language knowledge are collaboratively constructed and reconstructed in the course of interaction. It is argued that the SL learner is scaffolded into using new L2 forms (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 16).

2.11.6 Views of the language learner

According to Mitchell and Myles (1998, p. 17), a SL learner is one who embarks on learning an additional language, at least some years after she/he has started to acquire the first language. This learning may take place formally and systematically in a classroom setting, or it may take place through informal social contact such as work, migration or other social contexts which bring speakers of different languages into contact making communication a necessity. However, within the context of this research, the SL learner is an "African" isiZulu speaking school-going child who uses English as MoI. According to Mitchell and Myles, (1998, p. 17), this learner may be learning the target language to gain "access to economic development and public life". It is thus imperative to understand who and what the learner is in the context of language acquisition.

2.11.7 The learner as a language processor

Linguists and psycholinguists, concentrating on the route of language development of learners, have minimized or disregarded the social and contextual differences among

learners. There seems to be controversy on the age of learners; questioning whether a child and an adult learn in essentially similar ways or whether there is a critical age which divides younger and older learners. However, it is well-respected in scientific circles that 50 % of all human learning occurs in the first three years of life and that 80 % of all brain learning, typically, occurs in the first 8 years of life (National center for infants, toddlers, and families, 2012). It is argued that learning mechanisms atrophy as learners' ability for language acquisition declines with age, but some have developed supplementary ways to compensate for this decline (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 23; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 18).

It was Lenneberg (1967) who theorized, through the critical period hypothesis (CPH), that the acquisition of language is an innate process determined by biological factors which limit the CP of acquisition of a language (Collier, 1987/1988). Theorists posited that the actual age considered as the critical period ranged from two years to puberty (Collier, 1987, 1988; Hyltenstam, 1992; Long, 1990b). After the CP, language acquisition becomes difficult, with learners not achieving the same level of fluency and comprehension in their SL as in their first language (Collier, 1987, 1988; Hyltenstam, 1992; Long, 1990b). This is why few adult learners come to blend indistinguishably with the community of the target language (Mitchell and Myles, 1998, pp. 12-13). The best ages for language learning lie within the period between birth to age 10, both in terms of the rate of learning and ultimate attainment, which is crucial for this research as it has bearing on learners' competence, proficiency and performance in English as MoI.

2.11.8 Differences between individual learners

It has been found that SL learners differ greatly in the degree of ultimate success which they achieve, which can be attributed to what social psychologists call individual differences between learners. Learners are divided into those with two distinct traits, namely, the cognitive and the affective (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 18).

Cognitive factors: It has been found that learners with a generally better measure of intelligence, as well as those learners who seem to have a general flair for language learning, tend to do well in L2 learning. Another phenomenon is that more proficient

learners employ different language learning strategies from those used by less proficient learners (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 19).

Affective factors: Social psychologists see a correlation between the attitudes of the learner towards the target language, its speakers, the learning context and the success or failure of L2 learning. A positive relationship exists between language attitudes, with greater academic demands creating higher levels of motivation and L2 achievement (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 19; Snow & Hoefnagel-Hohle, 1978). Another factor that contributes to the success of L2 learning is language anxiety (and its obverse, self-confidence) typified by self-belittling and feelings of apprehension leading to learners being less willing to speak or even to engage target language speakers in a conversation (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 19). Anxiety is often related to sense of threat to the learner's self-concept in the learning situation, such as a learner's fears of being ridiculed for a mistake. It is thus suggested that language anxiety has a negative relationship with learning success, while some suggest the opposite for learner self-confidence obverse. Thus real acquisition would seem to develop slowly through comprehensible input under low anxiety situations (Krashen, 1981, pp. 6-7).

Another highly studied social factor impeding language development is the issue of extraverts and introverts. Extraverts acquire a SL better than introverts, presumably because extraverts are willing to try to communicate even if they are not sure they will succeed, as opposed to those who are typically quiet, reserved people who tend to avoid interaction (Hashem, Abo-Elenien, Dewaele & Furnham, 2000).

2.11.9 The learner as a social being

Thus far two perspectives on the learner have been highlighted namely, based on universal characteristics and based on individual characteristics. However, the learner must essentially be seen as a social being both influenced by and influencing the social contexts. This brings into focus the learner's relationship with the social context and the learning opportunities which are made available. The learning process itself may be viewed as essentially social and inextricably entangled in L2 use and L2 interaction. Two differences appear which distinguish this view of the learner from the last. Firstly, seeing the learner as a social being leads to concerns with a range of socially

constructed elements in the learner's identity and his/her relationship with learning. Thus class, ethnicity, and gender make their appearance as potentially significant for L2 learning research (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 20). Second, the relationship between the learner and the social context of learning should be considered dynamic, reflexive and constantly changing. While the "individual differences" tradition saw that the relationship of the learner's identity and learning hinged on innate qualities of the learner (e.g. aptitude, anxiety) which were relatively fixed, the socially oriented researchers view innate qualities as being constantly "reconstructed" in 2 experiences and interactions (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 20).

2.12   THEORIES ON SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Three major theories have been identified in the continuum of SLA. On the one extreme, the Nativist theories are diametrically opposed to the Environmentalist theories, thus advancing mutually exclusive variables for SLA.

This research is essentially governed by the Interactionist theory, which takes on a more causal-process form rather than the set-of-laws form, as it not only provides an interim explanation of the process being investigated, but also motivates and direct the research towards relevant data in order to provide new explanations for these phenomena (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991).

A brief overview of Nativist, Environmentalist and Interactionist theories shows its influences on SLA. Nativist theories on SLA hold learning is possible as a result of an innate biological endowment (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 227; Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 220). Environmentalist theories hold that one's nurture is of more importance to development than one's nature or innate contributions. It is argued that innate contributions do not play any role except to provide the internal structure which environmental forces can then shape (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 244). Interactionist theories contest the theories of both nativists and environmentalists, arguing that, although language acquisition is generally a cognitive process through which the child makes sense out of his world, it is undeniable that children are also social beings, and their learning of language both reflects and uses their social selves and must take place within the context of social interaction (Larsen-Freeman & Long,

1991; Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 225). Differential influences of family, peers, and formal education, as well as the beliefs about nature of language and development which the community holds must also be sought (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 221).

Within the three theories about SLA, six hypotheses have been identified which influence ESL learners' academic performance (Saville-Troike, 1989). Each of these hypotheses views language acquisition and learning from different perspectives and shows how different variables either facilitate or constrain language proficiency and competence. These hypotheses show how the differing levels of competence or proficiency in the target language, especially when used as MoI, impact on the academic performance of ESL learners.

Given that knowledge is transmitted through language, grasping a fuller understanding of these hypotheses proves invaluable to teachers and other language practitioners. It alerts teachers with knowledge on SLA and provides them with critical strategies to improve SLA and learning, especially among ESL learners, thus impacting on learners' academic performance. These hypotheses are: the acquisition/learning hypothesis; Natural order hypothesis, Monitor hypothesis; Input hypothesis; Interaction hypothesis (with Incomprehensible input hypothesis and Comprehensive output hypothesis) and Affective filter hypothesis dealing with integrative and instrumental motivation (see Appendix B for a more detailed account).

2.13   CONCLUSION

The literature review on English SLA, especially when English is used as MoI, has attempted to present a balanced view of the nature of the challenges. Research findings, interspersed with opinions of authoritative linguists from various parts of the world have been proffered and critically evaluated. The focus of this Chapter has been on use of foreign language, especially English as MoI within the South African context, and its impact on the academic performance of English SL learners. Despite literature indicating that the major apparent cause of poor academic performance of SL learners is the language of instruction, various other factors were considered in justification of colonial language choices. Since most African countries use a former colonial language as MoI, various theories on SLA were scrutinised together with different models for

teaching in second language. This chapter discussed the issues surrounding English as MoI together with its attendant challenges faced by ESL learners. The next Chapter examines the methodology employed in the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Having provided a theoretical perspective dealing with current literature on English as MoI for English second language (ESL) learners, the research framework for this study is provided.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1 Methodology

Due to the nature of this study and as exemplified by various authors, a methodological triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative methods was adopted (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 275; Creswell & Clark, 2007, p. 5; Knafl, Pettengill, Bevis, & Kirschoff, 1988; Patton, 2002; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The purpose of a triangulated mixed methods design was to get a better understanding of the research problem through merging, analysis and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data collected simultaneously (Creswell, 2008, p. 557). Furthermore, there is the danger in qualitative research of a selective perception, where the researcher observes only that which supports the theoretical conclusions. This, it is suggested, may be partially avoided by augmenting your qualitative observations with quantitative ones (Babbie, 1998, p. 298). It is understood that there are no clear windows into the inner life of an individual, where subtle variations in ongoing human experience occur. Any gaze into their social construct is "filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 12). There can be no objective observations. Respondents are seldom able to give full explanations for their actions; all they can offer are accounts about what they did and why. As a consequence, qualitative researchers employ a range of interpretive methods in seeking "better ways to make more understandable the worlds of experience that have been studied" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 12). Triangulation of methodologies enhances the accuracy or credibility of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 275; Creswell, 2008, p. 266; Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 123; Sorantakos, 1993, p. 168).

Granted, some authors (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985; Smith & Heshusius, 1986) express the view that combination of both methodologies is highly problematic; but there exists sufficient justification for the blend. De Vos et al. (2005, p. 359) are explicit that researchers should identify a single research approach for the overall design of research. It is argued that use of both approaches adequately and accurately will be time consuming and very costly thus extending studies beyond the designated time limits (De Vos et al., 2005). However, the overall advantage of a combined approach is considered worth the effort, and some of the short-comings were circumvented by clearly delimiting this study to focus within its given parameters. This necessarily meant that the researcher had to set clear boundaries to maintain focus on the small area which was to be investigated in-depth (Nelleke, 2004, p. 23). Qualitative and quantitative methods of research were used in this study because different methods were warranted at different stages of the research to gain a more holistic view of the phenomenon.

Qualitative research, as an inquiry process, is concerned with understanding a social or human problem in its natural settings in terms the meanings people bring to them from the actor's own frame of reference (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2; Leedy, 1997, p. 105; Nunan, 1992, p. 4). Nunan (1992, p. 4) also considers qualitative methodology as being "descriptive and inductive" beginning with general questions about "the phenomenon they are studying or with more specific questions and with a special focus" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 117). Furthermore, qualitative research method aims "to discover phenomena such as patterns of second language behaviour not previously described and to understand these phenomena from the perspective of participants in the activity" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 120). The task of a qualitative researcher, thus, is to "capture what people say and do as a product of how they interpret the complexity of their world, to understand events from the viewpoints of the participants" (Burns, 1997, p. 12). Therefore qualitative research, drawing on "multiple realities and socially constructed meanings that exist within every context", can "reveal subtleties and complexities that could go undetected through the use of more standardized measures" (Burns, 1997, p. 12-14). Burns advances a further advantage of qualitative descriptions as their descriptive and narrative style could benefit the practitioner, the teacher, who might lack the relevant knowledge of more sophisticated measurement techniques (Burns, 1997, p. 14).

Quantitative approaches deal with inquiry into a social or human problem measured by numbers and analysed with statistical procedures, to determine authenticity of predictive generalizations of the theory (Leedy, 1997, pp. 104-105). When one subscribes to the notion that the social world is like the natural world and directs scientific investigation at analysing relationships and regularities between selected variables, then the researcher is adopting a quantitative approach (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2001, p. 7). When the principal concern of the research is an understanding of individual's experiences and interpretations of the world in which he or she finds himself or herself, the approach now takes on "a qualitative as well as quantitative aspect" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 7). This emphasizes the inextricable intertwinement of social reality with the natural world; should the phenomenon being investigated in social sciences be so enmeshed that a single approach cannot succeed in encompassing human beings in their full complexity it necessitates researchers having to use both approaches (De Vos, et. al, 2005; Mouton & Marais, 1990). Thus a qualitative and quantitative approach represents complementary components of the research process (Leedy, 1997, p. 105). While some social science researchers may describe these approaches as incompatible, others see value in a variety of approaches as this allows us to "know and understand different things about the world" (Leedy, 1997, p. 105). Therefore by "adopting the point of view of convergence and complementarity we may eventually be in a position to understand more about human nature and social reality" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 360).

The inseparability of quantitative and qualitative methods was captured most richly by Campbell (in De Vos et al., 2005, p. 364) who argued that the quantitative method cannot exist without qualitative knowledge of research conventions, and that it was impossible to express qualitative perspectives without communications being partially amenable to quantitative representations. The compatible fusion of qualitative and quantitative methods in a single research study converges with the assertion of pragmatism serving to increase the concrete and practical methodological options available to researchers (Patton, 2002). Pragmatism means judging the quality of the study by its purpose, resources available, procedures followed and the end results within the given context for a specific audience (Patton, 2002). Being pragmatic means being able to use methodologically appropriate approaches which enhances methodological quality by recognizing that "different methods are appropriate for different situations"

(De Vos, et. al, 2005 p. 359). In subscribing to the tenets of a mixed-model pragmatist viewpoint, both the qualitative and quantitative approaches were adopted at different phases of the research process (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Thus, in an attempt to provide a more holistic picture of a given phenomenon, data, observer, theory and methodological triangulation were considered appropriate, as it provided greater confidence,(De Vos et al., 2005; Padgett, 1998, p. 32). The best approach in achieving a total picture of the phenomenon studied is then to mix quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods (Posavac & Carey, 1989, p. 242).

3.2.2 Ethnography

Within this mixed-mode methodology and utilising a phenomenological orientation to inquiry, this research undertook a snap shot case study using ethnographic study methods. Ethnography involves the study of characteristics of a particular group or society in a real-world situation through direct observation of their behaviour (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 279; Nunan, 1992, p. 55). A key part of this method is to see first-hand what occurs; failing which, ethnographers would ask subjects and others for their recollections, points of view and interpretations (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 487). The main objective of ethnography is to provide a holistic picture of the group being studied through analysis, interpretation, and explanations reduced to impartial written accounts of lived experiences (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 271; Nunan, 1992, p. 57). Ethnography is most succinctly described as learning from people and understanding their way of life from their perspective (Spradley, 1979, p. 3).

However, researchers need to be circumspect about the ethnographer's own cultural points of view, biases and experiences, which might cloud the explanations and descriptions of the foreign cultures being studied (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 280; De Vos et al., 2005, p. 271). Researchers are cautioned that ethnographic fieldwork has the continual potential for moral and ethical dilemmas, which, while not necessarily being able to be identified specifically beforehand, must be addressed (at last in principle) prior to actual data collection (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 271).

3.2.3   Case study

Since phenomenological studies attempt to "understand people's perception, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation" (De Vos et. al, 2005, p. 264) a snap shot case study provided an opportunity to view contexts which are unique and dynamic and to "report the complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors as a unique instance" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 181). A case study is a process of in-depth exploration of an event, programme or a single individual or a bounded system, involving multiple sources of data that are rich in context, in order to learn more about the unknown or poorly understood situation (Creswell, 2008, p. 272; De Vos et. al, 2005; Leedy, 1997; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 114 & 149). Case studies can yield "valuable scientific information when they take place in settings where many variables are measured" (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 280). The study is bounded by time, place or some physical boundaries (Creswell, 2008; Leedy, 1997; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). According to Hitchcock and Hughes (in Cohen et al., 2001, p. 182) case studies have the following characteristics:

- They are set in temporal, geographical, organisational, institutional and other contexts that enable boundaries to be drawn around the case;
- They can be defined with reference to characteristics defined by individuals and groups involved; and
- They can be defined by participant's roles and functions in the case.

Furthermore, a phenomenological inquiry attempting to understand and interpret the meaning that subjects give to their everyday lives makes a snap shot case study appropriate as it provides unique examples "of real people in real situations, which enables readers to have clear understanding of ideas" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 181). This is important, as case studies "provide fine grain details that provide powerful human-scale data from which decisions regarding development strategies can be made where theory can be infused with practice" (Dorasamy, 2005, p. 39). Thus, a snap-shot case study, having the following hallmarks, made it appropriate for this study (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 182):

- It is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case.

- It blends a description of events with the analysis of them.
- It highlights specific events that are relevant to the case.
- The researcher is integrally involved in the case.

3.2.4 Phenomenology

In order to fully appreciate and understand the impact of English as MoI on the academic performance of English Second Language (ESL) learners, particularly isiZulu learners, a phenomenological approach was considered appropriate. The rationality concerned with understanding draws its knowledge sources from the interpretive sciences, particularly phenomenology, which relies on interpretation and description in order to disclose meaning in everyday life (Hultgren, 1982, p. 8). Phenomenological studies, therefore aim at discovering subjects' experiences, in order to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and how they make sense of a particular situation (Babbie, 1998, p. 281; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 2; De Vos et al., 2005, p. 264). Vandenberg (1997, p. 10) describes phenomenology as the description of phenomenon in the lived-world or the description of movements of consciousness that enable us to become aware of phenomena, or both of these together. Social sciences should focus on the ways the life world (the taken-for-granted experiential world) is produced and experienced by others (Denzin & Lincoln (1994). Phenomenology therefore aims at the interpretation and explanation of human action and thought "through descriptions of the foundational structures of the reality" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263).

This approach provided the researcher with a means of generating a synopsis of how human beings construct and give meaning to experiences of a phenomenon, topic or concept (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 204). Although phenomenologists differ among themselves on certain issues, there is general consensus that phenomenology holds subjective consciousness as important, with consciousness actively constituting the objects of experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263), bestowing meaning; also that by a certain kind of reflection on consciousness, we gain direct knowledge (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 23). This means that human beings are engaged in continuously interpreting, creating and giving meaning to, justifying and rationalizing their actions, thus constructing and changing the everyday interpretations of their worlds (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 28). According to Gurwitsch,

consciousness involves mental faculties such as convergence, concordance and agreement between these operations and their outcomes, which make us accept the objects as really existing (in Lee & Mandelbaum, 1969, p. 27).

The central medium for the typifications of human consciousness is language, which thereby gives meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). This provides "a methodological orientation for a phenomenology of social life concerned with the relation between language use and the objects of experience" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). Thus objects of one's reality are catalytic to the meanings of a word, following a correspondence theory of meaning. Within this framework it is proposed that "the essential task of language is to convey information, to describe reality" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). Words, viewed as a system of typifications, can therefore be seen as "constitutive building blocks of everyday reality" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). It was also suggested that "social phenomenology rests on the tenet that social interaction constructs as much as conveys meaning" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). Schutz realized that people use a "stock of knowledge" gathered over time, called commonsense knowledge, to objectify social forms (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). These stocks of knowledge, producing a familiar world, and acting as verifiers, help members make meaning of experiences. This stock of knowledge helps build communities through intersubjective understanding, and helps co-ordinate actions. This familiarity is "because of the typified manner by which knowledge is articulated" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263).

It is suggested that the taken-for-granted stance of language use and typifications creates the assumption that others experience the world in basically the same way we do (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). These assumptions lead to the fallacious belief that we "can therefore understand one another in dealings in and with the world" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). We thus take our subjectivity for granted, overlooking its constitutive character, presuming that we intersubjectively share the same reality, which seems to perpetuate itself.

Thus, while stressing the constitutive nature of consciousness, it is argued that social scientists should focus on the ways experiential world is produced and experienced by members (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). It is to the notion of experience that the

philosophic traditions of phenomenology can be called upon to inform. Consequently, phenomenology as philosophy and as method should have as its primary objectives the direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously experienced. A characteristic feature of a phenomenological method is that assumptions about people, the nature of learning and "views of knowledge are constantly pushed to the surface" to be examined reflectively and clarifications sought, (Hultgren, 1982, pp. 7-8). Hultgren (1982, p. 8) summarizes this approach by stating that phenomenology is the ability to create opportunities for seeing through rich experiences in a variety of situations requiring repeated visits to the grounded structures of common educational phenomena and experiences. Cohen et al., (2001, p. 24) agree with the above assertion by stating that the experiences should be a stream of lived experiences which have no meaning in themselves except that which we can impute retrospectively using reflection.

While consciousness is a fundamental concept in phenomenology, it is not limited to mere innerness or introspection, as some critics have claimed. Greene (1973) refers to consciousness as experienced context, wherein each person's life experience is as a result of multiple ways in which the individual comes in touch with the world. The concept of "life world" is central to phenomenologists' thinking, and great emphasis is placed on each person's biographical situation. Greene (1978, p. 2) contends that people feel more grounded in the own personal histories of their lived lives because of their consciousness of their evolving experiences. Essential to the concept of experiences are not only ways of knowing the world, but ways of being-in-the-world. Heidegger addresses the fundamental philosophic question of "what is the meaning of being?" and as such, "provides an ontological grounding for educational experiences" (in Hultgren, 1982, p. 5). To Heidegger the "source of meaning is not found in a relationship of knowing but in a relationship of being. Knowing is only a special way of our being-in-the-world" (in Hultgren, 1982, p. 6). Phenomenologists argue that explaining the complex nature of social life cannot be adequately explained through "the detached objectivity of experimental research", but requires the researcher's participation through "being-in" with the people being studied rather than taking on a spectator stance of "looking in" (Hultgren, 1982, p. 6; Mertens, 1998, p. 62). This therefore requires that the researcher gets close to the subject and views the world from the perspective of the insider (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 33).

In phenomenology the subjective point of view serves as guarantee that the experiences of social reality will not be clouded by or replaced by "a fictional non-existing world constructed by the scientific observer" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). Since phenomenological studies attempt to understand "the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it", it should be clear that the investigation of lived experience is a central precept of this approach, which includes the investigated and the investigator (Mertens, 1998, p. 11). It is argued that getting real understanding is possible through "experiences itself that meaning and understandings are uncovered" (Hultgren, 1982, p. 8).

Hultgren (1982, p. 8) argues that in pursuit of fallacious research objectivity, the researcher is extricated from "being-in", leading to a "deficient mode of existence". By extrapolation then it can be deduced that a full understanding of what is human is not possible because of the methodological choice to omit being there. Since research is a mode of being, researchers enter the subject's "life world" or "life setting" and place themselves in the shoes of the subject, educing understanding and interpreting the meaning that subjects give to their everyday lives through being human and interacting with others in lived experiences (Creswell, 1998; De Vos et al., 2005, p. 270),

It is argued that the human world comprises various provinces of meaning varying in degrees of "consciousness, spontaneity, bracketing, sociality, self-experience and temporality" (Vandenberg, 1997, p. 7) which help to view the everyday life-world as the primary reality. In order to look beyond the details of everyday mundaneity to the essences underlying them, Husserl (in Cohen et al., 2001, p. 24) exhorts researchers to "put the world in brackets" so that "social action takes place within the natural attitude" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). A phenomenological process of bracketing "consciously avoids the use of theoretical, explanatory constructs, setting aside one's taken-for-granted orientation to it" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263) and frees researchers from their usual ways of perceiving the world. This process facilitates descriptions "in an unprejudiced manner phenomenon as they occur in the lived-world" (Vandenberg, 1997, p. 7).

The observer, by shedding off the layers of ontological judgements and prejudices, is able to focus innocently on how members of the life world produce the "recognizable,

intelligible forms they treat as real" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 263). It would be advisable, then, to move the researcher from the objectified third-person perspective, to the first-person involvement so as to allow the option of "being there" and being part of the unfolding inquiry of lived experience (Hultgren, 1982, p. 12). It is suggested that research is a personal venture which, aside from its social benefits, contributes to one's self-realisation (Hultgren, 1982). In pursuit of self-realisation, the researcher integrates with the process of data collection whereby "the researcher goes into the field" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 264). This is mainly done by means of naturalistic methods of study, analysing the conversations and interaction that researchers have with subjects. Data are systematically collected and meanings, themes and general descriptions of the experience analysed within a specific context" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 270). However, it is necessary to be circumspect about the ethnographer's own cultural biases, which might lead to potential moral and ethical pitfalls. It is thus suggested that qualitative researchers should make comprehensive observations at the outset and then winnow out any elements which originated in their own worldview rather than in the world-view of the people being observed and/or interviewed (Babbie, 1998, p. 281; Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 280; De Vos et al., 2005, p. 271). Eventually, the researcher, analysing data within a specific context, should reduce the experiences to a central meaning or essence of the experience, depicting essentially a description of the experiences studied as the product (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 270).

Thus, through a phenomenological orientation, an interpretive enterprise was undertaken to explicate, make visible and understandable the actions and perceptions of teachers and learners in the curriculum process on what impact English, as MoI, has on the academic performance of ESL learners where objects and experiences are subjectively and meaningfully constituted, in their mother tongue, i.e. isiZulu, and communicated in the world of everyday life.

Gambu's assertion (1999) that nothing will be revealed unless thorough investigation is conducted is not necessarily so. This is because "underlying modes of rationality inherent in educational theory and practice must be related to philosophies of knowledge rooted in paradigms other than the dominant empirical science tradition" (Hultgren, 1982, pp. 3-4). It would appear that the existing technological mentality has reduced the interest in philosophical reflection concerning means and ends in education.

This fixation with means and ends in the education milieu has led to a myopic view that overlooks modes of rationality based on critique and understanding: "The philosophic traditions of critical science and interpretive science are significant in this regard" (Hultgren, 1982). The basic tenet of critical science is therefore to expose oppressive and dominating views/practices in order to "reconstruct existing views and practices to perceive what they really are" (Hultgren, 1982, p. 2). In this case the critique concerns the use of English as MoI in most schools in South Africa, despite the majority of learners/teachers being ESL learners who seem to fare badly in a system that favours English.

Within the context of an interpretive framework, academic performance is seen as the study of educational experiences, concerned with making visible and understandable the actions and perceptions of teachers and learners in the academic milieu. However, in subscribing to the first-person involvement so as to allow the researcher to "be there" and be part of the unfolding inquiry of lived experience of subjects from a phenomenological orientation, this raises the question of inherent risks of the dichotomy of the Orient and the Occident, or the concept of the other.

Said's dichotomy between the Orient and Occident has created a division between these two groups, so much so that the concept of the "other" has emerged (Said in Biseth, 2006). This concept of the "Other" has been created primarily by academics from the West (the Occident), of people from the Orient. Analogous to the Orient-Occident dichotomy, is what Fine calls the "Self and Other" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 70-81). Fine argues that the concepts of "Self and Other" are entangled. This relationship, as lived between researcher and informants, is "typically obscured in social science texts, protecting privilege, securing distance, and laminating the contradictions" (Fine in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 72). Thus the qualitative researcher, despite denials, is always caught tenuously at the hyphen, the junction between the researcher and the subject (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). It is argued that, ironically, by stipulating the binary opposition of the Other and Self or Occident and Orient tensions, "one detours away from investigation of what is between" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 72). Unravelling "the blurred boundaries 'between' … constitutes a critical task of qualitative researchers" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 72). Fine, (in Denzin & Lincoln, (1994, p. 72) uses the analysis of the home as a "site for constituting Self and for expelling

Others". This implies that the researcher conducts the research and leaves without gaining the full impact of the lived experience.

It is argued that, should the researcher opt to simply write *about* those "Othered", then we deny the hyphen. However, should researchers slip into a "contradictory discourse of individualism, personalogic theorizing, and decontextualization, we inscribe the Other" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 72). Should researchers opt to engage in social struggles with those who have been exploited and subjugated, it is claimed that researchers work the hyphen, revealing more about the researchers and paradoxically accentuating the structures of "Othering". This concept of "working the hyphen" is a cogent and appropriate point to the context of this study, as it set out to explore the impact of English as MoI with ESL learners whose history has been steeped in apartheid-based dehumanisation, debasing their languages and cultures. The researcher, being an intruder, as based on the racial, geographical and socio-economic divide, entered the life space of a community which had suffered the indignity of being "children of a lesser God". The researcher's capacity, being an outsider, to elicit rich, thick descriptions on their interpretations of reality, only to be reported on clinically and divorced from their scrutiny, is challenged. The position of the oppressed is: "I'm tired of hearing you speak for me. Only I can speak for myself. I'll speak for my people, and these issues" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 80). This challenges the ethnographic researcher, especially within the context of this study, where the risk of romanticizing narratives and the concomitant retreat from analysis lurks.

Fine (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) suggests that working the hyphen means the researchers' intertwinement with the context and informants. It demands that researchers see how these relations obtain us better data: "limit what we feel free to say, expand our minds and constrict our mouths, engage us in intimacy and seduce us into complicity, make us quick to interpret and hesitant to write" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 72). This implies that a collaborative relationship should be formed between the researchers and subjects for discussion of the parameters of the research in order to elicit and report as closely as possible the reality as it is. Spivak, (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 75) therefore exhorts that researchers should not write reports as though they know the investigated and thus speak on their behalf, but should rather listen attentively

to them and acknowledge them as constructors and agents of knowledge. This therefore calls for vicarious ways to experience the "other".

However, this dichotomy is not restricted to the "Orient-Occident", "Selves-Others" tension only, but could apply equally to other constellations. Accordingly, in Biseth's paper (2006) the use of the "other" has been contextualized to mean the researcher rather than the respondents. Said's writing (in Biseth, 2006) also suggested a power imbalance being present, as it was the Occident who defined the characteristics of the "Other". This power imbalance plays itself out in most research, as is the case with this study, where the researcher, in entering the subject's "life world" or "life setting" and placing himself in the shoes of the subject, can be seen to be an intruder into territory imbued with its own cultural, socio-economic and socio-political issues which impact heavily on the performance of ESL learners. According to the writings of Fine (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 73), "Self" means the researcher, while "Others" means the subjects. This definition of the "Other", referring to the subjects, will be maintained for the purposes of this study. Thus the concept of the "Other" carries the connotation of lacking "any redeeming community traditions or collective voice of historical weight" and the researcher's account is "reduced to the imagery of the colonizer" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 73).

The works of qualitative researchers invariably become victim to the concept of "Othering" when we knowingly or not decide to work the hyphen. Fine (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 74) therefore argued that, in the process of analysis of the lived situations observed, researchers tend to cloud their analysis by writing in politically and socially acceptable terms so as not to offend but still remain acceptable to society's whims as though researchers remained neutral through the processes.

Stemming from the foregoing discussion, it is argued that there are no innocent ethnographers as the "eye of ethnography [often connects with] the I of imperialism" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 74). Thus qualitative researchers will continually grapple with the ethical decisions about how deeply to work with/for/despite those cast as others, and how seamlessly to represent the hyphen. It is for this reason that qualitative researchers must be guarded about the problems of describing foreign cultures from the ethnographer's own biased point of view.

3.3   SAMPLING

Sampling is the process of taking a representative portion of a population with some common defining characteristic for study (Babbie, 1998, p. 192; Creswell, 2008, p. 152; De Vos, et. al, 2005, p. 203). Specific sampling techniques allow the researcher to determine and/or control the likelihood of specific individuals being included or excluded in the study. The most basic consideration in sampling is "size and representativeness" (De Vos, et. al, 2005, p. 82). A sample is considered representative if the aggregate characteristics of the sample closely approximate the same characteristics as the population relevant to the research in question (Babbie, 1998, p. 200; De Vos, et. al, 2005, p. 196).

The target population for this study was non-language subject teachers teaching ESL learners and ESL isiZulu speaking learners using English as MoI, at FET band, secondary level in KwaZulu-Natal. Because of time and human and financial resource constraints, this research was restricted to a purposive sample of 3 schools in the eThekwini region. Owing to the heterogeneity of the target population, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was considered appropriate in identifying 25 grade 12 isiZulu speaking learners in each of the three schools. This was in keeping with Babbie (1998, p. 195) who argues that it is considered appropriate for the researcher to "select your sample on the basis of your own knowledge of the population … in short, based on your judgement and the purpose of the study".

For the semi-structured, focused-group interview, a non-probability convenience sampling technique was used in identifying the five volunteer non-language teachers per school (Appendix E – semi-structured interview schedule).

3.4   PILOTING OF RESEARCH

De Vos et al., (2005) suggested that the researcher undertakes a small scale investigation, in order to identify possible problems and risks, referred to as pilot, which serves as a valuable avenue to gaining practical knowledge of and insight into the research area (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 56). It is envisaged that the pilot alerts researchers to "possible unforeseen problems which may emerge during the main investigation" and prepares the researcher for possible errors that may occur (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 208).

Furthermore, it is argued that the reliability of interviews can be enhanced by careful piloting (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 121). It can also be argued that there exists a need for a pilot study in cases where more than one cultural or language group is included in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2006). Accordingly, a pilot study must be conducted ensuring that observational categories are appropriate, exhaustive and effectively operationalized for the purpose of the study (Cohen et al., 2001, p.129).

Therefore, during the pilot phase, the researcher exposed the research frame to establish fitness of purpose or validity in terms of its goals, resources, research population, "general level of response to be expected" and procedures for data collection (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 263). The pilot helped determine competence in individuals within the sample to complete questionnaires, but, more importantly it helped to identify mistakes or ambiguous question phrased by the researcher that respondents could not answer (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 244; Creswell, 2008). A pilot test conducted in two schools, therefore, provided feedback from a small number of individuals (not included in the final sample) which informed the researcher to modify or change instruments or contents of instruments to enhance validity of the research process (Creswell, 2008). While a pilot study may initially prove costly in terms of time, it may ultimately prove cost-effective by letting you know, "after only a small investment on your part, which approaches will and will not be effective in helping you solve your overall research problem" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 116). After piloting, instruments are to be edited in order "to achieve the required degree of reliability" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 195).

3.5   ETHICAL ISSUES

While data collection is central for the successful completion of the research in general, it must adhere to ethical issues of social research. Subscribing to the tenets of ethics is paramount, as social research is an intrusion into people's lives, requiring them to reveal personal information to strangers (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 521). Therefore, data collection was preceded by the researcher having obtained permission from several individuals, including ethical clearance from Durban University of Technology and permission from the KZN Department of Education, (Appendix C) (Creswell, 2008, p. 157). A letter (Appendix D) outlining the research topic and purpose, and requesting consent was read, dated and signed by all participants (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 108).

Furthermore, since learners were also involved in this research, principals' informed consent was sought through the same letter, as they are the legal custodians of learners (Appendix D) (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 108).

As research has an ethical-moral dimension, this requires that the researcher maintains a moral and professional obligation to be guided by ethics, even when the researched are unaware of ethics (Neuman, 2011). Basic tenets of ethics in research devolves this responsibility to the researcher to protect the participants from any harm, which is why issues of no harm to participants, voluntary participation, right to withdraw, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality were addressed in the letter to participants to ensure that participants were comfortable in being respondents in this research. Anonymity ensures that the participants remain unknown, while confidentiality means that the researcher is able to identify a respondent and his/her response but essentially promises not to make the connection known to the public; the researcher holds it in confidence or keeps it from the public (Babbie, 1995, p. 451; Cohen et al., 2001, p. 62). Respondents of interviews and questionnaires were requested to fill in their names and sign consent letters for quality control in data collection and verification purposes. However, all identifying information was removed as soon as it was no longer necessary and replaced with identification numbers in a master file linking numbers to names thus permitting for later correction of missing or contradictory information (Babbie, 1995, pp. 451-452; Cohen et al., 2005, p. 63; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 108). Furthermore, interviewees were also assured that the transcription were undertaken by the researcher only and was made available only to the supervisor when requested. Further, in order to ensure anonymity, all participants and entities, including schools, were given pseudonyms. Once necessary permission and consent was obtained, data collection followed.

3.6   DATA COLLECTION

Data from questionnaires were coded and captured on excel spreadsheets, using simple and grouped frequency distribution tables. Interviews and observations were categorised into themes and then coded using frequency distribution tables. Using univariate and bivariate analysis, data were analysed and presented in graphical representations in the form of graphs and charts. These data were thereafter interpreted to draw conclusions.

3.6.1 Data collection methods

This study adopted a methodological triangulation of data collection instruments which included questionnaires, interviews, and lesson and ground observations of learners' interactions with each other. Methodological triangulation is defined as obtaining corroborating evidence using the same method on different occasions or different methods on the same object of study (Babbie and Mouton, 2006, p. 275; Cohen et al., 2001, p. 113; Creswell, 2008, p. 266; De Vos et al., 2002, p. 341). It was considered advisable to triangulate in order to prevent researcher bias and distortions creeping in through exclusive reliance on one method (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 112). Triangulation methods were appropriate, as the strength of one method could make up for the shortcomings of others (Cohen et al., 2001). It is argued that when substantially same results are obtained from different methods of data collection, then there is greater confidence of the findings as it points to the true location of the phenomenon being studied (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 112; De Vos et al., 2002, p. 341).

Finally, triangulation also served as the "critical test by virtue of its comprehensiveness for competing theories" (De Vos et al., 2002, p. 342). In subscribing to the canons of trustworthiness of research findings and in a quest to obtain valid and reliable data, the researcher must ensure "that the measurement procedures and the measurement instruments to be used have acceptable levels of reliability, validity and objectivity (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 160, Mertens, 1998). Delport in De Vos et al., (2005, p. 160) argues that validity has two aspects, that "the instrument actually measures the concept in question" and that "the concept is measured accurately". Triangulation is generally considered "one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research" (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 275).

By using a combination of data collection procedures, the researcher was able to "more easily validate and cross-check findings" (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 314). Thus, through use of multiple measures of the same phenomenon, the capacity to collect substantial information was substantially enhanced since weaknesses of one instrument might be overcome by the strengths of the other (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 275; Cohen et al., 2001, p. 113; Creswell, 2008, p. 557; Sorantakos, 1993, p. 168). This approach

contributed to content validity as, through triangulation, instruments used fairly and comprehensively covered the domain being researched (Cohen et at., 2001, p. 109).

Therefore, through the processes of triangulation of data collection and analysis, the findings of this research, while having a limited degree of generalisability to the greater population, subscribed to standards of dependability, credibility and confirmability to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings.

3.6.2   Data collection instruments

Seliger and Shohamy (1989, 160) make the point that obtaining data from a variety of sources and procedures, inventively and tailored to the situation, results in rich and comprehensive data that generates a global picture of the phenomenon. Further, it is argued that the more contrastive the methods, "the greater the researcher's confidence" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 112). Thus, after careful consideration and through triangulation and subscriptions to the tenets of reliability and validity, data were collected through the use of questionnaire, interview and observation to gain a more holistic picture of the research topic.

a)   Questionnaire
(i) Motivation and design

In SLA research questionnaires are useful in collecting data on phenomenon "which are not easily observed, such as attitudes, motivation, and self-concepts" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 172). The advantage of questionnaires is its time economy because it enjoys the capacity of being self-administered thus least threatening to respondents (Mertens, 1998, p. 314).

The questionnaire comprised mostly of Yes/No responses, rank ordering and Likert rating scale questions, requiring respondents to make a choice, and was useful as a funnelling device for subsequent questions. Such questions also "do not discriminate unduly on the basis of how articulate the respondents are" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 248). While acknowledging that Likert scale questions administered to a small number of subjects do not allow for statistically meaningful calculations, participants' responses proffer relative intensity of feelings on the current topic, which can illuminate the

reasons behind subjects' perceptions and opinions (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 154; Strauss, 2008, p. 48). The Likert scale is advantageous as it combines the opportunity for a flexible response with the ability to determine frequencies, correlations and other forms of quantitative analysis. This affords the researcher the freedom to blend measurements with opinions, based on subjects' responses (Burns, 1997, p. 461; Cohen et al., 2001, p. 253). A disadvantage of the Likert method is that the total score has little clear meaning, since "many patterns of response to the various items may produce the same score" (Burns, 1997, p. 462). This research, though, was not concerned with a total score, but rather on individual attitudes and practices, and respondents' various life's experiences (Strauss, 2008, p. 49).

One of the major challenges of questionnaires used in SL research is that they may not be appropriate, as subjects often experience comprehension difficulties in L2 and there can be no assurance that the subjects properly understand and respond to the questions (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 172). In view of this, a structured questionnaire with a high degree of closed questions was designed as these were "considered to be more efficient than open ones" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 173). However, acknowledging the limited scope of closed questions for capturing the descriptive experiences of respondents, the questionnaire was counterbalanced with some open-ended questions. This enabled respondents to take ownership of data and to write responses in their own words that are authentic, rich, honest and candid, which may not have been otherwise caught (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 255; Dorasamy, 2005, p. 40). Nevertheless, to minimise the dross rate, the actual number of open-ended questions was limited since such questions may elicit repetitive and irrelevant materials which take a long time to analyse (Dorasamy, 2005, p. 40).

In order to prevent respondents from becoming disconcerted by shifting from one topic to the next and back, questions were grouped into different categories and logically sequenced with section headings (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 243; Cohen et al., 2001, p. 259; Dorasamy, 2005, p. 40). This indicated the "overall logic and coherence of the questionnaire to the respondents enabling them to 'find their way' through the questionnaire" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 259). Often, due to several questions having the same set of answer categories being posed, and in order to avoid confusion, the matrix question format was used in the questionnaire design. Babbie & Mouton (2006, p. 242)

enumerate the advantages of this format as it uses space efficiently, and respondents will probably find it easier to complete a set of questions presented in this fashion; this format may also increase the comparability of responses given to different questions for the respondent as well as for the researcher. The drawback of the possibility of a response-set being developed by respondents was countered by interspersing attitude questions throughout to prevent boredom and frustration (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 242; Cohen et al., 2001, pp. 258–259).

The questionnaire comprised four sections. Attitudinal questions on learners' perceptions and opinions on schooling and English as MoI, which respondents "are aching to express" were contained in Section A (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 243). These questions are considered not threatening and it is considered advisable to include these interesting items first to lead the respondent into the questionnaire, thereby increasing co-operation and decreasing the withdrawal rate (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 243; Burns, 1997, p. 475; Cohen et al., 2001, p. 257). Section B, being warm-up questions to stimulate the mind and memory of the respondents, were designed to elicit the impact of English as MoI on their academic performance and descriptive details of challenges learners face when using English as MoI (Burns, 1997, p. 475). The third section, Section C, sought suggestions on appropriate strategies for the improvement of academic performance of ESL learners while maintaining or improving marketability of youth within South Africa and abroad. Demographic data was requested in Section D as an easy format for the completion of the questionnaire. This was ranked last, based on the understanding that placing them at the beginning "gives the questionnaire the initial appearance of a routine form, and the person receiving it may not be motivated to complete it" (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 243).

(ii) Operationalisation

As respondents might lack personal investment in this study and not complete the instrument, the assistance of the school principals and teachers was sought to assist in the administration of questionnaires (Appendix F). The questionnaire was administered to seventy-five (75) grade 12 isiZulu speaking learners as part of the sample population (Creswell, 2008, p. 395). Completed questionnaires (placed into A4 envelopes and

sealed) were deposited into boxes provided. These boxes were collected at a stipulated date and time.

However, only 60 out of 75 questionnaires were completed and returned, yielding a return rate of 80% which most authors consider as excellent, and which therefore may be used for scientific deductions. This also implies that generalisations may be made for a bigger population. However, in light of the fact that this research was of limited scope and bearing in mind the linguistic and racial heterogeneity of the population in South Africa, the researcher maintained focus only on the isiZulu learners in KZN and did not envisage engaging in larger generalisations regarding the whole population.

b)   Interviews

(i) Motivation and design

Interviews serve as an additional means of gathering information by providing access to what is "inside a person's head" to make it possible to measure what a person knows (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 268). Interviews also allow for clarification and common understanding of meanings which provide "an opportunity to capture the deeper interpretations of issues" by teachers using English as MoI with ESL learners (Dorasamy, 2005, p. 42). The focus of interviews was to investigate whether teachers' perceptions of English as MoI with ESL learners correlates with the learners' perceptions, as well as the demands of academic performance. Interviews were also used to elicit information on teachers' views on emerging trends in language policy and to find out how teachers' competence in the use of English as MoI impacted on the academic performance of ESL learners. Interviews provide fertile grounds for capturing the rich diverse experiences of teachers, showing how they perceive the world, or accessing events that may not be observed directly; they also afford participants the opportunity to express their own points of view (Burns, 1997, p. 332; Cohen et al., 2001, p. 267). These can be elicited through probing respondents and obtaining "data that often have not been foreseen" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 166). Thus, in allowing for the maximum freedom of expression of the respondent, "ample and often unexpected information emerges" (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 167). It is suggested that, in order to minimise the dross rate or the amount of irrelevant information that interviews generate, several specific and defined questions, in the form

of a semi-structured interview schedule, be prepared before the interview process (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 294; Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, p. 167). Thus the interview schedule (Appendix E) focused on answering the research questions to avoid "superfluous information" and "data overload" which might have compromised the "efficiency and power" of the researcher's analysis (Huysamen, 2001, p. 89 in Govender, 2011, p. 97).

Focus groups and semi-structured interviews are more flexible in allowing a direction to be followed up in an interview, which is useful when time is limited for the collection of data (Burns, 1997, p. 330; Creswell, 2008, p. 226De Vos et al., 2005, p. 296; Seliger & Shohamy, 1989, pp. 166-167). Focus group interviews yield the best information when collection of data is from a shared understanding perspective through the cooperative interaction among interviewees (Creswell, 2008, p. 226). Another advantage of the focus group interview is the jogging of memories of respondents when listening to responses of other respondents in the interview, thus producing more complete data as "interviewees fill each other's gaps and memory lapses" (Strauss, 2008, p. 50). Given that the teachers interviewed in this study included African teachers who are ESL speakers, focus group interviews allowed the subjects with stronger communication skills to assist the weaker ones in expressing themselves in the unfamiliar language (Strauss, 2008, p. 50).

(ii) Operationalisation

Since the idea of interviews is to garner further information on the same topic but from a different sub-set of the sample population, five teachers from each of the three schools were interviewed. Furthermore, with the express permission of the interviewees, interviews were tape-recorded, and observational notes were also made during the interviews on non-verbal expressions such as gestures, facial expressions and general body language together with paralinguistic features such as intonation and tone of voice De Vos et al., 2002; Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004, p. 73). These additional notes provided indications to the researcher as to whether participants were comfortable or not on the questions posed.

c)   Observation

(i) Motivation and design

It is suggested that ethnographers should achieve a deep understanding of their subjects through immersing themselves in the lives of their subjects and "produce contextualized reproductions and interpretation of the stories told by the subjects" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 42).   This entails qualitative observation occurring in a natural setting, observing people's behaviour occurring naturally, and providing opportunities to understand meanings that they make, which presents opportunities to gather live data (Cohen et al., 2001 p. 305; Mertens, 1998, p. 317).   Observations further enable the researcher to see things which might otherwise be unconsciously missed and to discover things which subjects may be uncomfortable to talk about freely (Cohen et al., 2001 p. 305).   Thus participant observation was used to interact with the participants while collecting data from them (Mertens, 1998, p. 317).

(ii) Operationalisation

The third source of data was from classroom observation of lessons taught and general learner interaction during breaks at school. Having obtained permission from principals and teachers, sitting-in during classroom lessons provided opportunities to gain first-hand insight into the actual use of English as MoI with ESL learners in the classroom. This revealed the level of English usage by both the teachers and learners in their daily interaction with the curriculum.

Furthermore, with the permission of the principal, the researcher was immersed with learners during breaks to observe, as unobtrusively as possible, the communicative inter- and intra-group dialogues of learners. The observation was merely to "listen, instead, to the plural voices of those Othered" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 75). The disclosures revealed, triangulated with the data from the other two data collection instruments, helped unearth "the blurred boundaries 'between' to "reproduce a contextualized reproduction and interpretation of the stories told by the subjects" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 42 & p. 72).

3.7   DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis had as its heuristic objective seeking patterns of responses and determining causal connections of responses to provide solid descriptive narratives of respondents' perspectives on English as MoI and its impact on the academic performance of ESL learners. The heuristic objective acted as compass to the collection of data, which needed to be reduced to an intelligible and interpretable form from which conclusions might be drawn (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989, p. 29; De Vos et al., 2005, p. 28). The data collected for analysis in this research consisted of the questionnaire responses, tape-recordings of interviews, field notes and observation notes on classroom interactions and ground observations among learners and teachers.

As mentioned above, in order to understand how various factors interfaced with learner performance, a mixed method approach using a snap shot case study and an ethnographic study method was used to study the characteristics of a group in a real-world situation (Nunan, 1992, p. 55).   According to Creswell and Clark (2007, p. 168), mixed methods research involves "the collection, analysis, and mixing of both quantitative and qualitative data". This approach assumes that data so gathered will result in a better understanding of the research problem. Before actual data analysis was undertaken, a preliminary exploratory analysis of data was pursued through immersion into the data in its entirety "to obtain a general sense of the data, memoing ideas … considering whether you need more data" (Creswell, 2008, p. 250).

Quantitative data from the questionnaire were analysed using Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) version 18.0 and the grouped frequency distribution table. Descriptive statistics describes the organising and summarising of quantitative data. Tabular presentation helps to reduce data to "an intelligible and interpretable form"; providing foundations for more sophisticated analysis (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 218 – 222). Given the risk that a relatively small percentage of respondents might choose the two extreme responses to Likert scale or rank order questions, the two ends of the range of variations can be combined or collapsed to avoid distorted interpretation of data (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, pp. 428-429).

From these tabular data, the following graphical representations were prepared using

Statgraphics Centurion 15.1 (2006) and Microsoft Excel 2003:

- Bar charts, being either horizontal or vertical bars, with various levels of complexity (Willemse, 2009, pp. 29-34)

- Pie charts, which are used as divisions between people/groups/spending (Willemse, 2009, pp. 34-35)

- Cross-tabulations: Data resulting from observations made on two different related categorical variables (bivariate) can be summarised using a table, known as a two way frequency table or contingency table (Willemse, 2009, p. 28).

- Linear regression: Linear correlation is an associated degree of measure between two interval variables. The level and the direction of any relationship between the perception and expectation variables are therefore described by the correlation coefficient calculated by correlating the two means of the variables. The Pearson's r-value gives an indication as to the strength of the relationship between the variables. The closer values are to ±1, the stronger the relationship (both positive and negative). The closer the value is to 0, the weaker the relationship (Lind, Marchal, & Mason, 2004, pp. 457-460).

These graphic presentations help us to "comprehend the essential features of frequency distribution" and help with comparative analysis as well (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 227). Furthermore, they assist in making decisions about hypothesized states of the world, which therefore inherently implied drawing inferences from qualitative data collected and analysed. It is suggested that the qualitative researcher, wanting to capture the meanings of what respondents say or do in a report, should be very attentive to the words and phrases used by the respondents (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport, 2003, p. 318; Poggenpoel, 1998, p. 337). In drawing inferences on the causes and effects of English as MoI on the academic performance of ESL learners the deterministic model was used. The deterministic model acknowledges that one's behaviour is the product of one's personal willpower or of forces and factors in the world beyond one's control (Babbie, 1995, pp. 64-67).

According to the deterministic model, people's actions are essentially beyond their control or choice as they are driven by forces such as childhood experiences, inherited religious affiliations, customs and traditions, and similar factors (Babbie, 1995, p. 65).

In the context of this study, use of English as MoI was beyond the control of learners, as were other factors such as teacher competence, parents' aspirations, culture and traditions, and their economic aspirations. In other words, factors affecting learners' academic performance are caused by factors other than learners' free choice. However, "It is further assumed that those factors can be discovered and perhaps modified" (Babbie, 1995, p. 65). Of course, dissident views hold that learners wilfully chose English as MoI. The problem with this view, according to Babbie (1995, p. 65), is that "reasons have reasons". Why did learners choose English as MoI against their mother tongue? Responses to this question are contained in the thematic discussions that follow in Chapter 4. The ultimate aim of this study was to demonstrate that the academic performance of ESL learners "can be traced back through a long and complex chain" which explains the impact of English as MoI on the academic performance of ESL learners (Babbie, 1995, p. 65).

The deterministic model was typically based on a probabilistic causal model whereby the researcher, based on empirical evidence supporting the idiographic model of explanation, ascribed certain factors as contributing factors to the impact of English as MoI on the academic performance of ESL learners. However, where compelling considerations were identified which impacted on the academic performance of ESL learners, and without need for exhaustive enumeration, the nomothetic model of explanation was also favoured, where establishing general patterns of cause and effect is achieved by providing the greatest amount of explanation with the minimum number of causal variables (Babbie, 1995, pp. 66-67). The basic simplicity of this model calls for "a balancing of a high degree of explanation with a small number of considerations being specified" (Babbie, 1995, p. 68). The task of the observer therefore, according to Hazelrigg (2009), is to infer what that reality must be. Observations provided first-hand opportunities to see what happened in schools with the additional avenue of the researcher being able to probe subjects and others for their recollections, points of view, and interpretations (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 487). Inference is defined as a process of arriving at a conclusion (Hazelrigg, 2009). The central question was qualitative in nature and therefore necessitated open-ended questions in the questionnaire, observations and interviews to address these. Thus, throughout the processes of observation, interviews and analysis of open-ended questions in the questionnaire, inferences of meanings were automatically drawn of what was observed, while

acknowledging the inescapable fallibility of inferences. However, assiduous and self-conscious practices of adherence to the scientific research dictum: "values of empiricism, experimentalism, scepticism and publicity and through classification and measurement", and repeated multiple observation and triangulation of data methods, were employed in drawing of conclusions (Hazelrigg, 2009, pp. 65-68). The aim of this rigorous process was to proffer information "with enough discriminating power to give confidence that our methodical operations … are consistently and sufficiently supported" (Hazelrigg, 2009, p. 69). This was important as the aim was to "produce information that discriminates with increasing specificity the kinds and of quantities of 'things' that populate our realities of experiences" (Hazelrigg, 2009, p. 68).

Since this study was not interested in variables only, but also the relationships that may exist between variables, both univariate and bivariate analysis was also considered appropriate for descriptive statistics. Univariate analysis is concerned with measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion. The most appropriate measure of central tendency for interval data is the mean, and the most appropriate measure of dispersion for interval data is the standard deviation. Bivariate analysis concerns the measurement of two variables at a time (Lind, Marchal, & Mason, 2004, p. 6). Descriptive statistics are useful as they summarise results for an experiment, thereby also allowing for more constructive research after more detailed analysis. Descriptive data analysis aims to describe the data by investigating the distribution of scores on each variable, and by determining whether the scores on different variables are related to each other. Babbie and Mouton (2006, p. 427) maintain that bivariate and multivariate analysis are concerned primarily with explanations. In bivariate analysis, the researcher is interested in whether relationships between two variables really exist; if so, in what direction it lies – positive or negative, and if it exists, how strong that positive or negative relationship is (Babbie, 1998, pp. 378–383; Babbie and Mouton, 2006, pp. 430–433; De Vos et al., 2005, p. 238)?

The qualitative approach usually will not include numerical analysis (description using numbers may be difficult). Solving problems is likely to require the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Willemse, 2009, p. 6). Therefore, the analysis and interpretation of quantitative data was infused with qualitative data to present a report that depicts the diverse mechanisms at play when English is used as MoI, as well as its

impact on the academic performance of ESL learners. This method of data triangulation for a holistic analysis and interpretation helps the process to maintain the credibility, accuracy, representation and authority of the research.

Qualitative data from interviews, observations and open-ended questions in the questionnaires, were analyzed using the emic and the etic approach in getting rich descriptions based on the meanings people make combined with other data from the researcher's own concepts and relevant literature (Poggenpoel, 1998, p. 338). All qualitative data were, through a process of analytic induction, subjected to a system of coding to sort the data and to uncover underlying meanings in the text to bring both the "central and peripheral referents to the researcher's attention" (Poggenpoel, 1998, p. 341). Coding is a process of "segmenting and labelling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data" which allows for data filtration into image segments, examination for overlap, redundancy and "to collapse these codes into broad themes" (Creswell, 2008, p. 251). Babbie and Mouton (2006, p. 412) suggest that coding is assigning numerical value to qualitative data. In addition, Babbie and Mouton (2006) argue that conducting quantitative analysis of data obtained qualitatively forces one to engage in coding; this means that answers to open-ended questions which require non-numerical responses must be coded before analysis. Coding, on the basis of overall judgement, will be on the latent content of the qualitative data, i.e. "its underlying meaning" (Babbie & Mouton, 2006, p. 388). This process acts as a sieve to "select specific data to use and disregard other data that do not provide evidence" (Creswell, 2008, p. 251).

Data so gathered were crystallized in keeping with Tashakkori's and Teddlie's (1998) view of crystallization, which creates ever-changing images and pictures of reality. Crystallization thus deconstructs the traditional idea of validity, for now there can be no single or triangulated truth. Consequently, the processes of coding and categorisation of data entailed prolonged engagement, persistent observation and the use of triangulation techniques combined with peer debriefing and rich descriptions. It must be appreciated that in qualitative research, the processes of both observation and analysis are interwoven (Babbie, 1998, p. 297), analogous to inductive logic. This inductive logic involves looking for similarities or norms of behaviour or dissimilarities of participant behaviour. If similarities are found then these are considered universals. If behaviours

are essentially universal, then the question is raised as to why this should be the case. If a behaviour is dissimilar, or different or deviant, then again the question, "Why?" is asked (Babbie, 1998, p. 297). These questions forage answers through observations and probes of participants. This contributed to the trustworthiness of this research findings and information. Hence, qualitative and quantitative data were firstly, prepared, explored, analysed, represented separately, and then, secondly, the two data sets were merged, transformed and compared to examine similarities which resulted in thematic discussions (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p. 137). This approach of mixed methods allows the researcher to "report a statistical result … and then follow it up with specific quotes or information about a theme that confirms or disconfirms the quantitative results (or the order could be reversed)" (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p. 140).

Qualitative data, subjected to a system of coding and classification, were classified into categories which corresponded with those in the questionnaire. Furthermore, statistical analyses, using SPSS Statistics 17.0 (Release 23 August 2008) and Statgraphics Centurion 15.1 (2006), were conducted to enhance reliability of findings.

3.7.1 Reliability and validity

The two most important aspects of precision are reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the reproducibility of consistent results of a measurement under circumstances where characteristics being measured haven't changed (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 163; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 93). Reliability is quantified simply by taking several measurements on the same subjects and by comparing one's measurements with values that are as close to the true values as possible. Poor reliability degrades the precision of a single measurement and reduces the ability to track changes in measurements in experimental studies.

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of reliability. More specifically, alpha is a lower bound for the true reliability of the survey. Mathematically, reliability is defined as the proportion of the variability in the responses to the survey that is the result of differences in the respondents. This means that answers to a reliable survey will differ because respondents have different opinions, not because the survey is confusing or has multiple interpretations. The computation of Cronbach's alpha is based on the number

of items on the survey (k) and the ratio of the average inter-item covariance to the average item variance (SPSS).   Technically speaking, Cronbach's alpha is not a statistical test - it is a coefficient of reliability (or consistency) (Introduction to SAS. UCLA: Academic Technology Services).

Factor analysis attempts to identify underlying variables, or factors which explain the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables and identifies clusters with highly interrelated variables reflecting underlying themes, or factors (Babbie, 1995, pp. 427-428; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 278). Factor analysis is used in data reduction to identify a small number of factors which explain most of the variance that is observed in a much larger number of manifest variables. It can also be used to generate hypotheses regarding causal mechanisms or to screen variables for subsequent analysis (for example, to identify co-linearity prior to performing a linear regression analysis) (SPSS). For A more detail account see Appendix H.

Validity refers to the agreement between the value of a measurement and its true value. Objectivity is defined as the relationship between the researcher and the researched and the ability of the researcher to report subjects' responses without bias (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 166). Assurance of validity would entail the measuring device providing an adequate or representative sample of items that represent the concept or instances of the phenomenon being measured (De Vos et al., 2005, p 161).

The three standards, reliability, validity and objectivity, are used to judge the quality of quantitative research, whereas the parallel criteria for qualitative data are dependability, credibility, and confirmability - or applicability, consistency and neutrality (De Vos et al., 2005, p. 346; Mertens, 1998, p. 287). Cohen et al. contend that in "qualitative data validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved … the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher" (2001, p. 105).   Reliability, and thus the possibility of replication, is consistent with a quantitative orientation, whereas its equivalent in the qualitative orientation is "the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of situations, such that the study cannot be replicated – that is their strength rather than their weakness" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 119). Cohen et al. argue that researchers, due to their inextricable entwinement with the world they research, cannot be completely objective and offers "fidelity" which requires

the "researcher to be as honest as possible to the self-reporting of the researched" to enhance objectivity and validity (2001, p. 106).

3.8   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the research is underpinned by universal norms and standards regarding English as MoI, the findings based on data from the chosen sample are not easily generalizable to the general South African context.   In fact, a cogent point is that ethnographic reports, being interpretations of lived experience that are shaped by contexts which are relatively fixed, present an integrated synthesis of experience and theory generating knowledge (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 42 & p. 270).   This knowledge is local, situated in a local culture embodying stereotypes and ideologies, race, class and gender, and is embedded in organizational sites, lacking universality but "rather time and place bound … not certain but rather probabilistic and contestable" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 204 & p. 535).

Scepticism prevails about the possibility of "making valid generalizations in an ethnoracially pluralist society" as in South Africa, with its multiple languages (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 42).   Thus, the generalisability of ethnographic research findings is based on an idiosyncratic approach premised on "a world that is ontologically absurd but always meaningful to those who live in it" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 42).   This does not mean that the findings are so idiosyncratic that they have no applicability to other contexts.   Quite the opposite, it is hoped that through ethnographic research, discoveries will "lead to a greater understanding of the modern world" by understanding the historical contexts of the lives of individuals (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 42). Tentative conclusions arrived at from this research might provide a "conceptual framework for further research" (Babbie, 1998, p. 298).

Thus, while generalisability of findings and recommendations of this research will be restricted to this particular cluster, such information might provide new or variant lenses through which other research data with similar demographics may be examined.

3.9   CONCLUSION

This chapter described the framework for this research study. It provided relevant motivation for the research design, orientation, sampling, ethical consideration and data collection methods elected. The processes of piloting, administering of questionnaires, interview processes and observations were discussed. This chapter also highlighted some of the limitations of this research study. Finally, in subscribing to the tenets of credibility, consistency, accuracy and validity of the findings, this Chapter provided an in-depth review of different data analysis strategies. Chapter Four will presents the data in graphical form together with interpretations as to the impact of English as MoI on the academic performance of ESL learners.

Chapter three identified the methodologies and the data analysis processes that were selected for the empirical investigation of the research propositions.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS – FORMAL ENVIRONMENTS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the outcomes of the data-gathering processes, presents the results and discusses the findings obtained from the three instruments namely, the questionnaire, interviews and observations. The data was collected and analysed in relation to the overall research question posed in this study:

> "How/why English as the MoI affects the academic performance of ESL, especially isiZulu learners, at schools in the FET band in KZN".

Inherent in this statement is the assumption that English used as MoI at schools and universities poses different challenges to learners from differing cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds, thus impacting variously on their academic performance. The notion of difference recognises that there is more than one valid form of representing human experiences (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007). Thus, through a phenomenological study, investigations of behaviours, activities, experiences, perspectives, insights and priorities provides a better understanding of how learners and teachers constructed and gave meaning to experiences of a phenomenon, topic or concept. Therefore a phenomenological study was considered appropriate.

This study also acknowledges that various other mechanisms impact on the academic performance of SL learners at a subliminal level. These mechanisms, amongst others, according to Badat, include a culture of effective learning and teaching, qualified and motivated teachers, provision of high-quality learning material and textbooks, and the accountability of schools (Pather, 2011, p. 20; Vavi, 2010, pp. 5-6).

The combined correlation analysis of qualitative and quantitative data resulted in six themes, which are presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Once programmes such as SPSS Statistics 17.0 (Release 23 August 2008) and Statgraphics Centurion 15.1 (2006) had been used for the statistical analyses, reliability was computed by taking several measurements on the same subjects. Although a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered as acceptable, values between 0.6 and 0.7 are acceptable for exploratory studies (Garson, 2011, p. 9; Malhotra, 2004, p. 268; Simon, 2004). The results are presented below.

Table 4.1   Reliability statistics

	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Section A	10	.668
Section B	4	.893
Section C	8	.629
Section D	7	.729

All of the categories have acceptable (i.e. high) reliability values. This indicates a high degree of acceptable, consistent scoring for the different categories for this research. However, Streiner and Norman (1989, pp. 64-65) caution against "uncritically accepting high values of alpha and especially in interpreting them as reflecting simply internal consistency". Researchers are warned that "the cannons of reliability for quantitative research may be simply unworkable for qualitative research" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 119). It is argued that quantitative research assumes the possibility of replication if the same methods are used with the same sample. However, the premises of naturalistic studies include the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of situations, such that replication may not be possible, which Cohen et al. (2001, p. 119) argue are their strengths rather than their weaknesses.

Data were analyzed as outlined in Chapter 3, and this chapter outlines the findings of the broad level investigation.

4.3   EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The focus of this study was to determine the impact of English used as MoI on the academic performance of ESL learners, especially isiZulu speakers.   This research therefore focussed on isiZulu learners in three schools in the Ethekwini Region of KwaZulu-Natal, the demographics of which are reflected in Appendix K.

It is acknowledged that the way children learn differs from the way adults learn and this has important implications for teaching, especially when using a SL as MoI (Brown, 2000: 21).   Authors differ in that some believe that learners are active participants in learning and therefore stress the importance of individual cognitive development which is seen as "as a relatively solitary act", whereas others believe in social interaction being fundamental to cognitive development, hence society is the determiner of development, and the teacher is an important mediator of learning (Manyike, 2007, pp. 219-220). Coupled with this, Krashen's five hypotheses stress the importance of the creation of natural environments in SL "classrooms so as to overcome personal inhibitions" (Manyike, 2007, p. 220).   Furthermore there are a number of factors that contributes to the poor performance of learners (Howie, 2003, p. 2).   These include inadequate communication ability of pupils and teachers in the MoI, lack of resources, large classes, pressure to complete examination-driven syllabi, and heavy teaching loads, amongst others.   Howie (2003, p. 3) contends that studies do indicate the importance of languages in achievement, thus this study attempted to draw causal links between language proficiency in SL used as MoI and the academic performance of ESL learners.

The domain of formal learning is impacted by various environments, including the home, social gatherings, and the school grounds, but learning is facilitated mostly in the classroom.   Tanveer (2007, p. 24) referred to this as the social environment for L2 to take place "where target language is not used as L1 in the community or where it is used as L1".

It is against this background that various data, both quantitative and qualitative, have been analysed generating six themes, which have been categorized for purposes of convenience and discussion into two broad categories. The first category, which will be called the formal environments, constitutes (1) Classroom interactions and language

acquisition and (2) The school grounds, both of which are presented in this Chapter. The second category, called informal environments, constitutes (1) The community/home environments and language acquisition; (2) Motivation and poverty; (3) Resource and language acquisition; and (4) Absenteeism and language acquisition. These are discussed in Chapter 5. The obvious starting point for formal learning is the classroom, where learning interactions can be mediated.

4.4   CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

It is known that schools are responsible for educating learners and that using English as MoI with ESL learners poses a formidable daily task "both socially and academically" (Christy, 2005, p. 1).   De Naclerio (1998, p 57) argues that the linguistic environment can either "promote or hinder the adjustment of linguistic minorities". Thus, while it is acknowledged that efficient teaching is based on the skills of the teacher in multicultural environments, the teachers' relationships with learners, and maintaining effective communication in the interests of learners, for mainstream content subject teachers using English as MoI, determining appropriate teaching strategies for ESL poses a significant and unique challenge (Schütz, 2010, p. 5). Therefore there was a need to determine the extent to which teachers' ability to teach using English as MoI impacted on the academic performance of learners.   The responses to such cross-tabulations between questions 4 and 41 are presented in table 4.2.

It is observed that 70% of respondents did not believe that the teacher's ability to teach English affected their academic performance at school. Of these, 43.3% of respondents averaged between 41 – 60% in their school subjects.   In total, two-thirds (66.7%) averaged in this score range.

Aside from teaching the contents of the subjects using English as MoI, teachers also need to create an enabling environment in school to facilitate language acquisition and learning. To what extent this criterion was being met entailed asking learners in question 35 to identify where they thought most opportunities existed for learning/honing their skills in English. Figure 4.1 (p. 88) indicates that most learners (70 % - writing, 60 % - reading and 57 % - speaking) agreed that the classroom provided the most opportunities for improving English skills.

Table 4.2   Impact of teachers' ability and learners' performance

**Q41 What is your average performance at school (for all subjects)? Q4* Does your teachers'
ability to teach in English (knowledge, fluency) affect your academic performance in school?
Crosstabulation**

			Q4 Does your teachers' ability to teach in English (knowledge, fluency) affect your academic performance in school?		
			Yes	No	Total
What is your average performance at school (for all subjects)?	Below 40 %	Count	2	2	4
		% of Total	3.3%	3.3%	6.7%
	41 – 60 %	Count	14	26	40
		% of Total	23.3%	43.3%	66.7%
	61 – 80 %	Count	2	14	16
		% of Total	3.3%	23.3%	26.7%
Total		Count	18	42	60
		% of Total	30.0%	70.0%	100.0%

That 48 % of learners finding that the school grounds are not conducive for improving writing skills in English is expected, given the lack of writing space and the time allocated for their meals. Given the limited time and the high noise levels, it is understandable that 47 % of learners also indicated that the school ground is not conducive for reading. However, regarding the grounds, the majority of 45 % of learners indicated that a fair number of opportunities were provided here to hone their speaking skills. The grounds as an environment for SL are discussed in detail under section 4.5 "The School Grounds". It was interesting to note that opportunities for acquisition of all three skills in SL diminished as one moved further away from the classroom. Thus, it could be inferred that the classroom, within the context of South African SL learners, is the primary source and fertile ground for formal language acquisition and learning, especially for L2 acquisition. Furthermore, fig 4.1 also shows that most learners have indicated that the school grounds provided the least opportunities for improving writing (48 %) and reading (47 %) skills in English. The rationale for this is provided in the discussion on the school grounds.

Furthermore, fig. 4.2 also indicates that 91 % of learners in question 26 agreed that speaking in English in the class and on the grounds improves their English skills, while

a further 88 % in question 24 agreed that their English skills improve when English is used as MoI.
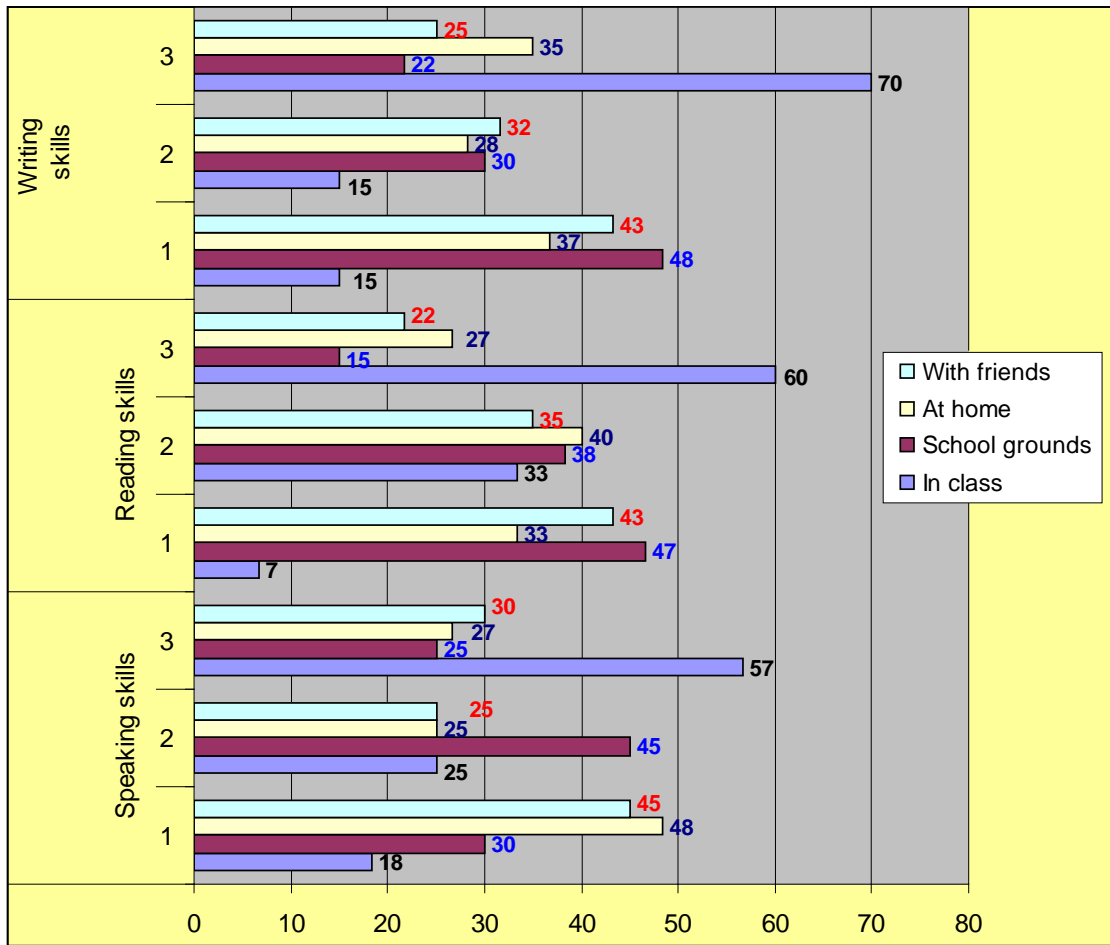
Fig. 4-1   Opportunities for improving English skills
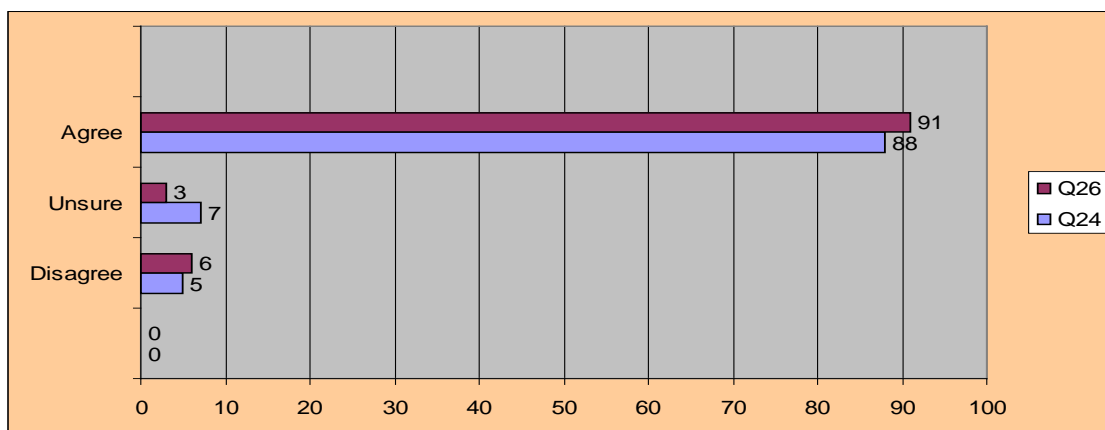
Fig. 4-2   Improving English skills

There appears to be a positive correlation that indicates that the use of English as MoI in the classroom improves learners' skills in English. Having established that the

classroom is crucial for L2 acquisition, the desire to establish how this was facilitated or constrained was necessary. Within the South African context, most schools have chosen English as MoI despite it being a SL for the majority. To this end, 82 % of the learners in question one (fig. 4.3) indicated that they did not experience difficulty when English was used as MoI, implying that they were able to follow classroom activities when the MoI was English; whereas 60 % of learners (fig. 4.3) in question 13 reported that English used as MoI actually improved their academic performance.
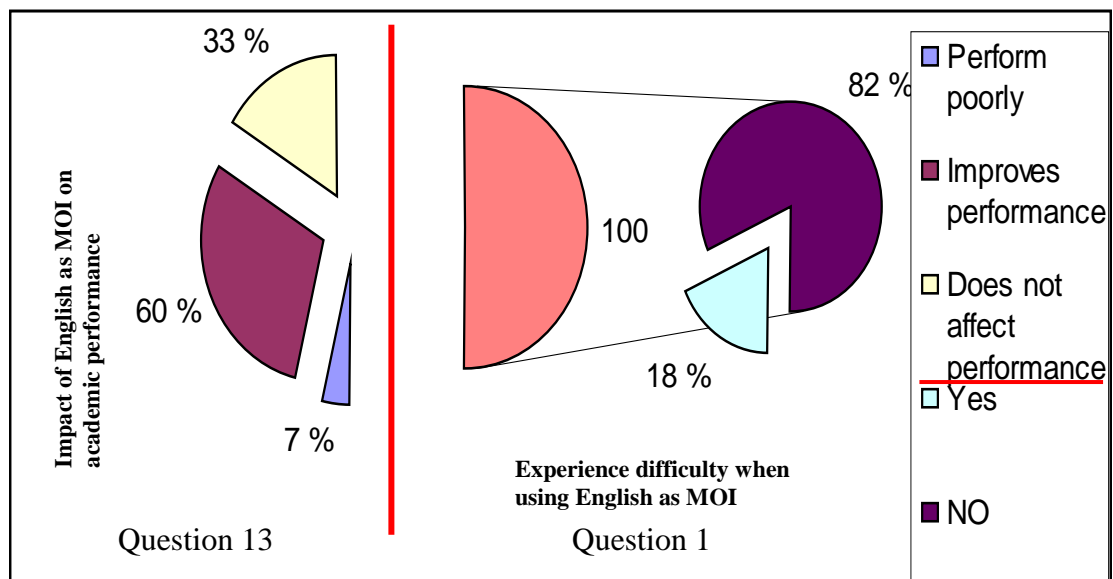
Fig. 4-3   Effect of English as MoI

This translates into patterns observed in sections B and C where most respondents reported being comfortable with the use of English. One of the possible reasons for most of the SL users being comfortable is that most learners have been exposed to English as MoI from their formative years since the new dispensation. Figure 4.3 also shows that 33 % of learners (question 13) indicated that English as MoI does not affect their performance. What exactly does "does not affect performance" mean could be summed up as academic performance being contingent upon a person's cognitive disposition and not on the MoI. This was raised by learner 9 (school B, question 13) who indicated that "I am sure if I used Xhosa I would get the same marks that I am getting now". However, for now it suffices to know that 93 % (60 % + 33 % - fig. 4.3) of learners have indicated that English as MoI does not have a negative impact on their academic performance. The learners' claims that English did not have a negative impact on their academic performance when used as MoI, contradicts other research findings. Howie (2003) and Fayeye & Yemi (2009, pp. 490-491) have reported that

learners' poor English proficiency may have negative consequences on learners' overall academic performance. According to De Naclerio (1998, p. 20), bilinguals performed poorly because of the learning of two languages, thus arguing that bilingualism itself "led to cognitive confusion and poor development of verbal skills". The Pearson Chi-square test, table 4.3, was therefore performed to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between academic performance and the ability to speak, read and write English.

Table 4.3   Relationship between English skills and academic performance

Pearson Chi-Square Tests

		What is your average performance at school (for all subjects)?
Speaking	Chi-square	29.061
	Df	8
	Sig.	.000[*]
Reading	Chi-square	16.095
	Df	8
	Sig.	.041[*]
Writing	Chi-square	42.861
	Df	8
	Sig.	.000[*]

Since the p-values (highlighted) are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), it indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between academic performance and the ability to speak, read and write English, which strongly supports the findings of Fayeye & Yemi (2009, p493) where the significance of relationships showed 0.499; P < .05. That means academic ability did play a role when it came to respondents being able to comprehend English. The positive relationship implies that the more proficient learners are in the target language, the better the academic performance of such learners (Fayeye & Yemi, 2009, p. 493). The significance of the study by Fayeye & Yemi (2009, p. 494) is that their study showed further that "proficiency in English does have a significant impact on senior secondary school students academic achievement" meaning "that the subjects with higher language proficiency had higher academic achievement scores … and vice-versa". One possible rationalisation for learners' claims of English not posing a challenge to them could be that the kind of language usage required in the classroom for academic purposes differs from that which is required for general conversational purposes to which they (learners) may have become accustomed. Thus, learners are of

the opinion that primary schools did prepare them sufficiently with their English skills to cope with the academic demands of high school subjects.

This became clearer when factor analysis of questions 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20 was conducted (see Appendix H), dealing with level of preparation of learners' English at primary school, the stress caused to ESL learners when English is used as MoI, and whether learners experienced difficulty when communicating in English with their teachers. The results of this analysis revealed that these components have factors that overlap, indicating a mixing of the factors. This means that the questions in the overlapping components did not specifically measure what they set out to measure or that the component split along themes. One possibility is that respondents did not clearly distinguish between the questions constituting the components. This could be with respect to interpretation or inability to distinguish what the questions were measuring as to what was expected of second language learners.

The Chi-square test on the relationship between level of competence in a language attained in primary schools (Q15) and the difficulty/stress associated with the use of such language (Q16) in high schools is shown below in table 4.4 and table 4.5

Table 4.4   **Relationship between language competence and associated stress in usage**

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.122[a]	16	.023
Likelihood Ratio	29.955	16	.018
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.374	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	60		

Table 4.4 shows a significant relationship between the competence levels in a particular language and the level of stress associated with the use of such a language. Table 4.5 further indicates that the relationship between level of competence in a language attained in primary schools (Q15) and the difficulty/stress associated with the use of such a language (Q16) in high schools, being significant, is inversely related.

Table 4.5 **Inverse relationship between language competence and associated stress in usage**

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.399	.101	-3.310	.002
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.488	.094	-4.257	.000[c]
N of Valid Cases		60			

It can be noted that table 4.5 and fig. 4.4 show an inverse relationship between level of competence in a language attained in primary schools (Q15) and the difficulty/stress associated with the use of such a language (Q16) in high schools. This suggests that, as proficiency in a language improves, the level of stress/difficulty associated with its usage decreases. This is reflected in fig. 4.4, where 67 % of learners in question (Q) 15 believe that primary schools developed learners' skills in English sufficiently to meet the demands of high school. Furthermore, 73 % of learners in Q16 also claim that English used as MoI does not stress them, and that the majority (75 %) of learners do not experience difficulty when communicating with their teachers in English (Q17).

Table 4.6 **Relationship of language proficiency from primary schools and difficulty experienced when used with teachers**

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	37.732[a]	16	.002
Likelihood Ratio	36.774	16	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.734	1	.005
N of Valid Cases	60		

The Chi-square test was conducted to determine whether there was a relationship between levels of proficiency development in primary schools (Q15) and whether learners experienced difficulty when communicating in English with their teachers in class (Q17). The result of such analysis is presented in table 4.6. This shows that there is a significant relationship between these two variables. Table 4.7 also shows that this relationship is significant and inverse. This means that, as the level of proficiency and competence in the target language improves, the level of difficulty experienced by learners in the use of such language with teachers should decrease. Interestingly, 80 %

of learners in Q19 have indicated that they understand the subjects when their teachers use mostly English.

Table 4.7 **Inverse relationship between language proficiency and levels of difficulty experienced during usage.**

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.362	.151	-2.958	.004
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.429	.139	-3.614	.001[c]
N of Valid Cases		60			

While the majority of learners claim that their competence and performance in English pose little or no challenge, there seems to be some contradiction between their level of competence and their performance when it comes to speaking in front of an audience.
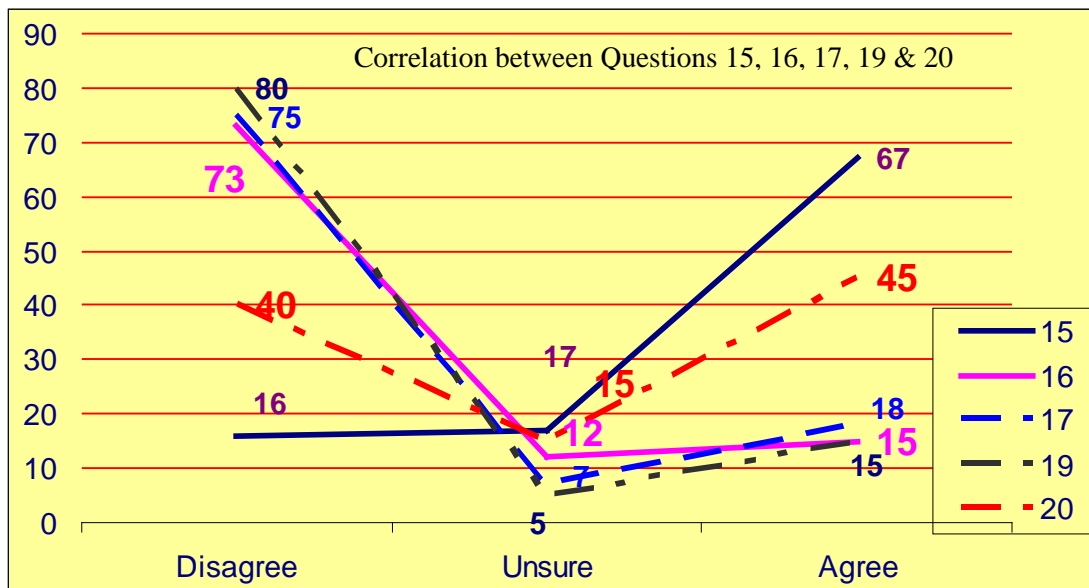
Fig. 4-4 **Language proficiency and it impact**

This is evident in fig. 4.4 where a majority of 45 % (Q20) of learners has indicated that speaking in English in front of the class causes them anxiety. This could mean that learners are comfortable when communicating on a one-to-one basis with their teachers or that they are passive listeners in class.

Thus there seems to be some degree of contradiction between the claims of learners and teachers in terms of learners' understanding of and proficiency in the English language.

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Learners might well be justifying their argument of not experiencing difficulty in English based on the majority of 67 % of learners in question 41 (fig. 4.5) indicating that their average academic performance is between 41 – 60 % which they believe is good enough, and sufficient for a pass. In acknowledging that "low overall IQ scores were associated with low Verbal IQ scores" of English second language learners and that "below average verbal scores were consistently associated with near-average performance scores" in the context of near-average performance scores, (De Naclerio, 1998, p. 5), teachers are aspiring for a better quality of pass for learners and hold a contradictory view on learner competence development in the target language.
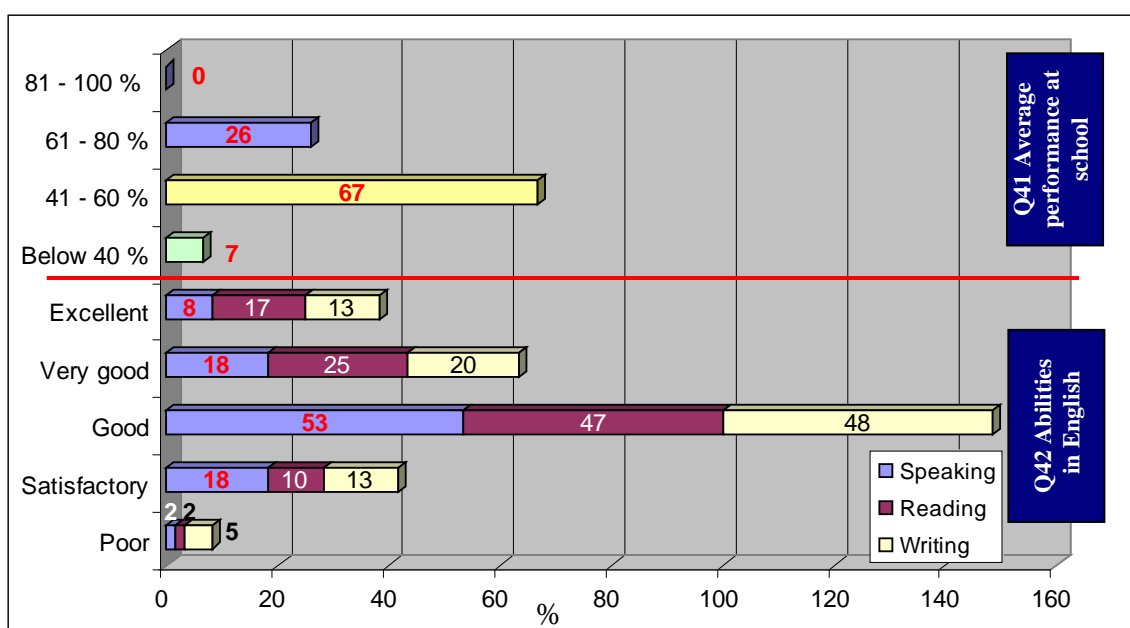
Fig. 4-5   **Average performance at school and abilities in English**

Teachers, on the other hand, claim that the major challenge that they (i.e. teachers) experience is the lack of understanding of and proficiency in the English language by learners, which can be gleaned from statements such as:

> A large number of African learners have difficulty understanding the English language. Those learners who understand the English language generally perform better than those learners who have difficulty understanding the English language (Mrs Singh - interview school B, question (Q) 3).

The following transcripts of interviews capture the essence as evidence of the extent of the challenge that teachers face regarding learners' lack of competence in English:

Interview school A Mrs Saraja: They are thinking in Zulu and they write in English (Q3). Mr Rajesh: They miss out on basics, methodology, interpretation etc. Their command of the English language is weak (Q5). Mrs Saraja: Maybe they can express themselves verbally but when it is written then there is a problem (Q9).
Interview school B Ms Thandi: They were taught in isiZulu …as a result they cannot construct a sentence and others if you ask them to read – they are failing to read (Q1).
Interview school C: Mr Pravesh: Learners lack understanding of the language (Q3). Mrs White: Language problem – most don't understand English. They do not have enough understanding to write exams in English (1). Mrs Suresh: Most learners have a poor comprehension of English. All exams are in English, except isiZulu. The language level in these papers are of a very high standard and certainly does not take into account the level of understanding of an English (FAL) learner (Q3). (*FAL- First Additional Language – researcher's note)*

One is led to wonder, then, how teachers might negotiate their way across the gulf that exists between learners' claims to adequate proficiency in and understanding of the English language and the stark reality expressed in the perspectives of teachers, who find that "most of the learners performs poorly because they don't meet the requirements and the standard is too high for them" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q3). Cummins' (1979) theory, highlighting the dichotomy between BICS and CALP, provides some explanation as to why ESL learners experience difficulty coping with school work. Two further dimensions within the BICS/CALP framework offer insight into the apparent contradictions between learners' claims of English proficiency and academic performance on the one hand and teacher claims of learners' lack of proficiency in English and poor performance on the other.
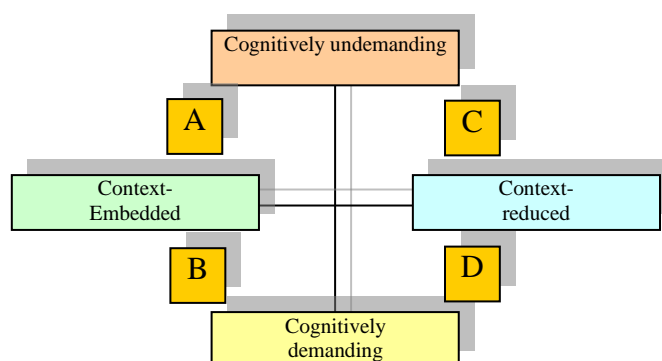
Fig. 4-6   **Range of contextual support and degree of cognitive involvement in communicative activities**
(Cummins and Swain, 1986 adapted from Baynham, 1995, p. 139)

These dimensions are cognitively undemanding/cognitively demanding and context-embedded/context-reduced (fig. 4.6). Superimposing the spoken/written dimension in the form of a grid illustrates the functional variability of spoken and written language. Hood (1990) cited in Baynham (1995) offers the following examples to clarify these dimensions in table 4.8:

Table 4.8   Cognitive variables vs contextual variables

CONTEXT	EXAMPLE
Cognitively undemanding, context-embedded spoken language	Pass the butter.
Cognitively undemanding, context-embedded written language	Don't forget to buy butter.
Cognitively demanding, context-reduced written language	It was noted that butter sales would be available at the next meeting
Cognitively demanding, context-reduced spoken language	One thing I'd like to say at this point is that our research shows that consumption of butter in his population is well above the national average

The distinction between BICS and CALP helps one to understand why ESL learners who claim to have proficiency in communication in the target language do not enjoy commensurate test scores, i.e. "they are unable to cope with school work" (Manyike, 2007, p. 221). This is why Mrs White (school C, Q3) said: "They do not have enough understanding to write exams in English". Data from ethnographical classroom observations revealed that learners' responses to teachers' questions were basically one word or short phrases, which are probably as a result of the anxiety learners experience when speaking English in front of other learners (see fig. 4.4, question 20, p. 93). Teachers, due to time constraints, did not challenge learners to respond in full sentences as: "We are supposed to teach the subject and not the language as there is simply no time for such intervention given the vastness of the curriculum" (Mrs White, school C, Q13). Mrs Suresh (school C, Q8) agreed that teachers so correct learners' language use "so that they can use the language correctly when required to do so. But this cannot be done all the time because of the pressures of needing to complete the vast curriculum". This indicates that interactions in classes are operating at cognitively undemanding, context-embedded spoken language level which therefore translates to cognitively undemanding, context-embedded written language responses of learners. Thus, when learners were asked to rate their abilities in English, in question 42, (speaking, reading

and writing skills), 53 % of learners rated their speaking skills as good, with 47 % rating their reading skills as good and 48 % rating their writing skills as good as represented in fig. 4.5 (p. 94).   A very small percentage of learners (18 %, 25 % and 20 % for speaking, reading and writing, respectively and (8 %, 17 % and 13 % for speaking, reading and writing, respectively) have indicated that their skills are very good or excellent.   Learners' beliefs that their proficiency in English (question 42) is essentially good-to-excellent does not correlate with the teachers' claims of lack of proficiency on the part of learners.   This indicates that learners perceived the question as operating within the cognitively undemanding, context-embedded spoken and written dimensions as opposed to cognitively demanding, context-reduced spoken and written dimensions.

Teachers, on the other hand, postulate a diametrically opposite view cognisant of the cognitively demanding and context-reduced perspective required for academic discourses. Ms Thandi's (school B, see page 147) concerns about the learners' inability to read and to construct sentences coupled with Mrs White's (school C, see page 147) argument that "learners do not have enough understanding to write exams in English" corroborates the notion that "poor readers are generally poor scholastic performers" (Pretorius, 1996: 35 cited in Bharuthram, 2006, p. 55).   This is also consistent with De Naclerio's (1998, p. 5) studies where it has been reported that the "extent of the Verbal IQ score and Performance IQ score discrepancy (V/P discrepancy)" obtained by ESL learners has been "found to be greater and more frequent than the discrepancy obtained by monolingual English-speaking children".   This occurs when reading is so slow that comprehension is difficult, and learners' ability to engage critically with any text is severely compromised (Ralfe, 2009, p. 307).   Furthermore, Bharuthram's (2006, p. 55) argument that a student may have good word recognition skills but poor inferencing skills (meaning he/she will "still encounter problems with comprehension as he/she will not be able to fill in the missing links in a text") were echoed by Mr Rajesh, a teacher (school A, Q9) who reported:

> To me – besides the contexts I think the learners that I teach have a major comprehension problem. I'll give you one example. I had a very senior class who didn't know the difference between quantities and amount. Because they didn't know the meaning of it. So to me it is a major problem.

This difficulty in handling inferencing skills was also manifest during a lesson observation where the teacher, teaching Consumer Studies, going over a test which was written by learners, pointed out to the learners that they had written the time incorrectly. The following is what was discussed:

> Learners had written the time as 16 hours instead of 16:00 to indicate 4 pm. The learners were pleading to the teacher that 16 hours is the same as 16:00. The teacher explained that 16:00 means the time of 4 PM in the afternoon whereas 16 hours gives duration/length of time and therefore it did not answer the question.

This is presumably why the teacher, Mrs Suresh (school C, Q3), as with most other teachers dealing with ESL learners, finds that "The language level in these papers is of a very high standard and certainly does not take into account the level of understanding of an English (FAL) learner".

This tension within the learner seems to arise from the confusion among learners between three domains: the everyday domain of the home, and the specialized and reflexive domains of formal learning (Macken-Horarik, 1996, p. 235). The everyday domain is the world of the home and the community into which the learner is born where "Zuluwizing" seems to be the norm; the specialized domain is where people "train in or devote themselves to a particular area of study" (Macken-Horarik, 1996, p. 236). However, the reflexive domain is where the learner needs to "construct texts that deal with controversial and competing points of view on issues" (Macken-Horarik, 1996, p. 239) which Ralfe (2009) calls critical literacy. According to De Naclerio (De Naclerio, 1998, p. 5), conclusions arrived at by various studies in America, spanning over many years, reveal that "low overall IQ scores were associated with low Verbal IQ scores" of ESL learners. Ralfe has also hypothesised that, without basic literacy, which could include the everyday domain (Macken-Horarik, 1996), critical literacy is not possible. This is required within the classroom environment where most of the formal learning takes place. This brings under scrutiny the statement made by Mrs Saraja (school A, Q3) where she stated that "They are thinking in Zulu and they write in English". This may mean that learners make direct translations, thus leading to confusion at syntactic, lexical and grammatical levels. This is what De Naclerio (1998, p. 53) citing Bialystok and Hakuta, argues, that a particular language organizes the way that we organize our perceptions, thus influencing the shape of thought, and that in

translations, where the goal "is to transfer the meanings of one language into the terms and structure of the other language", this cannot be done merely by literally translating word by word. This seems to be the challenge experienced by learners, where they think of concepts in their mother tongue and try and explain it in the target language. This is what Ms Fikile (school A, question 9) meant when she said:

> Such that even when they write I've noticed that from Technology and also other subjects. That's enough when they write when they construct or when they write a sentence trying to express something lets say for instance they are to explain what "**regret**" (*interviewee's emphasis*) means. Then for them to think of what the word means. Its already a big word to them and they try to put together words – it becomes a problem and whatever they are putting together they could see that they are writing and its what they think they understand but you as the teacher when you try to read it you can't even understand.

This may arise as a result of the non-cognate nature of isiZulu and English which could therefore make such processes (thinking in one language and writing in another) even more unintelligible for academic purposes. A SL, according to Bialystok and Hakuta (1994) cited in De Naclerio (1998, p. 55), "is learned quicker if it resembles the native language".

This is why Ms Fikile (school A, see above) says that, while learners think that what they are thinking in mother tongue and writing into English through direct translations make sense, it does not make sense to teachers when reading these sentiments in English. Conceding these challenges and acknowledging the differences between "critical conceptions and practices of reading and writing from non-critical or acritical literacies" (Lankshear, 1997, p. 42), teachers, showing commitment to the development of the ideal of critical literacy and education in general, negotiate between various discourses with ESL learners. The first approach begins from minimal assumptions about learners' abilities to engage in critical discourses. Working on the strengths and weaknesses of learners in terms of their proficiency in English, reading is encouraged.

4.4.1   Reading and language acquisition

It is argued that reading and language learning are interdependent. Koda (2007) contends that while reading necessitates linguistic knowledge, reading ability enhances linguistic knowledge expansion. This was also corroborated through the Pearson Chi-

square test (see table 4.4, p. 91), where it was established that there is a significant relationship between academic performance and the ability to speak, read and write in English. Therefore, in attempting to identify strengths and weaknesses of learners, teachers, amongst others, focused on reading as the challenge facing learners. Teachers had the following responses regarding reading:

School A (question 4)
Mrs Saraja: Ja, the major problem is spelling.
Mr Rajesh: The spelling, the pronunciation and the words.
Ms Fikile: What is really causing that is the lack of reading and writing skills. Do you understand? So if they could maybe like get themselves into doing a lot of reading and reading with understanding because sometimes they just read.
School B
Ms Thandi: They are not exposed to most of the things that can improve their English – for instance reading the newspapers, going to the library…Some of the learners are lazy to do things on their own or to improve themselves e.g. like reading magazines, finding meanings of words from the dictionary, to seek for assistance if they don't understand the work given to them as a result starting to develop hatred of the subject which will have a negative impact on the learners' results" (Q3).
Mrs Singh: Lack of libraries in the African areas – they are not encouraged to read therefore we need to encourage reading as this culminates in improving both their English skills and hence their academic performance (Q4).
School C
Mr Pravesh: There are various challenges and some of these are:
• Reading material is in isiZulu at home.
• Because of the difficulty posed by English – learners do not readily read, write or speak English (Q4).

From the utterances of Ms Fikile (school A), who said: "What is really causing that is the lack of reading and writing skills", it can be established that teachers acknowledge that reading does in fact impact on the learners' ability to pronounce and spell words which agrees with Koda's (2007) assertion. From the foregoing discussions, it can be seen that teachers encouraged learners to read. This is understandable, given the definition of intelligence, which includes the ability to master and use a range of academic skills, like reading (McDonough in Ellis, 1985; Gardner, 1985), and Krashen's theory (cited in McLaughlin, 1987) where it is argued that writing competence comes from large amounts of self-motivated reading, which is considered to provide the comprehensive input for writing. Mrs Saraja, (school A, Q3), wanting to improve learners' reading skills, said: "always tell them that you read and you write from the time you are young to the day you die". However, reading and writing alone are not sufficient for the development of critical literacy, and reflexive and critical

understanding is essential for empowerment (J. Cummins, 2000a). This sentiment was shared Ms Fikile (see above) who qualified her suggestion for reading by adding that learners must engage in a "lot of reading and reading with understanding". This entails learners having to interact with texts analytically and critically to develop language proficiency.

However, given the lack of interest in reading where "learners are lazy to do things on their own …like reading magazines" and that "they've got low concentration" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q3), it was suggested that one should encourage "reading for pleasure, not as a task" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q11). Mrs Saraja is of the opinion that learners tend to be de-motivated from reading since "We are too text-book orientated" which takes the fun out of reading. It is Mrs Saraja's belief that getting learners motivated to read should be the first priority, followed next by reading challenging texts with understanding.

One needs to appreciate that learners face challenges such as "Reading material is in isiZulu at home" and that "while at home they do not speak/read English" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q5). Even more disturbing is the report of Mr Lionel (school B, Q1) who has "discovered that er many of them in fact 7 in total in one particular class cannot read at all"; schools have embarked on a variety of opportunities for reading. However, given the use of that English (as L2) as MoI, and learners' reluctance to engage in L2 at least ay conversational level, teachers did not subscribe to the notion of Janopoulos, 1986 (cited in Foertsch, 1998), that opportunities for reading and writing should be provided in both languages. The rationale for this was that learners were not learning/acquiring English for communicative purposes only; but rather it was to be used as MoI for all content subjects in the school as well. Noting that learners experience low levels of proficiency in English, Ms Fikile (school A, question 10) suggested that teachers give learners:

> a chance to bring articles from magazines/newspapers to use during reading periods and every time they've read they need to explain to the whole class and teacher will ask them to take out difficult/new words they have learnt about while they were reading, and those words they have to look them up in the dictionaries and discuss them what they understood and they'll be let to use them to construct sentences/meaningful ones and each day they are expected to have a journal to record new words they've learnt from reading the articles.

> Sometimes a radio is brought to class for them to listen on news/stories and they have write down what they've heard and explain in class about what they were listening and sometimes they are given a chance to tell their own stories in class. Teacher will check the use of words, tenses, etc and also the understanding of the story being told.

This strategy is reminiscent of the extensive reading strategy of the bottom-up model whereby processes like "word recognition and lexical access" (Walter, 2003, p. 2) are developed. This strategy, being vital for the development of automaticity in low-level processing, involves learners' self-chosen reading which is undemanding, enjoyable and not needing unnecessary use of dictionaries, i.e. just below a comfortable level of comprehension (Walter, 2003, p. 3).

It could be seen that school A was scaffolding learners to the next level of intensive reading, i.e. critical reading or reading to learn, developing higher-order processes (Walter, 2003) to become proficient in four related areas of language in order to become truly literate, namely, code-breakers; text participants; text users and text analysers (Luke & Freebody, 1997). This, according to Mr Fikile (school A, Q10) is also possible by allowing learners during reading periods to:

> bring own magazines or newspapers in class; let them choose sections that they are interested in. Let them explain in class what those sections are about after they've read them.

However, the challenges facing teachers, learners and the schools at large were that at first these reading programmes seemed to be successful, but the effects did not last. Mrs Singh (school B, question 10) reported:

> ...this meant that the duration of each period had to be reduced to accommodate for this programme. The teachers had to force learners to read and after a few minutes they would fall asleep. This programme was abandoned.

It could be hypothesized that learners are not encouraged to read in English at home nor do they listen to English often enough at home, so much so, that a mismatch between the home language and MoI results. This hinders children's progress in early reading tasks, thus causing them to play catch up with the other more proficient children throughout their academic careers (Foertsch, 1998)

As can be ascertained from the foregoing, reading programmes cut across academic time which seemingly brought more stress to teachers in attempting to complete the syllabus. Furthermore, learners coming from English medium primary schools compared to learners coming from "African" schools differ markedly in reading proficiency. It was reported by Mrs Saraja (school A) that, due to the heterogeneity of the learners in terms of their proficiencies being so vastly different, it became difficult to administer reading programmes, and therefore such programmes posed a challenge. This difference in learner proficiencies is captured within the following dialogue with teachers in terms of some of the challenges that they encounter:

School A, (Q4)
Mr Rajesh: These kids and those teachers are – we are not talking about the level of competency but er if you take the language itself – you can't teach the child in mother tongue er isiZulu in Grades 1, 2 and 3 when these are foundation phases.
Mrs Saraja: But also you got to look at our grade 8's that came in like say the last 2 years. These kids started from grade R in an Indian medium school – and you can see the difference.
Ms Fikile: Yes the one that comes from the rural areas ..
Mrs Saraja: Of those children – they can read – they write beautifully and someway along the line – those before them are lost.
Ms Fikile: Ja they are lost. And someone that comes from the rural medium school – it seems like it's the first time ..
Mr Rajesh: They don't know English at all.
Ms Fikile: English is the second language

While teachers have indicated their challenges regarding learners' lack of reading habits and strategies for improvement, learners have also highlighted some of their challenges in trying to improve their proficiency in English. In response to question 23: "What are some of the difficulties (if any) you experience in improving your skills in English (reading, writing and speaking)?" many learners argued that community libraries have "a small amount of information that can help me" (learner 9, school B) which is contradictory to the response in question 6 (see fig 5.6, p. 192), where 63 % of learners indicated that community libraries had enough resources. However, this contradiction may be as a result not of the availability of resources but rather the relevance of such resources to the contextual needs of the learners concerned. Compounding this problem is the fact that learners find no enjoyment in the materials available to them for extensive reading to develop automaticity in low-level processing and vocabulary extension which can later be scaffolded to intensive reading (Walter, 2003). This is evident in the response of learner 10 (school B) who said: "Even though I want to

improve my English sometimes I don't get things to read that are fun and relevant to me." This sentiment was also expressed by another learner, who found that prescribed reading material also posed a challenge. The following statement by the learner, expressed exactly as written, shows the level of the learner's grammatical, writing and spelling skills when he says "We have to read shakespear [Shakespeare] – that whre [where] most people get problem" (learner 5 - school A). According to Walter (2003), this type of extensive reading should be of texts that are easy enough for dictionaries to be unnecessary. However, this is ignored, as shown by a learner saying: "Sometimes when I read I found it so difficult to understand some of the bombastic words" (learner 4, school C). Ms Thandi (school B, Q3) stated that:

> some of the learners are lazy to do things on their own or to improve themselves e.g. like reading magazines finding meanings of words from the dictionary to seek for assistance if they don't understand the work given to them as a result starting to develop hatred of the subject which will have a negative impact on the learners' results.

However, notwithstanding the encouragement and cajoling of learners to read "short stories, novels, newspapers, etc", Mrs Singh (school B, Q10) states that, even with the initial success, "This programme was abandoned" because "the duration of each period had to be reduced to accommodate for this programme" and "teachers had to force learners to read and after a few minutes they would fall asleep".

In view of the insurmountable challenges facing both teachers and learners in developing proficiency in English through reading, why then does the Department of Education not change the MoI to any of the indigenous languages?

4.4.2   Language choice and language acquisition

Despite the diglossic nature of language in South Africa where "English is not a major language of South Africa in statistical or geographical terms, the Bantu languages are" (Sutton, 2006, p. 31) parents and learners still choose English as MoI. According to De Naclerio (1998, pp. 57-58) for the "linguistic minorities, environmental stress has an impact not only in the eventual development of a second language but in the immediate choice of language". Given the choice of whether English as MoI should be replaced with an Indigenous language, "we get parents who come in and say that I want my child

to learn English. They know the need and necessity" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q3). The majority (72 %, see fig. 4.7, p. 107) of the learners in question 25 did not agree that English as MoI should be replaced with an Indigenous language.

The rationale for such a choice according to Ferguson (1959) cited in Sutton (2006, p. 29) is as follows: "the important feature of diglossia is the specialization of function for each variety. In one situation, only the majority, prestigious or 'high' (H) variety is appropriate and in another, only the minority, less prestigious or 'low' (L) variety is appropriate". Thus, learner 14 (school A, Q25) suggested that "in certain fields indigenous languages are not used at all, therefore English should not be replaced because it is mostly used to communicate with other people in their fields". It would appear that learners' choices are based on the view that English facilitates a specialized purpose for knowledge transference: "We can't learn everything in isiZulu" (learner 8, school B, Q25) because "There are words in English that isiZulu does not have" (learner 24, school A, Q25), which is presumably why learner 12 (school B, Q25) argued that "If they use other languages learners will not understand". This was corroborated by Mrs Mhlongo (observation school B) who uses code-switching very sparingly because "I sometimes find it difficult to explain certain concepts in Zulu because there are no equivalent Zulu words for many English terms taught in the subject". Thus learners view English as a prestigious or high (H) language where "We learn more from English and be able to read well" (learner 4, school A, Q25). According to learner 1 (school A, Q5) further prestige comes when "you know English and be fluent in speaking it and it show's that you educated well enough", "because English is the most important language in the world" (learner 19, school C, Q25). Furthermore, "most people believe that if you don't know English you lack of education" (learner 21, school A, Q5).

Another justification of the high status of English as warranted by learners' choice of English is that knowledge of and proficiency in it opens avenues, as it serves as a wider means of communication when set against less prestigious or low (L) language status of indigenous languages:

> Zulu is an indigenouse [indigenous] language that will not take us as far as we want to go and we wouldn't be able to communicate with other races. (Learner 9, school C, Q25).

This was also echoed by learner 1 (school B, Q1), who suggested that, if English were not used, then "Using another language which is not understood by many people won't get you to high places". Learners were thinking not only of the present but projecting into the future by arguing that "if it being replaced with indigenous languages we will find it difficult to use English in future" (learner 11, school B, Q25). Relegating indigenous languages to low status was also raised by learner 27 (school A, Q25) who suggested that "It not like everyperson in this world knows isiZulu, English is the only language that combines us". The epitome of relegating indigenous languages to low status is contained in the following statement made by learner 7 (school B, Q25) who said:

> isiZulu & Afrikaans are offered as second additional languages. That should be enough recognition.

Undoubtedly, there were voices wanting indigenous languages "because it's right choice and a good opportunity as Black people" (learner 7, school A, Q25) "so people could know other language" (learner 14, school B, Q25). Of course the qualification for the introduction of indigenous languages as MoI must be accompanied with "some text book that is in Zulu and if you don't understand and can use Zulu text to guide you in English word that you don't know" (learner 8, school A).

Teachers adopted a more international perspective in demarcating English as a high prestige language against indigenous languages, stating: "There is no place for indigenous languages outside of South Africa" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q12). However, Mr Lionel (school B, Q12) expressed ambivalence regarding replacement of English as MoI, arguing that "it's debatable… because we are living in an African society; you know there could be some need for it". On the other hand, Mr Rajesh (school A, Q12) suggested:

> We've got to look at the bigger picture. What's beyond KwaZulu Natal? If you take a Black guy that's in Cape Town; he is speaking Afrikaans including Gauteng so we (laughingly) can't be an international city of Durban.

Ms Fikile (school A, Q12), disagreed that English should be replaced with indigenous languages as MoI, because that will mean "we will be incompetent when we go to the other countries". Teachers were therefore unanimous that "English is an international

language; provides opportunities for learners in the future" (Mrs Singh, school B, Q12) which is why Ms Thandi (same school) agreed with her colleague, stating: "Everywhere you go around the world, English is essential". Having reflected and adopting a birds' eye view of the utility value of English, Mr Lionel (school B, Q12) was more decisive:

> [Within] a global society we understand that the English language is a key language. It's the language of industry it's the language of commerce it's the language of business. It's just how the world communicates. So you have to look at it from a global perspective.

These kinds of responses research support Howie's statement:

> The majority of "parents, pupils and teachers perceive English as the gateway to global opportunities and therefore many want the pupils to participate in their education through the medium of English (2003, p. 14).
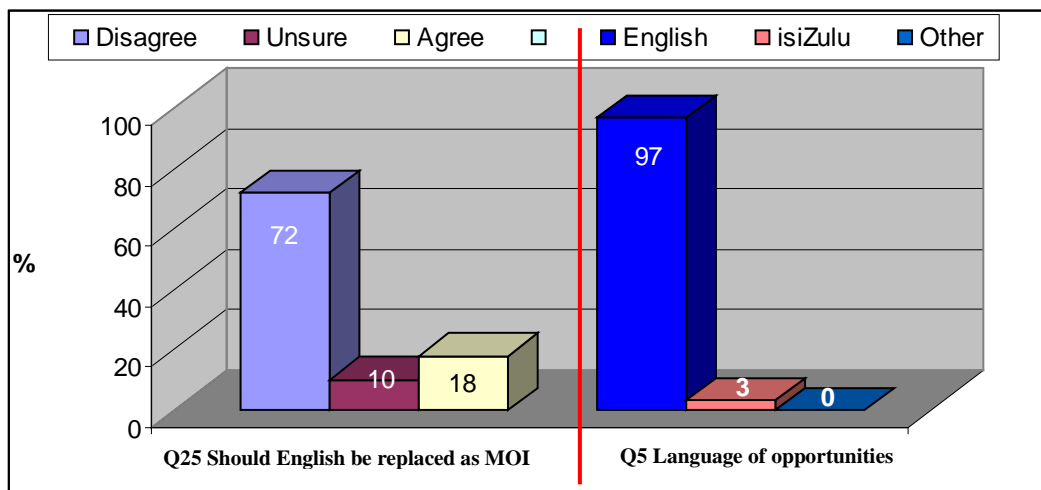
Fig. 4-7   **Language of opportunities**

This is probably why, given the opportunity in question 25, the majority (72 %) of learners disagreed that English should be replaced with an indigenous language as MoI (fig. 4.7). Learners seem to agree with Howie (2003, p. 14) in their responses to question 5 of the questionnaire, where a resounding majority of 97 % of learners (fig. 4.7) indicated that English provided such opportunities, as compared to the 3 % listing isiZulu. The basis for the majority of learners not wanting to replace English as MoI is presumably that this is their opportunity to learn the language which will lead to better job opportunities.

Furthermore, learners stated that "Most application forms and interviews are conducted in English" (learner 7, school B) which suggests why English has gained prominence. Inherent in what the learner said is that the ability to complete the application form is the first gateway to getting any job. Moreover, "if u [you] know English and you good at you can get a better job and most job mostly want high performance in English" (learner 7, school A, Q5). Deumert also found that participants in her research "repeatedly commented that their inability to express themselves in English … prevented them not only from finding permanent or casual employment, but also from access to social services and government institutions" (2004, p. 1). Learner 14 (school C) also suggested that Africans must not expect for any translations into isiZulu at the interview, since "it will be one Indian or Whites who will interview me so English will be needed no Indian will talk isiZulu". This suggests that the manner in which one conducts oneself during the interview is the second hurdle to obtaining a job. Inherent in what learner 7 stated is that it is not merely the ability to communicate in English that secures a job but rather a high degree of proficiency in the target language. However, as Deumert points out in research on interviewing, English proficiency of ESL applicants at interviews is generally poor: "many of those interviewed were unable to communicate even basic information in English" (2004, p. 1). The learners further argued that merely excelling at the interview and securing a job is not the ultimate, as the work itself demands knowledge of English "Because most of the people in the workforce they usually communicate in English" (learner 12, school B). The extent to which English is anchored for the economic survival of communities/societies is most vividly captured by learner 5 (school C, Q5) who wrote: "In South Africa everybody knows that if you don't have English in your hand they [there] is no future or someone can employ you". Learner 3 (school A), as with other aspirant job seekers, accepts the fact that proficiency in English, which is a widely used language, "would create greater opportunities in more places". This adds credence to Deumert's comment that "English had become the main language of upward mobility, political access and economic power" (2004, p. 1). These learners aspire for job opportunities not only within but outside of South Africa because "it is the communication language you might need to talk to other people in other countries" (learner 14, school B). This is because "In South Africa and around the world most countries use English to communicate as it is the most spoken language and understood by many" (learner 1, school B, Q5). The learner is indicating that aside from English being the global language of communication, it is

also the most widely spoken language. Being understood by many, it is argued, would therefore imply increased marketability of one's resources. Therefore learner 13 (school B, Q5) contends that "if I know it well it might get me a chance to even get jobs overseas". This sentiment is supported by Morris' contention that the considerable education and experience of many immigrants in their native countries might not be recognized in foreign countries "because of their limited English speaking abilities" (2002, p. 3). The extent to which English is elevated by virtue of its securing better opportunities is evident in the statement by learner 9 (school C), who stated: "I can't go anywhere in the world without English". Learners aspired to access to the global arena via English, in that, should they master proficiency in English as "an internationally recognized language", they might then "have dreams of working or visiting over seas" (learner 12, school C). While learners' aspirations are motivational, the concern is that most learners' sentiments expressed in this research support the findings of Ramsay-Brijball (2008), for example:

> ...in these days everything is in English everywhere you go they speak English so I force my self to know English so that at the end I will get what I want. (Learner 1 school B Q5)

4.4.3   Code-switching and language acquisition

Given that learners force themselves to learn English through code-switching, this study investigated the extent to which code-switching facilitated or hindered SLA or learning. It was found that isiZulu speakers did use code-switching as a tool, which allowed them to maintain their linguistic heritage through retaining isiZulu.

While a number of reasons exist for code-switching, the primary one in this research, within the context of the isiZulu learner, is for language acquisition/learning. Because speakers may not be able to express themselves in one language, they switch to their mother tongue "to compensate for the deficiency" (Skiba, 1997). This was evident when learner 12 (school A, Q13) suggested: "When other things are explained in English there are words that are used that I need to find the meaning of them but when explained in isiZulu it easy." The researcher does not dispute the conclusion that "code switching plays a positive role as an effective communicative tool in multilingual and multicultural classrooms" (Van Dulm, 2006 cited in Ramsay-Brijball, 2008). However, the question to what extent does code switching enable learning of subject knowledge in

class was the focus of this study. Learners' responses to question 29, on the efficacy of code-switching, are inconclusive as reflected in fig. 4.8 where there is a relatively even distribution of learners responses among disagree, unsure and agree.
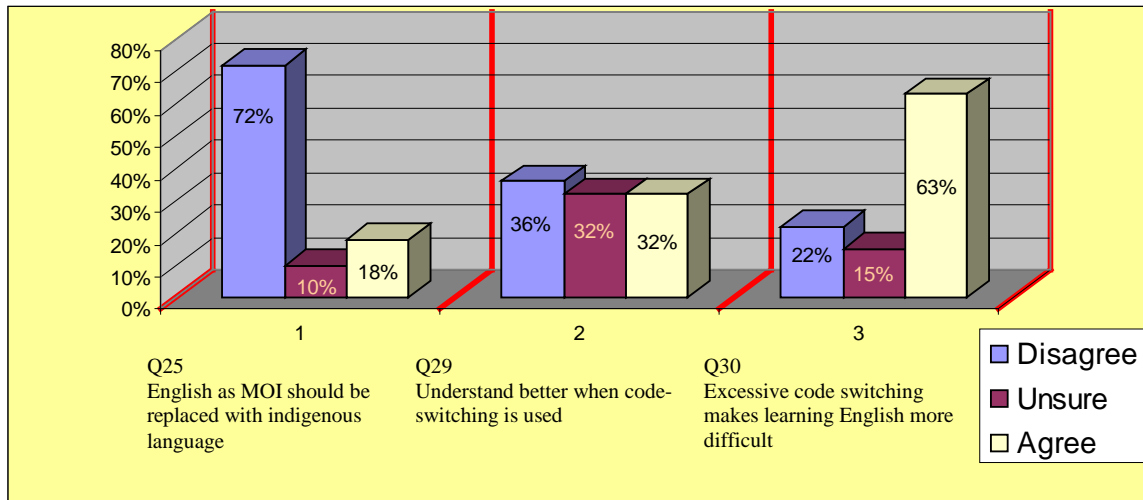
Fig. 4-8   Code switching and ESL learning/acquisition

Finding the rationale for such a response necessitated factor analysis of questions 25 and 29 (see Appendix H, section C) which indicated that these two questions, while split along three sub-components, have a high loading along one factor, i.e. replacing English as MoI. Learners, while accepting code-switching as necessary, remain uncertain of its efficacy but accept its necessity and have shown disagreement to the replacement of English as MoI. Implicit in this assumption, however, is the need for the co-existence of both English as MoI and mother tongue language to facilitate learning. Learners' ambivalence on the efficacy of code-switching could possibly be that assessments are conducted in English without the assistance of teachers' code-switching, but this becomes clearer as other aspects of code-switching are explained.

Effective use of code-switching should be constrained by two criteria. The first is the morpheme constraint, whereby "a speaker may not switch language between a word and its endings unless the word is pronounced as if it were in the language of the ending" (Cook, 1991, cited in Skiba, 1997, p. 2). The second is the equivalence constraint, when "the switch can come at a point in the sentence where it does not violate the grammar of either language" (Cook, 1991, cited in Skiba, 1997, p. 2). Within the context of this research it would appear that ESL learners tend to violate both these constraints, thus making it difficult for the recipient to make meaning of what is being

said. Evidence of this is a coined concept called "Zuluwizing" (Ms Fikile, school A). This is where SMS (short message services) language and English are combined with isiZulu words to create new text messages. This is found in the responses of interviewees when asked in question 4 to list some of the challenges which they consider hinder African learners from their skills in English (i.e. reading, writing and speaking).

> Interview - school A
> Ms Fikile: SMS language.
> Mrs Saraja: Text
> Mr Rajesh. Ja
> Ms Fikile: does not take them anywhere – does not teach them anything and they take that kind of language.
> Mr Rajesh: and the mixture of isiZulu words
> Ms Fikile: Yes – they like "Zuluwizing"

When Ms Fikile was probed to explain the concept of Zuluwizing, her response was:

> They take this English and put it into Zulu but it is internal and if you read it now it sounds like its Zulu but now its getting for English.

As can be gleaned from the above interaction, teachers, including isiZulu speakers, experience difficulty in understanding the learners' conflation of English, isiZulu and SMS languages especially when learners communicate in writing (SMS language is generally full of abbreviated words, e.g. gr8 is "great"). According to Ms Thandi (school B), this conflation is worsened when learners "Xhosalize" as they speak. When probed as to what this meant, Ms Thandi suggested that learners "use the first few letters from Xhosa words in front of Zulu words, to sound like Xhosa. That confuses even us". This suggests that the prefixes of isiXhosa words are added as prefixes to isiZulu words to make isiZulu words sound like isiXhosa. This, while it might suffice to serve as a local lingua franca, would obviously create a huge challenge in acquiring CALP and understanding of the target language.

The issue of learners themselves not understanding what they wrote, translating into teachers' lack of understanding, is captured in what Ms Fikile (school B, Q9) stated:

> Ja. Such that even when they write I've noticed that from Technology and also other subjects. That's enough when they write, when they construct or when they write a sentence trying to express something lets say for instance they are to explain what "*Regret*" means. Then for them to think of what the word means its already a big word to them and they try to put together words.

> It becomes a problem and whatever they are putting together they could see that they are writing and its what they think they understand but you as the teacher when you try to read it you can't even understand.

Thus, when learners who have a major comprehension problem summon up enough courage to seek clarity in class, there is often misunderstanding on the part of the teachers since "They use the word but they don't know in what context to use the word" (Mr Rajesh, school A).

According to Skiba (1997, p. 3) code-switching may be signalling the need for the listener to provide translation "into the second language thus providing a learning and developing activity". Signal for such translations could also be indicated by body expressions of learners to which teachers are sensitized as they "carry on in the lesson… [I] could see there are those few learners who are actually lost out what because they don't exactly have got like understanding of English" (Ms Fikile, school A, Q7). In response to such indicators, Ms Fikile (school A, Q7) stated that she uses code switching to isiZulu:

> …just to give them more clarity on lesson … trying to be lenient with them just so that you will be end up being on the board with them. So you end up translating – end up doing the code switching BUT not always.

The use of code-switching sparingly stems from the hesitancy on the part of teachers, who feel that "it can be positive but it can also be negative at the same time" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q3). However, not all teachers respond positively to such indicators, claiming that code-switching is actually antithetical to acquisition of and proficiency in English. In response to the issue of why Mrs Zulu (observation school C) did not encourage code-switching in class, she said:

> When I depend too much of Zulu, then exam time learners have a problem because the exam paper is in English and learners must answer in English. Learners get used to code switching; they become dependent and expect other teachers to code switch as well.

Ms Thandi, (school B, Q7) shared similar sentiments by arguing that "at times you find that even if you have explained several times but still the learner doesn't understand". So code-switching "doesn't help … you are still going to be assessed in English" (Ms Fikile, school A, Q7). Aside from merely getting clarity of terms through translations

(code-switching) Ms Naidoo (observation school B) noted that "in Hospitality learners experienced difficulty because they needed to comprehend what was written and then apply mathematical formulae". According to Ms Naidoo's statement, learners must now contend not only with understanding the language but also apply a mathematical formula. This is why their Consumer Studies Subject Advisors "insisted that the subject of Consumer Studies must be taught in English with minimal use of code-switching". It would appear that such ideal opportunities for language acquisition/learning are lost when teachers overtly discourage learners from using mother tongue. This is captured most appropriately by Mrs Saraja (school A, Q3), who said:

> And you will find our learners when they are in the class they will then even speak a little bit of Zulu and we've got to tell them you know that this is an English medium school – speak in English and when they are outside – you got to hear them they are speaking in their mother tongue.

That code-switching should not be encouraged is evident in Mr Lionel's (school B, Q3) claims: "in some rural schools perhaps they tried to implement code-switching and code-mixing to try to get the learners to understand but I think someway along the line (*teacher laughs*) it puts them at a disadvantage because it leaves gaps". Ms Thandi (school B, Q3) added that she didn't think that code-switching worked, because: "It's only few that can gain on that – code-switching. It's the clever learners; to the slower learners, it's going to them on air". That corroborates Mrs Naidoo's suggestion that "Learners that are slow need to work on their own as there is simply no time to extend or explain to those learners as there was not enough time in class to allow for this kind of translation due to the vastness of the curriculum" (observation school B).

The efficacy of code-switching in facilitating SLA is evident in fig. 4.8 (question 30, p. 110) reflecting that a majority of 63 % of learners agreed that a great amount of code-switching makes learning English more difficult. This sentiment was also shared by most teachers interviewed, and those whose classroom activities were observed. However, teachers claim legitimacy in this strategy of not encouraging mother tongue language usage during class by putting forward various reasons. The question on what language is used as MoI when teaching and whether code-switching is being used during class generated the following discussions with the teachers.

Most, if not all teachers of Indian, Coloured and White descent, do not use code-switching, simply because they do not understand and/or cannot speak isiZulu: "I am not at the level to communicate with them although I understand but I cannot converse with them" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q7). These teachers added that "learners need to understand English since examination and tuitions are in English" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q7), and "Switching languages discourages pupils from learning English" (Mrs White, school C, Q7). This could possibly be one explanation for learners' ambivalence in question 29 (see fig 4.8, p. 110), on the efficacy of code-switching, as it might be seen to have kept them (learners) at the inter-language level which has had a negative impact on their proficiency in the mother tongue and the target language, thus having a negative impact on their academic performance. The second possible explanation for learners' ambivalence is that code-switching retarded their acquisition of the target language. This brings home the reality of Mgqwashu's (2009, p. 296) contention that translations into isiZulu negatively affected learners' development in English vocabulary. This opinion was also shared by Mr Rajesh (school A, Q6) who, responding to the efficacy of code-switching, reported:

> To me it's not having a positive effect in English. It's actually bringing them down because if they have to translate what they think in their language it has a different meaning than in English. So it's not really helping them.

This was also highlighted by Mrs White (school C, Q7) who stated: "Switching languages discourages pupils from learning English" because learners "become dependent and expect other teachers to code-switch as well" (Mrs Zulu, observation school C). This prevents them from learning to use English at school.

To provide a degree of validity for interviewees' claims of English being used as MoI during lessons taught, observations of lessons of another 2 teachers per school conducted supported these assertions. However, it was found that, while the Indian teachers used only English as MoI and for general instructions, African teachers provided some isiZulu translations at the completion of lessons, and also gave general instructions in isiZulu where all learners in class were isiZulu speakers.

A further clarification in question 18 of learner questionnaire confirmed that 78 % of learners indicated that teachers used only English, while a further 18 % of learners

identified that teachers used mostly English, with a little isiZulu included when learners requested clarity during classroom lessons (see fig. 4.9).
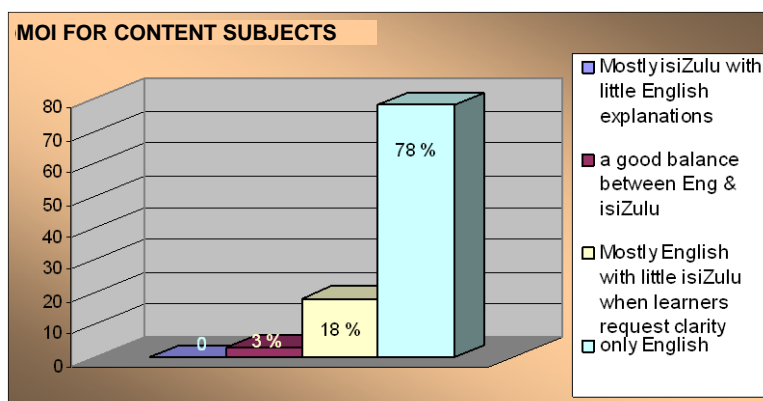
Fig. 4-9   **MoI for content subjects**

Thus, while it is acknowledged that code-switching carries out some basic functions which might be beneficial to language learning (Sert, 2005, p. 2), its usage is not being encouraged by teachers to serve as a tool for language acquisition/learning. This contradictory finding prompted the researcher to ask teachers two further questions regarding code-switching at the end of lesson observations. The first was: Why don't you code-switch? The second was: How do you assist learners who are not proficient/do not understand English? Their responses, written below, generated some interesting points that needed further investigation.

All Indian teachers used only English as MoI with no code switching at all. Their argument for not using code switching revolved essentially around: "I do not know any isiZulu and therefore cannot code-switch". On the opposite side of the debate for code-switching, African teachers who had the necessary competence and proficiency to code-switch into isiZulu argued that was difficult to code-switch in content subjects:

> When teaching the subject contents, the terminologies are highly specific and there were no equivalent isiZulu words for the English ones – therefore I use only English when teaching. But for general purposes I can use Zulu for clarity and better communication with the African learners (Ms Fikile, observation school A).
>
> I sometimes find it difficult to explain certain concept in Zulu because there are no equivalent Zulu words for many English terms taught in the subject. Unless government allows for the paper to be written in Zulu (Mrs Zulu, observation school C).

This corroborates the claims of various authors, such as Mchazime (2001); Mahlalela and Heugh, 2002 cited in Wildsmith-Cromarty and Gordan, (2009), that, at academic vocabulary level, the necessary lexicon and registers have has not been as fully developed in the indigenous languages as in the academic vocabulary of the European languages. This brings into focus what Javier and Marcos (1989) cited in De Naclerio (1998, p. 58) reported, that the interaction between degree of stress and language is complex. Javier and Marcos (1989) argued that, at a mild level of stress, code-switching was more prevalent, but at higher levels of stress, code-switching was reduced "apparently because high stress disrupts the generalization of information from one language to the other". This relates directly to what teachers were claiming, that use of code-switching in the teaching of content subjects was difficulty because of the highly specific and scientific terminologies of the subjects. Use of code-switching therefore causes more anxiety both on the part of the proficient isiZulu speaking teachers and learner, as vocabulary load increased from simple words to abstract constructs. This could be another possible explanation for learners' ambivalence on the efficacy of code-switching (see fig 4.8, p. 110), which seems to confuse them.

However, the reality that there were many African learners "who are actually lost out … because they don't exactly have got like understanding of English" (Ms Fikile, school A, Q7) needed a response on how teachers accommodated these learners. Most Indian teachers indicated that they solicited the assistance of the brighter African learners "who have a better command of the English language to help the slower learners" (Ms Naidoo, observation school B) or that they tried "to assist those learners who experience difficulties using English" (Mrs Govender, observation school A). However, Mrs Naidoo (observation school B) added:

> I find that the curriculum is so vast and with additional nationally set assessments during the 1st term means even less time to teach the subject. This has a negative impact as we need to increase the pace of the work to complete sections that are to be tested on in the National assessment. Learners that are slow need to work on their own as there is simply no time to extend or even explain to those learners. This proved a huge challenge as there was not enough time in class to allow for this kind of translation due to the vastness of the curriculum. We have recently attended a workshop held by our Subject Advisor for Consumer Studies who insisted that the subject of Consumer Studies must be taught in English with minimal use of code switching. Furthermore, in Hospitality learners experienced difficulty because they needed to comprehend what was written and then apply mathematical formulae. This causes extreme confusion.

This shows that neither the teachers nor the more proficient learners have the luxury of time to assist the slower learners in class. Thus, it would appear that the other alternative of pull-out classes in school to encourage a simpler "teacher-talk" for the 'slower acquirers' seemed a logical option (Krashen, 1988, p. 120). However, there seems to be another option to assist slower learners, as was expressed by Mrs Ram (observation school B), who found that, because she taught the same group of learners from Grade 10 to Grade 12 level, the need for brighter learners translating for the teacher diminished with grade progression of learners. Therefore at Grade 12 level she found that there was little need for translation. This strategy works on the principle that learners' facilitate peer-tutoring in such a way so as to "act as surrogate teachers with the more proficient ones tutoring their less proficient … classmates" (Kamwangamalu & Virasamy, 1999, p. 61; Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 348) with the proviso that the same teacher work with the same group of learners through grade progression. This means that the teachers who knows their learners' strengths and weaknesses can work with these learners over a protracted period of time and facilitate their proficiency in English in a developmental way.

Even more interesting were the viewpoints of the African teachers who actually discourage code switching, despite having proficiency in L1. Mrs Zulu, (observation school C) had the following to say regarding code switching:

> Mrs Zulu: I teach my lessons in English but some learners seek clarity in Zulu. I do explain in Zulu, where possible but I do not encourage this during class discussions. Most learners choose not to seek clarity during the lesson but immediately after the lesson is over, they come and ask in their vernacular"
> Researcher: Why don't you code-switch during the lesson?
> Mrs Zulu: Well, there are a few reasons that I can tell you. I sometimes find it difficult to explain certain concept in Zulu because there are no equivalent Zulu words for many English terms taught in the subject. Unless government allows for the paper to be written in Zulu.

Cook's (1991) assertion (cited in Skiba, 1997), that code switching may be integrated into the activities of a SL, is plausible but its practical implementation is questionable. Teachers find that the following has had a negative impact on teaching time: the vast curriculum, heavy workloads, shortened teaching time and the heterogeneity of the learners. The last named refers to the fact that there is great diversity in terms of the learners' proficiency in the language and each individual's intellectual abilities and

skills needed to make the abstractions, generalisations and critical judgements so necessary for academic work. Teachers just do not have the luxury of smaller classes to accommodate the teaching of a second language while teaching their content subjects. This, teachers argue, is compounded by the imposition of external assessments that take up teaching time.

Furthermore, for effective code-switching, the speakers must have the same degree of proficiency and competence in both languages, which Sookrajh and Joshua (2009, p. 330) and Ngubane (2005, p. 2) argue that most teachers do not possess. These challenges could emanate from the non-cognate nature of English and isiZulu, as mentioned by Naicker and Balfour (2009, p. 354) and Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan (2009, p. 363). It has been established within this research that learners lack English vocabulary and cannot fully express themselves in English.

The notion and the efficacy of learners acting as surrogate teachers can be challenged, as it is based on the primacy of the learners' understanding of what was taught. Teachers did not indicate any verification processes to ensure that what was translated and explained by the surrogate teacher (learner) to the slower learners was in fact what the teacher had taught. Compounding this issue is the extent to which the brighter learner has actually understood what was taught. For example, suppose he/she was able to understand only 50 % of what was taught by the teacher, which he/she then explains to the slower learners: if the slower learners understands only 50 % of what the surrogate teacher teaches them, then in effect the slower learner has understood only 25 % of what was originally taught by the teacher. Another challenge facing this notion is based on the equivalence of English and isiZulu in terms of academic lexicons and registers. It has been argued by various authors and respondents of this research that African languages do not have the necessary registers and lexicons for academic discourses. Yet it becomes incumbent upon the surrogate teacher (learner) to explain these constructs to the slower learners. This leaves room for further investigation, as it falls outside the empirical framework of this research.

Given the language challenge that learners face on a daily basis, it begs the question as to what extent are learners sufficiently motivated to succeed in a system in which they

appear to be fairing poorly. This is why Mr Lionel (school B, Q3), talking about code-switching as a tool to facilitate SLA/learning, suggests:

> I wouldn't rule it out when it comes to 2nd language acquisition. I wouldn't rule out code switching. You know it's like a crutch but a learner can't keep walking with a crutch. He needs to release it sometime or the other.

While code-switching is used as a crutch, teachers also engage in increased interactive learning tasks through similar programmes as Classroom Talk Programme (CTP) in the medium of English (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 340) to facilitate SLA or second language learning.

4.4.4 Interaction and language acquisition

It has been argued that teachers "encourage learners to communicate/speak in English during school time and in the classroom" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q10) so as to increase interaction using the L2, which, it is argued, should facilitate acquisition/learning and improve proficiency in L2.
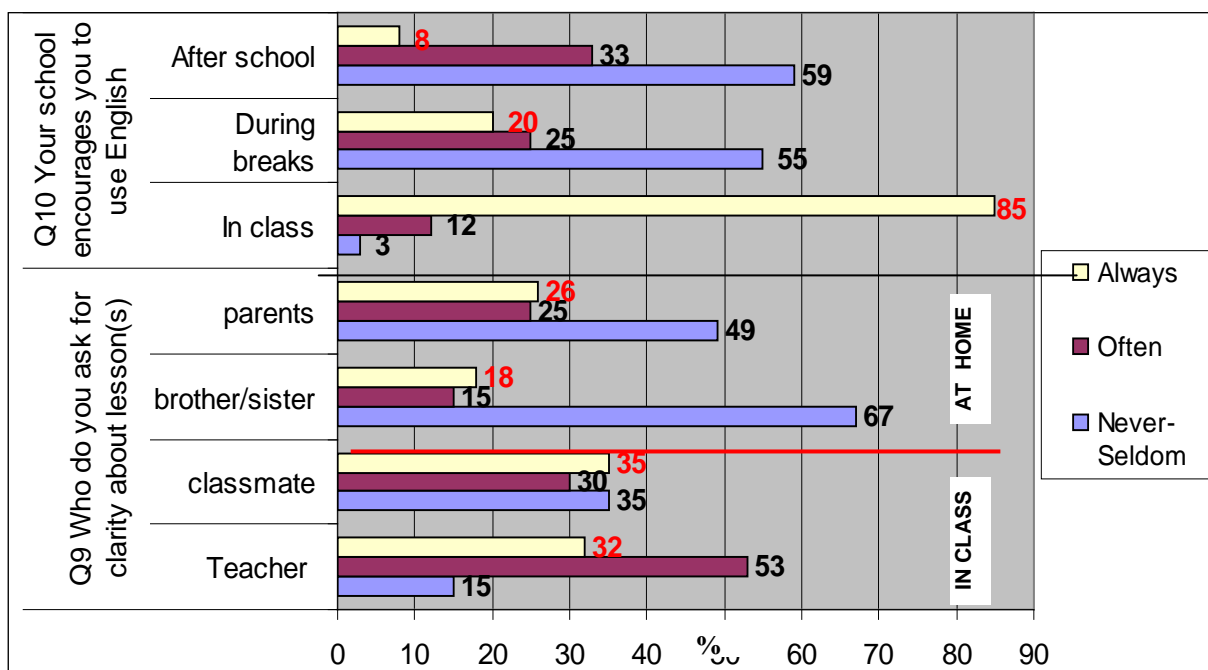
Fig. 4-10   Seeking clarity on use of English

A majority of 85 % of learners who answered question 10 corroborated (fig. 4.10) this claim, i.e. that teachers did encourage them to use English, especially in class. Factor analysis, as a statistical technique, was used to obtain a fuller understanding of this

response (Appendix H section A, questions 9 and 10). It has been found that teachers have devised and implemented various strategies in order to facilitate interaction among learners, however, its efficacy remains precarious at best.

a)   Getting learners to talk

Realising that language development increases within the complex interplay of the child and his environment (Lightbrown & Spada, 1999), teachers, as an augmentation to the various strategies adopted to improve proficiency in English, attempt to get learners involved in the daily discussions through "Peer/group learning and using learners that are fluent in English to help other slower learners" (Mr Pravesh school C, Q10). They also encourage speeches and debates in English (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q11) and question and answer sessions, where curriculum time allows. Factor analysis in section A of the questionnaire revealed that the variables which constituted the components of "Your school encourages you to use English" loaded perfectly along one factor, namely, interaction. This means that the statements (variables) that constituted this component perfectly measured the component, that is, the component measured what it was that was meant to be measured (Appendix H, section A, Q10).

This strategy is supported by the findings of MacIntyre and Legatto (2009) regarding learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) in SL, where it has been established that higher WTC is associated with increased language proficiency (MacIntyre, Kimberley, & Moore, 2010, p. 5). However, when teachers were asked whether learners participated actively during class discussions, while a certain degree of ambivalence was evident in the discussion, teachers generally agreed that learners did not participate actively during class activities. Both Mr Pravesh and Mrs White (school B, Q9) found that learners "find it difficult to express themselves in English" or that "Learners could be shy" (Mrs Singh, school B, Q9), possibly because "learners lack confidence and are laughed at by other learners" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q9). Teachers must be aware that SL learners may have language problems in reading and writing which are not immediately apparent if their oral abilities are used to gauge their English proficiency. The problems of academic reading and writing alluded to by teachers, in terms of learners' lack of confidence, shyness and fear of being laughed at, probably emanates from the limitations in vocabulary and syntactic knowledge of the SL. Thus, Mrs Singh

(school B) also shared the sentiment that learners "are afraid to speak because other learners could laugh at them". In direct response to what Mrs Singh stated, Mr Lionel had the following to share:

> Interview school B
> Mr Lionel: Now that could be a (laughs). That depends on the teacher and the style of teaching and if the learners are comfortable in the class and they are enjoying the lesson and the teacher doesn't come down hard on learners who don't have the right answers all the time. Then children just need to be comfortable to participate and the lesson that you prepare it needs to it needs to apply to them – you know and – like I find sometimes I'll refer to a television programme that I watched when I was younger not remembering you know that we are not in the same generation and they look at me dumb-founded and then I'll revert back to something that's more current and then they respond. So their participation relies a lot on how interesting the lesson is and how comfortable they are.
> Researcher: But I'm trying to see now, bearing in mind how English as MoI. Do you find that to be a barrier to their active participation?
> Mr Lionel: For some of them it will be a barrier. Those – I think that – you know - if a child acknowledges that they are weak or if somebody has led them to believe – even if they are weak – you know – but if its been reinforced in them that they are weak then because of that language barrier they wont participate. They will be withdrawn.
> Ms Thandi: Yes

Mr Lionel raised various issues which possibly contribute to learners' levels of participation. The first is the type and relevance of the lessons, which affect the degree to which learners can relate to such lessons (discussed in more detail under 4.8 Resources). The second is the teachers' styles in making learners feel comfortable in class. Here it is argued that the teachers' tolerance or intolerance of incorrect responses from learners could be the deciding factor in learners' participation or withdrawal. This is why learner 1 (school A) suggested that teachers should be "encouraging learners at all times even if they see you are doing really bad but still push you, don't discourage a pupil. And they must try to alleviate looking disdainful to other children, maybe less fortunate pupils too". The same learner also suggested that teachers should be "listening to learner's more often letting them speak their minds".

The third factor which contributes to learners' levels of participation would be teachers who openly acknowledge that learners are weak and/or reinforce such beliefs among learners. Such reinforcement from persons of authority becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure on the part of the learner, and contributes to the result which Mrs Singh anticipates: "Learners could have low self-esteem". This could imply that either

their low self-esteem results in learners not participating or that the fact of learners being "incapable of expressing themselves well in English" (Mrs Singh, school B, Q9) contributes to their low-self-esteem. Exacerbating the problem further would be the re-affirmation by teachers which strengthens the symbiotic relationship that seems to exist between learners' lack of competence and their low self-esteem.

Mr Pravesh (school C, Q9) postulated that the lack of participation by learners could be as a result of the fact that "learners do not understand the questions being asked". However, a more complex scenario was described by Ms Fikile (school A, Q9), who argued that participation could be context dependent:

> I think that it depends on the context or not just the context as such but also on the type of subject for instance in my case – in my case I don't always get a good response. I don't know whether it's because they are not yet or they still not yet familiar with the language or with the concept that we use in Hospitality – you understand. So it depends you understand. So it depends and I've noticed it is in some classes that the response is quiet good with the African learners when it comes to like English and thing they enjoy it becomes much easier because its something that they use enough and always and when it comes to contents– when it comes to these subjects that they do take – it becomes difficult for them to because it takes a lot of time for them to record and to interpret the question and you know even if they try and understand it end up but then when it comes to putting together the words and the way the manner in which they are expected to respond then they start to draw back and they end up not getting you know what you should be getting. You end up not getting a good response. I end up not getting a good response.

While acknowledging that participation by learners is not always good, Ms Fikile was unable to identify a specific reason for this. She vacillated between learners' lack of familiarity of the language, lack of understanding of subject specific concepts (constructs), and learners' enjoyment in what they do as contributing to their levels of participation. The notion that the learner's level of enjoyment of lessons motivates participation supports what Mr Lionel (school B) reported earlier on the type of lesson being planned and delivered. Whatever the reason, learners experience difficulty in recording and interpreting questions (echoed by Mr Pravesh), and therefore constructing sentences in response to questions becomes insurmountable for learners, resulting in withdrawal from class discussions. However, Mr Rajesh (school A, Q9) was more definite in defining the cause: "besides the contexts I think the learners that I teach have a major comprehension problem". He cited the following case as an example:

> …a very senior class who didn't know the difference between quantities and amount because they didn't know the meaning of it. So to me it is a major problem. They can use the word but they don't know in what context to use the word. So even learners in Grade 12 who are sitting in my lesson – don't know English words.

This again echoes the sentiments expressed by Ms Fikile: the fact that learners did not understand subject specific words was compounded by learners' not knowing English words in general.

The suggestion by Mrs Suresh (school C), that learners from senior classes "speak English and understand it better than those in the junior classes," implies that there is a degree of improvement in communicative skills of learners as they progress through the grades in the high schools. It was concluded from interview transcripts that teachers were generally unanimous that learners did not participate actively during class activities due essentially to lack of competence and proficiency in the second language. This was corroborated through lesson observation, where it was found that learners' participation in class was minimal, mostly comprising one word or short phrases. According to Mrs Zulu (lesson observation school C), learners did not participate actively because "they are shy" which arose from the "inferiority complex of the learners" as a result of learners who "tease each other when they make a mistake".

This brings us back to Buthelezi's (2002, p. 20) contention that isiZulu-medium primary school learners are silenced in class as they are not confident enough to perform verbal tasks (cited in Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 341). Mrs Saraja's (school A, Q9) observation highlights the division in language proficiency based on learners' primary schooling when, responding to a question on learners' participation level in class, she said:

> I would say yes because my learners that I have come from an English medium background from the primary school upwards so they know if I'm speaking or if I ask them an opinion about something – they do participate actively.

From the above, one can infer that the teacher implies that learners from "isiZulu medium African primary schools" do not have the necessary competence and proficiency in English to function adequately in cognitively demanding contexts where

"school contexts do not provide as much support as ordinary communication contexts do" (Mchazime, 2001, p. 41). The utterances of Ms Fikile (school A, see page 161) again point to the distinction between BICS and CALP, where learners seem more responsive to communicating on general issues during English periods as opposed to the specialist concepts involved in content subjects. Teachers must be cautioned about supposing that children who converse comfortably in English are in full control of the language, as face-to-face communication, constituting BICS, does not imply proficiency in the more complex academic language needed to engage in many classroom activities (CALP).
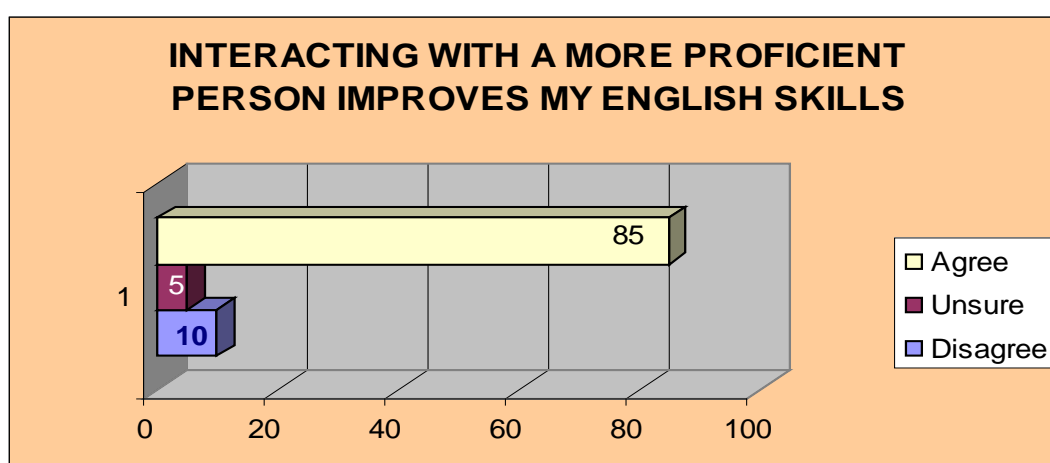
Fig. 4-11   Interaction and improvement in English skills

Granted, other reasons proffered were about learners not understanding the subject specific terminologies, lack of comprehension, and sheer inability to spell words. The strategy of getting more proficient learners to help slower learners is a strategy that Naicker and Balfour (2009, p. 348) have found to help improve CALP. A vast majority of 85 % of learners (fig. 4.11) have also agreed (question 26) that such interactions with more proficient L1 speakers improved their skills in spoken and written English.

In an attempt to lower the Affective filter, allowing for input to reach the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), teachers encouraged learners to spend time on "Watching TV programmes in English, speeches, debates in English … public speaking in English and … learners speaking English in classroom during lessons" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q11). "Assembly talks by learners to encourage peer participation" was also recommended (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q10). These strategies can be seen to be

supported by theories such as the Input hypothesis (comprehensible input is $i + 1$) and the Affective Filter hypothesis whereby learners are provided with ample opportunities for comprehensible input within an enabling environment created through discussions. McCain (2000) comments that the level of input provided has maximum effect at the $i + 1$ level and within an environment that encourages the greatest amount of use of the target language. Effective implementation of the comprehensible input hypothesis, based on its premise of providing input just beyond learners' current L2 competence, obviously proves a challenge to teachers. Extrapolating from learners' current proficiency/competence levels, which are not commensurate with grade specific vocabulary load, one can conclude that there is a mismatch. This mismatch is evident from the following excerpts of interview transcripts:

Interview school A
Ms Fikile: I don't know whether it's because they are not yet or they still not yet familiar with the language or with the concept that we use in Hospitality… Then for them to think of what the word means. Its already a big word to them and they try to put together words – it becomes a problem.
Mr Rajesh: Cannot spell his name. Does not know the letters of his alphabet and he is in Grade 8.
Ms Fikile: They don't know where to put a full stop or a comma.
Mr Rajesh: Now how is the child sitting in the English class? How did the child pass last year? How did the child pass English because one of the requirements is that you must pass the language of instruction? And the child who does not know his alphabets and has passed last year. To me it's a real concern. There should be an enquiry.
Researcher: But you are talking in the context of …
Mr Rajesh: In my subject. I didn't tell you this. One of the biggest barriers in them acquiring knowledge is the language barrier.
Mrs Saraja: Maybe they can express themselves verbally but when it is written then there is a problem.
Ms Fikile: Yes that is a problem.
Mr Rajesh: Even but they don't know the meaning of words like content. There are so many words that you need to end up explaining meanings

Interview school C
Mrs White: Well the teachers are not teaching learners the correct use of the English language in terms of grammar, sentence construction, etc. It is a wonder how these learners are passing their grades but are battling at high school.

There is implied evidence within the transcript above that senior learners do not enjoy the requisite competence to function at their respective grade level. Comprehensible input is based on the hypothesis that input should be at a level slightly higher than the learners' current level of competence. However, evident in the above transcript is the notion that learners' current language competence level is probably that required of two

to three grades lower than what it ought to be. If teachers were to implement the comprehensible input hypothesis effectively, it would mean that they would have to teach grade 12 learners at grade 9 or 10 level, which does not fulfil the curriculum vocabulary load. Thus, while the above transcripts suggests that learners are functioning at competence levels below the grade level requirements in which they are currently studying, teachers in meeting the grade specific curriculum vocabulary levels, appear to be providing learners with input at $i + 2$ or 3, whereas in fact they are merely in compliance with grade requirements. "The language level in these papers are of a very high standard and certainly does not take into account the level of understanding of an English (FAL) learner" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q3): this statement highlights the disjunction between learners' current language competence and grade specific vocabulary requirements. It addition, it is probably why learner 21 (school A, Q23), in response to identifying some challenges facing learners in improving their English skills, reported: "There are some words in comprehension that are difficult to understand. They must used [use] familiar words in english so that everyone will understand what is required in a question [question]'. Learner 16 (school C, Q23) also complained that "the other is that the paper are written with a difficult words. You find the word need a dictionary but the dictionary is not allow at the exam". This shows that the challenge of low vocabulary load on the part of the learners is not confined only to the classroom context but extends into the examination rooms. The fact that this challenge extends into the examination sessions suggests that very little vocabulary loading is taking place during the course of normal lessons during the year, despite teachers teaching the lessons. This therefore implies that teachers, in order to accommodate learners' low vocabulary levels, mediate through lowering the language complexity, resulting in their providing input at $i + 0$ or -1. This is implicit in Ms Fikile's statement: "But we are trying to be lenient with them just so that you will be end up being on the board with them" (school A, Q7). Teachers could, on the other hand, be using grade specific level of complexity, which translates into input at $i + 2$ or 3, and lose the learners. Thus the learners are left with low levels of vocabulary, which has a negative impact on their ability to interact with and analyse grade specific texts.

Further evidence of the $i + 2$ or 3 conundrum was raised by learner 13 (school A, Q23), who reported: "The difficulties are that when you trying to improve your English skills you may find some of the thing you do to improve your English skill more difficult".

This, according to Mitchell and Myles (1998, p. 38) is too complex a process for effective acquisition, which again highlights the mismatch in the BICS and CALP tensions. The BICS and CALP dichotomy prompts a discussion on the Critical Period of acquisition, which brings us to the next section.

b)   Critical period/age of language acquisition

This research was based on the premise that primary schools had met their obligations in terms of developing requisite skills in the target language sufficiently for effective use as MoI in more demanding contexts for higher grades. In order to validate this supposition, learners were asked whether primary schools developed their skills sufficiently to meet the demands of the high school subjects (question 15). Fig. 4.4 (p. 93). A majority of 67 % agreed that primary schools did develop their skills in English sufficiently. However, many of these learners, as will be shown during discussions that follow, have probably mistakenly assumed that, because they can converse comfortably in English, they are in full control of the language and have mastered the disembedded cognitive language required for the academic discourses of schooling. The ambivalence of the 17 % of learners who remain unsure, (fig. 4.4, p. 93) probably stems from the fact that they have passed the primary school phase using English as MoI, but still find themselves grappling with the academic demands of high school. This is why Mrs White (school C, Q13) exclaims: "It is a wonder how these learners are passing their grades but are battling at high school!" This is also evident in the statements made by the following learners:

I'm good in speaking and reading but I can't say that I am good in writing too (learner 12, school B, Q32).
Cause if I am writing exam or test I don't understand everything (learner 16, school C, Q13).

Furthermore, while only a minority of 16 % of learners disagreed that primary schools developed their English skills sufficiently (see fig. 4.4, p. 93), it would appear that these learners are acutely aware that simple conversational fluency in the MoI is not sufficient for academic success.

At face value this does not appear to warrant further discussion, and it would seem that the challenges of language and its usage should remain the domain of high schools. However, throughout all interviews and across various questions, the issue of primary schools, language usage at primary schools and primary school teacher competence became prominent signposts for the lack of language acquisition skills. According to the "Heyneman-Loxely effect", the poorer the country, the greater is the impact of school and teacher quality factors on learner performance (Nascimento, 2008, p. 22). This speaks to the poor quality of education at most primary schools for the indigenous majority.

Thus post analysis and interpretation of data, especially interview transcripts, brought upon the realisation that the premise adopted originally (i.e. that primary schools have met their language obligations) is probably fallacious, which explains why no specific questions were posed to teachers on the degree of primary schools` preparation of learners for high school. The research findings of Asikhia (2010, p. 229) reveal that teachers believed that teachers' methods of teaching influenced poor academic performance, whereas the learners believed that it was the teachers' qualification as well. This was also raised in this study, where it was reported that "English is not being properly taught at primary school" (Mrs White, school C, Q13). This and other views of learners gave a clear indication that teachers hold a directly opposite view to the majority of learners on primary schools' preparation of learners. It became apparent that the difference of opinions between teachers and learners emanates from the BICS/CALP tensions. When question 15 was read, learners were presumably of the opinion that having developed BICS is sufficient for the disembedded cognitive language demands of high school, hence the majority agreeing. This is confirmed by the following statements made by learners:

Because I understand english basically fluent (learner 21, school A, Q4).
Sometimes is easily to learn and speaking but writing is sometime your write incorrect words (learner 19, school C, Q32).

On the other hand, teachers view language from the CALP perspective, hence an opinion which is diametrically opposite to the one learners hold. Teachers reported that "Most learners have a poor comprehension of English" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q3) because "Learners lack understanding of the language … Therefore they do not

communicate fluently in English" (Mr Pravesh, school 3, Q3). The differences in perspectives held by teachers and learners can be represented diagrammatically as follows:
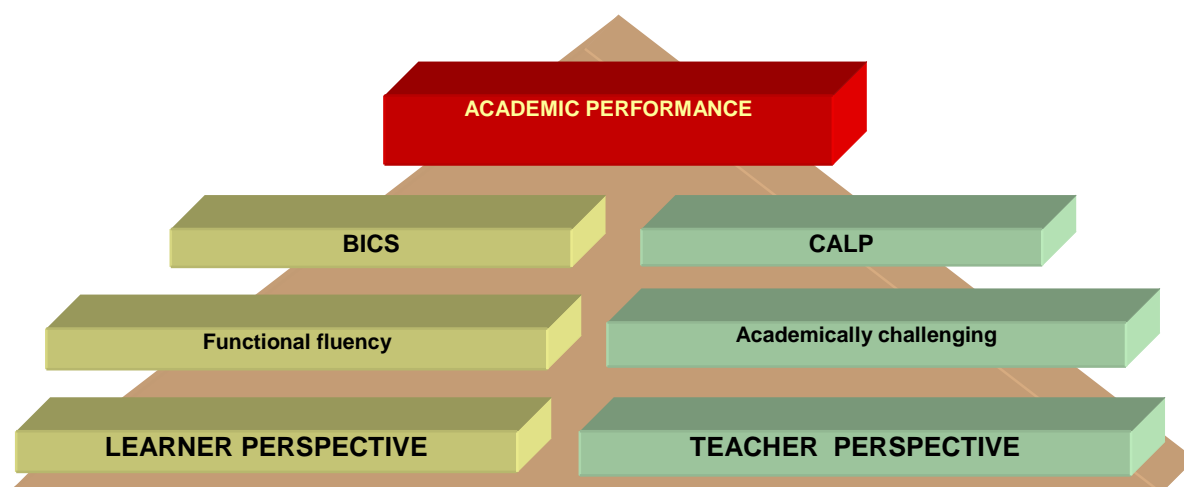
Fig. 4-12   **Researcher's understanding of teacher and learner perspective on BICS/CALP**

The paradox between Buthelezi's (cited in Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 341) contention that:

> isiZulu-medium primary schools learners are silenced in class as they were not confident enough to perform verbal tasks

and:

> I would say yes because my learners that I have come from an English medium background from the primary school upwards so they know if I'm speaking or if I ask them an opinion about something – they do participate actively (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q9)

thus became the point of departure in explaining the issues of primary schools' responsibility in developing learners' English skills for the curricular demands of high school.

Teachers pointed out that the challenge learners faced was "language barrier" (Mr Rajesh, school A, question 1) and "most importantly the poor comprehension of English" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q1). Learners unwittingly agreed with teachers that their (i.e. learners') CALP had not been sufficiently developed to meet the challenges of high school. The following extracts from learners' responses attest to the claims that their lack of development in CALP contributed to their poor academic performance:

> School A
> Learner 8: Some difficulties is when it come to write in bombastic words
> (hard words) and when it has been spoken" (Q23).
> Learner 21: There are some words in comprehension that are difficult to
> understand. They must used familiar words in english so that everyone will
> understand what is required in a quection [question] (Q23)
> Learner 12: Sometimes I find words in Questions that I don't understand (Q4).
> school B, question 23:
> Learner 1: Writing is more difficult because some of the spelling of words get
> confusing (Q23).
> Learner 6: My difficulties in improving my English is writing English when
> answering the questions (23).
> Learner 11: Sometimes when I read I found it so difficult to understand some
> of the bombastic words (Q23).

The above extracts also reflect the fact that if learners are not able to understand the comprehension passages or the "bombastic" words used in the passage or the question, then they are operating at the BICS and not the CALP level of the target language. This would explain why learners "usually …find difficult in writing English by using wrong spelling" (learner 4, school B, Q23) or that they "sometimes use wrong punctuation at a wrong place" (learner 23, school A, Q23).

Some learners have come to the realisation that Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency, in addition to BICS, is required for academic success. Thus learner 11 (school C, Q32) argued that "You have to be able to speak, read, write and understand English. Speaking is just a waste of time if you cannot read or write it". Learner 14 (school C, Q32) echoed similar sentiments by stating that "speaking, reading and writing is all wanted in English so that you can improve your performance". Having identified what the problem was, i.e. lack of language proficiency, the challenge then was to locate this problem in context. In this regard, Mr Lionel (school B, Q1) was forthright in stating that:

> It could be due to the nature of the primary school they went to, it could be
> the school didn't have teachers that were equipped to teach English or it could
> be that these 7 learners in particular just fell through the cracks of the system
> because we know that learners are only allowed to fail a number of times in a
> specific phase and they just keep pushing them up.

The utterances of Mr Lionel reveal three salient points regarding lack of proficiency in the target language by learners. Firstly, he identifies the nature of the primary school,

secondly, he identifies the competence of the teachers, and thirdly, a systemic problem wherein learners are not allowed to be held back for too long in a phase and should be "pushed through". These factors, amongst others, such as the criteria for transition from primary to secondary schools, inadequate provision and maintenance of infrastructure and teachers' qualification and experience, were also listed as "militating against the enhancement of quality education and better performance of students" in the WASSCE region at the first Lagos State Education Summit held in July 2004 (Adeogun & Osifila, 2008, p. 145). Mr Lionel's point numbers 2 and 3 bear relevance as a caveat to teachers in general. Mr Lionel, implicit in his assertions, suggests that, if learners who are not ready for the disembedded demands of English for the classroom are mainstreamed, their academic success may be hindered, and that teachers should realize that mainstreaming learners on the basis of oral language assessment is inappropriate, albeit a systemic problem.

The issue of the primary school needs elaboration. Mr Rajesh (school A, Q1) pointed out that "the foundation that they come from is not solid" which Mrs Thandi (school C, Q4) identifies as "Improper foundation from lower classes". Mr Rajesh (school A) found it imperative to repeat in question 4 that "the basics at primary school level are not done – not done adequately". The inadequacy of primary schools' role in developing language proficiency in learners is attributable to what Mrs White (school C, Q13) identified as follows:

> teachers are not teaching learners the correct use of the English language in terms of grammar sentence construction etc.

This is probably because the teachers in the primary schools mistakenly believe that learners with fluent conversational English no longer require language instruction. This highlights the myth identified by McLaughlin (1992, p. 4) that some teachers "assume that children who can converse comfortably in English are in full control of the language. Yet for school-aged children, proficiency in face-to-face communication does not imply proficiency in the more complex academic language needed to engage in many classroom activities". Furthermore, McLaughlin (1992, p.4) also suggested that it takes between 4 to 6 years of full interaction in the target language for children to acquire the level of proficiency needed for understanding the language in its academic uses.

The shortcomings of our South African primary schooling system were most pointedly brought out through the story of a Zimbabwean learner, currently in grade 11, at school B, supported by various other evidentiary statements by teachers which bring into focus the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) for language acquisition. Mrs Singh (school B, Q11) reported of this Zimbabwean learner that "her command of the English language is phenomenal". This was despite the learner's remaining in South Africa with "refugee status, with no family, no food and no clothing" and having to "fend for herself after school". Mrs Singh (school B, Q 11) gave the reason for this as follows:

> This is because her education was in English from the very first day of school. This builds excellent grounding for language acquisition. You can hear and see the drastic difference in her language skills as compared to other learners who studied mother tongue in their foundation years.

Mrs Saraja (school A, Q4) also painted a picture of the contrast between learners coming from English medium primary school as compared to other schools which are supposedly English medium. The following extract shows the differences in learner competences:

> Interview school C, Q4
>
> Mrs Saraja: But also you got to look at our grade 8's that came in like say the last 2 years. These kids started from grade R in an Indian medium school – and you can see the difference.
> Ms Fikile: Yes the one that comes from the rural areas ..
> Mrs Saraja: Of those children – they can read – they write beautifully and someway along the line – those before them are lost.
> Ms Fikile: Ja they are lost. And someone that comes from the rural medium school – it seems like it's the first time ..
> Mr Rajesh: They don't know English at all.
> Ms Fikile: English is the second language
> Mrs Saraja: Yes

It can be deduced that Mrs Saraja's reference to "Indian medium school" actually means "English medium school" whereas reference to "rural areas" (Ms Fikile) mean "African schools" where English should be the MoI. From the discussion above, it appears that learners who come from primary schools that choose and actually use English as the MoI from Grade R onwards actually fare better that those learners that come from schools that allegedly use English as MoI. The question then is why should there be such a marked difference in the level of proficiency among learners coming from "Indian" as opposed to "rural" schools, when it has become axiomatic that most, if not

all, primary schools use English as the MoI. The LiEP of 1997 appears to offer some answer to this dilemma. According to the LiEP, the MoI for learners in the foundation phase, i.e. from grades R to grade 3, must be in mother tongue and thereafter, from grade 4 upwards, the MoI should be chosen as per guidelines contained in the South African School's Act, 84 of 1996, Sec (6) (2) (Department of Education, 2003). Thus, within KwaZulu-Natal, there would appear to be three streams of primary schools with differing foundation phase MoI. In primary schools catering essentially for Afrikaans speaking learners, the MoI would be Afrikaans (mother tongue); the MoI in African schools would essentially be isiZulu (mother tongue); and Indian schools would have English (non-mother tongue) as MoI. Mr Lionel (school B, Q12) agreed with this strategy:

> in elementary school, in primary school gradually go from teaching in mother tongue to code switching and code mixing and then just the medium of instruction being in English as they move forward. …. I think that the structure that they have in place now – it's the best one that they've come up with thus far. It should be implemented properly.

However not all teachers agreed with this strategy. Mr Rajesh (school A, Q4) was adamant that "if you take the language itself – you can't teach the child in mother tongue, er, isiZulu in Grades 1, 2 and 3 when these are foundation phases". It would appear that teachers are finding that many of learners' challenges in gaining language proficiency in the target language arise from the MoI in the foundation phase. This fits in with the idea of CPH for SLA.

Given that the majority of African learners, including grade 12, "don't know English at all" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q4), teachers were unanimous that "English is not being properly taught at primary school" (Mrs White, school C, Q13). This refers us back to Schouten (2009, p. 1), who states that "a critical period exists for the domain of language learning". Schouten (2009) and other scholars argue that this period is characterized by the more rapid and easier acquisition of L2 learning than occurs at times falling outside of this period, if learners are provided with adequate stimuli (Brown, 1994; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991 and Scoval, 1998 cited in Moore, 1999). According to Hakuta, Bialystock and Wiley (n.d.) claims about the age at which the critical period terminates include 5 years (Krashen, 1973), 6 years (Pinker, 1994), 12 years (Lenneberg, 1967) and 15 years (Johnson Newport, 1989). Thus, Butler (2008, p.

2) has also argued that "the window opportunity for learning a second language is between birth and the age of ten or twelve, and he advises: "The sooner you begin the second language learning, the more apt the young child is to learn it faster and retain it better". According to research, learners of L2 who begin their learning process after this critical period are still able to acquire a SL, but show marked performance deficits in the language (Moore, 1999), and, as supported by Schouten (2009), are "markedly less successful than their younger counterparts". This explains the responses of the following teachers from school A (question 6), who reported that learners do learn but very slowly and in a compartmentalized fashion.

> Mrs Saraja: I think most of them although they are learning English and acquiring it at a very slow pace.
> Mr Rajesh: They are learning them in compartments.

It is further claimed that if language input does not occur until after this time, the individual will never achieve a full command of language – especially of grammatical systems, which explains why learners "cannot construct a sentence" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q1) nor do they "know where to put a full stop or a comma" (Ms Fikile, school A, Q9). This is why Mrs Saraja (school A, Q14) argues that the "Grounding phase is primary school" which is "the important phase for language development …" (Ms Fikile, school A, Q4) which supports Schouten's claim that while "highly developed cogitative abilities allow adults to outperform children in most areas of learning… in the realm of language learning, children seem to have a notable advantage" (2009, p. 1).
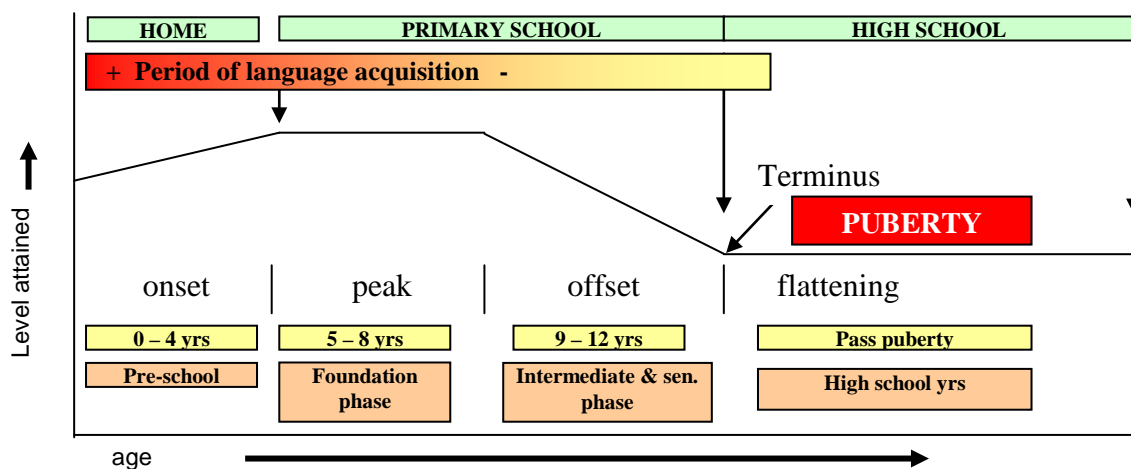
Fig. 4-13   Geometric features of a critical period

(adapted from Van Boxtel, 2005)

Hence language acquisition/learning should be dealt with vigorously during the primary school phase, as the age category of the primary school learners more or less exactly fits the profile of the CPH. Superimposing the learners' ages of sensitivity to language acquisition, puberty and the different grades/phases of schooling onto the basic figure, results in the representation shown in fig. 4.13.

Fig. 4.13 shows that, according to the CPH, acquisition/learning of English as a SL would be most successful if pursued vigorously during the primary schooling years of a learner. In support of this, Mr Rajesh (school A, Q4) was adamant that "if you take the language itself – you can't teach the child in mother tongue, er, isiZulu in Grades 1, 2 and 3 when these are foundation phases". If the "basics at primary school level is not done – not done adequately" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q4) learners will "lack understanding of the language" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q3) and their foundations will not be solid. Exacerbating the problem further is the fact that "some teachers even teach the normal subjects in isiZulu despite the LOLT [MoI] of the school being English" (Mrs White, school C, Q13). This point was also raised by Ms Thandi (school B, Q1), Mrs Suresh (school C, Q4) and Ms Fikile (school A, Q4). This practice reduces the opportunities available to learners in acquiring/learning the target language.

Another characteristic of the CPH, according to Schouten (2009) is that most children who are surrounded by a SL at an early age can acquire this language with native-like competence. If this is true, then this condition would prove a major challenge to most African learners, as at home they are exposed to their mother tongue (isiZulu) and not to the second language. This is confirmed by the following excerpts of interviews with teachers:

Interview school A, question 4 Ms Fikile: When they get home the only language they can use .. er .. Mrs Saraja: Ja their first language. Ms Fikile: They always feel comfortable with that
Interview school B, question 3 Ms Thandi: Yes – surely for - especially for the Africans while English as their home language its difficult for others and they are not exposed to most of the things that can improve their English
Interview school C Mr Pravesh: At home isiZulu is spoken. Radio stations and TV programmes – learners mostly watch isiZulu programmes (Q3). Mrs Suresh: Like my colleague mentioned, it appears that communication at home is mainly in isiZulu (Q4).

It can be seen from Ms Thandi's statement that learners are deprived of other means of improving their proficiency in the second language. Learners have also indicated that "when we get home we speak isiZulu" (learner 2, school B, Q11) because "my parents … with their tranditional belive [traditional belief] they don't allow me to use English during their time" (learner 11, school C, Q11). According to teachers, persistent use of indigenous languages seems to cause interference and retards development of competence in the target language. They argue that this is because: "When you are going home you listening to one set of language. You coming to school where English is a first language – the language of teaching and learning. It becomes a problem unlike second language English" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q3). Thus it can be established that most isiZulu children are not only deprived of exposure to target language from an early age, but are also often confused by the switching of languages between isiZulu and English. This is evidence that learners are not being supported by being surrounded by usage of or users of the target language to facilitate acquisition/learning.

An alternative interpretation of the critical period hypothesis is that second language learning becomes compromised with age, potentially because of other factors not specific to language, such as social and educational variables which influence learning potential and opportunity (Hakuta, Bialystok, & Wiley, n.d.). These include changes in cognition that occur with aging whereby there is a decreased ability to learn paired-associates, more difficulty encoding new information and less accuracy in recalling detail as opposed to gist (Hakuta, Bialystok, & Wiley, n.d.). This is what Ms Fikile (school A, Q9) found that her learners experienced when dealing with content subjects:

> it becomes difficult for them to because it takes a lot of time for them to record and to interpret the question and you know even if they try and understand it end up but then when it comes to putting together the words and the way the manner in which they are expected to respond then they start to draw back and they end up not getting you know what you should be getting.

According to Ms Fikile, her learners experience difficulty in recording and interpreting questions probably because of lack of ability to recall details or encoding the new information. Mr Rajesh (school A, Q9) also reported learners experiencing difficulty in encoding new information, where he found "a very senior class who didn't know the

difference between quantities and amount. Because they didn't know the meaning of it".

However, aside from the challenges of the MoI in the foundation phase, the gravity of the situation through lack of understanding and proficiency in the target language used as MoI has permeated the highest levels of learners which can be deciphered from the following transcripts:

Interview school A, question 9 Mr Rajesh: So even learners in Gr 12 who are sitting in my lesson – don't know English words. We had a case today where a child in Gr 8 can't spell his name. Mrs Saraja: Ja (laughs) Mr Rajesh: Cannot spell his name. Does not know the letters of his alphabet and he is in Grade 8. Ms Fikile: They don't know where to put a full stop or a comma. Mr Rajesh: Now how is the child sitting in the English class? How did the child pass last year? How did the child pass English because one of the requirements is that you must pass the language of instruction. Researcher: Okay Mr Rajesh: And the child who does not know his alphabets and has passed last year. To me it's a real concern. There should be an enquiry.
Interview school B, question 1 Ms Thandi: Most of them they cannot – they are failing to even write their names … and others if you ask them to read - just an article they are failing to read.

It becomes clear from the foregoing discussion that some primary schools are abdicating their responsibilities in developing proper language skills in learners before "pushing" them upwards to grade 8 in high schools. Mrs White (school C, Q13) finds it unacceptable that both teachers and learners in the primary schools are comfortable with isiZulu as MoI, because:

we are held accountable for the lack of commitment on the part of teachers at the primary school level. We are supposed to teach the subject and not the language as there is simply no time for such intervention given the vastness of the curriculum.

While this may be true, teachers, while not deliberately teaching English as a subject, do engage in various strategies such as: "When learners get to grade 10/11/12 level they know basic maths terms from the junior grades. I build on their existing knowledge" (Mrs Singh, school B, Q7). Teachers find innovative means of building on learners' knowledge base, albeit against the tide, but try to offer learners some respite from their

dire straits of language incompetence. The one strategy is to offer clarification when sought by learners.

4.4.5 Clarification and language acquisition

Undaunted by the challenges of learners' lack of appropriate competence or proficiency and with a commitment for improvement, teachers encourage learners to seek clarity in class, which contributes to them learning contextually appropriate terminologies. It would appear that most times, and pre-emptively, "During course of lessons, teachers explain key words/terminology that are unfamiliar/confusing to learners (Mrs Singh, school B, Q10). Furthermore, learners are encouraged "to communicate/speak in English during school time and in the classroom" to facilitate clarification (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q10). In this regard, a majority of 90 % of learners agreed that teachers did encourage them to seek clarity during class work (fig. 4.14). However, fig. 4.10 (p. 119) shows that learners do not always avail themselves of the opportunity of seeking clarity from teachers, despite their acknowledging that most opportunities to improve their skills in English existed in the classroom while maintaining discussions with persons more proficient than themselves (see responses to Question 26). It is evident in fig. 4.10 (p. 119) that only 32 % of learners consult teachers all the time. This means that the vast majority of learners choose to (or are forced to) remain on the periphery of interaction with teachers.

EDUCATORS ENCOURAGE CLARITY SEEKING

2%
8%
90%

- Disagree
- Unsure
- Agree
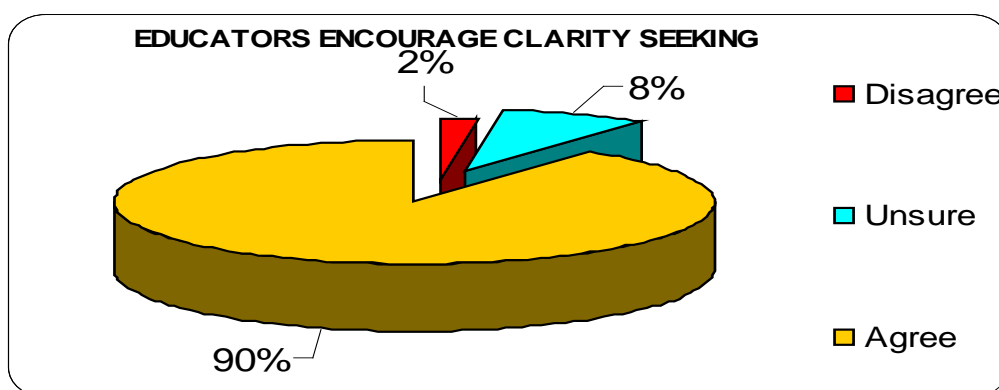
Fig. 4-14   Teachers encourage clarity seeking

The Chi-square test was conducted to determine whether there was a relationship between the difficulty of understanding the subject when teachers used mostly English

(Q19) and the difficulty experienced when communicating in English with teachers (Q17). The result of this analysis is presented in table 4.9 and 4.10.

Table 4.9   **Chi-square test of relationship between use of English as MoI and difficulty level in usage with teachers**

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	32.190[a]	16	.009
Likelihood Ratio	27.181	16	.040
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.071	1	.024
N of Valid Cases	60		

Table 4.10   **Relationship between use of English as MoI and difficulty level in usage with teachers**

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.293	.148	2.335	.023
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.355	.124	2.893	.005[c]
N of Valid Cases		60			

Tables 4.9 and 4.10 show that there is a significant and proportional relationship between understanding lessons taught in English and the difficulty experienced when communicating in English.

Factor analysis of question 9 (Appendix H, section A) also shows that the factors classmates, brothers/sisters and parents were heavily loaded for interaction among learners and not with the teachers. Worse response rates were reported by Wu (1991: 13) and Tsui (1985) who found that "No student took the initiative to seek clarification or check confirmation from the teacher" (Tsui, 1996, p. 146). The possible rationale for this would be that the communication with other class mates, siblings or parents takes place in a presumably more comfortable environment and in informal settings rather than the formal authoritative relationship with teachers, where there is the inequality of status or social distance between the teacher and the learner which "disfavour attempts at negotiation" (Wolfson, 1989 cited in Tanveer, 2007). This perceived power teachers have over learners can effectively silence a person in a conversation "even when instructions are not fully understood" (Chick, 1985 quoted in Tanveer, 2007).

What is interesting, though, is that 35 % of learners (fig. 4.10, p. 119) said they always use classmates for clarification purposes, which indicates a preference for fellow classmates over teachers. This was also noted during classroom observations, where learners discussed issues with classmates while lessons were being conducted. However, it was also observed that where isiZulu speaking learners communicated with Indian learners, their language of choice was English, as opposed to isiZulu when learners communicated with other African learners.

This can be attributed to various factors which will be explored. The first and foremost reason for learners showing a preference of classmates over teachers for clarification purposes is possibly the fact that "they do not want others to know that they did not understand" (Mrs Zulu, lesson observation – school C). The greatest fear of most learners is being laughed at should they either offer the incorrect answer or worse yet pronounce word(s) incorrectly, which is why Mrs Zulu suggested that "they tease each other when they make a mistake". Learners do not seek clarity during lessons because "they are shy", probably arising from an "inferiority complex of the learners" (Mrs Zulu – lesson observation school C) when communicating in English. According to Pascoe et al. (2006, p. 6), this inferiority complex, probably caused by persistent speech difficulties, places children at the increased risk of having difficulties in the normal acquisition of literacy; their psychological development may also be affected.

This tension that learners experience, while expressed variously, is succinctly captured by the sombre words of some of the learners regarding their challenges when using verbal skills in English:

School A
Learner 15: Sometimes I feel like I can just speak wear [where] I'm siting. I have no problem speaking in English the problem is that I'm to shay [shy] (Q20).
Learner 16: Because if i made a mistake i failed to pronounce a word properly my classmates they would laughrf [laugh] at me (Q20).
School B
Learner 1: Because sometimes I understand everything the teater is say but I can't think of any word to answer (Q4).
Learner 13: Because I am not sure of wether Im going to do well or I'll just cause a complete fool of myself in front of the class (Q20).
School C
Learner 5: You will think that if you miss one word or you did not pronounce it well they will laugh and make a joke of the week (Q20).

> Learner 7: the most difficulti is to speak english because sometimes we are ashamed of our self and when ever when you try to speak English, we you go wrong pronouncetion [pronunciation] children laugh at you we do not practise english (Q 23).
> Learner 11: I get nervous because I know that if I say something wrong or pronounce the word incorrectly. They will laugh at me and that decreases my self confidence (Q20).

It can therefore be concluded that the symbiotic relationship that should exist amongst learners to help each other improve their competence and performance in the SL becomes their "Trojan horse".

The second possible reason for not seeking clarification from teachers is that most schools (in all three sample schools) have a predominance of Indian teachers who do not speak isiZulu, nor do they encourage mother tongue discussions (see discussions on code-switching); most of the learners, ranging from 90 % to 100 % of the learners are African learners speaking isiZulu (91% isiZulu with a minority of 7 % speaking isiXhosa – Appendix K).

The third reason, as was observed during classroom observation, is that the learner needed clarification at the point when the new concept/term was not grasped rather than having to wait till the teacher paused or the end of the lesson. Learners may exhibit fear of disrupting lessons and thus sought clarification from other learners.

The fourth possible reason for this preference is the large classes and heterogeneity of learners' competence and performance (Howie, 2003; Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 346) which makes such strategies difficult to implement since "there is simply no time for such intervention given the vastness of the curriculum" (Mrs White, school C). Despite these challenges, teachers, while teaching content subject, engage in on-going corrections of learners' language performance. It could presumably also be that teachers are too authoritative and will not tolerate any mistakes from learners, which is why Mr Lionel (school B, Q9) recommended that "the teacher doesn't come down hard on learners who don't have the right answers all the time".

4.4.6   Corrective feedback

According to Lyster and Mori (2006), Lyster and Ranta (1997), Lightbown and Spada (1990) and Krashen (1988), there is considerable research on the impact of corrective feedback on L2 learners' use and acquisition of target language in the classroom. Mrs Singh (school B, Q8) stated (about learners): "I don't want them to continue making the same mistake – they will learn from their mistakes".   Morakinyo (2003) believes that the low level of academic achievement "is attributable to teacher's non-use of verbal reinforcement strategy" (Asikhia, 2010, p. 230). In this regard, teachers were asked whether they provided such corrective feedback to learners during their content subject lessons. Teachers were unanimous that they did correct learners' spoken and written English during their content subject lessons. Teachers claimed that this strategy is necessary as "It helps them because they become consciously aware that that's not correct" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q8). It means that: "they immediately differentiate what is wrong and right" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q8) and is done "because they need to speak English correctly" (Mrs White, school C, Q8) and they "don't continue making the same mistake" (Mrs Singh, school B). This strategy fits in with Anderson's (1999) study, which found that "teachers who regularly monitor and supervise their students' learning by checking students' work and helping individual student to overcome errors and learning difficulties are likely to have students who exhibit higher level of achievement" (Adeogun & Osifila, 2008, p. 145). According to the Monitor hypothesis, the language learned consciously acts as an editor (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). However, within the context of this research and given the learners' lack of proficiency and competence in the target language, the teacher becomes the external editor. Thus, the immediacy of correction of learners' verbal or written form is based on the precept that "if you leave them with incorrect information for a long period of time, it's not easy to erase it from their minds" (Mrs Thandi, school B, Q8). Teachers view this to have a long term effect, such that learners "can use the language correctly when required to do so" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q8). As a corollary to verbal corrections, written forms improve, as was argued by Mr Lionel (school B, Q8): "if it corresponds with their writing as well – so if I correct them verbally … the written form is being corrected … and so its what can I say … it has a double impact".

While educationists and teachers hypothesised on the efficacy of corrective feedback, the opinions of beneficiaries of such strategies are as important. Thus, it was established in question 31 that a majority 79 % of learners (fig. 4.15) also agreed that corrections proffered by teachers do help to improve their skills in English.
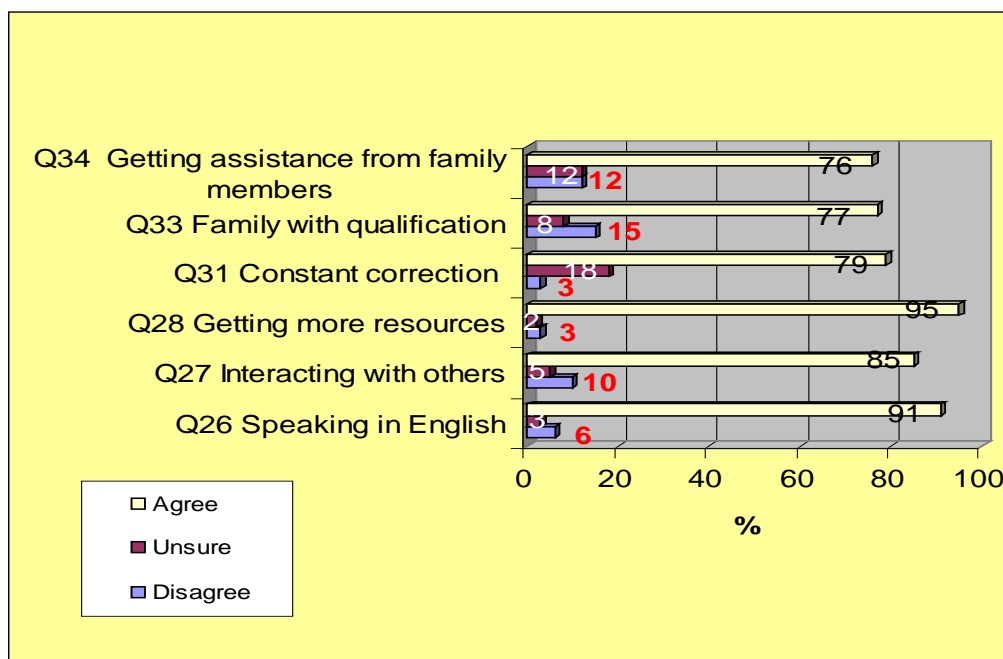
Fig. 4-15   Corrections improve English skills

Furthermore, through factor analysis, detailed in Appendix H, it was noted that the variables "speaking in English" (question 26), "interacting with others who have a better understanding of the English language" (question 27), "getting more resources" (question 28), "constant correction of my English", "family members with academic qualification … helps you to improve your academic performance" (question 33) and "getting assistance from family members" (question 34) loaded heavily along the theme of "corrective feedback". The majority of learners agree that corrective feedback from other speakers of the target language helps improve their (learners) skills in the target language. It was also noted that having more resources also assists with the improvement of skills – presumably more in line with written and reading skills. This again reinforces the inextricable link between reading, writing and speaking if one wants to improve skills in the target language, especially if it is to be used as MoI.

However, not all corrective feedback can be constructive. The efficacy of corrective feedback has been shown to vary depending on the technique used for correction and on

the overall focus of the classroom. In recognising this phenomenon, Ms Fikile (school A, Q8) argues: "Ja, I do sometimes, ... sometimes you just get with it". This indicates that, if the correction is not necessary, as it makes no material difference to understanding, then teachers forego minor errors in favour of lesson progress. The efficacy of this technique was raised by Mr Lionel (school B, Q9) who put forward this notion:

> [It] depends on the teacher and the style of teaching and if the learners are comfortable in the class and they are enjoying the lesson and the teacher doesn't come down hard on learners who don't have the right answers all the time. Then children just need to be comfortable to participate.

This implies that, if teachers are uncompromising and expecting the correct response from learners, the learners' Affective filter will be high, thus preventing comprehensible input reaching LAD, and thus no acquisition or learning takes place. Corrective feedback should facilitate rather than impede L2 acquisition/learning. Learners remain fragile and susceptible to failure when teachers are insensitive and ridicule the child, which lowers learners' self-esteem. This is captured most vividly when learner 8 (school A) responding to what causes anxiety in class, wrote:

> Because maybe I might tell myself I will able to speak but when I get to the front maybe my English teacher will say I'm wrong or can't talk properly.

The other technique affecting efficacy of corrective feedback is the notion of over-correction. Over correction also has a negative impact on the efficacy of acquisition which was acknowledged by Mrs White (school C, Q8) who said:

> But I've also noted that correcting them too often can lead to them recoiling and not wanting to contribute to your lessons in class.

Thus teachers need to be circumspect on both the frequency and techniques used in providing corrections to learners.

Of grave concern, as it has a direct bearing on what teachers in this research have reported, is the suggestion by Tarone, Bigelow and Hansen (2009), who hypothesised that the "learner's ability to focus on corrective feedback on grammatical features that do not affect meaning is considerably altered when the learner has low alphabetic

literacy". Utterances by Mr Rajesh (school A, Q9) highlight the challenge teachers face in dealing with learners who have very low alphabetic literacy:

> Does not know the letters of his alphabet and he is in Grade 8. And the child who does not know his alphabets and has passed last year. To me it's a real concern.

Thus for many learners who have low alphabetic literacy levels, feedback is going to impact minimally or not at all. In an attempt to get learners talking, teachers also encourage learners to speak in front of the class. This, it is hoped will enable learners to overcome their fear and allow for comprehensible input. However, how this affects learners and the learning environment is presented in the next section.

4.4.7 Anxiety and language acquisition

Anxiety, being an affective factor, can have either a debilitating or a facilitative effect on second language learning/acquisition (Ellis, 1994) depending on the level of opportunities provided in the environment. Despite acknowledging that increased communication opportunities improve language acquisition and learning, 45 % of learners (fig. 4.16, question 20) reported that speaking in English in class causes them anxiety while 40 % reported that it does not.

SPEAKING IN ENGLISH IN FRONT OF CLASS CAUSES ANXIETY
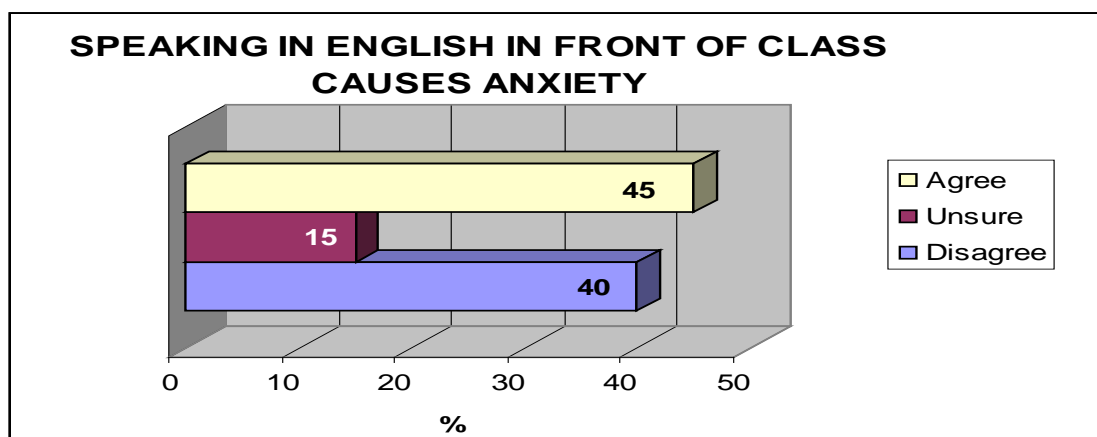
Fig. 4-16   **Speaking in English in class causes anxiety**

According to De Naclerio (1998, pp. 57-58) environmental stress, for SL learners, "has an impact not only in the eventual development of a second language but in the immediate choice of language and the manner in which the chosen language, in turn, modulates the level of stress". This shows a cyclical relationship between the language

chosen and the level of stress it generates. While there are a plethora of reasons causing anxiety, the following are representative of learners' sentiments, which can be aligned with Ellis' (1994) three types of anxiety in language learning. The first type of anxiety is "trait anxiety". This refers to a person's "disposition to be anxious" (Ellis, 1994). This is a person's general characteristic. Learners have clearly identified with this type of anxiety as can be gleaned from some learners' responses regarding their reasons for their anxiety:

School A
Learner 1: I'm not to good facing the audience and it make's me very nervouse and unstady [nervous and unsteady].
Learner 17: I get nervous because I'm a shy person I don't like too much attension [attention].
School B
Learner 3: Because I am not a good public speaker although I can speak English but I very nervous to speak in front of many people.
Learner 12: Because of the stage fright – I am afraid to stand and read in front of the class.
School C
Learner 6: I am afraid of standing in front of the class full of my classmate.
Learner 14: I'm a nervous person, who don't like to talk.

It becomes clear and must also be acknowledged that children are more likely to be shy and embarrassed around peers. Children from some cultural backgrounds are extremely anxious when singled out to perform in a language they are in the process of learning.

The second type of anxiety Ellis (1994) identifies is "state anxiety" which is based on a learner's "reaction to a specific learning situation like taking an exam or reciting an oral presentation". Here, too, learners' statements correlate with the Ellis' (1994) second definition of anxiety. The following clearly reveals the specific learning situations that are anxiety causing to learners.

School A
Learner 12. Sometimes when you speaking or presenting something to the audience you feel nervous although you know what you saying is right.
School B
Learner 1: When in front of the class I lose focus, become nervous and words run out, do not know what to say.
Learner 7: I don't get anxiety when teacher asks me question and I have to answer in English but I get a little nervous when doing speachs [speeches].
School C
Learner 16: Some of the learners laugh at me if I want to say something I go wrong. Maybe I don't know that words.
Learner 18: Yes Sometimes because my classmates they laugh at you when you pronounce a word wrongly and if you made a mistake.

The third type is "situation-specific anxiety" which is based on "the general orientation of anxiety resting on certain learning contexts in which a learner does not perceive himself or herself fit or linguistically capable for acquiring proficiency in speaking and/or reading contexts" (Ellis, 1994). This is evident in learners displaying a pessimistic perspective on their competence and performance. This is evident in a representative sample of the sentiments expressed by learners in response to what causes anxiety when speaking English in front of the class:

School A
Learner 2: I'm a shy person, so i feel so nervous when i'm standing in front of a class because i'm scared that i might flop.
Learner 4: Because when you are nervous you can'nt [can't] be able to speak well, you may thing you are speaking wront [wrong]English.
Learner 16: Because if i made a mistake i failed to pronounce a word properly my classmates they would laughrf at me.
School B
Learner 13: Because I am not sure of wether [whether] Im going to do well or I'll just cause a complete fool of myself in front of the class.
School C
Learner 13: I am scared & fell nervous. In front my English when is not perfect they laugh at me point. They make me just think I am not good in English.
Learner 15: I'm scared to face the hole class with another language. Scared they might laugh at me, it cases me stress and makes me feel unhappy.

Tanveer (2007, p. 25) quoting MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989), argues that, while it is axiomatic that language learning cannot be without errors, making errors can be a source of anxiety to some individuals who are trying to make positive social impressions when speaking a new language. Thus, to establish whether there is a relationship between "finding it difficult to understand the subject when the teachers use mostly English to teach" (Q19) and "getting me to speak in English in front of the class causes me a lot of anxiety (nervousness)" (Q20) a Pearson Chi-Square Test was conducted. The result of the test is as follows.

Table 4.11 shows that there is a significant relationship between understanding the subject when the teachers use mostly English to teach (Q19) and the level of anxiety that accompanies it when getting learners to speak in English in front of the class.

Table 4.11 **Chi-square test between use of English as MoI and level of anxiety**

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.233[a]	16	.001
Likelihood Ratio	32.563	16	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.371	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	60		

Furthermore, table 4.9 (p. 139) shows that there is a positive significant relationship between finding it difficult to understand the subject when the teachers use mostly English to teach (Q19) and getting learners to speak in English in front of the class.

Table 4.12 **Relationship between English as MoI and associated anxiety**

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.458	.101	3.923	.000
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.486	.109	4.235	.000[c]
N of Valid Cases		60			

Figure 4.4 (p. 93) however, shows a negative correlation between responses to questions 19 and 20 where the majority of 80 % of learners (Q19) find that they do not experience difficulty in understanding the subject when English is used as MoI, and yet - contradictorily - in question 20 the majority of 45 % of learners agree that speaking in English in class causes anxiety. Thus through factor analysis (see Appendix H, section B) of understanding the subject when English is MoI and anxiety when asked to speak in front of class (questions 19 and 20), it was found that these two components, while with a small degree of overlapping, loaded heavily on the theme of anxiety. It follows that when English is used as MoI in class, the teacher explains concepts/constructs and poses questions to learners in English and would therefore expect learners to respond in English. Generally, aside from language proficiency, getting to understand any section being taught is anxiety generating. Furthermore, learners' responses to teachers' questions needing to be in English coupled with learners' apparent lack of competence in the target language may be a further cause of anxiety among learners. Teachers must not assume that, because children supposedly learn second language quickly, that the

discomfort/anxiety caused by speaking in front of their peers in class will readily pass. This fits in with De Naclerio's concept of environmental stress for ESL learners in the choice of language and its related stress. This was most vividly captured when learner 13 from school C stated: "I am scared & fell nervous. In front my English when is not perfect they laugh at me point. They make me just think I am not good in English". Learner 7 (school C, Q23) also reported that "the most difficulty is to speak english because sometimes we are ashamed of our self and whenever when you try to speak English, we you go wrong pronouncetion [pronunciation] children laugh at you we do not practise english".

Given that error corrections occur most frequently in the classroom environment, exposing learners' lack of competence in the presence of other learners, leads "learners to frustration and embarrassment by making them conscious about their deficiencies" (Tanveer, 2007, p. 25). This is why Ms Zulu (lesson observation – School C) suggested that "learners do not seek clarity during the lesson but immediately after the lesson, they come to me individually and asked me in their vernacular". When Ms Zulu was asked why this was the case, she responded that "it's because of the inferiority complex of the learners, they don't want to be laughed at if they make a mistake". Pascoe et al., (2006, p. 6) suggested that persistent speech difficulties place "children at increased risk of having difficulties in the normal acquisition of literacy and that their psychological development may also be affected by having low self-esteem".

Thus the level of anxiety among learners appears to be high, which, according to Krashen (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991), translates into raised Affective filter thus not allowing for input to reach the language acquisition device (LAD).

However, not all learners experience anxiety when speaking English in front of the class. On the contrary, 40 % of learners disagreed that speaking English in front of the class causes anxiety: this is possibly because they find that these environments (stress/anxiety inducing) provide opportunities to "brand" themselves, i.e. flaunt their skills, which Haugen refers to as "expressive switching", which includes wanting to express a "mixed identity", by using two or more languages concurrently (Zungu, 1998, pp. 44-45). Excerpts of some responses are captured below to highlight the lack of apprehension on the part of the learners.

School A Learner 10: I don't get nervous because i can speak English and i have pride. Learner 19: My understanding of English has improved and i trust myself that i can speak English very well, so speaking in English in front of the class wont be a threat to me.
School B Learner 9: I have gotten use to speaking in frount [front] of the class it is not scary any more. Learner 10: I'm totally confident about speaking the language because I think I'm good at it.
School C Learner 9: I am extremely confident Individual who has a vision and know where I want to be, so I wont get there with nervousness. Learner 10: I am used to english I speak english most of the tie [time] and I enjoy speakin in front of puplic [public]. Learner 20: It makes me practise to speak English properly and understand each other.

It can be noted from these statements that some learners exude confidence. Given Ellis' findings (1994), and as is evident in the findings of this research as well, one can draw conclusions that anxiety can have both a debilitating or facilitative role resulting from the following factors: learners' competitive natures, teachers' questions are threatening, and lack of a relaxed second language environment.

Another dimension to anxiety that Ellis (1994) alerts us to is the possibility of learners switching off when confronted with a potentially threatening learning context. Conversely the switch off strategy can be employed by good learners who find the material of the language classes boring, or not sufficiently challenging. Mr Lionel (school B, Q9) experienced a similar phenomenon in his classes where learners look "dumb founded" (what Ellis would call switching off) when they cannot relate to the teacher or the contents of the lesson. One of Mr Lionel's (Q9) responses regarding learner participation in class highlights this concept of switching off:

Now that could be a (laughs). That depends on the teacher and the style of teaching and if the learners are comfortable in the class and they are enjoying the lesson and the teacher doesn't come down hard on learners who don't have the right answers all the time. Then children just need to be comfortable to participate and the lesson that you prepare it needs to it needs to apply to them – you know and – like I find sometimes I'll refer to a television programme that I watched when I was younger not remembering you know that we are not in the same generation and they look at me dumb founded and then I'll revert back to something that's more current and then they respond. So their participation relies a lot on how interesting the lesson is and how comfortable they are.

According to Ellis (1994) the degree of anxiety can also be intensified/mitigated by a few factors that are disregarded. These are the levels of motivation (which is discussed under motivation) of the learner which drives the learner to study the SL and self-image of the learner manifesting in self-confidence. Reviewing and drawing comparative inferences between the representative samples of statements that either agree or disagree on the notion that speaking in English in front of the class causes anxiety, one can see clearly that the deciding factor of agreeing or disagreeing hinges on the confidence levels of the learners. Closer examination of statements of learners such as:

> "I"m shy", "I"m scared", "I might flop", can"t be able to speak well", "if I made a mistake", "I failed to pronounce", "fool of myself", "not good in English"

compared with:

> "I have pride", "I trust myself", "speak English well", "won't be a threat to me", "not scary any more", "I extremely confident", "has a vision", "enjoy speaking English" and "practice speaking English well"

reveals that the dividing line here is confidence.

According to Ellis (1994) anxious learners are generally tied up by the emotional elements, and thus do not have enough self-awareness to regulate their learning; therefore cannot switch back to the learning context. They are also unable to remember the contents of the previous lesson. This, according to De Naclerio (1998, p. 58), results from the fact that "stressful experiences are encoded in the language in which the experience first occurred". Thus, according to McCain (2000) learners who are afraid of embarrassing themselves by speaking incorrectly or by not speaking at all avoid opportunities that would otherwise aid their learning. Such evidence of embarrassment causing anxiety was presented by learners variously, but the sentiment of one learner (learner 16, school A) captures this most concisely when he admitted that "if i made a mistake i failed to pronounce a word properly my classmates they would laughrf [laugh] at me".

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Furthermore, according to McCain (2000), corrections of learners' mistakes by teachers exacerbates the situation whereby learners may isolate themselves. This sentiment was also shared by Mrs White (school C, Q8) who warned that "correcting them too often can lead to them recoiling and not wanting to contribute to your lessons in class". Thus the environment in which SLA takes place, should be made as enabling as possible for the maximum effect of comprehensible input ($i + 1$) to take place rather than $i + 2/3/4$. Communication anxiety can also be triggered during intercultural or interethnic communication, where people interact with people of other cultures and encounters cultural differences (Tanveer, 2007, p. 27). This, while sometimes taking place within the classroom environments, transpires essentially in the school grounds.

4.5   THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

Tanveer's (2007) intercultural and interethnic communication is analogous to Schumann's (1978) acculturation model, concerned mainly with SLA in "natural", non-instructional settings such as the street and the playground (Harley, et at., 1990, p. 140). Schumann's model proposed that the degree to which learners' acculturate to the target language group will control the degree to which they acquire the second language. This can be attributable to the acculturation stress, which, Quintana (1995) cited in De Naclerio (1998, pp. 55-56), defined as "the changes experienced by racial, ethnic, and cultural groups as a result of their interaction". Given the measurement of acculturation along "a continuum of exclusive identification with the native culture to total adoption of the host culture", albeit controversial, Berry proposed four acculturation models to describe the minority response to such interaction, namely, "integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalisation" (De Naclerio, 1998, p. 56). It was against this background that learners were asked in question 2 which language they preferred to use to communicate with other learners/friends during breaks (fig. 4.17) and whether African learners associated with learners from other race groups (question 44).

While it is acknowledged that the sample schools had an overwhelming majority of 90 % of isiZulu speaking learners (see fig.4.17 question 38), the intention of the question was to ascertain the extent to which learners availed themselves of opportunities for SLA through interactions with more proficient target language speakers in informal settings. Fig. 4.17 shows that a majority 53% of learners prefer to use English during

breaks compared with only 45 % preferring isiZulu, despite the home language of the majority (90 %) being isiZulu.
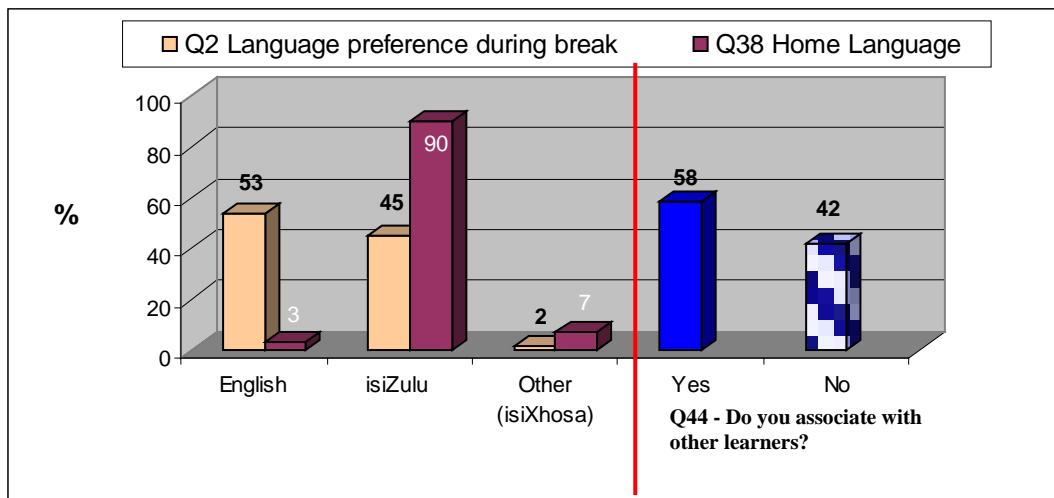
Fig. 4-17   Opportunities for SLA

The 2 % indicates a preference for isiXhosa, which brings in a new dimension to be discussed later, Xhosalizing – whereby Xhosa learners add a Xhosa prefix to Zulu words thus making it sound like isiXhosa. This choice, as represented in fig. 4.17, corroborates the acknowledgement by the majority of learners (90 %) in question 26 and 85 % of learners in Q 27 (fig. 4.15, p. 143) that more practice in speaking English both in class and in the grounds will improve their competence in English. While at face value it would appear only natural that learners will speak isiZulu, given that there is a pre-dominance of isiZulu speaking learners, analysis of learners' responses to the questions on language preferences (question 2) and their reasons for choice of association with other race groups (question 44) coupled with interrogative questioning during school ground observations reveal a number of reasons for such preferences.

Figure 4.17 (question 44) shows that 58 % of learners join other learners while a substantial 42 % of learners do not join learners from other race groups during breaks. However, ethnographical observational evidence gathered during school ground observations found contradictory evidence that learners actually used mostly isiZulu instead of English. An analysis of fig. 4.17 reveals that learners do not necessarily avail themselves of the opportunities that present themselves in informal settings for SLA. The reasons for such choices will be explored.

4.5.1 Identity and second language acquisition

From the analysis of data presented below, it appears that language is used either to assert solidarity or to stress in-group identity (Adendorff, 1993, cited in Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 362), and that use of the SL language may lead to an identity crisis. The following statements by learners indicate group cohesion based on language which clearly deals with identity. This was captured when learners said:

School A
Learner 9:   Because it my language that why I prefer to use it.
Learner 20: All of us are Zulu speaking learners and our mother tongue.
School B
Learner 7: It is my home language.
Learner 11: Because it is my mother tongue/home language.
School C
Learner 8: Because it's my language.
Learner 13: Yes because it our language we talk.

Interactions with learners on the school grounds provided further ethnographic evidence that most learners grouped themselves along racial lines and African learners preferred to use isiZulu among themselves, which corroborated learners' responses in the questionnaire. The learners' rationale for preference of isiZulu to English again revealed identity and allegiance to linguistic solidarity, which includes sentiments such as:

"its not necessary for us to speak English during breaks – it's a Black thing – because there are no Indians there".
"We use Zulu because it's our language".
"It is our home language and we prefer it".

When sentiments of learners expressed in questionnaires and school ground observations are set against learners' choice to associate with learners from other race groups (question 44), a startling revelation of attitudinal factor comes into the mix of language fixity. A quick exposition on why 42 % learners chose not to associate with learners from other race groups during breaks in school (see fig. 4.17, p. 153) revealed the following: all learners from school C indicated that they did not associate with other race groups simply because the total learner population constituted of only African learners – thus there was no choice. However, examining the reasons in question 44 for

African learners from schools A and B not associating with learners from other race groups showed the following responses:

> Learner 7, school A: I don't want too.
>
> Learner 26, school A: There is no much we could talk about.
>
> Learner 14, school B: Because they don't associate mine.

This fits in with Berry's acculturation model of separation (cited in De Naclerio, 1998, p. 56). A learner from the grounds observation in school C also indicated that language use might cause an identity crisis:

> Some people tend to forget where they come from their roots and ancestors because their trying to be something they are not.

Closer analysis of the above sentiments revealed that their choice again revolved around allegiance to identity and attitude manifesting through linguistic choices.

It emerges therefore that attitudinal factors in the above cases hinder learners from availing themselves of opportunities to acquire/learn the target language in informal language contexts.   It can be inferred that those learners who do not avail themselves of opportunities for SLA are presumably those who fear that, as their skills in the target language improve, they might lose their skills in their mother tongue, which corroborates Van Tonder's (1997) causal link between "home language loss and the educational difficulties experienced by many learners using another language for learning".   Qualitative evidence from learner responses from questionnaires reveals learners' sentiments such as:

> School A, question 11
> Learner 1: Sometimes i feel like I'm losing my own language because I'm so used of speaking english, reading it and writing it.
> Learner 18: You forget some of the your home language words cause English is in your head.
> Learner 24: It will fell like we abandone [abandoned] our mother tongue.

The above confirms that learners fear loss of their skills in their mother tongue, which Herriman and Burnaby (1996, p. 10) cautioned could lead to learners losing their most powerful lien, their language.

However, an analysis of learners' responses to question 12 (fig. 4.18) revealed that the majority of 66 % of the learners disagreed that there was a risk of loss of mother tongue skills as English skills improved.

This contradicts Tanveer's (2007, p. 53) findings, where it was established that there existed fear that speaking in a non-native language might lead to the loss of one's positive self-image or sell-identity, as one's self identity is deeply rooted in the first language.
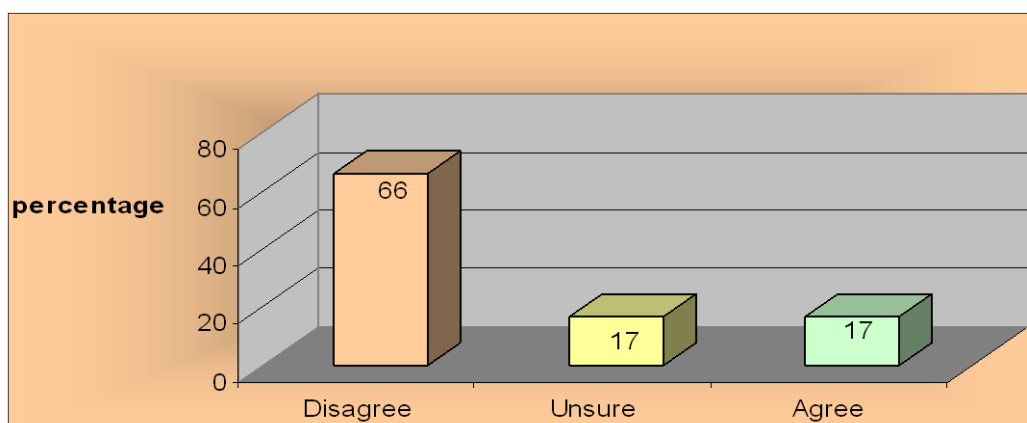
Fig. 4-18   **Diminish of mother tongue skills as English improve**

This necessitated use of factor analysis, a statistical technique the main goal of which is data reduction. A typical use of factor analysis is in survey research, where a researcher wishes to represent a number of questions with a small number of hypothetical factors (SPSS). This is method minimizes the number of variables that have high loadings on each factor. It simplifies the interpretation of the factors. Accordingly, the variables, "never", "seldom", "sometimes", "often" and "always", in question 43 were reduced to reflect "Never-sometimes" and "often-always"; and "in class and during breaks" reduced to formal environment whereas "after school and at home" were reduced to "informal environment" in order to present a more concise picture of the frequency of usage of English. This is explained in section D - Appendix H, and fig 4.19 shows the results of the analysis.

Having reduced the data, fig 4.19 shows that 74 % of the learners rarely use English in informal environments and also in formal environments. Why must this be when the

majority of learners in fig. 4.18 have indicated that there is no risk of loss of their mother tongue as their skills in English improves?
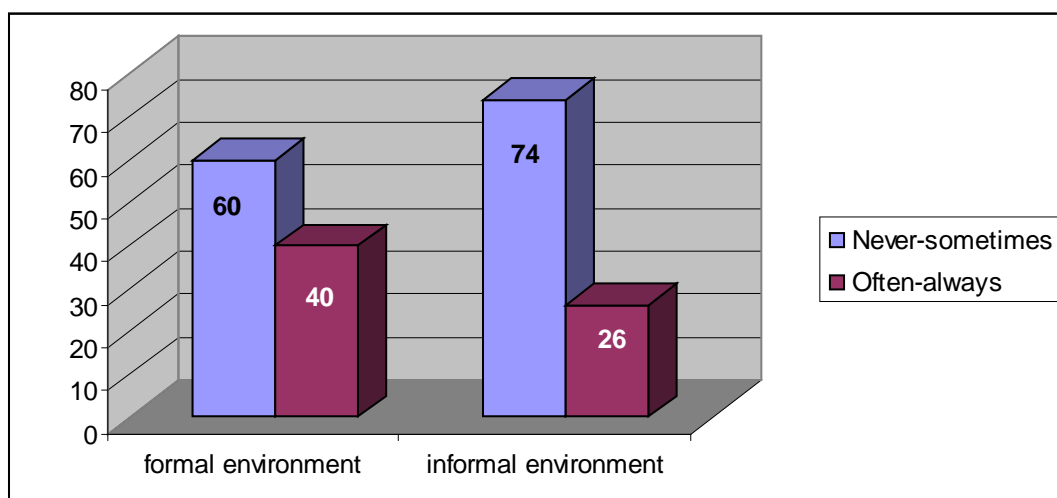
Fig. 4-19   **Frequency of ESL usage**

The fact that learners do not avail themselves to opportunities for improving their skills in English, as reflected in fig. 4.19, implies an underlying fear, not so much among learners per se, but rather with the notion of losing their affiliation with their community. Given that language allows for participation and sharing in the community, social and ethnic group or in the nation, such fears of loss will impact on learners' identity where, should they lose their lien, then they lose their affiliation to their community. This is tantamount to subtractive bilingualism which will have a negative impact on a child's social and cognitive development, and him/her not being able to make sound judgements about the content (Luckett, 1993).

Furthermore, given that these learners are, of necessity, pressurized to learn English to be used as MoI, (Lambert, 1990, p. 212), the result is subtractive bilingualism (Luckett, 1993), which therefore raises affective filters, thus retarding SL acquisition/learning. According to Ramirez (1991) cited by Heugh et al., (1995, p. 46), children in subtractive bilingual programmes tend to fall rapidly behind their peers.

In order to probe more deeply into the minds of learners and establish if there were other hidden reasons for learners not wanting to use English during breaks, learners were asked whether they realised that by communicating in English (however, broken it

may be) with their friends, their proficiency in English would improve. While learners did not categorically dispute this notion, their responses revealed that

> "Improving English is for classroom where teacher protect us and not allow for other children to laugh at me when we make mistake". (Ground observation school C).
> "We only improve English through reading". (Ground observation school B)

Thus these learners do not see the need to use English during breaks. However, learners' choices of isiZulu over English during breaks are not necessarily driven solely by solidarity to group identify but also for fear of being stigmatized.

4.5.2 Stigma involved in language choice

Choice of language is sometimes imposed through fear of being stigmatized. The following extracts from field notes during school break observation illustrate this:

> School ground Observation - School B
> "We use Zulu because if we use English with other African learners its like we are better than them and its like insulting them and ourselves by not using our Mother tongue".
> "Speaking English is the American language with accents that make them think they better than us".
> School ground observation - School C
> "We fright to use English because they laugh at us when they use wrong words".

These learners, while acknowledging that their skills in the target language can improve through continued interaction in the target language, fear that, should they be heard talking in English to other African learners, then they would be branded as assuming superiority over other learners, or accused of insulting the isiZulu speakers or simply be laughed at or called names should they make a mistake. Other data instruments yielded similar findings. Interviews with teachers established that "they become the coconuts" (Mrs Saraja — responding to Mr Rajesh's comments that "many of our Black children who go to Model C schools can't speak their own language" school A). One learner (Learner 6, school A), justifying the choice of isiZulu over English during breaks, argued: "Because it's the language we are all used to plus it would seem as if youre a coconut if you use english"; Malaba (2006, p. 5) defined this state ("coconut") as referring to the hybrid identities of Africans who earned degrading stigmas as "cultural half-casts". This is what Malaba (2006, p. 4) meant when he argued that the advent of

Colonial languages into the African continent created the tension "between an imperative of a black African identity" and "seeking affirmation and acknowledgement of Western societies". This stigmatization of learners can conceivably be construed as a coercive tactic of ensuring learner solidarity to in-group identity. Of course other reasons were proffered by learners justifying their preference of isiZulu over English.

4.5.3 Utility value of language

If the purpose of language is simply to facilitate communication (Du Plessis, 2000), then the language that best serves such purpose should be the obvious choice. It is conceivably against this understanding that learners justify their choice of isiZulu over English when learners find that isiZulu best serves their need. Learners find that they are comfortable with each other, and given that most of their friends are also isiZulu speakers, find it very convenient to communicate in their mother tongue. They therefore use language to include other learners rather than exclude them from the conversation as some learners may not understand English. Furthermore, use of isiZulu among friends minimizes the need for explanations and/or translations thus increasing understanding. This is evident from the following statements made by learners answering question 3:

School B
Learner 1: Most learners speak Zulu there less learners who also prefer English.
Learner 12: If I speak in English or any other language my friends might not be able to understand.
Learner 15: Because I have African friends like me. They understand everything I'm saying. It is not going to be same if I speak in English. There are some of the word I can't understand in English.
School A
Learner 7: Because it is my language that I understand the most and it easy let me to communicate well with them.
Learner 17. Because its easier for me to communicate and explain certain things in isiZulu.
Learner 26: Because there are most people who speak the language.
School C
Learner 1: Because it is the language the most learner understand especially in Gr 8 & 9.
Learner 6: We speak the same language and we have understanding we using it.

While the utilitarian value of isiZulu was expressed by learners in the questionnaire, verification through ground observation and interactions with learners also found that learners on the ground echoed the same sentiments:

> Ground observation – school A
> "We know each other better and can communicate better in isiZulu"
> "Some children do not understand English well enough to use it as a means of talking to each other".
>
> Ground observation – school C
> "We are all Zulus here therefore we speak Zulu …"
> "We used isiZulu because we don't understand English well".

While the above sentiments reflect the use of isiZulu among learners (monolinguality) during breaks serves not only the purpose of easy communication but also allows for ease of understanding; multilingualism or even bilingualism brings with it certain challenges. This was evident during ground observation in school B where a learner suggested:

> We use English with some Zulu but also use gestures and point to things that we don't know the English words for. Sometimes we ask English words from other Indian children who know Zulu and then talk with the Indian teacher.

The above erratic/stuttering approach to communication captures the essence of Sridhar's (1996) and Mabiletja's (2008) selective functionality of multilingualism, where competence in certain aspects is developed separately for academic purposes and competence for communicative purposes is developed in another language. This leaves individuals in a state of semi-lingualism where they cannot use either language proficiently. In the above excerpt it becomes clear that learners use isiZulu mixed with English, gestures, pointing to objects and asking others for help when trying to maintain a conversation with an Indian teacher. Tokuhama-Espinosa (2003), cited in Mabiletja (2008, P. 16-17) therefore believes that children can suffer "brain overload" which causes linguistic problems such as stuttering or dyslexia. The issue of dyslexia was captured succinctly by Mr Rajesh (school A, Q9) who said:

> They can't copy the exact sentence that you write on the board. I've got evidence of that where a teacher puts up notes on the board and if you have to look what the child wrote and what's on the board – its two different things. They are mixing. They still got reversal they still got. They are still confused about the "b's" and the "d's" are the other way around.

This was also mentioned by Ms Thandi (school B, Q1) who stated:

> I've taught the grade 8 isiZulu. What I've observed – most of them they cannot – they are failing to even write their names.

While the choice of a language that serve BICS fostering longevity for indigenous languages is commendable, this must be counterbalanced with the caveat that there should be a preference to acquire proficiency in the target language, especially if chosen as the MoI.

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE				TARGET LANGUAGE		
Black African identity	Fear – stigma/ outcaste	Fear – loss of L1 proficiency	Utility value	Instrumental	Integrative	Seeking affirmation
INFORMAL ENVIRONMENT				FORMAL ENVIRONMENT		
	BICS			CALP		
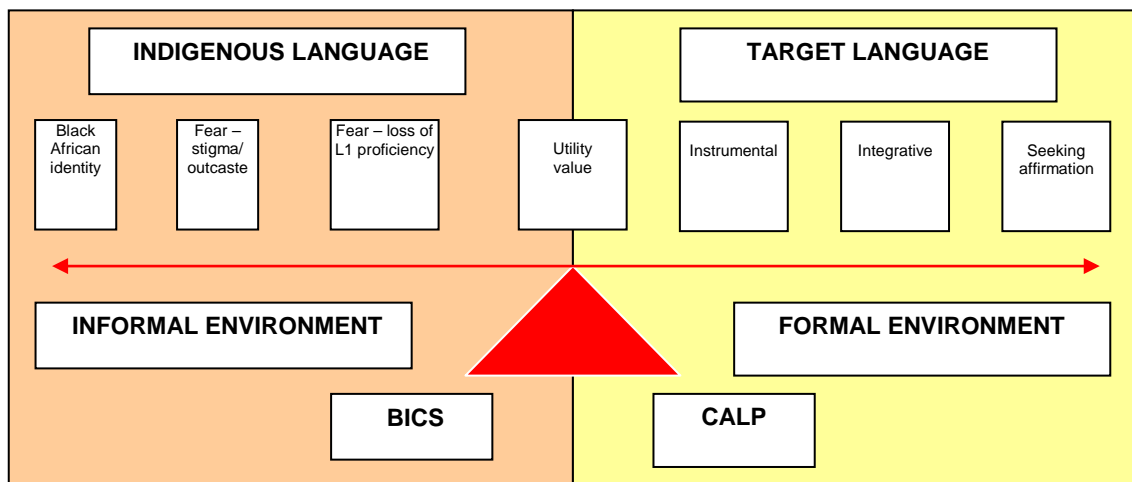
Fig. 4.20   **Researcher's understanding of learners' choice of language usage**

The learners' choice of language usage varies largely along a continuum, with one extreme being the imperative of a Black African identity while the other extreme seeks affirmation and acknowledgement of Western societies "embedded in European education" (Malaba, 2006, p. 4). This is illustrated in fig. 4.20. It can be established from the foregoing discussion and from that which is represented in fig. 4.20 that learners' choice of language was biased towards using an indigenous language. However, the underlying basis for the remaining 35 % of learners (fig. 4.16, p. 145) showing preference to use English during break will be the main focus in the discussions on Motivation and Poverty and Culture and Traditions.

While the classroom and the school grounds constitute a large portion of the formal learning environments, these are not the only environments that contribute to the academic performance of learners. A critical component in the continuum of learning

extends into the informal environments made up of the home and the community in which the learner finds himself/herself. These will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.6   CONCLUSION

This chapter presented both qualitative and quantitative data on variables and strategies that impact on the academic performance of ESL learners. It is evident that there are various variables that either facilitate or militate against English used as MoI and thus impact on the academic performance of ESL. Chapter 5 presents both qualitative and quantitative data on variables within the informal environment which impact on the use of English as MoI, with an attendant impact on the academic performance of learners.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS – INFORMAL ENVIRONMENTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four presented data on variables operating within the formal environments that impacted on the academic performance of the ESL learner. This chapter presents data, both qualitative and quantitative, on other variables operating within the informal environment, which this study believes has an impact on the academic performance of second language learners.

5.2 THE COMMUNITY/HOME ENVIRONMENT

The second social environment that Tanveer (2007, p. 24) referred to is where the target language is not used as L1 is in the community, which includes the home. Hakuta (1986) and Krashen (1982) cited in De Naclerio (1998, p. 47) have identified, amongst others, exposure to the SL such as the length of residence in the SL environment, and the language of the parents and the community, which is argued likely "to constraint second language acquisition but do not preclude it" (De Naclerio, 1998, p 47). Nascimento found family background and peer effects to be the major determinants of student achievement (2008, p. 19). Asikhia (2010, p. 229) reported that an analysis of learners' responses showed that "students' environment influence students' poor performance" probably because this environment provides L2 learners with "only limited and sometimes faulty input" (Tanveer, 2007, p. 24)". Determining the extent to which this might prove accurate necessitated asking learners about the frequency of use of English in the community and at home. Their responses (question 43) are captured in fig. 5.1.

Fig. 5.1 show that the majority 77 % and 72 %) of learners exercise very limited (never-seldom-sometimes) use of L2 after school and at home respectively. Also evident in fig. 5.1 is the finding that only 53 % of learners (which should have been an

overwhelming majority of 100 % given that English is the M0I) use English often to always in class.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE ENGLISH?
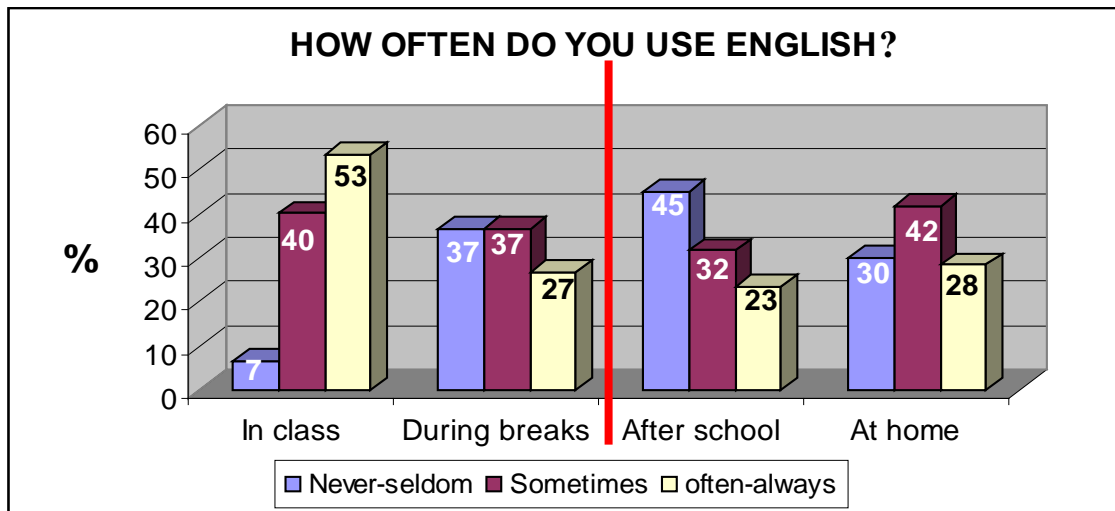
Fig. 5.1   **How often do you use English?**

Furthermore, only a meagre 23 % and 28 % of learners use English often to always after school and at home respectively. Stated differently, it means that 72 % and 77 % of learners have very limited (never-seldom-sometime) use of L2 at home and in the community. This corroborates what Bialystock and Hakuta (1994), cited in De Naclerio (1998, p 47), argue are environments likely to constraint SLA. Teachers also expressed concerns that the fact that learners avail themselves of very limited or no opportunities to speak or listen to English at home impedes their improvement in proficiency of L2. Mr Rajesh (school A, question 3) said, of those learners' parents:

> [They] do not have a full education so they still converse with their children in the mother tongue. That becomes a problem in school where the MoI is English. When you are going home you listening to one set of language. You coming to school where English is a first language – the language of teaching and learning. It becomes a problem.

Learners "are only exposed to English at school – at home they speak their mother tongue" (Mrs Singh, school B, Q4) which translates into learners experiencing "various challenges … parents and family members communicate in isiZulu at home" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q4), which Mrs Suresh (school C, Q4) agreed with, saying "it appears that communication at home is mainly in isiZulu". This is evident in fig. 5.1 where a majority of 53 % of learners use English as school but only 28 % at home. This

was also verified through the response of learners in question 11 where learners indicated the following:

School B Learner 2: When we get home we speak isiZulu.
School C Learner 4: It affect me …because even if I'm with my parents and olders cousins talking together I find my self speaking English while they talking isiZulu which is disrespectful. Learner 5: Sometimes I am at home with my parents they do understand english. With their tranditional belive [traditional belief] they don't allow me to use english during their time. I use english they say you don't have respect your culture. Learner 7: Because sometimes at home parents do not understand English. Learner 20: Improving my English does not affect my own culture at all, beside when I talk to a friend in English that absets [upsets] my grandparents.

The above sentiments reveal that speaking English at home or in the community is often frowned upon to such an extent that it would be better not to use English in the community. However, a closer examination of the home environment is advisable, as according to Asikhia, (2010, pp. 231-232), the family is the "primary socializing agent of which a child is a member" providing avenues for development of first language, interaction, guidance and support.

5.2.1   The home environment

The home environment also determines ones socio-economic status, which has been found to have a significant relationship with the academic achievement of learners (Asikhia, 2010, p. 233). Given the association of parental involvement with learner achievement, it was established that 76 % of learners (fig. 5.2) agreed that assistance from family members in the completion of homework (question 34) does indeed have a positive impact on their academic performance.

While that may hold true theoretically, it was considered advisable to establish to what extent the home actually facilitated or impeded L2 acquisition/learning. It was shown in fig. 4.10 (p. 119) that a very low percentage of learners seek assistance from their parents and siblings, only 26 % always and a further 25 % often. One possible reason for lower parental involvement was identified by Desforges and Abouchaar (2003, p. 4), who found that parental involvement is strongly positively influenced by a child's level

of achievement, that the higher the level of attainment of learners, the more parents become get involved, and that it diminishes as the child gets older.
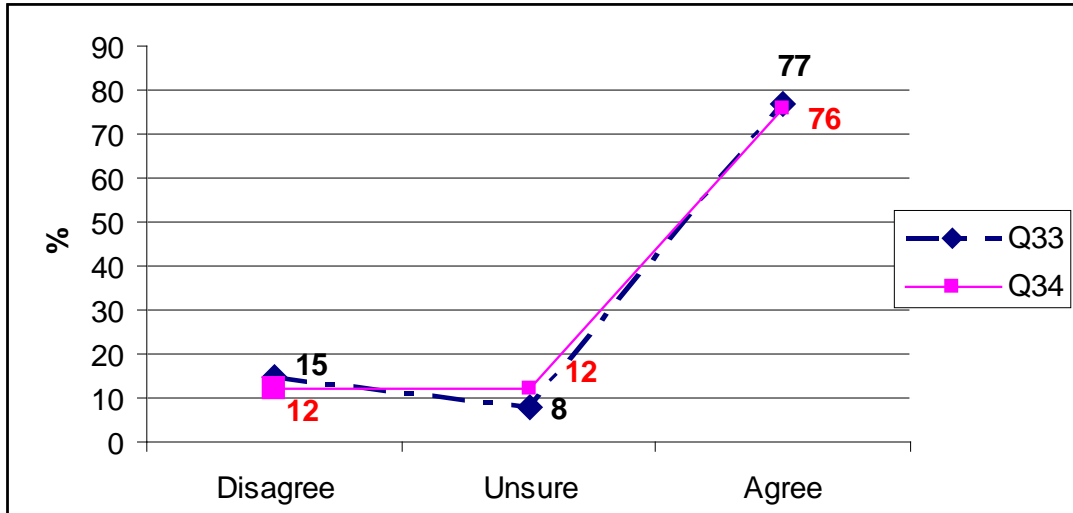
Fig. 5.2   **Assistance with homework from family members with qualifications**

It can therefore be inferred that the greater the parental involvement in educational affairs of learners, the greater the opportunity for learner attainment. Thus, it can be extrapolated that, given Desforges and Abouchaar's (2003) assertion, parental involvement could be average, which correlates with the average performance of learners as depicted in table 4.3 (p. 90) and furthermore parental involvement would have diminished to a minimal level as the learners in this sample were from grade 12, the last grade of schooling. Further, that parental involvement is not optimal is evident in what teachers reported during the interview:

School A, (Q1): Mr Rajesh: It's also the foundation that they come from is not solid …the family system as such – there is no solid parental involvement.
School B, (Q1): Ms Thandi: Some of them they are orphans and they are staying with people who are not interested in their education. Even if you phone the parent, the parent maybe tell you that – he have tried her best and there is nothing that she can do. Ms Thandi, (Q2): Some of the learners they lack love at home … its difficult for them to voice out … and parent is not aware of the problems that the learner is encountering there at home. Mr Lionel, (Q2): Most of them are orphans where they come from households where the household is child-headed… What I mean is that there are no parents present in the home where they live. Parents might be living or working perhaps in Pietermaritzburg or Johannesburg and they leave their eldest child in the house to take care of the home and the younger ones.

It can be concluded from the above sentiments expressed by teachers that learners' academic achievement remains average because parental involvement is minimal or non-existent in some cases. This correlates with the findings of William (2005), where it was reported that the academic achievement scores of learners with highly involved parents were substantially higher than those learners whose parents were less involved.

Why and how this should be, required, firstly, a definition of parental involvement and secondly, an investigation of variables identified in such a definition. Within the context of this study, parental involvement, while defined variously, includes, amongst others factors, "intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values, and high aspirations relating to personal fulfilment and good citizenship" (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p. 4). Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) reported that learners' achievements were significantly related to family social class (in Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p. 21), which Asikhia, (2010, p. 233), argued is determined by wealth, power, and prestige, which is strongly correlated with education and occupation. According to Christy (2005), the level of literacy of family members can have a causal effect on learners' academic performance. Van der Berg and Louw (2006, p. 2) and Desforges and Abouchaar (2003, p. 4) argue that the extent and form of parental involvement is strongly influenced by parent's level of education because, as Christy (2005) has shown, the more fluent the parent the more fluent the child, which was also found in Carrol's study (cited in Krashen, 1988). This was also reported in the findings of Kassim and Muraina (2011, p. 4) where it was concluded that "parents' education has the highest effect or predicts students' academic achievement most". Kassim and Muraina (2011, p. 4) also concluded that evidence suggests that learners of educated parents might perform better than learners of uneducated parents.

While appreciating and acknowledging the causal relationship between family qualifications and learner achievement, (Asikhia, 2010; Christy, 2005; Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) in Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Kassim & Muraina, 2011; Van der Berg & Louw, 2006), it was advisable to ascertain whether learners themselves also saw the causal relationship. Thus learners were asked in question 33 whether family members' qualifications impacted on the learners' academic performance. Their responses, as indicated in fig. 5.2 (p. 166), showed that a majority of 77 % of learners

agreed that family members with qualifications did impact positively on the learners' academic performance. This agrees with what Kodippili (2011, p. 3) reported, that research has "indicated a positive relationship between education level of the parents and the student performance". Thus, according to the responses of learners, and supported by Kodippili (2011), there appears to be a causal relationship between learners' academic performance and education of parents. In order to establish whether there was any significant relationship between parents' education (question 33) and learner performance through assistance with home work (question 34), the Pearson Chi-square test was conducted, and the results are indicated below in table 5.1.

Table 5.1   **Chi-square test between parents' education and learner performance**

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	42.792	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	34.026	16	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	16.010	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	60		

Table 5.2   **Relationship between parents' education and learner performance**

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.521	.132	4.648	.000
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.521	.108	4.646	.000
N of Valid Cases		60			

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between parents' education and learners' performance. This corroborates the findings of Kodippili (2011) as well as learner claims indicating a positive relationship between education level of the parents and the student performance. Findings in this study lend support to the results of similar findings of statistical analysis in the study conducted by Kassim & Muraina (2011), where it was reported that parents' education has the highest effect on, or predicts students' academic achievement. Thus it was necessary to establish whether learners' family members did have any qualifications (question 39) and the extent to which this facilitated or impeded learner performance. Fig. 5.3 shows the results of the analysis of question 39.

Figure 5.3 show that most learners' family members (63 % for fathers, 55 % for mothers, 60 % for both siblings and 85 % for others comprising of uncles/aunts) do not have any academic qualification. Furthermore, when considering the academic achievement of learners, it can be seen that learners are performing basically at an average level, which is depicted in table 4.3 (p. 90).
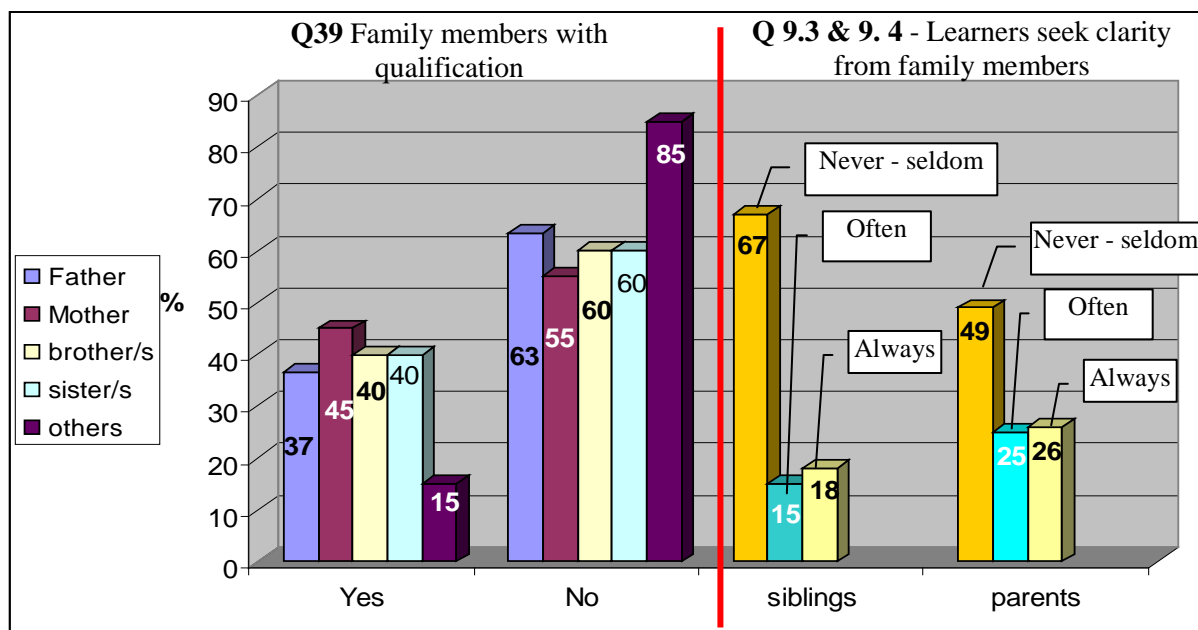
Fig. 5.3 **Family members with qualification and interactions with learners**

In an attempt to understand how the parents' level of education impacted on the academic performance of learners, responses were solicited from teachers. The following are representative of responses from teachers:

School A Mrs Saraja, (Q1): Most of the parents as well do not have adult basic education so therefore they don't play the role in nurturing them like the others Mr Rajesh, (Q3): I think also what's important is that many of the parents, as we said earlier on do not have a full education so they still converse with their children in the mother tongue.
School B Mr Lionel, (Q2): They have parents who themselves are not educated and sometimes it might not be that they are not interested but that the parents themselves are not able to help their kids. I would say the lack of interest and not having their vision about their life, others they don't see the need of learning English. How is it going to assist them if they finish grade 12? Ms Thandi, (Q4): Illiterate parents who won't be able to assist the child at home. Irresponsible parents who doesn't care about the child's education. No intrinsic motivation from the learners.
School C Mrs Suresh, (Q2): Many are content/complacent with their lot in lives. They

> do not aspire for greater things because parents are also content.
>
> Mr Pravesh, question 1: There is the socio-economic conditions such as lack of parental involvement – most households are single parent households.

Analysis of the above statements suggests that teachers believe that the high percentage of parents not having any academic qualifications (see fig 5.3) or those who "do not have adult basic education" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q1) translate into "illiterate parents who won't be able to assist the child at home" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q4). "So therefore they don't play the role in nurturing them like the other race groups because they themselves are disadvantaged" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q1). This sentiment was shared by Mr Lionel (school B, Q2) who argued that learners "have parents who themselves are not educated …might not be that they are not interested but that the parents themselves are not able to help their kids". Therefore it can be concluded that "The environment where the learners stay can have a poor impact on the child performance e.g. if most of the community members are illiterate" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q1).

It can therefore be surmised from the findings of this study that learner performance seems to be correlated with parents' qualification, based on the kind of support that parents are able to proffer. This is captured in the following statement by Mrs Singh (school B, Q2):

> Learners who belong to the middle/higher socio-economic groups generally show more interest in their work and have a stronger sense of work ethic. There is greater parental support and supervision of homework. Parents encourage their children to perform better. The above mentioned may be taking place in poorer families – but to a smaller extent.

Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) state: "the more parents and children conversed with each other in the home, the more the pupils achieved in school" (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p. 21). This is corroborated by William (2005, p. 2), arguing a large investment of time is needed. When this is compared with the actual level of interaction of learners and parents regarding academic work, as depicted in Fig 5.3 (question 9.3 and 9.4, p. 169), then the following conclusions may be drawn. A majority of 67 % and 49 % of learners do not interact with their siblings or parents, respectively, with regard to their school work. Only a minority of 25-26 % and 15-18 % of learners interact between

"often to always" with their parents and siblings, with regard to their school work. This is presumably because of what teachers in this study have argued: that the lack of education of family members prevents them from helping their children. Or it could be that the parents' occupations, being the second most important predictors of learner achievement (Kassim & Muraina, 2011), keep many parents away from home. Due to the work situation "there are no parents present in the home" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q2) and they are therefore unable to assist learners with their homework or to provide them with any other forms of support.

Van der Berg & Louw (2006, p. 2, citing Behrman et al., 1999) state that educated parents are expected to "complement the teaching received by their children more effectively… through providing better help with homework". According to Van der Berg and Louw (2006, p. 2), "better-educated parents may rank education more highly," and are thus willing to devote more time. Parents may also choose to live in better neighbourhoods with better schools, thus providing learners with superior schooling opportunities. The choice of a better school and a better neighbourhood was most poignantly put forward by learner 2 (school A, Q45) who said "Because if i was rich i would have been in model [i.e. Model C] school from my beginning".

In spite of the fact that educated parents are expected to "complement the teaching received by their children more effectively" through better help with homework (Van der Berg & Louw, 2006, p. 2), this may not necessarily be taking place in the homes of learners in this study. This can be deduced from the statements of Mrs Singh (school B, Q2):

> Learners who belong to the middle/higher socio-economic groups generally show more interest in their work and have a stronger sense of work ethic. There is greater parental support and supervision of homework. Parents encourage their children to perform better. The above mentioned may be taking place in poorer families – but to a smaller extent

This point was also raised by Ms Thandi (school B, Q4) who simply said that "Illiterate parents who won't be able to assist the child at home". Closer examination of the level of clarity seeking of learners from their parents and siblings attests to the notion that very little is taking place. Fig. 5.3 (p. 169, question 9.3 and 9.4) indicates that only a

very small percentage of learners, i.e. 15 % - 18 % and 25 %– 26 % seek clarity from siblings and parents respectively.

It can be inferred, therefore, that parents who have minimal or no formal qualifications cannot proffer any academic support to their charges. This, therefore, confirms Christy's (2005) assertions that literacy levels of parents are correlated with the academic performance of learners, based presumably on the kind of educational support (mentoring and coaching) that parents are able to provide. It can be extrapolated that there exists some kind of correlation between the lack of parental qualifications and the poor academic performance of learners.

Of course, it is not only about parents' qualifications but also the "poor or no support structures at home" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q1) or "lack of family support" (Mrs White, school C, Q1) where "Irresponsible parents who doesn't care about the child's education (Ms Thandi, school B, Q4) contribute to the negative impact on learners' performance. Furthermore, that "many of them are under foster care" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q2), which probably indicates lack of appropriate parental involvement in the education of the learners, and "Lack of supervision at home" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q5). This was corroborated by Ms Thandi (school B, Q2) who said:

> Yes you find that some of the learners they lack love from at home as a result if they come here – they want that attention and some of them even if they have got problems – its difficult for them to voice out and you find that some of them they leave their step, step parent – maybe it can be a step father or step mother and whoever is there as the biological parent is not aware of the problems that the learner is encountering there at home. As a result this learner is just victimized at home. If the learner comes here then she or he will have that attitude, the negative attitude just because of the problems that she encounters.

It is evident from the above that learners who come from foster care or homes where parents are divorced and have re-married bear the brunt of neglect from their step parent(s). The sentiment of this learner captures the essence of learners' lament over their academic performance attributable to stress because "you also stressed about your homes problems" (from "Problems at home" - learners 18 and 19 respectively –school C, question 45). According to Ms Thandi (school B), learners who have no avenue of escaping the victimization suffered at home begin to rebel at school. This translates into a negative attitude and a downward spiral of learner attainment.

Not all teachers, however, share these sentiments. There are those who are of the opinion that it is not necessarily that parents do not care about their children's education but, of necessity, parents are not present at home, and hence cannot offer such assistance. This is why Mr Lionel (school B, Q2) stated that:

> Well, I think that it ties in with what mam just said that most of them are orphans where they come from households where the household is child headed … What I mean is that there are no parents present in the home where they live. Parents might be living or working perhaps in Pietermaritzburg or Johannesburg and they leave their eldest child in the house to take care of the home and the younger ones.

While some parents are not able to provide educational support to their children due to lack of educational qualification on their part, Mr Lionel's comments suggests a further burden to some learners. While not getting the necessary academic support from family members is not burdensome enough, the suggestion that "some of the African children come from child headed families and they have children to take care of" (Ms Fikile, school A, Q2) leaves one in awe as to how these learners manage their lifestyles. The added responsibility of maintaining the home with its entire attendant chores and attending school seems insurmountable, which is presumably why "By the time they reach school they are tired" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q1) and this has a negative impact on the academic performance of learners.

One must hasten to add that the qualification of the parents is not the only contributory factor in the measure of academic prowess of the learner. Learner 18 (school C, Q5) seems to imply that the literacy levels of parents correlates with the types of job opportunities available to them when he said: "most of jobs needs people who is educated enough". This point was also raised by learner 21 (school A, Q32) who said: "if you are not fluent enough in English they are slim chances for you to get a job". This then brings on another dimension of support for learners which takes on an economic slant, and will be discussed under the section Motivation and Poverty and educational excellence.

While the discussion thus far drew correlations between education qualification of parents, mental stimulus, household chores and academic performance of learners, it is not suggested that there is no interaction/communication taking place at home. It would

appear that learners' lack of proficiency development in English is impacted by the lack of opportunities at home as it has been reported that "at home isiZulu is spoken. The radio and TV programmes most accessed by SL learners are isiZulu. Therefore they "do not communicate fluently in English" and "reading materials is in isiZulu at home" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q3 and 4). This was also corroborated by learners who said: "when we get home we speak isiZulu" (learner 2, school B, Q11 and learner 15, school A, Q3). Significantly, what learner 4 from school C suggested is that, when using English at home, which is viewed as "disrespectful" to elders, responses from parents and older cousins are in isiZulu.

This means that learners are receiving limited exposure to the target language at home and in their communities due to the spatial differences between the residential areas of other language speakers. According to Krashen (1985) cited in Tanveer (2007: 24) the "limited exposure to the target language and the lack of opportunities to practice speaking in such environments do not let the communicative abilities of L2 learners to fully develop and result into embarrassment or stress for them when they are required both in and out of the class". Why then do learners not utilize this opportunity to practice speaking in the target language? Some of the reasons were outlined in the discussion around the School Ground (see sub-topic School Grounds in Chapter 4). Other possible reason for learners not availing themselves of using the L2 in their communities could revolve around Culture and Tradition.

5.2.2   Culture and tradition

De Naclerio, citing various authoritative authors, argued that culture is critical for the development of emotions and self-esteem, which, in turn, are known "to enhance or deter second-language acquisition … and academic success" (1998, p. 1). De Naclerio further contends that the "linguistic environment is as important as the ethnic and cultural context in shaping the adjustment" of SL learners (1998, p. 55). This adjustment includes self-esteem, racial-ethnic identity, social interactions, and use of language, amongst other factors. This is because culture is experienced through language, as language is inseparable from culture; thus learning a SL requires learning linguistic aspects of the target culture, and hence SLA is akin to second culture acquisition (Spackman, n.d., p. 2). Acculturation, as a process or act of adjusting to a

new culture (Spackman, n.d., p. 3) is inextricably intertwined with SLA, and can cause acculturation stress, which refers to the "changes experienced by racial, ethnic, and cultural groups as a result of their interaction" (De Naclerio, 1998, p. 56). According to De Naclerio, it could be considered fair that the "linguistic environment, intrinsic to a cultural milieu, has the power to either promote or hinder the adjustment of linguistic minorities" (1998, p. 57). From the foregoing discussion, it can be inferred that African culture and traditions can either facilitate or impede the acquisition/learning of L2 based on the perspectives adopted by learners. Responses from learners to question 11, regarding their perspective on what impact improvement in English skills had on their knowledge of their culture/traditions, ranged from acculturation to assimilation to accommodation. Assimilation, as defined by Diaz-Rico and Weed, is when the learner "becomes totally absorbed into the new culture, with the native culture ultimately disappearing" (2007, pp. 245-246, cited in Spackman, n.d., p. 4). This suggests that some learners have raised affective filters based on the notion that English has a negative impact on their cultures and traditions, because of the opinion expressed that learning English diminishes their knowledge and understanding of their own culture. These sentiments were inferred from the following excerpts in question 11:

School A

Learner 2: Sometimes i feel like i'm losing my own language because i'm so used of speaking english, reading it and writing it.

Learner 3: It does not as you begin to gain interest in the English language you also gain interest in English customs and traditions and forget yours.

Learner 5: It affects my tradition in a way that pupils will stop believing in their customs and start to want to live the Europe or American way because of the language and beliefs. You find a child no longer can write, speak or read his/her language.

Learner 16: Sometimes as a black people we forgot our culture and use to no the other thing because we see other people do like white peer is.

Learner 17: By adapting the language and using or communicating with other people with english often, you tend to forget your own cultures an traditions.

Learner 18: You forget some of the your home language words cause English is in your head.

Learner 20: Culture has been affected because by going to Multi-racial schools black people have adopted a English life-style of living which affected culture.

Learner 21: Culture affected because by going to Multi-racial schools black people have adopted a English life-style of living which affected culture.

Learner 24: You want know about your culture and the home language. It will fell like we abandone [abandon] our mother tongue.

School B

Learner 2: I affect me because sometimes I as a learner I forget about my background how important it is to also speak my language. For instant I always forget some of the Zulu words end-up writing them in English.

Learner 3: It affect my own culture and tradition because the more I speak and

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> read English is the more I decrease in understating my own culture and tradition.
>
> Learner 11: I use English words even if its unnecessary which is not good for my culture.
>
> School C
>
> Learner 3: Some people tend to forget where they come from, their roots and ancestors because their trying to be something they are not.
>
> Learner 5: It affects my tradition in a way that pupils will stop believing in their customs and start to want to live the Europe or American way because of the language and beliefs. You find a child no longer can write, speak or read his/her language.

It can be seen from the above statements that the acquisition/learning of English (L2) is viewed as having a negative impact on the cultural beliefs and traditions of the learner and probably the community at large. This would cause tensions between retention of culture and the acquisition of the SL. It is argued that language is the most overt expression of culture and that most of the learning, both in school and in the home, takes place through language. The child must relate and accommodate what has been learned in the home to the language and culture of the school and vice versa. For learners whose linguistic and cultural fabric is different from that represented in the school, this task would appear insurmountable. Thus, the above sentiments expressed by learners, unveiling fears at a subliminal level, appear to be synonymous with the definition of assimilation by Diaz-Rico and Weed (cited in Spackman, n.d., p. 4).

Teachers were also probed on the influence of African cultures and traditions on L2 acquisition/learning. Most teachers of Indian descent adopted a neutral position on this aspect, arguing that they did not know enough on African cultures and traditions to warrant a response. However, the others, including some Indian teachers, while appearing uncertain, were biased towards viewing African cultures and traditions as having a negative impact on learners' improving their proficiency in L2. Teachers are of the opinion that learners and parents hold English as the language of the oppressor and that speaking it amounts to westernisation. Given some of the strong sentiments held by parents and learners about English and its impact on African cultures and traditions, it is understandable that English is not promoted as a conversational language by parents or learners. This trend has a knock-on effect on language proficiency which translates into poor academic performance. These sentiments are captured in the following excerpts from the answers to question 6 in the interviews conducted:

School A
Mrs Saraja: Definitely because they are looking at English as still the language of the oppressor….They are not looking at it as a medium in which this is going to take them places in the world.
School B
Ms Thandi: I agree. In some areas they strongly believe on the norms and standards of their culture. In some areas they don't see - know the importance of an African learner knowing English is not his/her mother tongue. They take English as for westernisation. Mrs Singh: Agree. Some African parents encourage their children to follow African culture and traditions and discourage them from speaking English at home. This means that these children only speak English in the classroom. They do not have much opportunity to master their skills in English.
School C
Mr Pravesh: Agree. Learners beliefs/traditions are in isiZulu, thus learners believe that English is not important. Learners trust elders and communicate with them in mother tongue.

The negative impact of culture and traditions on learners' opportunities for improving proficiency in the target language was most poignantly captured by the utterances of Mr Rajesh (school A) who reported on his conversation with another teacher on her child's general progress at school as follows:

Mr Rajesh: To me it's not having a positive effect in English. It's actually bringing them down because if they have to translate what they think in their language it has a different meaning than in English. So it's not really helping them. See when I asked one of the African teachers about her child. She said that she had her child in an African - isiZulu medium school but early into Grade 8, the child was in an Indian school and then she realized that the child was not worried about the traditions and cultures of what was needed to be done at home. So she sent her back to an African school so she can still retain the cultures at the expense of delaying – again after another year – she brought her back and that caused er… that what I call to-ing and fro-ing Mrs Saraja: Which brings us back to what I'm saying is that … Mr Rajesh: It does influence. Mrs Saraja: As much as they here doing the English but they still are very much into their traditions. Ms Fikile: Their culture Mr Rajesh: It's having a negative effect on their English. That's what I was trying to say.

The above clearly demarcates the tensions of the parents' dilemma, having to choose between the continuance of their cultural and traditional heritage and the "foreign" acculturation of their children caused by L2 language proficiency/ acquisition/ learning. The dialogue narrated by Mr Rajesh above has resonances with the third stage of acculturation which, according to Brown (1980), entails feelings of anomie whereby the learner experiences the feelings of being between cultures but not a member of either,

thus there is "a perceived social distance between him- or herself and both cultures" (Spackman, n.d., p. 5). The dilemma appears so strong that it projects on to learners and leaves them in a state of confused "semi-lingualism" as they begin to oscillate between culture and traditions, steeped in mother tongue, on the one hand, and the target language on the other, without acquiring sufficient mastery to claim any degree of proficiency in the target language. It can be established from the above dialogue that the confused child lags behind the rest of the class academically, much to the child's detriment.

Not all teachers were as emphatic as suggested by the experience related by Mr Rajesh (school A); some teachers were uncertain about the effect of culture and tradition on African learners improving their skills in English. The ambivalence of teachers' opinion on what effect African cultures and traditions might have on L2 proficiency is shown in what Mr Lionel (school C, Q6) said:

> I think, yes I think that it is true that you do become more westernized you do become accustomed to new ideas but I don't think that the ideas of anybody's culture or custom that's contrary to yours simply because of the language that they speak should adversely affect your commitment to your own culture and your cultural practices.

This notion of new ideas of other cultures not necessarily affecting one's cultural heritage, as expressed by Mr Lionel, was also expressed by learners. Some learners were of the opinion that learning an L2 is positively correlated to improving the understanding of not only their own culture but that of others as well. Butler (2008, p. 2) also found that learners gained "respect for those around them no matter the color of their skin or the sound of their voice". In this respect, a majority of 66 % of learners, in question 12 indicated that they do not fear loss of their indigenous language as their skills in English improves. This may appear contradictory to the discussions thus far, but a closer examination of learners' qualitative responses in question 11 indicates that the SL assumes another role, in terms of culture and traditions – that of edifier and verifier.

Learners felt that improved proficiency in L2 not only enabled them to understand their cultures and traditions better, but, through gaining more knowledge, they were able to compare and verify what they knew about their cultures and traditions. These

sentiments are captured in the following extracts from learners' responses to question 11:

School A
Learner 6: In many ways because sometimes you also get to know that some of the things there are believed to be our culture aren't real.
Learner 12: It doesn't because by me learning english it doesn't take any information from me it just adding to what I got.
School B
Learner 7: You are able to relate your culture and tradition in English. Which will give you/me different ways in understanding my culture not in the way I'm used to.
Learner 8: I get more knowledge.
Learner 9: It helps me understand how unique my culture is and the more I learn English, the more I appreciate my mother toung [tongue] it is a language for my nation.
Learner 10: It helps me a lot because I can read [a]bout it and compare that with what I'm thought at home and be able to form my own views.
School C
Learner 6: I am getting to learn more about my culture and other traditions.
Learner 10: It make me realise how other cultures and traditions are important to other people or to whose people traditions is.

Learner 1 (school A, Q11) was also of the opinion that L2 proficiency made him "realise other diverse cultures more clearly". There are those who hold the opinion that culture and traditions have no bearing on learning the target language nor does the language have any impact on their cultures and traditions. This is evident in the following statements made by learners:

School A
Learner 19: Improving my English doesn't affect my knowledge and Understanding my our Culture. I'm just being able to speak English, i'm not living an English life.
Learner 22: I doesn't affect me but I get to learn more by reading, speaking and writing the language.
Learner 25: English doesn't affect my culture, traditions or beliefs.
Learner 26: It doesn't affect in a bad way. English is the common language that is used and you have to be influenced by it.
Learner 27: It doesn't affect my culture at all.
School B
Learner 4: It does not affect my understanding of my own culture because I know who am I & what I want or what are my roots and what to follow.
Learner 6: English does not affect my knowledge.   My culture and traditions has nothing to do with me speaking English.
School C
Learner 1: Improving my English skills does not ever affect my culture and tradition. I can improve a lot in English skill But never forget my culture.
Learner 2: It doesn't affect my culture.

Learner 11: It does not because you can know your English well but there is nothing that can stop you from knowing your culture and there are lot of resources that can help you learn about your culture and traditions.
Learner 14: Not affecting me, still follow my culture.
Learner 15: It doesn't affect my culture neither my traditions.
Learner 16: No. Nothing change me if I talk in English but am not forgeting [forgetting] my culture.
Learner 18: No, it does not affect my knowledge.

FEAR LOSS OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE AS ENGLISH SKILLS IMPROVE
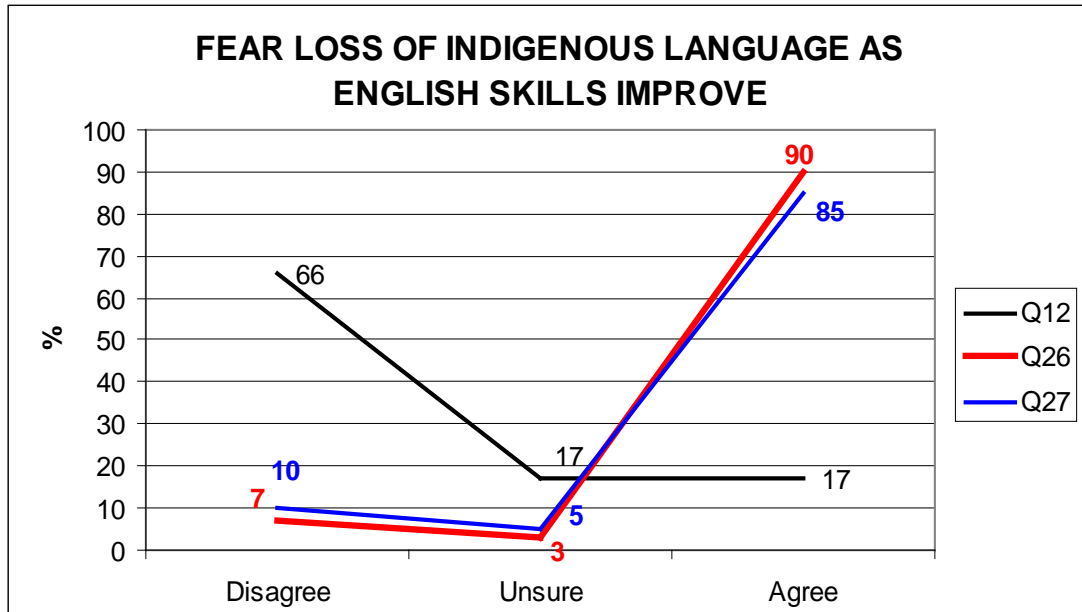
Fig. 5-4   **Fear of loss of indigenous language**

Thus fig. 5.4 shows that there is an inverse relationship between learners' fear of losing their skills in their mother tongue (Q12) and the improvement of their skills in English, through various strategies, such as speaking in English during breaks (Q26) and interacting with more proficient speakers (Q27). This inverse relationship can be accounted for by understanding that, as learners' fear of losing of their indigenous language diminishes, intake for the target language increases, thus leading to improved proficiency. That intake may increase, must of necessity be as a result of motivation. According to Schumann (1986), motivation, while an important aspect of learners' language acquisition, "does not correlate with learners' attitudes toward acculturation" (cited in Spackman, n.d., p. 4).

5.3 MOTIVATION AND POVERTY

This study views motivation from two perspectives, namely, motivation for language acquisition and motivation in general. Motivation for language acquisition is further divided into either instrumental or integrative motivation (Norris-Holt, 2001;

Schumann, 1986 cited in Spackman, n.d.) whereas motivation in general is further divided into either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. These will be discussed in connection with the findings of this study.

5.3.1   Motivation and language acquisition

Motivation is defined as a kind of desire for learning. On the question on whether learners were motivated instrumentally or integratively, various questions were posed to learners to ascertain their views on this matter subtly. The most overt question which revealed that learners were instrumentally motivated was where learners were asked which language provided opportunities for a job (question 5). Here an overwhelming majority of 97 % of the learners (see fig. 4.7, p. 107) indicated that English served such a purpose. While many learners indicated that English serves this purpose, this was summed up clearly by learner 9 (school C, Q5) who reported: "In South Africa and a lot of countries around the world [people] use English as their main language. So English can help me get a job anywhere I am going". This is a clear indication that these learners chose English as MoI so as to improve their proficiency for utilitarian purposes, which correlates with Hudson's argument that instrumental motivation is characterised by "the desire to obtain something practical or concrete from the study of a second language" (Hudson, 2000, cited in Noriss-Holt, 2001, p. 3). This corroborates Schumann's (1986) assertion that "learners who want language ability for their job or other specific task are instrumentally motivated" (Spackman, n.d., p. 4). Furthermore, Hudson's claim that such motivation for SLA is driven for "university graduation, applying for a job" (Norris-Holt, 2001, p. 3) was also mentioned by learner 20 (school C, Q25) who justified that "Mosly [mostly] all Universities use English so I'm improving my English skills" and "Most application forms and interviews are conducted in English" (learner 7, school B, question 5). Learners were not only looking to solicit a job through proficiency in English, but were also keeping their options open when they argued that they were learning it "because most professions requires you to know English and be fluent in speaking it" (Learner 1, school A, question5). This suggests that learners are looking at the requirements of not just one but various professions so that they can pre-emptively work towards meeting those requirements so that they have a choice at a later stage.

In an attempt to verify Schumann's (1986) findings that "learners need English for a specific purpose and are not trying to integrate into an English speaking culture" (Spackman, n.d., p. 4), i.e. whether learners were instrumentally motivated, learners were also given the opportunity to decide whether English should be replaced with an indigenous language or not, and to justify their responses (see question 25). Again a majority of 72 % of the learners (see fig. 4.7, p. 107) disagreed that English should be replaced. Their responses gravitated around job opportunities and prosperity. This was captured by learner 9 (school B, question 25) who wrote: "I feel that English is an important language with it we can get a lot of jobs and can easily communicate with people from other countries". The extent to which proficiency is important for job opportunities was captured by learner 11 (school C, Q25) who wrote: "Because English is the language of communication and in nowadays most of the time you do not get a job if you don't know your English properly". However, Hudson's (2000) caveat that instrumental motivation is characteristic of learners displaying little or no desire for social integration into the community using the target language (cited in Norris-Holt, 2001, p. 3) was eminently clear in this research where, there seemed to be a deafening silence on the need to integrate into the community using target language. This little or no desire to assimilate into the community of the target language is evident in the opinions held by some learners that they prefer using English during breaks (see question 3) simply: "Because it is the language that I must adopt in order to achieve my goals" (learner 23, school A). This suggests that learners "are not trying to integrate into an English speaking culture" (Schumann, 1986 cited in Spackman, n.d., p. 4). It becomes clear that acquiring proficiency in the SL is viewed as a means to an end since "it's the language everyone uses especially at working properties" (learner 20, school C), which is why learners need to gain proficiency in it to facilitate getting a job. If the acquisition of target language is driven by the sheer need for utilitarian purposes, then there always exists the danger of fossilization, where a learner seems to "freeze" or become stuck at some more or less deviant stage (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 13) once SL learners are able to obtain a job.

Of course not all learners were solely motivated to learn English for utilitarian purposes. A small minority of learners displayed motivation for integrative purposes, as shown when learners, in response to various questions on preferences of English as language of communication (questions 3, 5, 11 and 25), reported that they needed to improve their

English so as to open or maintain the channels of communication with members of other race groups. The following extracts from learner responses indicate such intentions:

School B, Q3 Learner 8: I have school friends who speak English, their home language is English.
School A, Q5 Learner 12: Recently everything is instructed in english and you may find that you meet different people from different Races but we can communicate in english.
School A, Q25 Learner 27: It not like everyperson in this world knows isiZulu english is the only language that combines us.
School B Learner 13: We are living in a diverse country and not al of us understand isiZulu as for English is a commonly used language by differe [different] races.
School C: Learner 15: When we've finished school and out on the real world we won't know how to communicate with others.

There were also suggestions that learning a SL that is widely used by most - if not all - races, helps increase understanding of one's own culture, and also helps to integrate across diverse cultures, thus contributing to a greater understanding and respect of other cultures. This therefore implies that English serves as a harmonizer across the cultural divide. This opinion was evident in the following learner responses to question 11 regarding the impact that English had on their cultures and traditions:

School A Learner 1: It makes me realise other diverse culture's more clearly and speaking wise you can communicate with whom ever you want without fear and most importantly tell the next person your feelings if you were hurt.
School B Learner 7: You are able to relate your culture and tradition in English. Which will give you/me different ways in understanding my culture not in the way I'm used to.
School C Learner 6: I am getting to learn more about my culture and other traditions. Learner 10: It make me realise how other cultures and traditions are important to other people or to whose people traditions is.

Statements such as: "You are able to relate your culture and tradition in English. Which will give you/me different ways in understanding my culture not in the way I'm used to" (learner 7, school B, Q11) brings in another dimension to the motivation for the

acquisition of English, that of edifier and verifier. It can be deciphered from the above sentiment that learners hold that improving their skills in English affords them new opportunities to validate or to question their understanding of their own cultures. This is shown in statements such as: "I am getting to learn more about my culture and other traditions" (learner 6, school C, Q11), since "There are words in English that isiZulu does not have" (learner 24, school A, Q25). Furthermore, the statement that "We can't learn everything in isiZulu" (learner 8, school B, Q25) suggests that English serves as "knowledge expander", since learners view their indigenous languages as being constrained by vocabulary limitations, which is in agreement with Makgalemele (2005, p. 63), who stated that "The use of indigenous languages cannot be implemented due to the under development of their academic vocabulary…"

Clearly, when L2 is learned for integrative purposes, affective filters are lowered and intake increases allowing for language acquisition. However, while these minorities of learners are integratively motivated, various other factors, discussed earlier, mitigate against acquisition of SL.

Aside from motivation for integrative or instrumental purposes, motivation is also examined from the perspective of its being a more general trait in learner achievement. According to Reece & Walker (1997), motivation is a key factor in the SL learning process so much so that it is argued that a "less able student who is highly motivated can achieve greater success than the more intelligent student who is not well motivated" (cited in Gömleksiz, 2001, p. 220). The veracity of this argument was shown to be inversely true by the utterances of Mrs Suresh, who reporting on learner motivation, stated: "Many are content/complacent with their lot in lives. They do not aspire for greater things because parents are also content". Thus the teachers' plight in teaching SL learners becomes very pertinent when, according to Gömleksiz (2001, p. 220), "it is very difficult to teach a second language in a learning environment if the learner does not have a desire to learn a language". Given the definition of motivation and from the foregoing discussion, it immediately places into context the challenges of teachers who find that:

> Pupils tend to have a poor attitude towards schoolwork…. They are not self motivated. They do not seem to have aspirations or goals. There is no extra work done on their own (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q1).

The notion that learners do not do any extra work on their own also suggests a lack of motivation on the part of the learners. Teachers therefore seem to be unanimous that certain learners are unmotivated:

> Many are content/complacent with their lot in lives. They do not aspire for greater things because parents are also content (Mrs Suresh school C, Q2).

This sentiment was also shared by other teachers who argued that there is "No intrinsic motivation from the learners" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q4), which is why "Pupils tend to have a poor attitude towards schoolwork" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q1). There seems to be a certain degree of apathy among learners, as: "They do not know what they are doing because they don't have role models" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q1). However, not all learners are without goals, as was mentioned by learner 1 (school B), remaining steadfast in foregoing his culture for success within an English environment by arguing that: "It shows me that my culture is important but not as important as my English skills because it is the main source needed wherever you go". Given that motivation remains the cornerstone to success, Gömleksiz's (2001, p. 220) proposition that the task of the teacher to maintain and/or maximize learners' motivation correlates with the plight of a learner 1 (school A, Q37) who calls for the following:

> Teachers encouraging learners at all times even if they see you are doing really bad but still push you don't discourage and a pupil. Teachers listening to learner's more often letting them speak their minds and they must try to elliviate [alleviate] looking disdainful to other children maybe less fortunate pupils too.

Excerpts from the above resonate with what Morakinyo (2003) argued, that falling level of academic performance is "attributable to teacher's non-use of verbal reinforcement strategy …. Unsavoury comments about student's performance that could damage their ego" (cited in Asikhia, 2010, p. 230). From the foregoing discussion it also becomes clear that the task of the teacher to maximize or to even maintain motivation of students, as proposed by Gömleksiz (2001, p. 220), which proves a challenge because "Classes are too large for proper teaching" (Mrs White, school C, Q14). Despite teachers motivating learners by showing that economic success comes from academic excellence, many poor learners remain despondent: "When you poor you get thinking that you will never be anything in life" (learner 6, school C, Q45). This despondency

emanates from what learners observe to be the case: "If, you are rich you do not have a reason to work hard at school" (learner 3, school A, Q45). Learners become apathetic because they see, all too often, that affluent students are rewarded without any corresponding effort on their part: "Sometimes learners show off and wear things that you cannot afford and yet their [they] are performing not very well and you are being told that you got to get good marks to get that" (learner 12, school B, Q45).

However, there seems to be some measure of support for Mrs Singh's (school B, Q2) assertion that the degree of motivation seems to be contingent upon the economic standing of the learner, when she argued that "Learners who belong to the middle/higher socio-economic groups generally show more interest in their work and have a stronger sense of work ethic". This brings into the discussion the dimension of socio-economic circumstances of learners and their impact on motivation.

5.3.2 Poverty and language acquisition

It is generally acknowledged that poverty makes teaching and learning difficult for learners who are hurt physically or mentally, those that are hungry, lack proper clothing or live in unsafe environments. The study by Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) found that learners' achievements were significantly related to family social class (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003, p. 21), which Asikhia (2010, p. 233) argued is determined by, among other things, wealth. Nascimento (2008, p. 21) stated that recent studies in Brazil have shown that "socioeconomic characteristics and previous ability show far more robust influence on student achievement" than resources. White (1986) argues that there is a positive correlation between socio-economic status and academic achievement, meaning that "as one factor increases, the other also increases" (Asikhia, 2010, p. 233). High socio-economic status consists of upper and middle classes – i.e. the "rich" (Asikhia, 2010, p. 233). This was also found to be true in this study where it was reported by Mrs Singh (school B, Q2) that:

> Learners who belong to the middle/higher socio-economic groups generally show more interest in their work and have a stronger sense of work ethic. There is greater parental support and supervision of homework. Parents encourage their children to perform better. The above mentioned may be taking place in poorer families – but to a smaller extent.

In order to establish learner perspectives on the extent of economic circumstances on learner performance, learners were asked whether being rich or poor affected their academic performance at school (question 45) and to proffer reasons why. Strangely, despite the socio-economic environments in which these learners find themselves, a majority of 72 % of the learners (fig. 5.5) do not believe that being rich or poor has any impact on their academic performance at school.

BEING RICH OR POOR AFFECTS YOUR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Yes
28%

No
72%
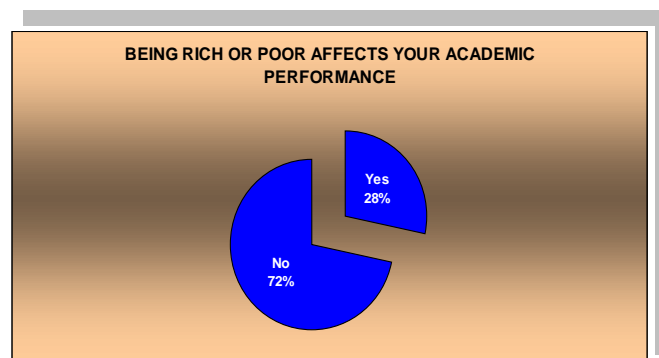
Fig. 5-5   Being rich or poor affects your academic performance

These learners, it seems, identify intrinsic motivation as the cornerstone to their pursuit for academic achievement. This was appropriately captured in question 45 by learners who said:

School A
Learner 17: Because it depends on your focus and on what you want to make of your self.
Learner 23: Because when you are at school it is up to you to do your best even if you are rich you can fail.
School B
Learner 2: Because it about your thinking no matter if rich or poor if you are positive you'll make it in life.
Learner 4: Your mind and focusing in school work increases your performance. Most learners are poor but they can manage.
Learner 9: There are studance [students] in South Africa who have reached their goals thgoug [through] hard times it is up to us.
School C
Learner 11: If you know what you want and what you want to achieve, your background have no effect at all but what matter's is your hardwork.
Learner 12: It is your self-motivation that affects your academic performance at school.

Furthermore, utterances such as "Because that poorness encourages you to do better and want to have better life" (learner 20, school C) indicates that the very poverty that learners are subjected to seems to provide them with the impetus, sense of determination, focus and stoic fortitude to achieve better results, which they perceive will alleviate their plight. These sentiments show a sense of determination that one would imagine is sufficient to ensure good academic performance. Of course this could be a fallacious belief if one has to hold that it is only motivation that is required for academic excellence. While a majority of 72 % of the learners, with plausible explanations, indicated that their economic circumstances did not have an impact on their academic performance, the other 28 % of the learners (fig. 5.5), being the other end of the rich/poor continuum, offered even more convincing arguments on why and how being poor has a negative impact on their academic performance.

In most countries, including South Africa, students are assigned to neighbourhood schools, resulting in wealthier families having the capacity for choosing good public schools for their children based on where they choose to live. This state of affairs was raised by learner 2 (school A, question 45), who said: "if I was rich I would have been in model school from my beginning". Such statements display the sense of despair of learners whose economic circumstances restrict their choices of "quality schools". These learners argue that, "if you are poor you are always stressed" (learner 3, school B, Q45) presumably "Because you also stressed about your homes problems" (learner 18, school B, Q45). These problems, amongst others, could be what Ms Fikile (school A) described: "some of the African children come from child-headed families and they have children to take care of", which was corroborated by Mr Lionel (school B) who pointed out that: "they leave their eldest child in the house to take care of the home and the younger ones". Teachers, it seems are therefore aware that learners find it much harder, if not impossible, to learn or even care about getting an education or to hope that learning holds any reward for them. Given the imposing challenges that learners face, this leads to despondency among learners, who feel that: "When you poor you get thinking that you will never be anything in life" (learner 6, school C). A similar sentiment was echoed by learner 26, who wrote: "Sometimes you may think you are poor and there is not [no] future" (school A). The challenges and despondency "leads to bring down of self-esteem" (learner 10, school A). Lowered self-esteem translates into lack of confidence, raised the affective filter and thus reduced intake. This

despondency and low self-esteem reveals a sense of resignation in the child as he/she sees no avenue of getting out of the doldrums of poverty. Compounding the plight of these learners is peer pressure: "Sometimes a learner may be pressured by peers who are rich and they are poor and they tend to do wrong things to be in the same position as them" (learner 14. school A).   Ms Thandi (school B, Q1) also pointed out that peer pressure was one of the reasons why African learners performed poorly: "teenagers are now addicted to drugs, money, cell phones, etc."

The problem of poverty permeates even the school environment "because sometimes you are poor sometime during breaks you don't have something to eat it affect you because you can't even read when you are hungry" (learner 7, school C). Learner 16 (school A) also indicated that "if you are poor sometime you might be hungry and can't concentrate in class". Teachers were also unanimous that, due to poverty, there is a "Lack of proper nutrition" (Mr Pravesh, school C), or "no nutrition" (Mr Rajesh, school A), and therefore one can see "the problem with learners who've come with no food" (Mrs Saraja, school A) contributing to learners being "hungry and so – that's why … they can't really focus when they do have time to spend with teachers" (Mr Lionel, school B). Thus it becomes clear that hunger "plays a major role in their ability to concentrate" (Mrs Saraja, school A), and those that are overwhelmed by hunger "sleep in class" (Mrs White, school C), which has a negative impact on their academic performance. Thus it can be concluded that "poverty has an impact also because if a learner is hungry, he/she becomes passive in class" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q1).

Aside from hunger, "being poor affects your academic performance especially when you live in rural areas" (learner 8, school B, Q45), where:

> Boys starts their schooling very late because they need to be the shepherds take care of the livestock. In rural areas before the girls can go to school they need to fetch water from the river/water port and fetch wood for the fire. By the time they reach school they are tired (Ms Thandi, school B, question 1).

Furthermore, learners experience difficulty in getting to school as "Some of them walk long distances, from home to school, because parents don't have money for the transport" (Ms Thandi, school B). Lack of funds ushers in another dimension to

poverty, called absenteeism (discussed later) as "on the days on which they don't have bus fare, they don't come to school" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q2).

Those learners who qualify for child support grants from the government, because they "are under foster care …don't have access to the monies for what they require for school" since "Monies go to the parents" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q2) and "Parents take the monies" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q2). Although learners are able to attend school, however frequently, their "poor comprehension of English" (Mrs Suresh, school C, Q1), "lack of family support" and "poor self-discipline" (Mrs White, school C, Q1 and 3) necessitates additional intervention in most, if not all, their subjects. However, "with financial constraints, many cannot afford extra tuition in difficult subjects e.g. Maths, Physical Science" (Mrs Suresh, school C, question 2) and "they most certainly do not have money for extra lessons" (Mrs White, school C, question 4). Mr Pravesh (school C, Q2) also shared similar sentiments when he reported that "those learners that are rich are able to afford to pay for additional material/extra classes, have proper meals etc. Poor learners are disadvantaged in terms of living conditions". The despair a learner stricken by poverty and constrained by finance is captured in the words of learner 2 (school A) who wrote "Because if I was rich I would have been in model school from my beginning". There is an implication that schooling in Model C schools (essentially private schools) is far superior in terms of teacher competence, resources and schooling infrastructure. However, this discussion falls outside the ambit of this study and therefore no further comments will be proffered on this matter. In stark contrast to the poverty-stricken learner is "the affluent Black child whose every whim and fancies is catered for and that Black child comes here with a kind of a chip on his shoulder" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q2); these learners' ability "to afford to pay for additional material/extra classes" highlights the fact that "poor learners are disadvantaged" (Mr Pravesh, school C, Q2). This, it seems causes some consternation among teachers as they "have two opposites in our school" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q2) – resource-rich and resource-deprived. This will be discussed further under the theme "resources".

5.4   RESOURCE AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Howie's (2003, p. 2) contention that the lack of resources is one of the factors that is attributable to learners' poor performance was corroborated by Nascimento (2008, p.

19), who reported that recent studies indicate that "school resources were sufficiently significant to be regarded as pedagogically important". Nascimento (2008, p. 20) also suggests that "countries with very low per capita income sometimes suggest contexts where student outcomes tend to be more sensible to the availability of school resources". Adeogun and Osifila (2008, p. 1) have also argued that the extent to which an "educational institution attains her objectives is directly proportional to the educational resources available and their utilization". According to Adeogun and Osifila (2008, p. 1) material resources include "textbooks, charts, maps, audio-visual and electronic instructional materials … paper supplies and writing materials, pencils, ruler, ... and so on". Understanding the extent to which this was true afforded learners the opportunity, through questions 7 and 28, to corroborate or refute, with supporting arguments, the fact that access to and availability of resources increases ones chances of improving skills in English, thus impacting on academic performance. Learners' responses as represented in fig 5.6 show that the majority of learners, 72 % and 95 % to questions 7 and 28 respectively, have agreed that access to and availability of resources increases ones chances in improving skills in English. Learners justified this by arguing that "Reading textbooks and magazines help improve your reading and understanding English" (Learner 4, school B).
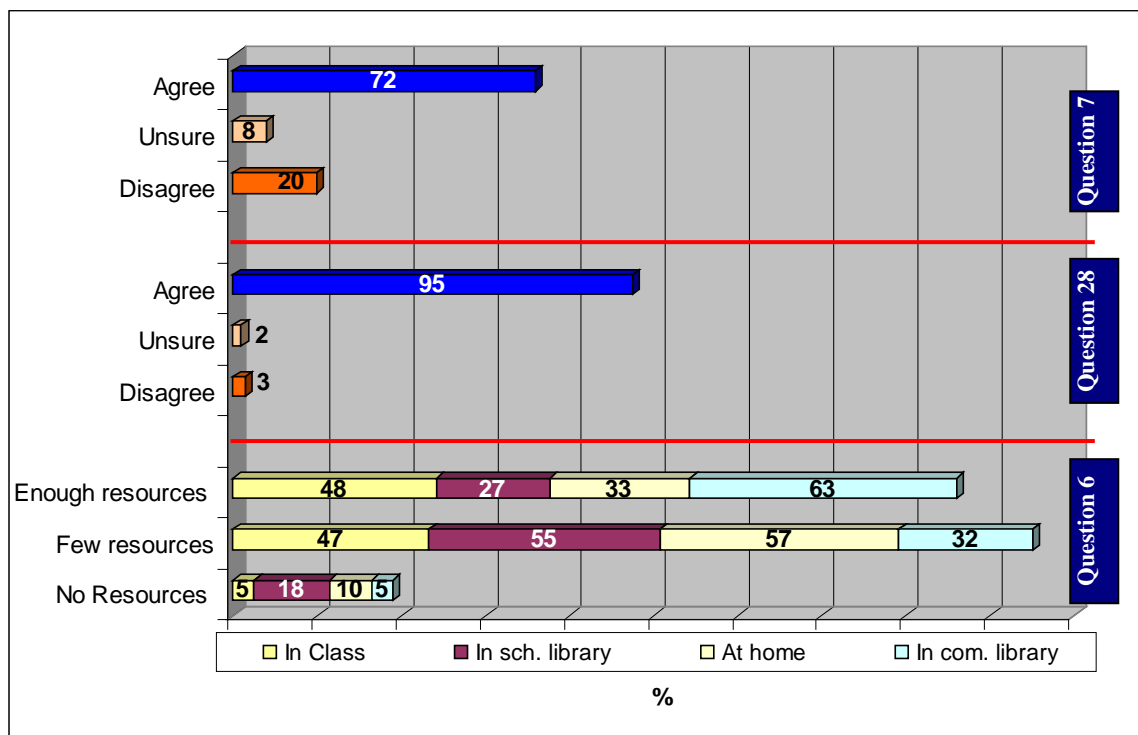
Fig. 5-6   Resources and their impact on academic performance

Learners have also indicated that, with more resources, they will be spending "more time using those textbook in order to improve my performance" (learner 6, school B). Thus "More resources mean more information" (learner 1, school A) which "will mean more learning and knowing things because you never stop learning" (learner 12, school A). Fuller (1985) cited in (Adeogun & Osifila, 2008, p. 145) discovered that "students who had used two or more books were almost three times better than those who had no textbooks in school". Therefore "the more time you spend with your books the more you will gather knowledge and be able to speak English" (learner 22, school A). Furthermore, Learner 8 (school A) argued that "By getting more textbook which it will improve much better and might give me encouragement to speak more in English and understanding of english and writing". It would appear that learner 11 (school C) elaborated on the previous statement by stating that "the more I get more resources, the better are the chances of learning English and understanding it. So also my performance will improve when I am an expert in my English". Thus, "when we get more textbooks to read we improve more academic performance" (learner 7, school C). Learners are therefore arguing that increased interaction with resources leads to increased access to information and thus improvement in their skills in English leading to improved academic performance. This corroborates the findings of Lorton & Walley (1979) and Walberg & Thomas (1972) cited in Adeogun and Osifila (2008, p. 145) where it was found that learning experiences are richest when the environment around learners meet their needs through adequate and effective utilization of resources and that "children learn best when they can actively explore an environment rich in adequate materials".

Factor analysis (see Appendix H, section C) of resources and its effect on skills acquisition in English (question 28) loaded heavily with the theme of interaction, which indicates that increased interaction with more resources increases learners' chances of improving skills in English. Mr Lionel (school B) also agreed with this notion: "If a child has a wealth of resources to work with then he will be able to improve". Learners also see availability of and access to resources as an avenue to "know how to read difficult words and understand it" (learner 24, school A). This alludes to increasing English vocabulary: "Everytime when I read I find new words that I didn't know or understand" (learner 27, school A) which learner 13 (school B) refers to as "Bombastic words". Thus "my vocabulary gets better and better whenever I am reading" (learner

12, school B). When learners come across a word that they do not understand, "then I will go to ask someone to explain that word" (learner 5, school C). This "would improve my spelling and vocabulary" (learner 3, school A). The suggestion by learner 5 (school C) that they seek explanations of words from other learners suggest interaction. This interaction, in seeking clarification, also contributes to increased proficiency in SL with the caveat that it takes place using the SL. Ms Fikile, (school A, Q10) also uses this strategy:

> Learners are given a chance to bring articles from magazines/newspapers to use during reading periods and every time they've read they need to explain to the whole class and teacher will ask them to take out difficult/new words they have learnt about while they were reading, and those words they have to look them up in the dictionaries and discuss them what they understood and they'll be let to use them to construct sentences meaningful ones and each day they are expected to have a journal to record new words they've learnt from reading the articles.

This strategy supports Walter's (2003, p. 4) hypothesis that "In order to read comfortably, skilled readers need to have receptive mastery of 95 % or more of the words in a text, recognising them rapidly". While this strategy is plausible, the suggestion that "Yes it will be cool because text book has more information even no matter you did not understand a teacher you simply read textbooks" (learner 18, school C) implies a dangerous view that resources act as substitutes for teachers. This notion was also shared by learner 13, from the same school, who wrote "I will used does [those] textbooks extra note at home teach my self". There is the insinuation that teachers are abdicating their responsibility of teaching and expecting learners to use their resources as primary sources of learning rather than as supplementary to what is taught in class. This was implied by learner 25 (school A) who suggested that "Getting used to these skills will help me. Life will be more easy in my studies". This seems to resonate with what Nkuuhe (cited in Adeogun & Osifila, 2008, p. 146) has highlighted as a bad influence, despite textbooks being "indispensable to the quality education and students' academic performance …teachers' abdication of teaching responsibility to textbooks at the expense of original teaching method". It is argued that textbooks do "not give room for flexibility …and no provision made for individual differences among students" (Adeogun & Osifila, 2008, p. 146).

Although it has been established that the availability of and access to resources have a bearing on English proficiency, this study also sought the opinions of teachers and learners on the actual availability of and access to such resources. The learner's perception that "What we know is little but what we don't know is immense so we just need to keep learning and gaining knowledge" (learner 9, school C) suggests that there is a desire for increased availability of and access to resources, which, according to Mr Pravesh (school C) the "availability of English material" poses a challenge. This challenge was also highlighted by learner 6 (school A) who wrote "Well you find that most people fear to understand english because of the lack of textbooks and resources like that. It would be much easier, if they had the resource". This sentiment is shared by Mr Lionel (school B, Q4) who said, that when one considers the challenges facing African learners improving their skills in English, it seemed that:

> one is definitely resources. If a child has a wealth of resources to work with then he will be able to improve. So the school itself lacks resources. Children are sometimes not educated solely by sitting in the class and being dictated to but they learn by interacting with their environment and with different resources. So I think resources".

Learners in general also shared the sentiment that resources did pose a challenge, as is shown in fig. 5.6 (Q6, p. 191). Factor analysis of the responses to the question on the availability of resources learners have at their disposal (refer to Appendix H, section A) showed that the variable "availability of resources" has factors that overlap, This means that the component split along two sub-themes, namely, *resource poor* (highlighted in green) and *resource rich* environments (highlighted in yellow). Through the processes of factor analysis (see Appendix H, section A), together with data contained in fig 5.6 (Q6, p. 191), it becomes evident that the majority of learners (55 % and 57 %) have indicated that there are few resources in the school library and at home, respectively, constituting a "resource poor" environment. This assessment was shared by teachers. Mrs Thandi said: "at school, I think that they do have the resources but they are not enough (Ms Thandi, school B, question 3). Mrs White (school C, Q 4) also noted that learners have "no access to books for reading".

Figure 5.6 (Q6, p. 191) also reveals that 63 % and 48 % of learners indicated that there are enough resources in the community libraries and in the class, respectively, thus constituting "**resource rich**" environments. While there may not be any numerically

quantifiable criteria to define what constitutes a resource rich environment, the fact that only 48 % of learners in question 6 (fig 5.6, p. 191) indicated that there are sufficient resources in class, is an anomaly and does not necessarily imply a resource rich environment. However, by comparison of other learners' opinion in question 6 (fig 5.6, p. 191), 48 % does constitute the majority, but will not necessarily achieve what Walberg and Thomas (1972) have reported, i.e. that "children learn best when they can actively explore an environment rich in adequate materials" (Adeogun & Osifila, 2008, p. 145). Thus, in effect, availability of and access to resources in the classroom is very restricted. This is evidenced by what Mrs White (school C, Q2) reported that learners, due to poverty "do not have the necessary resources for learning, pens, calculators, etc". Learners 8 and 10 (school B and C respectively) agree that "They usually don't have enough resources to help them". This was also confirmed by Mr Rajesh (school A, Q2) who reported: "they don't have resources, because they use one exam pad for every subject. You can't ask for files - you can't ask for assignments that you can compare with the Model C school."

Contrary to learners' claims that the classroom had enough resources, it was noted from classroom lesson observations that Hudelson's (1987) postulation (cited in Foertsch, 1998) that environments being filled with print examples in both languages are important to successful acquisition was not adhered to in the three schools visited. Learners' claims of having enough resources in class could emanate from the notion that teachers providing learners with worksheets constitute "enough resources". It must be understood that worksheets are highly contextualized to facilitate a particular purpose only, and do not necessarily provide learners opportunities for expanded opportunities for further exploration and self-discovery.

Although 63 % of learners (fig. 5.6, p. 191) have indicated that community libraries do have enough resources, the inability of poor learners to access such resources or to even visit such sites as resources centres is attributable to poverty, "Because you don't get money to go out in the outside world and gather information e.g. Resource centres" (learner 13, school B). A contradictory view of a learner is found: "The community library has a small amount of information that can help me out" (learner 9, school B). This was in response to question 23 regarding challenges that learners face in improving their skills in English bears relevance and necessitates further discussion. Although

availability of and access to resources is important, "which resources are relevant, to what extent and level, and given the school context" (Nascimento, 2008, p. 20) are important considerations to facilitate challenging learners in analysing texts.

According to the comprehensible input hypothesis, the complexity of language used should be at one level above the learner's current level of competence. However, when asked to list some of the challenges that hamper African learners improving their skills in English (Q4), Mrs Saraja (school A) drew attention to the relevance of resources used, stating that "the choice of literature that we choose like the set works err, it doesn't benefit them". In question 3, Mrs Saraja identified "Shakespeare – those kinds of literature is not benefiting the child to equip the child our there. Shakespeare especially is not". This was also mentioned by Mr Lionel, (school B, Q9) who made the following recommendation:

> the lesson that you prepare it needs to it needs to apply to them – you know and like I find sometimes I'll refer to a television programme that I watched when I was younger not remembering you know that we are not in the same generation and they look at me dumb founded and then I'll revert back to something that's more current and then they respond. So their participation relies a lot on how interesting the lesson is and how comfortable they are.

Mr Lionel suggests that, if resources to which learners are unable to relate are used, then getting learners to critically analyse texts and engage in discussions is limited. Responses to question 23, regarding difficulties experienced by learners in improving their skills in English, also raised the relevance of resources used in schools which posed a challenge to them, as they seem not to be able to relate to these chosen texts. This is most succinctly captured by the following learners who reported:

> School A:
> Learner 25: I really don't have a problem with my skills in english. But the english we are doing novels, plays there are from England it makes it very difficult to understand some words there.
> Learner 27: We have to read shakespear – that whre [where] most people get problem.
> School B:
> Learner 10: Even though I want to improve my english sometimes I don't get things to read that are fun and relevant to me.

Motivated learners provided with resources that they can relate to help to lower affective filters which allows for language input and intake to take place.

On the other extreme, Ms Thandi (school B, Q2) argues that "learners that comes from well to do families, have all the resources needed for their subjects e.g. study guides. If given assignments or projects they have the accessibility to the information whereas the poor learners they struggle most of the time". While the affluent learners are able to provide all resources needed for school, the poor learners "don't have resources, because they use one exam pad for every subject. You can't ask for files - you can't ask for assignments" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q2) drawing accord with the sentiment expressed by learner 10 (school C, Q45) that "You may have insufficient resources to learn, e.g. Study guide..." This dichotomy of the haves and the have-nots (rich and poor learners) seems also to be a stumbling block to teachers' pacing their workloads as the rich learners are able to submit assignments timeously whereas the poorer learners are not able to produce this assignment due to lack of access to information and also lack of resources such as writing materials. This therefore retards the teaching and learning process to keep pace with what poorer learners are able to manage. Thus, poverty seems to be the cause and the effect of the problem which seems to cause tensions with teachers in terms of curriculum completion.

However, utterances such as "Here at school, I think that they do have the resources but they are not enough (Ms Thandi, school B, Q3); "the school itself lacks resources" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q4) and "We need more resources like textbooks" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q11) heralds the warning of Nascimento (2008). Nascimento (2008, p. 23) cautioned that without taking into account the endogenous determination of school resources, "serious methodological shortcomings arise" and "cast doubt on whether any conclusions can be drawn with confidence" and thus simply examining the correlations between level of resources and achievement may reach misleading conclusions whereby the numbers "will show better resourced schools performing worse". Another example of distorted interpretations of inter-relationships of resources on academic performance refers to the housing choices exerted by parents. Learners are generally assigned to neighbourhood schools, thus resulting in wealthier families having capacity of choosing good public schools for their children based on where they choose to live. This was raised by learner 2 (school A, Q45) who reported that "Because if I was rich I would have been in model school from my beginning". In this case some schools will perform better than other schools simply because `of the "proportion of wealthy students studying there – not because of better school resources" (Nascimento, 2008, p. 23).

Therefore, this problem potentially introduces inter-relationships between various other variables including, amongst others, absenteeism, that may also impact, either independently or interrelatedly, on the academic performance of learners.

5.5   ABSENTEEISM AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

The phenomenon of absenteeism amongst learners "is believed to have many social and academic consequences such as poorer academic development, and anti-social behaviour" (Abdul, 2010, p. 1) and increased school dropout rate (Kodippili, 2011, p. 2). Absenteeism has been defined as "failure of a pupil to attend school regularly" (Abdul, 2010, p. 3). It must be acknowledged further that aside from out of school factors, there is a growing body of opinion that "in-school" or "school-based" factors also play a vital role in the non-attendance of learners (Newmarch, 2000). These in-school factors may include curriculum overload, teacher attitudes toward slower learners, multi-racial and multi-cultural learning environments, lesson pace, or other factors. However, while it was not the focus of this study to look at the causes of absenteeism, it would have been short sighted not to as it adds to the understanding of its impact on English used as MoI and the academic performance of learners. Furthermore, this study aimed to test the veracity of Newmarch's (2000, p. 2) claims that low levels of literacy among indigenous learners prevented them from participating actively in academic activities which affected their attendance and success at school.

Evidence in this study, as discussed under "Interaction and language acquisition", supports the notion that lower levels of literacy prevent learners from participating fully in academic activities. While there seems to be close correlation between school attendance and competence in English and literacy skills, there appears to be no definitive evidence as to whether poor attendance is a cause of the problems experienced by learners or whether it is an effect of these problems (Newmarch, 2000). Findings in this study, essentially in question 5 of the interview schedule (unless otherwise stated), provide some insight into this dilemma when teachers were probed on the impact they perceived absenteeism had on African learners acquiring/improving their skills in English. With the exception of one, all other teachers were unanimous that absenteeism had a negative impact on learners' academic performance. This shows a high degree of resonance with other studies where "higher attendance is related to

higher achievement for students of all backgrounds (Kodippili, 2011, p. 2). Teachers' reasoning was varied and therefore deserves close examination to decipher whether absenteeism is the cause of or is the consequence of poor academic performance. Mrs White (school C, Q5), being the exception, claimed that learners' absenteeism had "no impact" on them acquiring or improving their skills in English simply because learners "do not speak English at school except in English lessons". When Mrs White (school C, Q5) was probed for a better understanding of her response, she replied:

> Well even if they are at school they do not speak in English – so them being absent they do not miss any opportunities for improving their communication skills in English as they always speak in isiZulu.

This response must be understood in the broader context of this school, where African learners constitute 100 % of learner population, speaking predominantly isiZulu. Given that there were no target language speakers (English) within the learner population, language preference for communication was isiZulu, as pointed out by Mrs White and others. While the opinion expressed by Mrs White may seem naïve, it is an opinion that should not be discounted as it is a reality that teachers experience and subliminally ushers in teacher frustrations about the tensions between indigenous languages, as lingua franca verses English as MoI. Furthermore, closer analysis of Mrs White's utterance suggests that most knowledge subject lessons, with the exception of English as a subject, are probably being facilitated in isiZulu, which finds accord with Mgqwashu's (2009, p. 298) experiences that "we would get to know the story through the teacher's isiZulu narration".

However, a diametrically opposed view is held by other teachers who are of the opinion that learners forgo opportunities for language skills acquisition through interaction because of absenteeism. Teachers expressed the following sentiments:

> School C
> Mrs Suresh: Absenteeism impacts negatively on all learning areas, which are being taught and since the MoI is English, the learner is obviously disadvantaged when absent.
> Mr Pravesh: This has a far reaching impact. Learners generally have poor retention skills and being absent for long periods and frequently affects language skills. While at home learners do not speak/read English. This affects ability to communicate in English.
> School B
> Ms Thandi: They end up being passive in class because they lack knowledge

and they are not on par with other learners.
Mrs Singh: When they are absent they lose opportunities of improving their skills in English.
School A
Ms Fikile: Ja it will have a negative impact as it become hard for them to catch up with what has been covered in class and they don't even get to be exposed to new innovative ways which might help them improve their skills in English.

The above excerpts highlight two salient points. One is that learners lose the opportunity to interact with other learners in the target language thus reducing their opportunities for intake. Concomitant with such loss is the opportunistic encroachment of indigenous language into times when the learners should be interacting in the target language, as when learners are "at home learners do not speak/read English" (Mr Pravesh, school C). Secondly, the long and frequent periods of absence means that these learners' competences in the target language together with "poor retention skills" (Mr Pravesh, school C) become victim to indigenous languages thus making them lag behind other learners. This contributes to their silence in class as "learners have difficulty in expressing themselves in English. (Mr Pravesh and Mrs White, school C, Q9) thus "preventing them from participating fully in academic activities" (Newmarch, 2000).

What is more, "Absenteeism results in reduced contact time with teachers – thereby causing learners to miss out on important schoolwork" (Mrs Singh, school B) leading to learners "being passive in class" because they "miss most of the things" (Ms Thandi, school B). Aside from losing contact time, learners are also losing opportunities for interaction and clarification. Furthermore, over and above the loss of subject knowledge, learners also miss opportunities for correct usage of words as "during lessons learners are exposed to English terminology and correct usage of words" (Mrs Singh, school B). Learners therefore "miss out on basics, methodology, interpretation," (Mr Rajesh, school A) and learners "don't even get to be exposed to new innovative ways which might help them improve their skills in English" (Ms Fikile, school A). This implies that when new terminologies are being introduced at appropriate and specific times within a topic, these terms are defined and their usage explained by way of examples. Those that are absent, however lose this opportunity which explains Mr Rajesh's (school A, Q9) concern about learners from "a very senior class who didn't know the difference between quantities and amount. Because they didn't know the

meaning of it". It is presumed that because these learners absent themselves so frequently, while they may learn the word and can use the word, "they don't know in what context to use the word" (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q9). When teachers attempt to correct learners it was found that "correcting them too often can lead to them recoiling and not wanting to contribute to your lessons in class" (Mrs White, school C, Q9). This implies that because learners would have missed out on opportunities to improve their proficiency because of absenteeism, any interventions to "fast-track" their improvement in proficiency results in learners withdrawing as they become embarrassed. In this case, it appears that absenteeism is both the cause of and the consequence of the problem. It would also appear that no matter what innovative strategies that teachers may engage in, in order to teach concepts it would be inane as the very learners that need such strategies are absent. According to teachers "When they stay away from school, they miss out on large chunks of work" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q5) meaning that "They miss out on syllabus completion" (Mrs Saraja, school A). When learners do return to school, "They are behind on most of the things" (Mr Lionel, school B) and "Their work is therefore incomplete" (Mr Pravesh, school C). Learners therefore "cannot cope with work" consequently "Learners lose focus" (Mr Pravesh, school C). Exacerbating the situation is the difficulty learners' face playing "catch up while still battling to grasp previous concepts" (Mr Lionel, school B). This therefore means that "Lots of important info is lost" (Mr Lionel, school B). However, teachers find it very difficult to mediate this situation of curriculum completion, on the one hand and assisting the learners who lag behind because of absence, on the other. Teachers therefore find that "it is difficult to have a catch up programme" (Mrs Saraja, school A) or "may not even have time to go back to what has already been covered due to the lack of time, limited time available" (Ms Fikile, school A). Given that there are no catch up programmes, learners find that "The work piles up for them … and they are in a rush to catch up with the rest of class" (Ms Fikile, school A). Learners, who lag behind and who are without notes, find "it difficult for them to refer back to what's been done earlier" and therefore resort to "copying work from others without understanding clearly the content of the subject" (Ms Fikile, school A). According to Ms Fikile (school A) this strategy is moot as "the problems they might have will not be attended" to. Mr Rajesh (school A, Q9) echoed similar sentiment but added his concern that some learners "can't copy the exact sentence that you write on the board". He offered evidence that what learners copied

was very different from that which was written on the board. It is therefore implied that learners who copy notes without understanding from other learners, do so perilously.

While not suggesting that absenteeism should be condoned, without knowledge of the reasons for learner absenteeism, it would appear that learners merely abscond or play truancy. While this may not necessarily be untrue, closer examination of information presented in this study reveal that "Most stay away due to no bus fare, gone to the farm, etc" (Mrs Saraja, school A). It was also pointed out that "Some of them walk long distances, from home to school, because parents don't have money for the transport" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q2). In rural areas, where families are steeped "in the norms and standards of their culture, girls, before they go to school, need to fetch water from the river, water port and fetch wood for the fire. By the time they reach school they are tired" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q1). This explains the observational data on late arrivals of learners at schools in the mornings. Learners who arrive after the closure of the school gates (which is approximately 07:45) are not allowed into the school unless they return with their parent(s) either later in the day or the next day, contributing to absenteeism. While the school attempts to inculcate punctuality in learners, many days are lost to the learner as they are not allowed into the school on the days which they are late. At times, it was observed that the buses arrived late which was beyond the control of the learners; but learners were still not allowed into the school. Of great concern is the plight of learners who are "also stressed about your homes problems" (Learners 18 and 19, school C, Q45).

The last reason offered for late attendance of learners concerns boys coming from homesteads that have livestock who "start their schooling very late because they need to be the shepherds, take care of the livestock" (Ms Thandi, school B, Q1).

From the previous paragraph, it becomes clear that most learners absent themselves due to circumstances beyond their control which include lack of bus fares, long distances to walk, household chores, coming from child-headed households and taking responsibilities for the home problems. Schools, while building character in learners in terms of punctuality, do so at the expense of teaching and learning time. Learners have acclimatized themselves in not attending school if they perceive that they are going to

be late and this becomes a vicious cycle of absenteeism leading to loss of teaching and learning time and probably increased drop-out rate.

5.6   CONCLUSION

Chapter four presented various factors within the formal environment that affected the way in which language acquisition/learning is either constrained or facilitated. Chapter five reported on factors from the informal environment. Findings revealed the level of input, levels of anxiety, various types of motivation, including integrative and instrumental motivation, positive environments such as the home, level of family qualifications, resources and absenteeism can help processes of language acquisition progress. While language acquisition is ultimately completed and stored in the brain, emotional and environmental factors greatly affect the process by which it is acquired. Because these factors and many others all interact in the acquisition of language, it is incredibly difficult to research the effect of one specific aspect. Many studies have ignored this fact and have tried to attribute too much weight to one factor while others have undoubtedly affected those outcomes. While that may be true, it would appear that the CPH needs further investigation as it seems to be the basis of the various challenges faced by learners and teachers alike. Therefore Chapters four and five presented analysis and interpretation of data from different perspectives, using different instruments that, it is hoped, increased validity of the study. This therefore provides the trajectory for Chapter 6 where emerging issues and recommendation can be proffered based on the findings as presented in Chapter four and Chapter five in this research and from findings and recommendations of other similar studies. Chapter six therefore puts forward recommendations that will mitigate the challenges faced by both learners and teachers in achieving academic performance

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The stance undertaken in this study adopted a more holistic approach to English as MoI as it is acknowledged that as a language, English impacts on academic performance of learners while simultaneously being impacted upon by various periphery issues which might negate its efficacy as MoI. This approach therefore provided the researcher with the latitude to probe issues around language policy and choices, interactions in classroom, on school grounds, in communities and in learners' home, and, finally, the issue of resources. Given that language is fundamental to the learning process, this study posed various questions about learners' and teachers' views on the effect of the MoI on learners' academic performance, thus necessitating an ethnographic inquiry into the learners' world.

Thus it was appropriate to ask the questions "What are the learners' attitudes and opinions on the use of English as MoI?" and "What impact do learners feel English has on the academic performance of learners when used as MoI?" These questions provided an avenue to investigate various environments which might impact on the learners' academic performance while using English as MoI. Given that indigenous languages have been subjected to decades of marginalisation, learner attitudinal questions on the reciprocity of English as MoI and indigenous traditions and customs were considered appropriate. Coupled with this, it was considered advisable to probe learner attitude on the impact of English on the status of indigenous language, as this has reference to additive or subtractive bilingualism, which ultimately affects learners' and parents' attitudes on use of SL. This chapter provides a recapitulation and reflection on the findings of this study within the key questions as captured in Chapter 1.

6.2   LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this study are acknowledged. While investigating the impact of English as MoI on the academic performance of ESL with a view to devising strategies for improvement, it does not provide all the solutions. While the research was not necessarily desirous of generalisability of its findings due to its idiosyncratic nature, it is thought that its findings, though limited by empirical parameters of the study, will have wider resonance and applicability for further studies (Silverman, 2000, p. 103). Inherent in the acknowledgment of the limitations of this study are additional concerns that provide fertile grounds for further research.

6.3   KEY CONCLUSIONS

This study was premised on the assumption that it was not so much the language chosen as MoI that has had a negative impact on the academic performance but rather the periphery issues that impacted on the efficacy of usage of such language. This was appropriately captured by learner 9 (school B, Q13) who wrote "I am sure if I used Xhosa I would get the same marks that I am getting now". Thus it is the conclusion of this study that it is not so much English used as MoI which had a negative impact on the academic performance of ESL learners, but rather the lack of proficiency in the target language. If one was to attribute the lack of proficiency in English to a critical factor, it would be, in the opinion of this study, the "Critical Period Hypothesis" (CPH) during which period learners are deprived of SLA as primary school teachers do not use English as MoI during class lessons despite it being the chosen MoI.

6.4   A SUMMARY OF AND REFLECTIONS ON FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggestions and recommendations proffered have been inter-woven with various theories and findings of other similar studies presented in Chapter 2 to provide a more holistic approach to the challenges faced by ESL learners. However, one must be cautioned that, within the South African context, acquisition of the SL is not confined to communicative skills only, but proficiency in such target language is also, if not more importantly, vital for CALP if it has been chosen to be used as MoI, in other words, for academic discourses.

A summary of the responses to questions 1 and 2 of this study will now be presented. These questions were:

(1) How does English, as a medium of instruction, affect academic performance from the point of view of the following stakeholders: learners and teachers?

(2) What do answers to the above suggest about ways of improving ESL performance while still using English as a medium of instruction?

While the findings of this research have identified various factors that impact on the efficacy of English used as MoI, the following remain within the realm of this research: language policy (LiEP) and choice, teacher competence, code-switching, language vocabulary, learning environments, poverty and resources. These factors, together with recommendations are outlined.

6.4.1   Language policy and choice

This study has found that, given the choice between English and isiZulu as MoI, most, if not all learners and parents in KwaZulu-Natal have opted for English. Whether this choice, in retrospect, and upon reflection of the poor academic performance of ESL learners, can be justified leaves room for robust debate. However, reasons proffered by respondents in this study justify such a choice, and, in conjunction with other studies (Villegas, 2000), it remains the opinion of this study that the choice of English as MoI is the correct one and should continue to be so. This must be seen from a global perspective, as Mr Lionel (school B, Q12) pointed out: English is the language of commerce and industry and that is "just how the world communicates". Mr Rajesh (school A, Q12) argued that, if we are not going to use an international lingua franca such as English, "we can't be an international city of Durban" However, the choice of the MoI should not be seen in isolation of other systemic issues in terms of LiEP, teacher competence, resources, and so on. These factors form a holistic picture and we should therefore adopt a more integrated approach. Thus it became necessary to look at the extent to which such language choices, if they do, continue to marginalise indigenous languages.

Respondents in this study have implicitly revealed their perception that indigenous languages enjoy "low" status against the "high" status of English. According to Herriman and Burnaby (1996), the viability and stability of other languages are affected by explicit or implicit policies on the status of the official languages. Within the South African context most parents and learners chose English as MoI, but many teachers in primary schools, contradictorily, seem to use isiZulu. This explains why Mr Lionel, (school B, Q12) commenting on LiEP suggested that "I think that the structure that they have in place now – it's the best one that they've come up with thus far. It should be implemented properly". Thus, while LiEP exists to address the aspirations of its citizenry, there seems to be some resistance on the part of the teachers or a lack of will on the part of the Department of Education for the proper implementation of the policy to the letter of the law. Teachers in this study as with Meyer's (1998) study (in Mabiletja, 2008, p. 29), have implied that the lack of proper implementation of LiEP in the primary schools seem to be fundamental to the lack of proficiency in and retardation of SLA. Amuzu (1992) corroborated this arguing for a positive correlation between teachers' actual use of English in class and the academic performance of Black learners. In light of this, it is recommended that LiEP be implemented vigorously and monitored closely, i.e. that the chosen language for MoI is actually used during class time, which finds accord with the recommendation of Fayeye & Yemi (2009, p. 494), who argue that "language proficiency ultimately determines their [i.e. students] overall academic success".

However, should LiEP be implemented as it currently exists or should it be amended to more effectively articulate between acquisition of and proficiency in the SL while promoting status progression of indigenous languages to enjoy equivalence with the SL (i.e. isiZulu and English in KZN)? Such claims by teachers as:

> if you take the language itself – you can't teach the child in mother tongue err … isiZulu in Grades 1 2 and 3 when these are foundation phases (Mr Rajesh school A, Q4).

and

> If the child doesn't get a good background some learners find it difficult to pick up in upper grade (Mrs Thandi school B, Q14).

as well as those of others interviewed, repeatedly pointed to lack of language acquisition emanating from the primary schools. Closer examination of what teachers pointed out as lack of language competence coincides with the CPH. If one subscribes to the CPH, as is the case of this study, and it implores one to consider amendments to LiEP as being vital for any substantial improvement in academic performance of ESL learners. It is against this backdrop, and acknowledging Butler (2008, p. 2) that the window of opportunity for learning a SL is between birth and 10 years, that it is recommended that LiEP be amended to now reflect that English should be chosen and used as MoI from the very first grade that learners enter formal schooling. This is a deviation from the current policy whereby learners are taught in mother tongue in the Foundation phase (i.e. grades R to grade 3). This would be a radical shift in the policy but it must be emphasised that, while the MoI should be changed to English, indigenous languages must be offered as an examinable subject to ensure longevity and promotion of indigenous languages. This provides a partial solution for the dilemma of Brock-Utne (2005, p. 549) who agonized over mastery of a world language being preceded first by development of indigenous languages or the use of the world language as MoI from as early as possible.

Policy changes are therefore necessary not only in the Foundation phase but should rather permeate the entire schooling system. It is therefore recommended that English as the chosen MoI must be studied as an examinable First Additional Language (FAL) subject by all learners and additionally be offered as a non-examinable (but assessment) course by non-proficient English learners for communicative purposes only. Learners who are proficient in English may be offered one of the indigenous languages as a course for communicative purposes. This translates into the less-proficient learners in English being provided with three opportunities to improve proficiency and performance in the target language: the first being the use of English as MoI in all subjects; the second being the study of English as an examinable subject; and the third being the study of English as a non-examinable communicative skills subject. While this takes care of developing competence and performance in the target language, such policy must simultaneously promote the development and use of indigenous languages as examinable subjects. This can be achieved, as is currently contained in the LiEP where learners must also be offered at least one other (maximum two) language(s) as examinable subjects at second additional language level. Furthermore, learners who

enjoy sufficient competence in English to be able function at the CALP level should be offered an indigenous language for communicative purposes as a non-examinable but assessed subject. This presents opportunities for the citizenry to become proficient in indigenous languages at least at BICS level. These changes should provide greater opportunities to proficient English speakers to hone their skills in an indigenous language while allowing less-proficient English speakers to develop their skills in English. This strategy will also allow for learners studying communicative skills in English and other indigenous languages greater opportunities for interaction among learners as envisaged by McCarthy's three I's (1998) and Naicker and Balfour's (2009, p. 340) Classroom Talk Programme. The possible interaction will also assist to assuage the concerns of learner 5 (school A, Q3) who finds that because of communicative challenges "Indian stand alone and black stand alone". This process may assist these learners to become surrogate teachers at least at BICS level, which forms the springboard to develop CALP. However, effective policy implementation is contingent upon teacher competence.

6.4.2   Teacher competence

While teacher competence was not the focus of this study, the various incidental evidentiary data gathered suggested the need to investigate this factor. This was necessary, as it emerged that teachers are either unaware of LiEP as a policy or remain naïve on the implications of non-compliance. This was confirmed by Mrs Thandi (school B, Q4), who reported that there is "Lack of knowledge from the teachers' side", which was also corroborated by Govender (2011). Therefore teachers must be fully orientated on the LiEP document, and in addition, especially in the primary school, must be fully orientated on the CPH. This strategy will provide opportunities for immediate intervention for the current cohort of learners and teachers while also providing for transitional/transformational systemic improvements and changes in the future.

Secondly, policy implementation must be preceded or followed by proper orientation and capacity building in English communicative skills, as teachers seems to lack the necessary competence to teach in English. It was discovered incidentally in this study that "schools didn't have teachers that were equipped to teach English" (Mr Lionel,

school B, Q1) and is corroborated through the empirical findings of Govender (2011) and Ngubane (2005, p. 2) who found that most teachers are not proficient in English as they lack English vocabulary. Most content subject teachers therefore use the learners' home language in teaching their subjects.

However, content subject teachers in this study have attempted to legitimize the abdication of their role as mediators of language acquisition by claiming that, due to time constraints, it is not their responsibility. The sentiments of teachers were succinctly captured by Mrs White (school C, Q13) who said: "We are supposed to teach the subject and not the language as there is simply no time for such intervention". The reality however, is that facilitating language acquisition/learning, especially one that is used as MoI, is the responsibility of every teacher, justifiably so as it is now axiomatic that construction of meaning is mediated through language. What is questionable, though, is the extent to which content subject teachers can be held accountable for the acquisition of the SL. It can therefore be surmised that it remains the primary responsibility of language teachers to provide and lay a firm foundation for learners to acquire/learn the language chosen as MoI and for subject teachers to ensure that learners learn through the MoI. It is on this platform that content subject teachers, using multi-literacies, can incrementally scaffold acquisition of contextualized subject specific concepts while using English as the meta-language. Teachers must therefore be provided with the capacity to teach in bicultural environments and the ability to create "situations or real communication focusing on the student's interests" (Schütz, 2010, p. 5). Developing such competences among content subject teachers requires that teachers be provided with additional capacity in engaging in Content Based Language Learning and Teaching (COBALLT). This is a strategy whereby subject teachers are taught how to infuse the teaching of language through their content subject lessons. Furthermore, teachers must understand the psycholinguistics of language learning so as to be patient with the kind of student code-switching which facilities children's internalization of understanding.

6.4.3   Code-switching

While it is acknowledged that code-switching between a common mother-tongue and English facilitates understanding (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009), most teachers

and learners in this study have identified that excessive use of code-switching, especially in the higher grades, is counterproductive to SLA. This, they argued, tends to favour "the clever learners" while it remains beyond the comprehension of the slower learners (Mrs Thandi, school B, Q3). It has been established that the practice of teachers switching languages during instruction does not assist language acquisition. Furthermore, it has been argued that some learners become dependent and expect other teachers to also code-switch. It has been established that this dependency has a negative impact during examination period when learners have to write their examinations in English. In subscribing to the notion that code-switching between English and indigenous languages is necessitated as a result of the deficiency hypothesis (Skiba, 1997), challenges are raised from two perspectives. The first challenge is identifying the point at which code-switching becomes necessary; given the tensions between the ESL learners' apparent lack of proficiency in the MoI and the curriculum specific vocabulary load requirements. Once one has identified the appropriate point at which code-switching becomes necessary, this ushers in the second challenge, namely that code-switching is not possible due to the lack of necessary lexicons and registers of the indigenous languages for academic discourses (i.e. at CALP level code-switching becomes difficult). Thus, inasmuch as it is argued that code-switching by children facilitates internalization of understanding, its efficacy remains limited at BICS level. The most irrefutable reason, therefore, it would appear, is that code-switching is not possible because there are no equivalent Zulu words for highly specific subject terminologies taught in English (Mrs Mhlongo, observation school C; Ms Fikile, observation school A) which was also reported by Mchazime (2001, p. 233) and Zungu (1998). However, one cannot totally discontinue the use of code-switching as teachers share the notion that code-switching should have an inverse relationship to learner grade progression, i.e. as the learner progresses into higher grades, use of code-switching should be minimized. This is because code-switching is seen to be "like a crutch but a learner can't keep walking with a crutch" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q3). Thus, code-switching is more appropriately used in the primary school level, as indigenous words generally remain within the realm of concepts as opposed to constructs taking on more subject specific abstract meanings in high schools. Furthermore, as lexicons and registers in indigenous languages are developed and graduated for academic discourses, code switching at higher levels may become appropriate, as it was pointed out by Owens (1988) that, once two languages are learned, then code switching ensures that

both are used. However, drawing from the conclusions arrived at by Sookrajh and Joshua (2009, p. 330), namely that teachers had not been trained to teach bilingually; code switching will again pose another challenge. This was also corroborated in this study, where it was established that many teachers had no knowledge of isiZulu and therefore could not translate, or that their proficiency in isiZulu was so limited that they certainly could not teach Mathematics in isiZulu. Furthermore there are schools that "didn't have teachers that were equipped to teach English" (Mr Lionel school B, Q1), thus code-switching from isiZulu to English poses a challenge in this respect as well.

Similar findings run throughout Govender's (2011) study, confirming that the lack of teacher competence has a negative impact on the academic performance of the learners. Thus, the intervention required for the development of teachers is acquisition and development of language skills. For appropriate levels of code-switching to occur, appropriate language registers and lexicons should and must be developed in the indigenous languages. In the interim, learners must be encouraged to use existing English-isiZulu dictionaries as an additional resource to aid in understanding constructs. This was sadly not observed in the three schools where interviews and observations were conducted. As an additional means of facilitating language acquisition/learning, teachers should pre-emptively provide learners with a list of new/challenging words together with their meanings at the beginning of each new section to be taught. Learners should demonstrate their understanding and familiarity with such terms through construction of sentences expressing their contextual meanings. Once learners are forearmed with the meanings of these new words/constructs, teachers should help with the understanding of subject contents taught, and assist with the pace of the lessons and with vocabulary building. However, development of vocabulary in indigenous languages should not be done in isolation from literary works of indigenous languages. This should be developed in collaboration with the development of literary works in indigenous languages as it simultaneously develops contextual realities. In some instances teachers with requisite competence, code-switched between English and isiZulu and other teachers used the surrogate teacher option where "brighter" learners having good competence in both languages helped teach the slower learners. However, overall, it appears that code-switching, especially in the high schools, has limited application and should therefore not be used.

6.4.4 Vocabulary and resources

Claims made in this study that indigenous languages lacked the precision and specificity for academic discourses are also found in other studies (Makgalemele, 2005, p. 63; Mchazime, 2001, p. 233; Zungu, 1998, p. 44), attributable to the under development of indigenous languages at the CALP level. Therefore indigenous language cannot be used for academic discourses. Mrs Zulu (observation school C) attests to the notion that at CALP level, indigenous languages do not meet the criteria for academic discourses. While there may be some truth to this, it need not necessarily continue to remain so. Therefore, as recommended by Mahalalela and Heugh (in Wildsmith-Cromarty and Gordan, 2009, p. 366), the necessary lexicons and registers of the indigenous languages need to be developed through "creation of a modern scientific vocabulary in the various African languages" rather than borrowings from European languages (Wildsmith-Cromarty & Gordan, 2009, p. 362). However, development of the necessary lexicons and registers in the indigenous languages must not be seen to be mutually exclusive of resources such as novels, poems and short stories by indigenous authors. Curriculum developers must provide indigenous authors opportunities for the study of indigenous literary works as prescribed literature at schools. Such changes in the curriculum might well encourage keener penmanship among indigenous authors, while simultaneously addressing the issue of shortage of indigenous literary works, as claimed by Mabiletja (2008, p. 14). This approach must not be misconstrued to mean replacement of English with indigenous languages as the MoI; but rather the development of the indigenous language to enjoy equal status with and to facilitate better acquisition of English. The encouragement of indigenous authors should also include writings in the English language, as it appears that certain prescribed literary works like Shakespeare are not benefiting learners as they do not equip them with English for communicative purposes.

Encouragement of literary works in English by indigenous authors for academic discourses will assist in various ways. Firstly, these literary works factor in local contexts which make such resources relevant to the learners' environments, facilitating better understanding and acquisition of ESL. Secondly, this approach will help alleviate the current shortage of English materials/resources as claimed by teachers and learners in this study, which was also reported by Mabiletja (2008, p. 14). Thirdly, studying literary works of local authors might become motivational, with the authors serving as

role models to whom learners can relate. However, merely encouraging use of local literary works will not suffice, as it appears that the "school itself lacks resources" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q4), and libraries are often few, not within easy access, and lacking in an adequate supply of resources. It has been pointed out by Mr Lionel (school B, Q4) that:

> If a child has a wealth of resources to work with then he will be able to improve. So the school itself lacks resources. Children are sometimes not educated solely by sitting in the class and being dictated to but they learn by interacting with their environment and with different resources.

It is the responsibility of the local municipalities and the Department of Education to make provision jointly for sufficient supply of such resources. The researcher is also guarded about the potential biases due to the endogeneity of resources and the various mechanisms operating in their allocation. One must be warned that the endogenous determination of school resources is an endemic problem which "refers to the fact that educational resources are not randomly allocated into schools – the type, extent, level and continuity of resources available to the schools are a consequence of factors such as financing rules, school performance and parental choices" (Nascimento, 2008, p. 23). Thus, more involvement of local stakeholders, such as teachers, parents and publishers should be included in the decision making process in terms of resource allocations. However, one cannot assume that merely making resources available will necessarily translate into improved academic performance. Furthermore, there must be a concerted effort to empower learners on reading strategies such as reading for pleasure, easy reading without use of dictionaries, reading with understanding and reading for critical discourses. This was pointed out by Ms Fikile (school A, Q4), who stated that learners tend to "just read". Avid reading, it is hypothesised, is causally linked to improved writing skills, as pointed out by Mrs Saraja (school, A, Q4), who said that that learners who could read could "write beautifully". Although reading strategies have been shown to be unsuccessful, because of learners needing to be coerced and learners falling off to sleep, learning environments should continue to foster the culture of reading, especially within such formal environments. Reading can also be encouraged by having learning environments endowed with print media, which should be replaced regularly.

6.4.5   Learning environments

While it has been pointed out that learning environments should have print media available in the class, most of the classes visited during lesson observations appeared devoid of such print media. The rationale for such paucity of print media was not the focus of this study, however, and, this being so, it will suffice to state that print media should be made available in all classrooms, preferably being brought by learners, which will provide them with additional opportunities for reading.   These learning environments can facilitate learning in various other ways.   These include the encouragement of what Naicker and Balfour (2009, p. 340) called the "Classroom Talk Programme".   Although sweeping generalizations, such as "talking equals learning", and forcing students to participate when they are not ready should be avoided, it is undeniable that participation is very important in language learning.   When students produce the language that they are studying, they are testing out the hypothesis which they have formed about the language. Such activity encourages learners to raise queries and give comments, which entails being actively involved in negotiation of comprehensible input and production of comprehensible output (Tsui, 1996, p. 146). However, during classroom and ground observations, it was noted that English was used for communicative purposes only where learners from different race groups (Indians and African) interacted.   On the other hand, despite encouragements from teachers, when only African learners congregated, isiZulu was the lingua franca, thus losing opportunities for SL language acquisition and learning.   The gravity of the situation was most succinctly captured by Mrs White (school C, Q5) who stated that, when learners absent themselves it had no impact on their academic performance, because learners did not use English except during English lessons.   Thus, it is recommended that further integration of learners and staff from different race groups should be encouraged.   However, cognisance must be taken of the racially based, apartheid era geographical separation of residences which has had a negative impact on social integration at school level.   This therefore means that the responsibility of language acquisition/learning relies heavily on the teachers' competence and persistence/insistence on the use of English for BICS and CALP in classroom.   The teachers must therefore, lead by example.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that a strong home foundation operates as support in learning a SL, thus making the learning process easier and faster. Paradoxically, acquisition of and proficiency in a SL are contingent upon choices made by and active involvement of parents; yet it is the community's low levels of literacy (Mrs Thandi, school B, Q1) and their cultural and traditional practices and beliefs which seem to have a negative impact on effective implementation of such choices.

It has been shown that communities steeped in indigenous cultural and traditional practices displayed a certain degree of aversion towards English, to the extent that the use of English is prohibited within homes and consequently within the greater community. This was exemplified by learner 5 (school C, Q11), who reported that "my parents they do understand english. With their traditional belive [belief] they don't allow me to use english …they say you don't have respect your culture". This corroborates Bharuthram's findings that learners who come from disadvantaged backgrounds enjoyed minimal or no family support (2006, p. 264). The lack of support can arguably be attributable to the low levels of family literacies as family members cannot see that in acquiring the SL one is able to "learn more about my culture and other traditions" (learner 6, school C, Q11) and "provide you/me different ways in understanding my culture" (learner 7, school B, Q11). Establishing the reasons for this cultural and traditional aversion to acquisition of the SL was beyond the scope of this study, but it does provide scope for further study, particularly in view of the role of family literacy, as discussed below.

According to Machet (in Bharuthram, 2006, p. 264) one of the most successful strategies for improving literacy in disadvantaged communicates is family literacy. Bharuthram (2006, p. 264) advocates that such programmes should contain culturally familiar and relevant content as it is argued that learners "bring with them culture specific literacy practices and ways of knowing". In spite of this, these interventions must not be conceived of as filling a vacuum but rather be augmentative of a multi-departmental approach involving Adult Education and Training (AET), Department of Education, Department of Labour (for job creation for sustainability) and other relevant stakeholders. This study, together with corroboratory evidence from other studies, has shown a positive correlation between educational qualification of family members and the academic performance of learners. Therefore family literacy programmes, if

properly funded and sustained, will serve an essential component in the child's learning as they would lead to greater and earlier parental involvement, which would facilitate the development of BICS to CALP (Bharuthram, 2006, p. 265).

6.4.6   Poverty

Apart from the family and community, poverty plays a vital role in facilitating learning. It has been established that the socio-economic environment of learners is directly correlated with the academic performance of learners. It has been found that more than 50 % of children from poverty stricken communities had spoken language skills significantly delayed for their age and that this had an impact on the children's literacy achievement (Parscoe, Stackhouse & Wells, 2006, p. 6). Symptomatic of this is the fatigue that learners experience as a result of walking long distances "from home to school, because parents don't have money for the transport" (Mrs Thandi, school B, Q2), resulting in "learners falling asleep" (Mrs Singh, school B, Q10). Furthermore, it was reported that "on the days on which they don't have bus fare, they don't come to school," (Mr Rajesh, school A, Q2), thus increasing absenteeism which has a negative impact on learners' academic performance. Evidence from this study also showed that even foster children, whose foster parents receive grants, do not have sufficient funds for transport as "Monies go to the parents and therefore they don't have access to the monies for what they require for school" (Mrs Saraja, school A, Q2). From this it can be established that merely providing funding for parents does not necessarily translate into improved conditions for learners.   Instead, the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Transport, should provide free transport to and from school for such learners.

Secondly, learners' daily domestic chores such as fetching water from the river before leaving for school also results in them reporting late for school. It was also found that boys' education was also delayed because of their added chores of having to being shepherds having to take care of the livestock. Thirdly, it has been established that learners coming to school with no food are hungry, which has a negative impact on their academic performance, as learners experience difficulty in concentrating and remaining focussed in class, thus reducing the amount of time they actually spend on learning. This can be seen to have a negative impact on the learners' academic performance, no

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matter what the MoI. While schools provide some sustenance through their feeding schemes, this is not sufficient, as it does not cater for the "3 meals that a child needs for one day" (Mr Lionel, school B, Q2). Again, although schools attempt to mitigate poverty, their ability to do so successfully is hampered both by finance and time. It would require an inter-departmental intervention to eradicate this problem. It is not about giving money to the unemployed, but rather giving employable citizens their dignity through sustainable job creation programmes which will enable them to earn a decent living.

Fourthly, many households are child-headed in the cases where parents are either deceased or are migrant labourers who are not able to provide the necessary support structures needed for a favourable educational environment. Again, other multi-stakeholder collaboration is required to assist with the scourge of poverty alleviation. Factors of poverty and out-of-school factors that have a negative impact on learner performance must be addressed, but schools cannot be expected to remedy the problems caused by poverty without assistance from the Government or the public outside the school.

6.4.7 Absenteeism

It has been shown that absenteeism does necessarily have a bearing on the academic performance of learners, as learners who absent themselves often are often found lagging behind other learners in terms of the notes that they have and their ability to contribute actively in classroom activities. While teachers have put forward various ways on how absenteeism might have a negative impact on the learners' academic achievements, at this point this study is unable to suggest any particular strategies or measures which might show any improvement in raising school attendance, probably because "the root causes of absenteeism have not yet been addressed fully (Abdul, 2010, p. 1). Abdul (2010) further argues that any curative measures must be reflective and precise as to the causes; otherwise any measures which are too generic to combat absenteeism will yield poor outcomes. "Therefore, it is suggested that before considering any measures for combating absenteeism, its underpinning causes among pupils from diverse ethnic backgrounds should be precisely identified" (Abdul, 2010, p. 1). However, observations in this study revealed that many learners, due to late coming,

are turned away from school and are expected to return only if they are accompanied by their parents. This practice contributes to absenteeism because of late-coming and is further exacerbated by requests for learners to return only if accompanied by parents, which often proves difficult because of parents' commitments. Thus learners do not return, and this translates into prolonged periods of absences. It is therefore suggested that learners who arrive late are allowed into school to continue with the day's academic work – thus reducing the total loss of teaching time. An alternative is to consider changing school times to accommodate late arrivals. While this may seem impractical, the benefits in the long term could prove substantial and impact positively on learners' academic performance.

The above factors provided some explanation in answering questions 1 and 2 of this study, as well as suggesting recommendations. The information presented in tables 6.1 and 6.2 is an attempt to answer questions 3 and 4 of the key questions in this study, namely:

(3) What are teachers' perceptions on the relationship between the learners' environment and learner performance?

(4) What are learners' perceptions on the relationship between their environment and performance?

From the summaries contained in tables 6.1 and 6.2, it can be established that there exists a dichotomous relationship between the school and community, and teaching and learning, arbitrarily junctioned at language. It appears that parents and learners seem to hold the view that the schooling environment and the community are mutually exclusive entities in the pursuit of educational excellence. Furthermore, teachers and learners seem to view the processes of teaching and learning to be mutually exclusive, as teachers believe that it is the teachers' responsibility to teach while it is the learners' responsibility to learn. For any fundamental development and improvement in the academic performance of ESL learners, there should be a seamless transition from community to school, and teaching and learning, articulated through language. For this to happen, it is recommended that parents and learners must view the schooling system and communities to be extensions of each other, both promoting and complimenting each other. Communities must therefore not view schools as places where

marginalization of indigenous languages is entrenched, but rather as vehicles for the democratization of languages and for the economic liberation of the nation.

Table 6.1   Variables in the formal environment

Teachers' perceptions	Variables affecting English as MoI	Learners' perceptions
Teacher initiate various strategies for 2nd language acquisition	**CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**	Learners manifest resistance/acceptance
Teachers encouraged learners to read because of its causality to improved proficiency in language acquisition &academic performance	**Reading and language acquisition**	Most learners do not read. Learners have complained that there is a dearth of relevant reading materials
There seems to be resistance from teachers or lack of will on the part of Department of Education for effective implementation of LiEP. Thus, primary school teachers use isiZulu to teach despite English being the MoI which causes language problems for higher grade teachers using English as MoI.	**Language choice and language acquisition**	Parent and learners rationalized and justified their choice of English as MOI – despite alternative indigenous language. Learners and parents seem to want the opportunities of English proficiency but are unwilling to avail themselves to opportunities of language acquisition.
Despite acknowledging its benefit, teachers discourage use of code-switching due to learner dependency. Also argue the lack of necessary lexicons and registers in indigenous languages	**Code-switching and language acquisition**	Learners, due to lack of proficiency of target language, want code-switching but acknowledge that it retards proficiency in target language
Teachers encourage learners to interact with other more proficient learners so that language acquisition/learning can take place	**Interaction and language acquisition**	Learners, due to various reasons, do not exploit opportunities to engage in conversations in target language – even at BICS level including discussions with teachers.
Teachers encourage learners to seek clarification in class if learners are in doubt.	**Clarification and language acquisition**	Learners, due to various reasons, do not exploit opportunities to engage in conversations in target language – even at BICS level. When communicating with teachers – mostly in their indigenous language
Teachers provide both written and verbal corrective feedback – mindful of over-correction	**Corrective feedback**	Learners, learn from mistakes, but more often, do not participate for fear of being laughed at – thus little correction takes place.
Lessons are taught in English for the following reasons: 1. It's the MOI 2. Most teachers do not know isiZulu 3. Indigenous languages lack lexicons/registers	**Anxiety and language acquisition**	Learners experience anxiety because they do not understand the language and are afraid to seek clarity. Learners get anxious when asked to speak in class.
School and teachers provide rules and encourage English usage	**THE SCHOOL GROUNDS**	Learners choose language that best suits their needs, most often being an indigenous language
Teachers have little or not control over this aspect. African teachers communicate with African learners in indigenous languages	**Identity and SLA**	Learners use language to identify with groups and to show solidarity. Some use language to include and other use language to exclude.
Teachers have little or not control over this aspect.	**Stigma**	Learners, for fear of being stigmatized, use indigenous language or risk being classed as coco-nuts.
Teachers encourage learners to use English to improve their proficiency to increase job opportunities	**Utility value of language**	Learners know the need for English proficiency to secure a better future, but circumstances sometimes prevent them from developing proficiency.

This will be possible where such forums as School Governing Bodies, community religious organisations and local ratepayers' associations, amongst other bodies, are capacitated. This must be done by the Department of Education in programmes focusing on language issues to enlighten communities of the mutual roles to be undertaken for the improvement of the learners' academic performance. Furthermore, teachers must be informed that, for effective teaching and learning to take place, teachers must plan, prepare and teach properly and ensure that learners are in fact learning. Learners, on the other hand, must ensure that they play their mutual role of learning and that it is within their right to demand that teachers teach and that this should be undertaken in the language chosen as the MoI. While this approach still appears to demonstrate a separate and demarcated approach to teaching and learning, it is envisaged that teachers must be seen to be part of the communities they serve and as such be the embodiment of the traditions and cultures of the communities. Communities, on the other hand, must be seen as governors of the schools, taking on a more active role in the schools' activities but not to presume to take over the professional duties of the teachers.

Table 6.2   **Variables in the informal environment**

Teachers' perceptions	Variables affecting English as MOI	Learners' perceptions
Teachers can only advise and give homework and assignments. No control over these	**THE COMMUNITY/ HOME ENVIRONMENT**	Learners are influenced by community identity and home requirements
Teachers have no control over this variable	**The home environment**	Parent qualifications and occupation are the greatest predictors of learner achievement. However, parents have very low education – which has a negative impact on learner performance
Teachers have no control over these issues but argue that it has a negative effect on learners' education.	**Culture and tradition**	Parents realize that language is the lien for culture and traditions, thus do not encourage use of English
Teachers can only motivate and encourage	**MOTIVATION AND POVERTY**	Learners are impacted by the differing levels of motivation and poverty
Teachers motivate the learners but exercise very little control over these variable. Some teachers can be discouraging through negative comments	**Motivation and language acquisition**	Learners are motivated mostly instrumentally. They see English as the passport to a better quality of life.
Teachers motivate the learners but exercise very little control over these variable	**Poverty and language acquisition**	Poverty has a negative impact due to lack of funds for various aspects of learner achievement.
Teachers provide worksheets which are highly contextualized	**RESOURCE AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**	Relevance of and access to resources poses a challenge to learners
School & teachers encourage learners to attend school regularly	**ABSENTEEISM AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**	Learners, due to various factors are not always able to attend school. This affects their performance negatively

6.4   CONCLUSION

It can be surmised that it is not so much English as a language which has a negative impact on the academic performance of learners but rather the environment. This was also echoed by Amuzu (1992), who concluded that the difference of learner's performance was not so much dictated by language per se but rather by the environment in which they found themselves. Complicating the issue is the complexity of the English language in terms of its lexicons and registers, when juxtaposed against indigenous languages which lack "the necessary lexicon and registers required for conceptual work across the academic disciplines" (Witwatersrand, 2003). This implies that they do not have the same degree of complexity of morphemes or that these languages do not enjoy the same degree of precision. However, it is precisely this level of complexity of English, which is not commensurate with language development among learners, and in some cases teachers, which poses a challenge. This complexity has had a negative impact on the efficacy of usage of the English language by both teachers and learners. The under-development of the indigenous language means that ESL learners' first language is not sufficiently developed to support scaffolded acquisition of the second language. It must also be noted that suggestions put forward must be cognisant of the current "low" status of indigenous languages against the "high" status of English and that "Any threat to or diminution of the language is a threat to the culture it encodes" (Herriman & Burnaby, 1996, p. 10), especially in multicultural societies where cultural resources need protection (Alexander, 1999, p. 4).

This thesis concludes with the following excerpt from Alexander (1999, p. 10) who states:

> Besides the intrinsic value of being proficient in a number of languages, it is obvious that in the post-colonial situation where lingua francas which cater for the whole nation either do not exist or where the former colonial language functions as such in restricted domains, knowledge of two or more national languages is a viable alternative and an essential practical strategy for the creation of national consensus and even of a sense of national unity.

1. BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY MODELS

Having grasped a better perspective on bilingualism, getting a fix on the socio-environmental factors or processes that play a facilitative role in bilingual proficiency is considered advisable. Six social process models that impact on bilingual proficiency, have been put forward showing how social factors motivate or prevent individuals learning languages (Harley, et. al, 1990, p. 138). These models are social, since learning a language involves both contact with the linguistics features of the target language and some contact with the cultural products of that language, including interpersonal relations with speakers of the target language group.

These models are concerned with individual factors such as linguistic and academic aptitude, predictors of language proficiency such as attitudes and orientations toward the target language and its speakers, motivational processes for learning and using the target language, formal and informal language learning context and outcome variables such as linguistic and non-linguistic communicative proficiency. Gardner cautions that, currently there are no supermodel to account for all that is known about bilingual proficiency but that each of the following six models contributes in its own way to a better understanding of bilingual proficiency (Harley, et. al, 1990, 130).
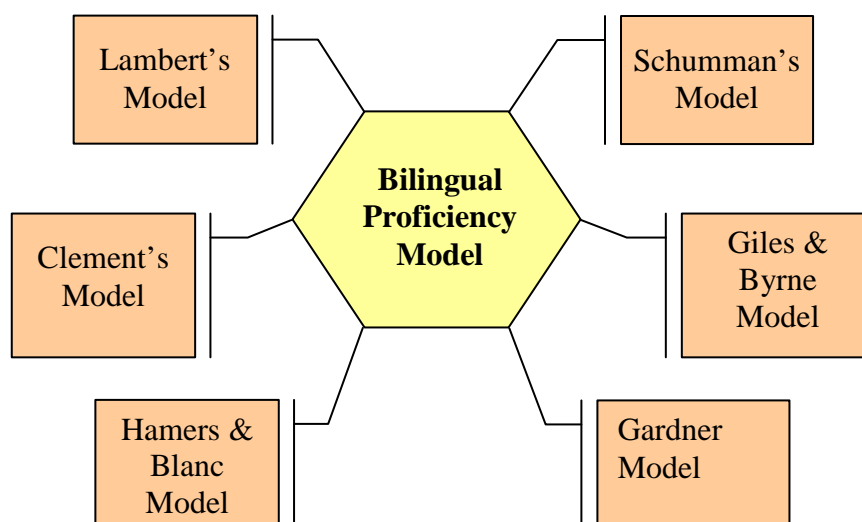
Fig. A1   Researcher's conceptual framework of bilingual proficiency model

1.1   Lambert's model

The basic point of Lambert's (1974) model is that the development of proficiency in a SL has important implications for an individual's self-identity since language often emerges as the most important aspect of group members' self identity (Harley et al., 1990). Herriman and Burnaby (1996, p. 10) posit that language has a peculiar role of not only "giving expression to the self" but also in an individual's participation and sharing in the community, social and ethnic group, therefore representing the individuals most powerful lien on the group. However, not one, but many languages can be used to indicate an urban or township identity of individuals (Slabbert and Finlayson 2000, pp. 120-125) and also identify with the many groups that live side by side (Nongogo, 2007, p. 25) in South Africa. If belonging to a group means sharing its culture, then language is a primary means by which the culture is assimilated whether the culture is an oral one or has access to written forms (Herriman & Burnaby, 1996).

Lambert's model, based on identity, is problematized by Blommaert's (2005, p. 214) definition of ethnolinguistic identity arguing that individuals identify themselves as belonging to a particular community or ethnic community through a particular language. The problem arises within the multilingual context of South Africa, where people speak languages of differing ethnic groups (Nongogo, 2007, p. 25). Nongogo, thus argues that "it is impractical to tie peoples' linguistic abilities to their ethnicity" and also argues against "the over-determined sense of linguistic fixity" (2007, p. 25).

Lambert distinguishes *attitudes* (attitudinal reactions concerning the ingroup and/or outgroup language and community), from *orientation*, which refers to reasons for learning the language that may be instrumental or integrative (for a fuller discussion see under Affective filter).   Both attitudes and orientation together influence the individual's level of motivation to learn the target language.   Aptitudes refer to cognitive abilities, including intelligence and language aptitudes. It is hypothesized that aptitudes, motivations and attitudes have a direct impact on language proficiency, which once developed to a high level, is shown to influence on self-identity, which impacts on additive or subtractive bilingualism.   Lambert's model is the basis of all the other models and is depicted in fig. A2.
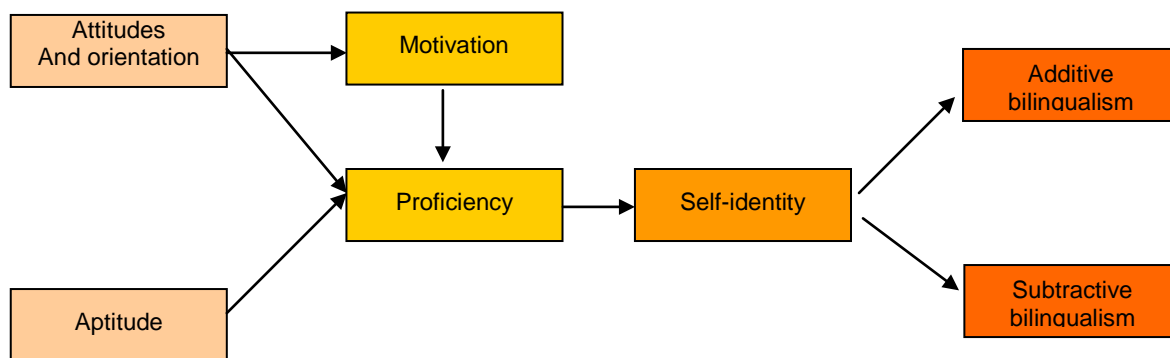
Fig. A2   **Lambert's model (1974)**
                     [Taken from Harley et al., (1990, p. 140)]

1.2   Schumann's model

Schumann's acculturation model is concerned mainly with SLA in "natural", noninstructional settings such as the street and the playground. Schumann's (Harley et al., 1990, p. 140) model proposes that the degree to which learners acculturate to the target language group will control the degree to which they acquire the SL. Gardner (in Harley et al., 1990) points out that Schumann's model could be adapted to SL learning situations that are both informal and formal such as classroom learning. This model alerts us to the importance of a broad range of social, affective, personality, cognitive and biological factors that could influence bilingual proficiency.

1.3   Clement's model

Clement's model focuses on motivations of the speakers to learn a language as well as the cultural milieu and relative group vitalities of the speakers involved in becoming bilingual (Harley et al., 1990, p. 141). This model, focusing on self-identity changes that occur as a result of learning a SL was designed to apply in cultural settings where one of the two language communities has a low level of ethnolinguistic vitality relative to the other. Ethnolinguistic vitality is described as group cohesion and its distinctive characteristics (Harley et al., 1990, p. 141). It is argued that the more vitality an ethnolinguistic group has, the more likely it will be to maintain its distinctive linguistic collectivity in multilingual settings. Conversely, it is argued that ethnolinguistic groups with little or no group vitality would eventually assimilate linguistically or cease to exist as distinctive groups. This seems to agree with Hall's (1992b) hybridity theory where it is argued in favour of how identity resists being fixed or rooted in a particular culture

because of a multiplicity of socio-cultural influences. Hall (1992(b), p. 258) argued that while we speak from particular experiences that inform our worlds, we cannot be fixed to that position.

The ethnolinguistic vitality of a group is assessed against a group's strengths and weaknesses aligned with three main domains, namely, demography, status and institutional support. This structural analysis of the relative strength of language communities has been found to be useful in the elaboration of bilingual proficiency. Within this model, a unicultural context is defined as a setting where one language community is clearly in the majority. Clements argues that primary motivational process is defined as "the net result of two opposing forces, integrativeness minus fear of assimilation" (Harley et al., 1990, p 141). Integrativeness refers to the desire to become an accepted member of the target group/outgroup culture (Harley et al., 1990, p. 141; Krashen, 1988, p. 22). Fear of assimilation refers to the fear that belonging to the target culture may result in the loss of the first language and culture. It is claimed that when the difference between these two forces is positive, the primary process reflects integrativeness and a high motivation to learn the target language results. However, when the difference is negative, the primary process reflects fear of assimilation and motivation to learn the target language is relatively low. Clement (in Harley et al., 1990) proposes that in multicultural contexts where the ethnolinguistic vitalities of the language communities are more equal find relatively high, factors such as self-confidence with the SL become more important in determining levels of bilingual proficiency. Different rates of bilingual proficiency could be expected based on the learner's wish to integrate and fear of assimilation systems. Different indigenous language groups, by virtue of their respective ethnolinguistic vitality, may vary in their beliefs concerning the desirability of gaining proficiency in the dominant language of the target majority.

1.4   Giles and Byrne model

The Giles and Byrne (1982) intergroup model of bilingual proficiency focuses specifically on the SLA of linguistic minority groups. The major construct in this framework is the self-concept, and the major motivating force is one of developing and maintaining a positive social identity (Harley et al., 1990, p. 142). Giles and Byrne (1982) propose that motivation is central to SLA and that the integrative motive is the

strongest form of motivation. This model also proposes that the acquisition of a SL requires some form of identification with the target language community. The model incorporates the notion that how minority group members perceive their own ethnolinguistic vitality can be as important as their actual group vitality. Giles and Byrne (in Harley et al., 1990, p. 143) propose that people will see themselves in ethnolinguistic terms and strive for positive psycholinguistic differentiation from outgroups when they:

- see themselves strongly as members of a group with language as an important dimension of its identity,
- regard their group's relative status as changeable,
- perceive their ingroup's ethnolinguistic vitality as high,
- perceive intergroup boundaries as hard,
- identify with few other social groups, and ones that offer unfavourable social comparisons.

According to this model, those for whom these five propositions hold true are identified as subgroup A and for those, for whom they are false, are referred to as subgroup B. It is proposed that subgroup A will demonstrate a fear of assimilation and will tend to be relatively unsuccessful at learning a SL. Such minority-group speakers will tend to avoid informal learning contexts and develop proficiency only on those skills specifically learned in the formal classroom context. In contrast, subgroup B would be integratively motivated; would seek informal learning contexts, and would be relatively successful in acquiring the language of the majority group.

1.5 The Hamers and Blanc model

An important feature of Hamers' and Blanc's (1982) model known as bilingual development model is that it analyzes the acquisition of bilingual proficiency from a social-development framework. Important elements within the model include the *relative value system* and *social networks* of language learners.

The model include the notion of perceived ethnolinguistic vitality, the stability of the functional and formal aspects of L1 and L2, and motivational process for learning and using L1 and L2 for different language functions (Harley et al., 1990, p. 144). As with

previous models, these sociostructural, social and motivational factors interact to affect the development of linguistic and communicative competence in the L1 and L2, especially in the child.

1.6   The Gardner model

Gleaning from Fig A3, it becomes evident that Gardner's model incorporates many of the features included in the other models. The major features of this model include the social milieu, individual differences, SLA contexts and linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning process. Gardner suggests that four individual differences, viz, intelligence, language aptitude, motivation and situational anxiety, will have a direct influence on bilingual proficiency (Harley et al., 1990, p. 145).
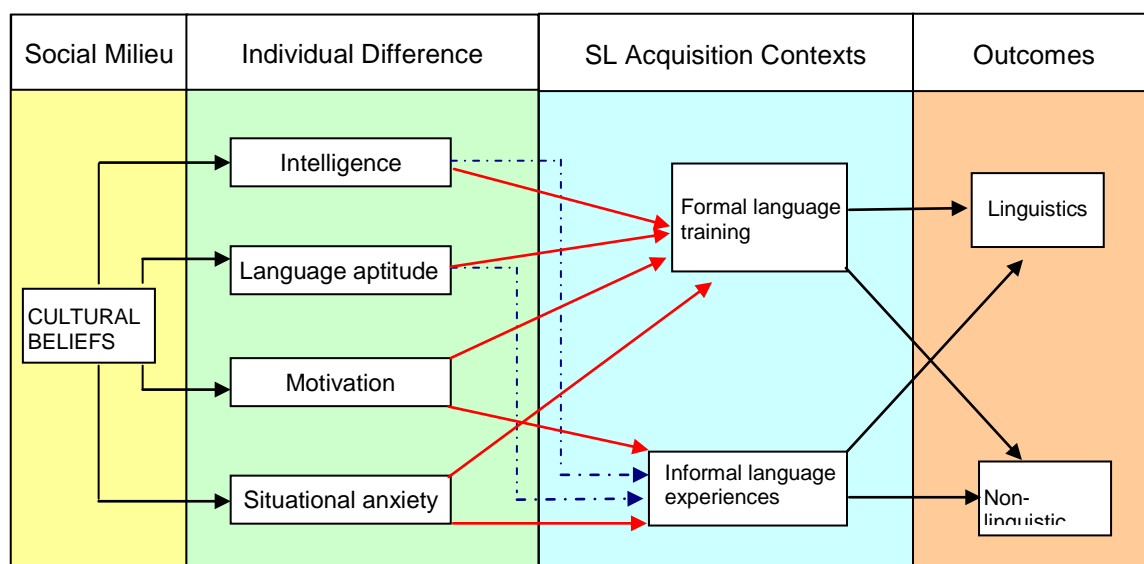
Fig. A3   **Gardner's (1983) socio-educational model of bilingual proficiency**
(From Harley et al., 1990, p. 144)

It is hypothesised that, depending on whether the learner has experienced formal language learning and/or informal language experiences, each of these individual factors will have an impact on the development of bilingual proficiency in linguistic and non-linguistic domains.

The formal and informal environments for SLA on and/or learning, while diametrically opposed, should be combined for optimal linguistic success. Artificial or formal environments, found for the most part in the classroom, provide feedback (error correction and/or error detection) for SLA/learning. Krashen and Seliger cited in Krashen (1988, p. 40), note that rule isolation and feedback do not seem to be present in

informal environments.   Krashen and Seliger argued that formal and informal environments make contributions to different aspects of SL competence (Krashen, 1988, p. 41). Arising from their survey, Krashen and Seliger consider the following two hypotheses:

- The informal environment can be efficiently utilized by the adult second language learner.
- Formal study, or its essential characteristics, is significantly more efficient than informal exposure in increasing second language proficiency in adults.

Upshur's (in Krashen, 1988, p. 41), research conclusion that "foreign language courses may at this time be less effective means for producing language learning than the use of language in other activities" has several implications for learning SLA/learning within contexts. It has been shown that there was a correlation with the amount of time spent in target language environment (with native speakers) and academic performance; and also the frequency of parental use of target language and academic scores of those students. It was reported that frequent parental use of the target language resulted in these learners scoring better academically than students who reported occasional use (Krashen, 1988). Of greater interest was the better academic performance of learners whose parents used target language occasionally as compared to students who fared poorly where their parents did not or could not speak the target language.   These findings are consistent with both hypotheses (Krashen, 1988, p. 43). It was established that when exposure was compared with formal instruction, more instruction correlated with higher proficiency but more exposure did not translate into more proficiency in ESL (Krashen, 1988, p 43).   These environments, coupled with the myriad of other variables, impacts heavily on the academic performance of ESL.

1.   THEORIES ON SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Three major theories, amongst others, have been identified in the continuum of SLA. Nativist theories are diametrically opposed to the Environmentalist theories, advancing mutually exclusive variables for SLA.   The third theory, Interactionist theory, draws on variables from both the Nativist and Environmentalist theories.
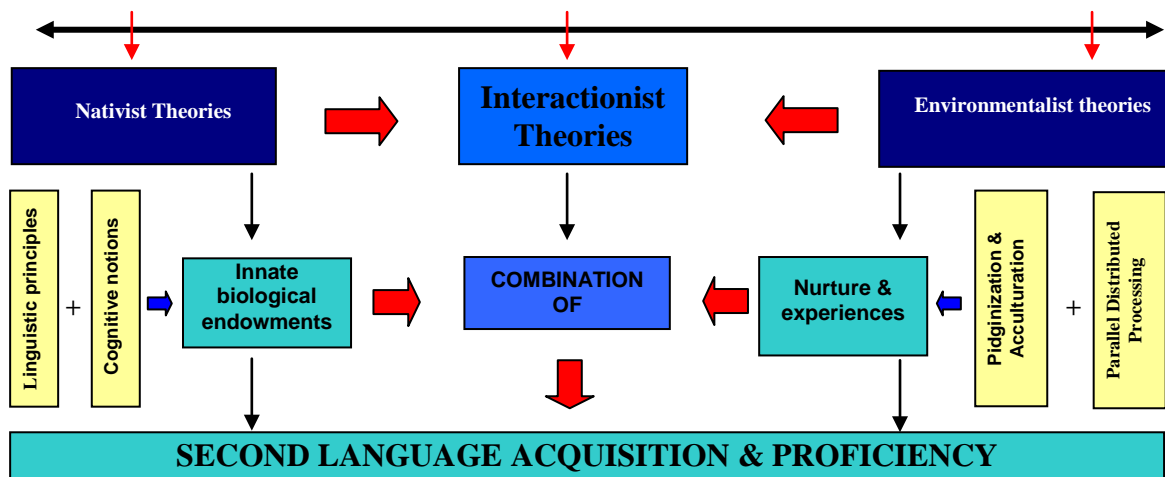
Fig. B1   **Researcher's conceptualization of theories on SLA**

A brief overview of Nativist, Environmentalist and Interactionist theories will be provided to show their influences on SLA.

Nativist theories on SLA, explains acquisition by arguing for ""'an innate biological endowment that makes learning possible" (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 227; Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 220). While these theories are valuable in their own right, it draws criticism against the concepts of vagueness of settings being triggered 'instantaneously', the assumption that certain syntactic principles are unlearnable, and therefore innate and the assumption that input available to learners is inadequate (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991).

Environmentalist theories hold that one's nurture are of importance to development than its nature or innate contributions. Saville-Troike (1989, p. 223) argues that the quantitative aspects of language use to which children are socialized i.e. "the taciturnity/loquacity dimension" is related to the linguistic environment. Innate

contributions do not play any role at all except to provide the internal structure which environmental forces can then shape (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 244). Aside from the stimulus-response and parallel distributed processing model, no pure environmentalist theories of language learning have been proffered in recent years, however many current theories fall into this category which explains acquisition by invoking learner external variables devoid of cognitive processing (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, pp. 256-257). This exclusion of linguistic and cognitive processing limits the theory's ability for successful explanations of SLA.

Augmentative of both nativists and environmentalists, it is argued that although language acquisition is generally a cognitive process (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 225) through which the child makes sense out of his world, it is undeniable that the child is also a social being and his learning of language both reflects and uses his social self (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991) taking place within the context of social interaction. Further, all components of a communicative event are potential input to children in their construction of meaning from language, "with the social identity of participants evidently the most salient" (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 225). Differential influences of family, peers, and formal education as well as the beliefs about nature of language and development that community holds must also be sought (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 221). Halliday's functional-interactional approach is consonant with this view claiming children learn the meaning of language because of the systematic relation between what they hear and what is going on around them (Saville-Troike, 1989, pp. 221-225). This invokes the notion that while the language-learning child is a cognitive activist, we cannot curtain the language-learning child who is increasingly seen as a social activist. This perspective that summons both innate and environmental factors to explain language learning is called the **Interactionist theory**. This research is essentially governed by the Interactionist theory which takes on a more causal-process form rather than the set-of-laws form, as they not only provide an interim explanation of the process being investigated, but also motivate and direct the research towards relevant data in order to provide new explanations for these phenomena (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). Within the Interactionist's theories**, Givon's Functional-Typological Theory** provides beacons for this research. The rationale for Givon's Functional-Typological Theory is that it "is a unified theory of all kinds of language change, including language acquisition" (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 267). Givon's approach, called the

"Functional-Typological Syntactic Analysis", views syntax as emanating "from properties of human discourse (Givon in Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 267) and has affinities with Halliday's (1975) treatment of language acquisition and its meaning potential through interaction across a variety of or register of language used (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 226); thus moving from a pragmatic mode of communication to a more syntactic mode. This is shared by Naicker and Balfour's CTP (2009) where learners' functional approach to language acquisition gravitates to a more syntactic mode for language acquisition and proficiency sharing the same language acquisition platform of Cummins' (1979) BICS and CALP phenomena.

Givon's typological phenomenon considers "a diverse body of languages, not simply a single language or language family" (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 267). This is particularly relevant within the South African context where 11 official languages emanating from different non-cognate family groups exist.

Having foregrounded this research within the area of SL theory, a detailed exposition of the different hypotheses will be presented. According to Krashen (1981), there exist five key hypotheses. Together with Halliday's (1975) Interaction Hypothesis about SLA, these are depicted diagrammatically as follows:
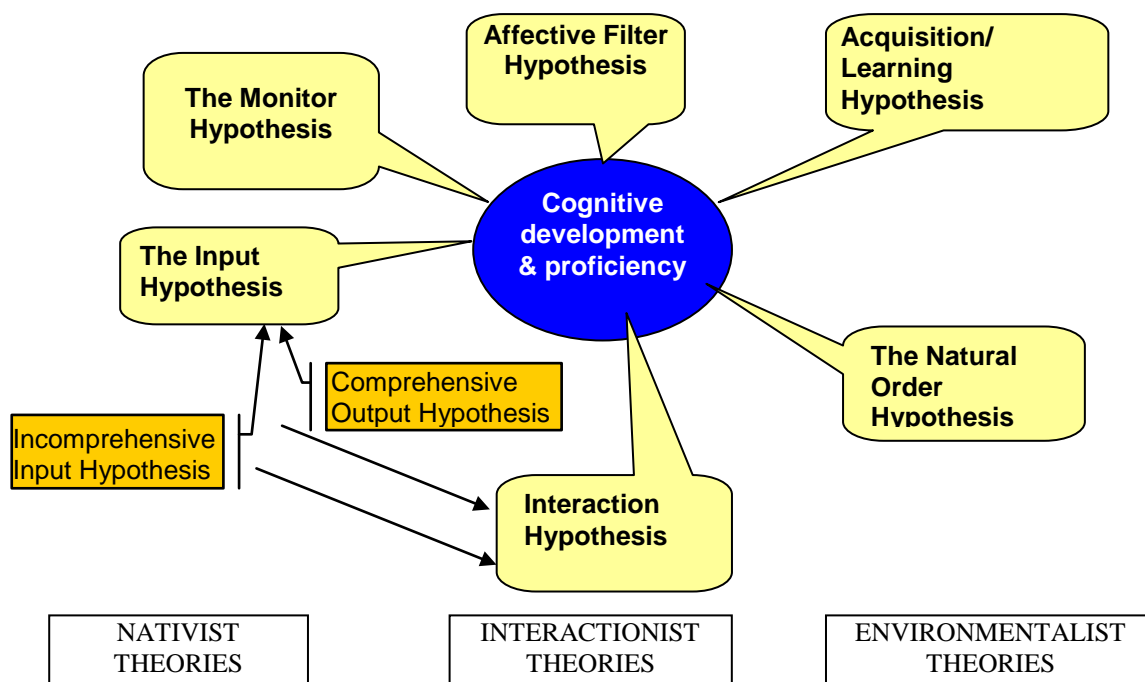
Fig. B2   **Adaptation of Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Hypothesis & Halliday's Interaction Hypothesis**

1.1   Acquisition-learning hypothesis

According to Krashen there are two independent systems, neither being the consequence of the other, to develop competence and performance in a SL. The first is called "language learning" involving receiving information about the language, transforming it into knowledge through intellectual effort and storing it through memorization. It refers to the conscious process of language instruction under formal settings explicitly concerned with error detection and correction through feedback, resulting in conscious knowledge about SL, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 20; Schütz, 2007; Wilson, 2000, p. 3). It is argued that the learners' grammatical sensitivity, i.e. the ability to demonstrate awareness of syntax in sentences, and inductive ability, i.e. learners' ability to interrogate materials detecting meanings, together with verbal intelligence are hypothesized to relate directly to learning (Krashen, 1988, p. 19).

The other referred to as "language acquisition" involves developing the skill of interacting with foreigners to understand them and speak their language. Acquisition or the acquired system which is the product of a subconscious process identical in all important ways to the process that children undergo when they acquire their first language, a process that produces functional skills in the spoken language without theoretical knowledge (Krashen, 1981; McLaughlin, 1987, p. 20; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 35; R Schütz, 2007). Language acquirers are not consciously aware of the grammatical rules of the language, but rather develop a "feel" for correctness. In non-technical language, "acquisition is 'picking-up' a language" (Wilson, 2000, p. 3). De Bot (1996, p. 531) conceives acquisition as gradual growth of knowledge with concomitant increase in "ease with which those structures can be used in processing". Acquisition defined as the extension of existing knowledge requires meaningful interaction in a natural communication setting in the target language during which the acquirer is focused on meaning rather than form. The acquisition approach praises "the communicative act and develops self-confidence in the learner" (Schütz, 2010, p. 1). Acquisition is not explicitly concerned with error detection and correction which therefore sets in motion developmental processes akin to those outlined in the first language acquisition (Krashen, 1981; McLaughlin, 1987, p. 20; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 35; Schütz, 2007; Wilson, 2000). According to Krashen, both adults and

children can subconsciously acquire language, and either written or oral language can be acquired (Krashen, 2003).

McLaughlin (1987, pp. 20-21) and Mitchell & Myles (1998, p. 36) argued that for Krashen the acquisition-learning distinction is based not on the setting *per se* but the conscious attention to rules that distinguishes language acquisition from language learning. McLaughlin (1987, p. 21) raises further concern that if setting is not the distinguishing characteristic of acquisition and learning in Krashen's sense, what exactly does Krashen mean by 'conscious' and 'subconscious' without explicit definitions of these.

While acknowledging that Krashen (1978) did intimate conscious learning with judgements of grammaticality based on 'rule' and subconscious acquisition with judgements based on 'feel', such an approach makes it very difficult in practice to know whether a learner's production is the result of conscious application of rules and when it is not (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 21; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 36). Further, McLaughlin (1987) argues that Krashen has not provided any way of independently determining whether a given process involves acquisition or learning. This lack of clarity in the distinction between acquisition and learning becomes more apparent considering that, according to Krashen; learning cannot or does not turn into acquisition (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 21; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 36). McLaughlin (1987) states that according to Krashen, that which is consciously learned – rules and explanations of grammar – does not become the basis of acquisition of the target language. Language knowledge learned/acquired through these different processes cannot eventually become integrated into a unified whole (Mitchell & Myles, 1998). According to Krashen (in McLaughlin, 1987, p. 21) the argument that conscious learning does not become unconscious acquisition is based on three claims:

(1)   Sometimes there is 'acquisition' without 'learning' – that is some individuals have considerable competence in a second language but do not know very many rules consciously.

(2)   There are cases where 'learning' never becomes 'acquisition' – that is, a person can know the rule and continue breaking it, and

(3)   No one knows anywhere near all the rules.

Researchers, while accepting all of these arguments may be true, disagree with Krashen as these claims do not constitute evidence to support the claim that learning does not become acquisition (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 21; Mitchell & Myles, 1998). Schütz, on (2007) the other hand, states that Krashen considers learning to be less important than acquisition "(*Veja o texto ao lado e também outra página em português sobre Acquisition/Learning*)" (Schütz, 2007, p. 3). It is hypothesized that "much of what is termed aptitude is directly related to conscious learning, while attitudinal factors may be more closely linked to acquisition" (Krashen, 1988, p. 19).

While there may be numerous controversies surrounding the acquisition/learning hypothesis, essentially what is important to this research is that language competence and performance are influenced by these two routes as Wilson (2000, p. 3) states that the acquisition-learning distinction hypothesis claims that adults do not lose the ability to acquire languages. Furthermore, for this research, improvement in language competence and performance, in whatever means acquired/learned, which impacts on SL learners' academic performance, is important. Therefore elaborating on the distinction between acquired and learned, while acknowledging the different routes followed and its impact on academic performance, is considered moot and thus within the scope of this research accept that the distinction is only clinical.

1.2   The Natural order hypothesis

Various criticisms of the Natural order hypothesis were levelled by Mitchell & Myles (1998, p. 37), such as Krashen's disregard for language transfer, individual variations and its almost exclusive theoretical basis on the morpheme studies with their known methodological problems. However, since this hypothesis, it is contended, has some relevance to this study, a brief discussion of this hypothesis follows.

According to this hypothesis, acquisition of rules of language occurs formally or informally in a predictable order, not necessarily determined by formal simplicity nor by order in which rules are taught in language classes (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 30; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 37). This 'natural' order of acquisition, Krashen argues, is presumably as a result of the acquired system, operating free of conscious grammar, or the monitor (McLaughlin, 1987).

It is proposed that the learner's first language could be one source of deviation from a 'natural' order arguing for the variance of native language semantic complexity of the morphemes to that of the target language (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 32). It is posited that "the learner's first language can make the acquisition of certain forms in a target language more difficult than they are for learners with other first languages" (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 34). If the indigenous language does not make the same discriminations as that of the target language, then learners experience more difficulty in learning to use the morphemes of target (McLaughlin, 1987) implying that the more cognate first and SL are, the easier it will be to acquire/learn the SL. If this were true, then learning/acquiring English proficiency (performance and competence) by isiZulu speaking learners will pose a major challenge as these are not cognate languages (Naicker and Balfour, 2009). Furthermore, the claim of underdevelopment of indigenous languages for academic discourses (Witwatersrand, 2003) implies that they do not have the same degree of complexity of morphemes or that they are not as discriminating as that of the target language.

1.3 The Monitor hypothesis

The monitor hypothesis explains the relationship between acquisition and learning both of which are used in very specific ways in SL performance and it defines the influence of the latter on the former (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 242; McLaughlin, 1987, p. 24; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 36; Schütz, 2007, p. 3). The unconsciously acquired system initiates utterances in a SL and is responsible for our fluency, whereas the language consciously learned acts as an editor or monitor in situations where the learner has enough time to edit and where three conditions, viz, *Input Hypothesis, Comprehensible Input* and *Understanding* are met (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 242). This conscious editor is called the monitor resulting in variable performance which accounts for different types and amounts of errors under different conditions (Krashen, 1988, p. 12).

The monitoring function is the practical result of the learned grammar which does not operate all the time (Krashen, 1988, p. 12; Schütz, 2007, p. 3). In other words, while only the acquired system is able to produce spontaneous speech, the learned system is used to check what is being spoken. This hypothesis has important implications for

language teaching as formal instruction in a language provides rule isolation and feedback for the development of the monitor, which alters production to improve accuracy toward target language norms (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 24). Before the learner produces an utterance, internal scanning for errors takes place and the learned system is used to make corrections. Self-correction occurs when the learner uses the monitor to correct a sentence after it is uttered. Such self-monitoring and self-correction are the only functions of conscious language learning (Krashen, 2003; Krashen, 1988, pp. 13-14). McLaughlin (1987) argues that conscious knowledge of rules does not to help acquisition but only enables learners to polish-up what has been acquired through communication.

Different individuals use their editors/monitors in different ways with differing degrees of success explaining individual learner differences (Krashen, 1988, p. 12). It is suggested that monitor over-users' speech lack fluency attributable to their constant checking of their utterances against the conscious stock of rules they possess (Krashen, 1988, pp. 12-15; McLaughlin, 1987, p. 27; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 36; Wilson, 2000). Introverts, perfectionists and persons lacking self-confidence are frequently related to over-use of the monitor (Krashen, 1988, p. 17; Schütz (2007, pp. 4-5).

Under-users, on the other hand, do not seem to care much about the errors they make as speed and fluency seem to be more important. Their under-usage could be attributable to either not having consciously learned or, if they have learned, simply choosing not to use their conscious knowledge of language. Under-users "rely exclusively on the acquired system" and are either unable or unwilling to "consciously apply anything they have learnt to their output" (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 37). Although these learners are typically uninfluenced by error correction by others, they often correct themselves based on a "feel" for correctness. The ultimate is to produce optimal monitor users, who tend not to use their conscious knowledge of grammar in normal conversation, but will use it in writing and planned speech, i.e. appropriately and when it does not interfere with communication (Krashen, 1988, p. 12; McLaughlin, 1987; Schütz, 2007; Wilson, 2000). Optimal monitor users are those that "use their learned competence as a supplement to their acquired competence" (Wilson, 2000, p. 5).

Krashen's unsubstantiated argument that learning is available only for use in production, not in comprehension, has been criticised by Gregg "as a rather counter-intuitive notion" (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 24). Schütz (2007) suggests that the role of conscious learning is somewhat limited in SL performance. It is argued that the role of the monitor is – or should be – minor, being used only to correct deviations from normal speech and to give speech a more polished appearance. The monitor acts in a planning, editing and correcting function when three specific conditions are met:

- Time: Sufficient time is required by SL performers in order to think about and use conscious rules effectively; a luxury that, due to "Black teachers' haste to complete syllabus" (Mgqwashu, 2009, p. 298) isiZulu learners seem not to enjoy. Normal conversations do not necessarily allow enough time to think about and use rules.. However, one must be cautioned that the over-use of rules in conversation can lead to a "hesitant style of talking and inattention to what the conversational partner is saying" (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 25).
- Focus on form: Using the monitor effectively also involves ESL focus on form or thinking about correctness implying that one should concentrate not only on what one is saying but also on how one is saying it.
- Know the rule: While acknowledging that language is extremely complex and that only a small part of the total grammar of language has been described, ESL learners must be aware of the rules.

Researchers having contested the efficacy of these three rules, individually, accepted that these cannot and should not be looked at or analysed separately but rather combined to produce somewhat limited use (McLaughlin (1987, p. 25 – 26.

1.4 The Input hypothesis

The input hypothesis, being considered the single most important concept in SLA is linked to the Natural order hypothesis in that it claims that as we move along the developmental continuum, SL is acquired through receiving and processing of Comprehensible Input (CI), i.e. language that is heard or read and understood (Krashen, 1980, p. 168; McLaughlin, 1987, p. 36; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 242). Comprehensible input is defined as L2 input just beyond the learner's current L2

competence, in terms of its syntactic complexity. This means that if the ESL learner's current competence is *i*, then comprehensible input is *i + 1,* the next step in the natural order of developmental process containing, by understanding the input of *i + 1* (McLaughlin, 1987, pp. 36-37; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 38). Mother's talk is often assumed to be the most important source of early input while linguistic input is also affected by family structures and residential patterns (Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 221 & 223). Not all CI helps, either (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). Input which is either too simple (already acquired) or too complex (*i + 2 / 3 / 4 …*) will not be useful for acquisition (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 38). According to the input hypothesis L2 input must be comprehended, be at one stage above the learner's current level (i + 1) and the learner must be emotionally receptive to the input to be acquired (Fang, 2010, p. 12), i.e. understanding the unknown structures. Krashen (1983, p. 138-139) described the process of turning input into intake by learners firstly understanding a message using the not yet acquired i + 1 L2 structure and somehow connecting this form with its meaning. The learner must notice a difference between their current interlanguage (IL) competence and the L2 form. If the form shows up with sufficient frequency, it may be acquired (Fang, 2010, p. 12). Of paramount importance here is notion that getting the unknown structures to be understood is facilitated through "help of linguistic and extra-linguistic context, knowledge of the world, previously acquired linguistic knowledge", and by these means and such devices as pictures, translation and explanation (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 242).

However, Krashen's input hypothesis has been frequently criticized for being vague and imprecise on how does one determine level *i* and level *i + 1* (Chaudron, 1985; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 38). This hypothesis, however persuasive, poses different challenges within the South African context. The first being that the diagnostic analysis of every ESL (isiZulu speaking) learner in determining the *i* level for additional input, will prove almost an impossibility; probably attributable in part to the large number of under-qualified teachers (EMIS, 2005). Secondly, the lack of opportunities for CI holds up ESL learners' development (McLaughlin, 1987) as Mgqwashu's (2009, p. 298) experiences reveal that the teacher "made little attempt to challenge us to access, or talk about, the texts through the medium of English". These contentions corroborates Saville-Troike (1989, p. 224) argument that "when children have limited input from any source, communicative development may indeed be retarded".

Large classes (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 346) and the heterogeneity of learners' competence and performance in English as SL which Krashen (in McLaughlin, 1987), acknowledges as individual variations in SLA, will pose a continual challenge to teachers, unless one subscribes to the principle that pupils facilitate peer-tutoring in such a way so as to "act as surrogate teachers, with the more proficient ones tutoring their less proficient … classmates" (Kamwangamalu & Virasamy, 1999, p. 61; Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 348). The other alternative is to subscribe to the pull-out classes in school for the 'slower acquirers', either in English as a SL or in one or more subject-matters. This segregation would at least encourage a simpler "teacher-talk" from teachers (Krashen, 1988, p. 120).

Krashen, with tangential assertions, argues that input hypothesis "may also apply to the acquisition of writing style" (McLaughlin, 1987, pp. 42-43). It is maintained that writing competence comes from large amounts of self-motivated reading which is considered to provide the CI for writing. Concomitant with the input hypothesis is the affective filter which, Naicker and Balfour (2009, pp. 347-350), claim to have an inverse relationship whereby improved self-confidence being an adjunct to lowered affective filter, improves SL proficiency.

Although Krashen (in Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 126) has argued that understanding, noticing a gap and the reappearance of $i + 1$, turns CI into "*intake*" for L2 acquisition, other authors (Swain, 1985; Swain & Lapkin, 1995; White, 1987) have contested these claims. It has been argued that despite abundant meaning-oriented input there are many cases of L2 learners who have failed to progress beyond a fossilized and deviant interlanguage phase. The input hypothesis has also been criticised on other grounds, which resulted in other proposed revisions to related concepts, incomprehensible input hypothesis (White, 1987); the Interaction hypothesis (Long, 1983) and Comprehensible output hypothesis developed by Merrill Swain (1985). It was also suggested that "negative feedback, during either comprehension or production, is vital to IL development" (Fang, 2010, p. 12).

A corollary of the primacy attributed to comprehension is that speaking is a result, not a cause of acquisition; it is a product of growth in competence achieved through understanding the target language. Larsen-Freeman contends that Krashen is silent on

how the data are actually used, but attributes it to the Krashen's assumption of innate endowment, which therefore makes both the input hypothesis and the monitor theory – Nativist (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, pp. 242-243).

1.5   Interaction hypothesis

In the interactional approach to L2 input is defined as "the linguistic forms … the streams of speech in the air – directed at the non-native speaker" whereas the "analysis of interaction means describing the functions of those forms in (conversational) discourse" (Long, 1983, p. 127). Long (1983) justified this distinction on the basis that in L2 input one may find modifications in the linguistic forms, in the interaction, in both, or in neither.

Drawing from a theoretical view of first language acquisition, known as Interactionist position, language develops as a result of the interplay between the human characteristics of the child and the environment in which the child develops (Lightbrown & Spada, 1999, p. 22) where cognitive development and learning originate in a social context (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Naicker and Balfour (2009, p. 340) hypothesised that an increase in interactive learning tasks through Classroom Talk Programme (CTP) in the medium of English lowers affective filter so as to voluntarily develop CALP in English. Central to their research (Naicker and Balfour, 2009, p. 340) was the question of to what extent interaction could be utilised strategically and optimally to lower affective filter and develop learners' communicative performance in the medium of English. Their conclusions indicated that CTP did indeed lower affective filter and learners became "voluble in English during activities" and developed CALP, although ESL learners did engage in code-switching for purposes of clarity (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 347 & 352).

Other interactionist theorists maintain that SLA takes place through conversational interaction (Gass, 1997; Gass, Mackey, & Pica, 1998; Vygotsky, 1986), and can be examined from McCarthy's (1998) methodological proposal of the 'Three Is' dealing with Illustration, Interaction and Induction. While accepting the CI hypothesis, interactionists doubted that mere exposure to input, even if comprehensible, could promote language learning as learners had no opportunity to show that they have not

understood the message. Researchers inferred that interaction containing negotiation of meaning serves to make input comprehensible leading to language acquisition (Fang, 2010, p. 14; Lightbrown & Spada, 1999; Long (1980, 1983a; Pica, 1987).

The input and interaction hypothesis combines an argument regarding the importance of input comprehension to SLA and an argument for the value of modifications to discourse structure for learner comprehension that indirectly facilitate SLA (Fang, 2010, p. 12). Long's research on Native Speakers (NS) and Non-Native Speakers (NNS) concluded that in order to solve ongoing communication difficulties "adjustments-to-comprehension" (Fang, 2010, p. 13) or modifications made input comprehensible to the learner. This process is based on a pre-condition of prolepsis, which refers to presupposition of some knowledge on the part of the speaker. Long's findings are not shared by other findings where it was reported that learners from isiZulu-medium primary schools, because of their limited communicative and performance skills in English, became silenced in class as they were not confident enough to perform verbal tasks (Buthelezi, 2002, p. 20; Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 341).

Modifying the interactional structure of discourse through negotiated interaction between speaker and listener is one way that input is made comprehensible to the learner. Another way to increase learner comprehension is for the speaker to modify the input. Input modifications are frequently the linguistic by-product of negotiated interactions and may be classified as either input simplifications or elaborations (Fang, 2010, pp. 13-14). Thus, if a listener asks for clarification of a previous utterance, the speaker will respond by elaborating (repeating, rephrasing or explaining it), or by simplifying it (e.g. using less complex grammatical structures) (Fang, 2010, p. 14). It is worth noting the caveat of simplification is that when pre-modified input alone was the only source of information, comprehension was significantly worse than when unmodified input was used together with the opportunity to ask clarification questions and/or signal difficulty (Pica, 1987). Paradoxically, while the classroom should provide fertile grounds for confirmations, comprehension checks and clarifications; research found that the NS and NNS interactions outside the classroom provided significantly higher opportunities (Pica, 1987). Presumably this is what Villegas (2000, p. 1) alluded to when writing about the lament of a Japanese student who studied English, wrote "We read and write English a lot in school, but we don't have a chance to speak and listen to

English". This is probably attributable to the unequal status relationship between the learners and teachers in classrooms which negates opportunities resulting in learners avoiding seeking clarification because they (learners) feared that their requests for clarification, confirmation and comprehension checks "will be perceived as challenges to the knowledge and professional experience of the teacher" (Pica, 1987, p. 12).

It was found that the NS-NNS pairs made use of conversational tactics such as repetitions, confirmations checks, comprehension checks or clarification requests as a means of language acquisition (Long, 1980; Saville-Troike, 1989, p. 229; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 128). It is inferred that the prime trigger for interactional adjustments is that the interlocutor is experiencing on-going comprehension problems. However, from the interaction hypothesis perspective, such collaborative efforts between more or less fluent speakers should be very useful for language learning. It is argued that as speakers struggle to maximize comprehension and negotiate meaning, the NS-NNS partnership incidentally fine-tunes the L2 input; so as to make it more relevant to the current state of learner development thus their receptive and expressive capacities in a SL are advanced (Pica, 1987). However warnings such as "when children are removed from adult native language models for long periods of time, their linguistic maturation may be prematurely ossified" (Saville-Troike, 1989, pp. 223-224) should be heeded.

Considerable attention has been directed towards the role of interaction with respect to the conditions considered theoretically important for SLA, such as the learner's comprehension of input, access to feedback, and production of modified output (Fang, 2010, p. 11). Thus conversational tactics used to increase comprehension should be highly contextualised to facilitate negotiation of meaning. Drawing from Naicker and Balfour's (2009, p. 350) conclusions on the CTP it was found that "learners were developing the proficiency to interact in AC because they were interacting in purposeful or 'genuine' communicative tasks that demanded that they communicate meaningfully". Halliday's functional-interactional approach is consonant with this view claiming that children learn the meaning of language because of the systematic relation between what they hear and what is going on around them (Saville-Troike, 1989, pp. 221-225).

Long (1985) pointed out that CI was necessary but not sufficient to promote the acquisition process thus interactional modifications cannot be the only mechanism

behind the learner's L2 development. Feedback, particularly as a source of negative evidence, as a way of elucidating the inadequacy of learners own rule system, was also pointed out by White (1987), who suggested that what is necessary for L2 development is not comprehensible input, but incomprehensible input.

a)   Incomprehensible input hypothesis

It is has argued that besides CI, incomprehensible input is also vital to SLA where learners encounter input that is incomprehensible triggering learners' recognition of mismatches between their interlanguage (IL) grammar and that of their L2 target, thus being pushed to modify those IL rules to accommodate the structure (Fang, 2010, pp. 12-14; White, 1987).   Modifications to language, triggered by something incomprehensible become the impetus for learners to recognize the inadequacy of their own rule system (White, 1987). In essence, comprehension difficulties or "instances of non-understanding" (Fang, 2010, p. 14) are what allows a learner to realize that linguistic modification is necessary. These modifications may, in turn, lead to subsequent stabilization or language change (Fang, 2010). Through clarification and elaboration of the message, NNS can receive more usable input in their quest to understand the L2 and, further, this new or elaborated input can draw attention to IL features that diverge from the L2. Therefore, negotiation, along with certain classroom activities such as teacher explanation, can bring particular forms to a learner's attention – forms that might otherwise be unnoticed – thus enhancing the input and making it more salient (Fang, 2010, p. 14)

Thus, comprehension difficulties can provide important negative feedback to the learner. This could explain Krashen's (1983) process of turning input into intake using the not yet acquired structure and somehow connecting this form with its meaning.

b)   Comprehensive output hypothesis

The main tenet of the Comprehensive Output (CO) hypothesis, being an extension of the input hypothesis, is displaying competence in the L2 through production of speech or engaging in conversations in the target language (Pica, Holliday, Lewis, & Morgenthaler, 1989; Swain, 1985; Swain & Lapkin, 1995). Thus it is contended that

ESL learners' lack of NS productive competence is not as a result limited CI but because their CO is limited in two ways. First, the students are simply not given – especially in the later grades adequate opportunities to use the target language in the classroom context. Second, they are not being "pushed" in their output (De Bot, 1996, p. 532),

The issue of opportunities to use the target language in the classroom context was corroborated by Mgqwashu (2009, p. 298) who also found that teachers in most schools in South Africa make little attempt to engage us in conversations through the medium of English. De Bot (1996, p. 529) argues that output serves an important role in SLA because it generates "highly specific input the cognitive system needs to build up a coherent set of knowledge". Krashen (1998, p. 1) argued that we acquire language when we attempt to transmit a message, through trial and error, until our utterances are conversationally understandable. CO is not responsible for all or even most of our language competence but rather, under certain conditions, "output facilitates SL learning in ways that are different form, or enhance, those of input", thus "comprehensible output results in actual improvement" (Krashen, 1998, p. 2). De Bot (1996) also claims that output also plays a direct role in enhancing fluency by turning declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge while also indirectly facilitating acquisition of declarative knowledge by triggering input that the learner can use for the generation of new declarative knowledge.

Swain (1985) concluded that CI is only responsible for the acquisition of semantic competence while CO is responsible for grammatical competence. In recent publications Swain (1995) and Swain and Lapkin (1995) have identified four functions of output in SLA. Firstly, it makes learners aware of gaps in their knowledge which they call "noticing". Noticing of gaps in terms of forms and functions of a target language by learners triggers cognitive processes which generate linguistic knowledge that may be new for the learner or it consolidates their existing knowledge (Carter, Hughes & McCarthy, 1998; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 126; Swain, 1995, p. 126). This was affirmed in research findings (Ellis, 1997; Fotos, 1993; Schmidt, 1995) where it was shown that activities that promote conscious attention to the structures of a foreign language foster students' acquisition of these structures. It was also noted that learning can be more effective if learners were given opportunity to reflect and analyse

the structures, consciously noticing their form and functions, before rushing to produce them. This encouraged learners interpretative skills and at the end of the task structures that were previously unknown become part of the learners' knowledge.

The second function is to serve language learning through hypothesis testing (Alcón, 2002; Mitchell & Myles, 1998) while the third function is metalinguistic in nature: output serves to control and internalize linguistic knowledge. The fourth function enhances fluency through practice which carries connotations of pushing. Pushing learners to improve accuracy of production results not only "in immediate improved performance but also in gains in accuracy over time" (Krashen, 1998, p. 2). Enhanced fluency through practice has been corroborated by the CTP where it was found that "learners with limited proficiencies developed … their speaking roles became bolder, louder and more fluent" (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 350).

One of the criticisms of the CO hypothesis is the scarcity of evidence in support of this theory (Krashen, 1998, p. 1). Another is that there is evidence that support the notion that one can develop extremely high levels of language and literacy competence without any language production at all (Krashen, 1998, p. 2). A third criticism is inherent in the argument that the CO hypothesis predicts that we acquire language when there is a communicative breakdown and we are "pushed to use alternative means to get across … the message … precisely, coherently, and appropriately" (Swain, 1985, pp. 248-249). Other authors argue that pushing students to speak in front of their peers was unpleasant for them as this constituted the highest anxiety-provoking activity (Krashen, 1998, p. 3). At a subliminal level there exists another source of stress which was "the frustration of not being able to communicate effectively" (Krashen, 1998, p. 3). Evidence, therefore suggests that it is "pushed output, having to utilize structures they have not yet acquired, under demanding conditions, that students find uncomfortable" (Krashen, 1998, p. 3). Thus high stress factors correlates with a high or strong affective filter, which has a negative impact on SLA.

While Fang (2010, p. 11) elaborates that input and interactional modifications facilitate SLA, McLaughlin (1987), as is the assertion of this research, principally, agree that the right kind of input (as well as incomprehensible input) complimented by interaction and CO helps SL learning and thus its relevance to the central aim of this research.

Extrapolating from Long's (in Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 128), research findings, the 'interaction hypothesis' plays a mediatory role between the dichotomy of the input and output hypothesis. However, Asher (1994, p. 3724) argues that "affective factors such as motivation or attitude toward the L2 either reduce input or reduce the effectiveness with which input is processed". What then are affective factors?

1.6   The Affective filter hypothesis

While CI is necessary for language acquisition to take place, it is not a sufficient condition for successful acquisition (McLaughlin, 1987, pp. 51-52; Mitchell & Myles, 1998, pp. 38-39). Learners need to "let that input in" (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 38). Through the affective filter supposedly determining how receptive to CI a learner is going to be. The affective filter hypothesis views various affective factors such as motivation, self-confidence, attitude and anxiety playing a facilitative, but non-causal role in the process of SLA (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 243).

It is posited that acquirers vary with respect to the strength or level of their affective filters whereby those whose attitudes are not optimal for SLA will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong affective filter, thus the input will not reach LAD. Conversely, those with attitudes more conducive to SLA will not only seek and obtain more input; they will also have a lower filter (Krashen, 1988; McLaughlin, 1987). Evidence of lowered affective filters facilitating SLA was provided by Naicker and Balfour (2009, p. 347) using the CTP, arguing that appropriately organised classroom activities did lower the Affective Filter of several ESL learners. According to Krashen, if the filter is 'down' the input reaches the LAD and become acquired competence; but if the filter is 'up', the input is blocked and does not reach the LAD; thus the affective filter acts as a barrier to acquisition.

Thus input is a primary causative variable in SLA whereas affective variables either facilitate or constrain the delivery of input to the acquisition device (McLaughlin, 1987, p. 52).
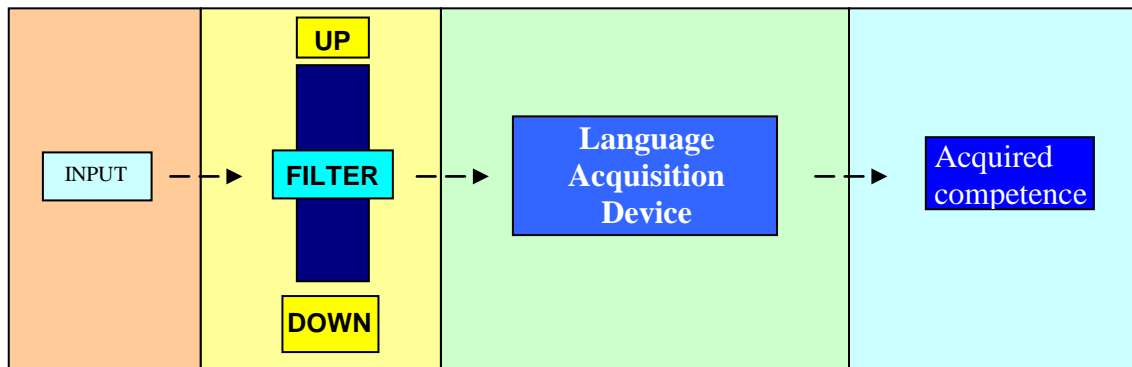
Fig. B3   **Affective Filter Hypothesis**
(McLaughlin, 1987, 52)

The filter, being an internal processing system, sub-consciously screens incoming language that affects what learners' motives, needs, attitudes and emotional states (Dulay, Burt, E Krashen, 1982, p. 46)

Krashen maintains that acquirers need to be open to the input and that when the affective filter is up, the learner may understand what is seen and read, but the input will not reach the LAD.   This happens when the learner is unmotivated, lacking in confidence, or concerned with failure.   The filter is down when the learner is not anxious and is intent on becoming a member of the group seeking the target language. Naicker and Balfour (2009, p. 339) hypothesized that increased constructive classroom talk in the medium of English lowered affective filters which helps develop English proficiency and CALP and increases ESL learners' confidence to communicate. Findings from the CTP research attested to confidence as a variable that affected SLA when it was found that "As ESL learners … developed the confidence … their speaking roles gradually became bolder, louder and more fluent" (Naicker & Balfour, 2009, p. 350).   Naicker and Balfour (2009, p. 350) also found evidence that the affective filter being lowered was manifest by learners' ability to construct sentences fluently and speaking without stammering or struggling.   The conclusion therefore is that lowered filters allow learners to be less inhibited as they speak and acquire CI.

However, that speaking the target language in front of the class has been shown to be the highest anxiety-causing activity (Krashen, 1998, p. 3), must serve as warnings to us in the indiscriminate use of this 'pushing' methodology of SLA.   This, according to Krashen's hypothesis, puts the filter up, and thus the input will not reach the LAD.   A

brief discussion on attitude, due to its apparent relationship with affective filter that supposedly affects how receptive to CI a learner is going to be, is necessary.

a)   Attitude

Attitudinal factors that relate to SLA may be motivational factors that encourage intake thus determining whether or not the student avails to inputs (Krashen, 1988, p. 21). These factors encourage acquirers to communicate with speakers of the target language, and thereby obtain the necessary input or intake for language acquisition. Secondly, there are attitudinal factors relating to acquisition that enables the performer to utilize the language heard for acquisition. The argument here is that simply hearing a SL with understanding, while necessary, is not sufficient for acquisition to take place. Krashen (1988, p. 21) contends that the acquirer must not only understand the input but must also be "open" to it. The following summary of attitudinal factors will attempt to relate posited predictors of second language proficiency to these two functions:

Integrative motivation: Krashen defines this as the "desire to be like valued members of the community that speak the SL" (1988, p. 22) which is therefore correlated with proficiency. Integrative motivation should encourage the acquirer to interact with speakers of the SL out of sheer interest and thereby obtain intake.   In terms of Stevick (in Krashen, 1988), the integratively motivated performer will not feel threatened and will thus be more prone to engage in "receptive learning" (acquisition), rather than "defensive learning"" (Krashen, 1988, p. 22).

Instrumental motivation: is defined as the desire to achieve proficiency in L2 for utilitarian or practical reasons. Its presence, it is argued, will encourage performers to interact with L2 speakers in order to achieve certain ends. This dichotomy highlights the essential purpose of language acquisition, viz, for the integratively motivated performer; interaction for its own sake will be valued whereas for the instrumentally motivated performer, interaction always has some practical purpose (Krashen, 1988). A further implicit distinction is that integrative motivation predicts a low affective filter resulting in longer term acquisition whereas the presence of instrumental motivation predicts a stronger affective filter and language acquisition may cease as soon as enough is acquired to get the job done (Naicker and Balfour, 2009). Also, instrumentally

motivated performers may acquire just those aspects of the target language that are necessary. Thus, it is posited that when the practical value of SL proficiency is high and frequent use necessary, instrumental motivation may be a powerful predictor of SLA (Krashen, 1988). The dichotomy between instrumental and integrative motivation heave the LiEP into this discussion, albeit at a very cursory level. LiEP's prescription that learners must offer at least two official languages in their curriculum (Department of Education, 1997) could conceivably be interpreted as imposing instrumental motivation. This prescription could therefore bring into focus the personality of the language acquirer which is interrelated with motivational factors. It is hypothesized that the self-confident or secure person will be more able to encourage intake and will also have a lower filter. The converse is true for the less confident person. Another personality trait is that of empathy. Empathy is also predicted to be relevant to acquisition in that the empathic person may be the one who is able to identify more easily with the speakers of a target language and thus accept their input as intake for language acquisition (lowered filter). Attitudes toward the classroom and teacher relates to both acquisition and learning (Krashen, 1988, p. 23; Makgalemele, 2005). Krashen (1988) postulates that, the learner who feels at ease in the classroom and like the teacher, seeks out intake and may be more accepting of the teacher as a source of intake. Positive attitude toward the classroom and teacher may also be manifestations of self-confidence and/or integrative motivation and thus may relate to acquisition.

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF PERMISSION

PERMISSION FROM DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU NATAL; ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU NATALI; PROVINSIE KWAZL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO; DEPARTEMENT VAN C

Box 2; Mt. Edgecombe; 4300 – 1 Spire Street; Stonebridge; 4068 – Tel: 031 502 6325; Fax: 031 50

Enquiries: Imibuzo: L P Swartz Navrae:	Reference: Inkomba: Research Verwysing:	Date: Usuku: 21 Februa Datum:

Mr Dorasamy

Your request to conduct research in schools on "The impact of English as m
instruction on the academic performance of second language learners" refe

The Circuit hereby grants you permission to access our schools and the edu
under the following conditions:

1.   No school or person may be forced to participate in the study

2.   Access to the schools you wish to utilize is to be negotiated with th
principal and yourself

3.   The normal learning and teaching programme of the school must n
disrupted

4.   The confidentiality of the participants is to be respected

The Circuit takes this opportunity to wish you everything of the best in your
endeavours and hopes to get a copy of your finings once the investigation I
completed

Dr Leslie Peter SWARTZ

Superintendent of Education

PHOENIX CIRCUIT OFFICE

SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATIO
(MANAGEMENT)

SIGNATURE OF SEM   DATE
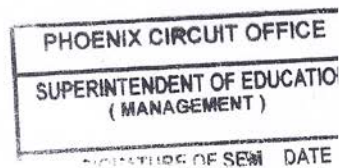
APPENDIX D: CONSENT LETTER

LETTER OF CONSENT

D U R B A N
UNIVERSITY *of*
TECHNOLOGY

7 March 2011

Dear Participant

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study entitled *The impact of English as medium of instruction on the academic performance of second language learners at FET band, secondary level, in KZN.*

This study, then, will investigate how/why English used as MoI impacts on academic progress at secondary level, to establish what is working and what is not working for stakeholders, and suggest possible solutions.

The researcher undertakes to assure you of the following:

- To maintain your confidentiality;

- To protect your rights and welfare; i.e. to ensure that no harm comes to you as a result of your participation in this research.

- No manipulation or withholding of information is involved in this study.

- To present information and transcripts used in this research in such a way as to maintain the participant's dignity and if in doubt to first consult with you.

- To make available the final copy of this research publication in the library.

- The participant is free to withdraw from this research process at any time whatsoever if the need should so arise.

It is hoped that education at large will benefit from your insights into academic composing arising from this research. I acknowledge your South Africacrifice in volunteering to add to the body of academic knowledge and your perseverance in carrying out the research task to its completion.

Yours sincerely

RS Dorasamy
DTech student

Participant's signature of agreement: _____

Date: _____
PLEASE PRINT NAME: _____

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS:

SCHOOL: _____ **NAME:** _____

DATE: _____

1. What would you consider are some of the reasons for African learners' poor academic performance?
RESPONSES

2. What effect, if any, do you think the socio-economic circumstances of learners (being rich or poor) have on their academic performance?
RESPONSES

3. English, used as the medium of instruction has an impact on the academic performance of African learners. Do you agree/disagree?   Please state why.
RESPONSES

4. Please list some of the challenges that you consider hampers African learners improving their skills in English (Reading, Writing and speaking)?
RESPONSES

6. African culture and traditions have an impact on African learners acquiring/mastering their   skills in English? Do you agree/disagree? Why?
RESPONSES

7. What ratio of isiZulu to English (code-switching) do you use when teaching? Please explain shy?				
Time apportionment				Reasons
Mostly isiZulu with little English explanations	A good balance between English and isiZulu	Mostly English with little isiZulu when learners request clarity	Only English	

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8.	Do you correct learners' spoken and written English during your subject lessons? Please explain why?
RESPONSE	

9.	Do African learners participate actively during your class discussions/lessons? If not, what could possibly be the reasons for this?
RESPONSE	

12.	Should English as MoI be replaced with an Indigenous language? Explain?
RESPONSES	

Thank you for answering these questions.

AFFORDING THE TEACHERS THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLARIFICATION

13.	Would you like to comment further on any of the questions?
RESPONSES	

14.	Are there any other issues you would like to mention or comment on?
RESPONSES	

15.	Is there anything you would like to ask me?
RESPONSES	

Thank you for participating in this research.

May I call back should I need to verify or clarify any issues?

Thank you once again.

QUESTIONAIRE FOR GRADE 12 LEARNERS

SECTION A – ATTITUDINAL QUESTIONS

Please tick only one box in each question (unless stated otherwise)

1. Do you experience difficulty in understanding English when used as the medium of instruction (language of learning and teaching)?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

2. What language do you prefer to use to communicate with other learners/friends during breaks in school?

    ☐ English

    ☐ isiZulu

    ☐ Other (specify) _____

3. Why do you prefer to use the language chosen in question 2 to talk to other learners during break?
    _____

4. Does your teachers' ability to teach in English (knowledge, fluency) affect your academic performance in school?

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No

    How? _____

5. Which language do you feel will provide you with better opportunities for a job? (Tick only one)

    ☐ English

    ☐ IsiZulu

    ☐ Other (specify what language) _____

    Please explain your choice: _____

    _____

PTO

6. Indicate the availability of resources (like textbooks, magazines, dictionaries) you have at your disposal in the following places: (Tick only one box for each place listed below)

NO	PLACE	NO RESOURCES	VERY FEW RESOURCES	ENOUGH RESOURCES AVAILABLE
6.1	In Classroom			
6.2	In school library			
6.3	At home			
6.4	In community library			

7. Availability of resources (like textbooks, magazines, dictionaries) has an effect on my ability to improve my skills in English (speaking, reading, writing).

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

8. Your teachers encourage you to ask questions to seek clarity in class.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

9. Who do you ask for clarity about lesson(s) taught or concepts that you do not understand? (Indicate how often you ask each of the persons listed below by placing a tick in either: Never, Seldom, sometimes or always)

9.1	Teacher	Never		Seldom		Often		Always	
9.2	Class mate	Never		Seldom		Often		Always	
9.3	Brothers/sisters	Never		Seldom		Often		Always	
9.4	Parents	Never		Seldom		Often		Always	

10. Your school encourages you to use English.

10.1	In class	Seldom		Often		Always	
10.2	During breaks	Seldom		Often		Always	
10.3	After school	Seldom		Often		Always	

11. How does improving your English skills (speaking, reading, writing) affect your knowledge of your own culture/traditions, if at all?

_____

12. Are you afraid that as your skills in English (reading, writing, speaking) improve, you will slowly lose your skills in your mother tongue (e.g. isiZulu).

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

PTO

SECTION B – IMPACT OF ENGLISH AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

13.   What effect does English, used as the medium of instruction, have on your academic performance? (Tick only one box)

☐   Causes me to perform poorly in my subjects.

☐   Improves my academic performance (test scores)

☐   Does not affect my academic performance.

☐   Other (specify) _____

Could you please explain your choice: _____
_____

14.   Rank each of the following from 1 – 4 on the impact that you consider English has on your academic performance. (You may use the numbers 1 – 4 more than once, if necessary)

1 = not a challenge at all; 2 = poses a minor challenge; 3 poses a major challenge; 4 poses the greatest challenge.

NO	CHALLENGE	RANKING 1, 2, 3 or 4
14.1	My ability to speak, read & write in English	
14.2	My understanding of English	
14.3	Teachers' level of preparation in the subject	
14.4	Teachers' ability to explain concepts in English	
14.5	Teachers' ability to teach/speak in English	
14.6	Teachers' ability to challenge us in analyzing texts in English	

15.   Primary school has developed my English skills sufficiently to meet the demands of the high school subjects.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

16.   Use of English as medium of instruction causes me great stress.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

17.   I experience difficulty when communicating in English with my teachers in class.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

18. When content subjects (like Geography, Accounting) are being taught, the medium of instruction used by your teachers is: (Tick only one box).

Mostly isiZulu with little English explanations		A good balance between English & isiZulu		Mostly English with little isiZulu when learners request clarity		Only English	

19. I find it difficult to understand the subject when the teachers use mostly English to teach.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

20. Getting me to speak in English in front of the class causes me a lot of anxiety (nervousness).

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

Please explain: _____

21. How do you engage in Comprehension lessons during English periods? (Read through the alternatives and choose the one that best describes the activities in English Comprehension class)

1	Comprehension passage is given to you and you are expected to answer the questions that follow (neither discussions nor any explanations provided).	
2	Comprehension passage is given to you; teacher provides some explanations on certain words and then you are required to answer the questions that follow.	
3	Comprehension passage is given to you and learners are to discuss the comprehension passage among them and then answer the questions that follow.	
4	Comprehension passage is given to you to read, followed by a full discussion of the passage with the teacher and class. Thereafter, you are required to answer the questions that follow.	

22. How do you find your answers to questions during comprehension lessons in English? (Read through the alternatives and choose the one that best describes how you arrive at your answers. Choose only 1 response).

1	Read and understand the passage (without help) and then attempt to answer the questions in your own words.	
2	Read the passage, discuss with other learners and formulate a group answer.	
3	Read the passage, engage in class discussion with the teacher and then arrive at your answers in your own words.	
4	Read comprehension passage and look for key words that correspond with words in the question and then copy the whole chunk from the passage as your answer to the question.	

23. What are some of the difficulties (if any) you experience in improving your skills in English (reading, writing and speaking)?

_____
_____

SECTION C – SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

23. My skills in English (speaking, reading, writing) improve when English is used more often as a medium of instruction during content subject lessons.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

25. Use of English as the medium of instruction should be replaced with one of our Indigenous Languages, like isiZulu.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

Please explain: _____

26. Speaking in English, in class/on the grounds improves my English skills.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

27. Interacting with others who have a better understanding/command of the English language improves my skills in English.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

28. Getting more resources like textbooks, will increase chances of improving my skills in English.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

Could you explain: _____

29. I understand the subjects better when the teachers use code switching (explanations in mother tongue language) with Indigenous language like isiZulu to explain concepts.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

30. A lot of code-switching (switching to isiZulu) makes learning English more difficult.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

31.   Constant correction of my English by my teachers/learners improves my command of the English language.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

32.   What, in your opinion, will improve your academic performance (test scores) at school while still using English as medium of instruction? (Tick only one box)

Only speaking well in English	Speaking and reading English well	Speaking, reading and writing well in English.

Please explain: _____

33.   Having family members with academic qualification (certificates, diplomas, degrees) helps you to improve your academic performance.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

34.   Getting assistance from my family members in the completion of my homework helps me to improve my academic performance.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree

35.   Which places would you consider provides you with opportunities to improve different skills (speaking, reading, writing skills) in English? (For each place listed below use the following codes: -
1 = least opportunities; 2 = fair amount of opportunities; 3 = most opportunities)

NO	Places	Speaking skills	Reading skills	Writing skills (grammar, etc)
35.1	In class			
35.2	On the school grounds			
35.3	At home			
35.4	Friends (after school)			

36.   Rank the following, in order of preference, on ways that you think will improve your skills (speaking, reading, writing) in English. (1 = least effective, 2 = little effect; 3 = effective; 4 = most effective)

NO	Activity	Ranking
36.1	Read and understand the passage (without help) and then attempt to answer the questions in your own words.	
36.2	Read the passage, discuss with other learners and formulate a group answer.	
36.3	Read the passage, engage in class discussion with the teacher and then arrive at your answers in your own words.	
36.4	Read comprehension passage and look for key words that correspond with words in the question and then copy the whole paragraph from the passage as your answer to the question.	

37. List at least 3 ways (**you may write more if you want to**) that you consider will improve your English skills, (reading, writing and speaking).

A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	

SECTION D – DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA

38. What is your home language? _____

39. Please fill in the details about your family:

NO	Relation	Does he/she have any academic qualification(s) (e.g. certificates, diplomas, degrees)		Any comments
		Yes	No	
39.1	Father			
39.2	Mother			
39.3	Older brother(s)			
39.4	Older sister(s)			
39.5	Other (who)			

40. Your parents encourage you to use English to communicate

☐ Yes   ☐ No

41. What is your average performance at school (for all subjects)?

1		2		3		4	
Below 40 %		41 – 60 %		61 – 80 %		81 – 100 %	

42. Rate your abilities in English:

Abilities	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very good	excellent
Speaking					
Reading					
Writing					

43. How often do you use English?

43.1	In class	Never		Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom	
43.2	During breaks	Never		Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom	
43.3	After school	Never		Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom	
43.4	At home	Never		Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom	

44.   Do you associate with learners from other race group during breaks?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Explain why: _____

_____

45.   Do you think that your economic condition (how rich you are) affects your academic performance at school?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Explain: _____

_____

Thank you for your contribution.

APPENDIX G: OBSERVATION TOOL

CLASSROOM AND GROUND OBSERVATION TOOL

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

DATE(S) OF OBSERVATION _____ / _____

# of teachers								
Demographics of teachers	African		Indian		White		Coloureds	
# of learners								
Demographics of all learners	African		Indian		White		Coloureds	
# of Gr 12 learners								
Demographics of Gr 12 learners	African		Indian		White		Coloureds	

IN CLASS OBSERVATION:

Observation of knowledge subject

Punctuality of teacher(s)	
Punctuality of learners	
What happens to Learners who come in late?	

LESSON OBSERVATION:

Criteria	Rating			
Use of LoLT by teacher	Mostly isiZulu with little English explanations	A good balance between English and isiZulu	Mostly English with little isiZulu when learners request clarity	Only English
Use of LoLT by learners	Mostly isiZulu with little English	A good balance between English and isiZulu	Mostly English with little isiZulu	Only English

Resource (dictionaries available in class	Yes		No	
Do learners use dictionaries to seek meaning	Yes		No	
No of dictionaries available	Sufficient for sharing: Too few to be of any assistance			
Textbooks:				
All learners have one				
Learners share (2 to 1)				
Learners share (groups of 4 and more)				
Learners share – state what ratio				

ON THE GROUND OBSERVATIONS:

When learners gather – do they join learners from their own race groups? If so ask why?	
What language do African learners use to communicate with other learners from own race groups? Establish why the particular language?	
What language do African learners use to communicate with other learners from other race groups? Establish why the particular language?	
What language do African learners use to communicate with teachers from other race groups? Establish why the particular language?	
What language do African learners use to communicate with teachers from their own race groups? Establish why the particular language?	

APPENDIX H: FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis is done essentially through the generation of artificial dimensions (factors) that correlate highly with several of the real variables and that are independent of one another. This is method minimizes the number of variables that have high loadings on each factor. It simplifies the interpretation of the factors

The output of a factor analysis generates [1] "observed relations among variables plus the correlations between each variable and each factor – called the factor loadings" and [2] "a series of factors with appropriate factor loadings" (Babbie, 1995, p. 429). Researcher should then "determine the meaning of a given factor", on the basis of those variables that load highly on it, with the understanding that such factors have "no reference to the meaning of variables, only to their empirical associations" (Babbie, 1995, p. 429). With reference to the Appendix G: Certain components divided into finer components. This is explained thematically in Chapter 4 in the rotated component matrix.

- Hypotheses tests: p-values and statistical significance: *Inferential statistical analysis* is concerned with the testing of hypothesis. The independent t-test is the most appropriate parametric test for a comparison of the means. This tests any significant difference between the two variables. Primary data was collated and analysed and comments and concluding discussions are thereafter based on the results obtained (Lind, Marchal, & Mason, 2004, pp. 348-351). Inferential statistical analysis allows the researcher to draw conclusions about populations from sample data. The most important application in the social sciences of the statistical theory around sampling distributions has been significance testing or statistical hypothesis testing. The researcher is interested in the outcome of a study on the impact of service delivery.

- The traditional approach to reporting a result requires a statement of statistical significance. A **p-value** is generated from a **test statistic.** A significant result is indicated with "$p < 0.05$" (Lind, Marchal, & Mason, 2004, p. 347). The choice of the value 0.05 as the level of significance is in fact totally arbitrary, but has become

enshrined as a standard in statistics. All Likert scale questions were grouped together in order to compute the correlation between variables.

- Pearson Chi-square test**:** A chi-square test is any statistical hypothesis test in which the test statistic has a chi-square distribution when the null hypothesis is true, or any in which the probability distribution of the test statistic (assuming the null hypothesis is true) can be made to approximate a chi-square distribution as closely as desired by making the sample size large enough. Specifically, a chi-square test for independence evaluates statistically significant *differences* between proportions for two or more groups in a data set (Willemse, 2009).

- T-Test**:** The t-test is a parametric test and it makes the following assumptions:

    1. The level of measurement of the dependent variable must be at least interval.
    2. The dependent variable is normally distributed in the population.
    3. The variances of the samples are not significantly different (Kerr, Hall, & Kozuh, 2004, p. 61).

FACTOR ANALYSIS BY SECTIONS

Factor analysis is a statistical technique whose main goal is data reduction. A typical use of factor analysis is in survey research, where a researcher wishes to represent a number of questions with a small number of hypothetical factors (SPSS). With reference to the Appendix G:

- The principle component analysis was used as the extraction method, and the rotation method was Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. This is an orthogonal rotation method that minimizes the number of variables that have high loadings on each factor. It simplifies the interpretation of the factors.
- Factor analysis/loading show inter-correlations between variables.
- Items of questions that loaded similarly imply measurement along a similar factor. An examination of the content of items loading at or above 0.5 (and using the higher or highest loading in instances where items cross-loaded at greater than this value) effectively measured along the various components.

Certain components divided into finer components. This is explained below in the rotated component matrix

SECTION A

Q6	Indicate the availability of resources (like textbooks, magazines, dictionaries) you have at your disposal in the following places	Component	
		1	2
Q6.1	In Classroom	.717	.024
Q6.2	In school library	.336	.700
Q6.3	At home	-.193	.836
Q6.4	In community library	.728	.032

Q9	Who do you ask for clarity about lesson(s) taught or concepts that you do not understand?	Component	
		1	2
Q9.1	Teacher	.076	.934
Q9.2	Class mate	.699	-.336
Q9.3	Brothers/sisters	.861	.116
Q9.4	Parents	.801	.258

Q10	Your school encourages you to use English	Component
		1
Q10.1	In class	.464
Q10.2	During breaks	.942
Q10.3	After school	.920

It is noted that the variables that constituted the components of "**Your school encourages you to use English"**, loaded perfectly along one factor. This means that the statements (variables) that constituted this component perfectly measured the component. That is, the component measured what it was that was meant to be measured.

However, the other two components have factors that overlap, indicating a mixing of the factors. This means that the questions in the overlapping components did not specifically measure what it set out to measure or that the component split along themes. One possibility is that respondents did not clearly distinguish between the questions constituting the components. This could be with respect to interpretation or inability to distinguish what the questions were measuring.

SECTION B

Q		Component	
		1	2
Q15	Primary school has developed my English skills sufficiently to meet the demands of the high school subjects.	-.841	.080
Q16	Use of English as medium of instruction causes me great stress.	.751	.173
Q17	I experience difficulty when communicating in English with my teachers in class.	.632	.400
Q19	I find it difficult to understand the subject when the teachers use mostly English to teach.	-.026	.889
Q20	Getting me to speak in English in front of the class causes me a lot of anxiety (nervousness).	.255	.765

SECTION C

		Component		
		1	2	3
Q25	Use of English as the medium of instruction should be replaced with one of our Indigenous Languages, like isiZulu.	-.036	.748	.074
Q26	Speaking in English, in class/on the grounds improves my English skills.	.800	-.060	-.079
Q27	Interacting with others who have a better understanding of the English language improves my English skills.	.844	-.062	-.042
Q28	Getting more resources like textbooks, will increase chances of improving my skills in English.	.844	-.185	-.170
Q29	I understand the subjects better when the teachers use code switching (explanations in mother tongue language) with Indigenous language like isiZulu to explain concepts.	.017	.653	-.071
Q30	A lot of code-switching (switching to isiZulu) makes learning English more difficult.	-.034	-.064	.835
Q31	Constant correction of my English by my teachers/learners improves my command of the English language.	.712	.072	.294
Q33	Having family members with academic qualification (certificates, diplomas, degrees) helps you to improve your academic performance.	.561	.407	.287
Q34	Getting assistance from my family members in the completion of my homework helps me to improve my academic performance.	.594	.368	.344

The statements in this section also split along three sub-components. The first (highlighted in green) looks at the use of English resulting in improved understanding, the second (highlighted in yellow) looked at replacing English, and the third (single) is concerned with difficulties associated with switching languages.

Section D

		Component	
Q42		1	2
Q42	Speaking	.170	.849
Q42	Reading	.051	.832
Q42	Writing	.021	.827
Q43			
Q43.1	In class	.574	.170
Q43.2	During breaks	.823	.035
Q43.3	After school	.819	.099
Q43.4	At home	.842	-.031

The statements loaded perfectly under the two components which comprise this section. The first component (highlighted in green) measured the respondents' ability in English. The second set (highlighted in yellow) measured the frequency of use of English.

APPENDIX I: STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Statistical information presented by Vic Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000, p. 5)

South Africa is ranked ninety-third in the Global Human Development Ratings by the United Nations Development Programme (Africa Institute 1996: 24) with a Human Development Index (HDI)[2] of 0,65 (0,462 for black South Africans), as compared with first-ranked Canada's figure of 0.932). This is not surprising, if one considers the following facts:

- In 1993, there were 15 million illiterate people in South Africa, measured in terms of those who had not completed seven years of formal education.

- The drop-out rate in 1988 for the first school year in black schools was 16.2 per cent (South African Institute for Race Relations 1990:828).[3]

- In 1992, the mean period of schooling for the population over 25 years of age was 3.9 years.

- In 1994, approximately 5 million South Africans (of whom 3.5 million were black) above the age of four ears had had no education at all, and only 1.7 million had some form of post-matriculation training. Only 1 per cent of the population had degrees.

- In 1993, the matriculation[4] pass-rate for black pupils was 39 per cent. In 1994, only 13 per cent of black pupils in their final school year passed well enough to be admitted to university.

- In 1992, 14 per cent of the teachers in black schools did not have a teaching diploma, and 57 per cent were under qualified.

SOURCE: Webb, V & Kembo-Sure (eds.) 2000. *African Voices: An Introduction to the Languages and Linguistics of Africa.* New York: Oxford University Press.

APPENDIX J: LEARNER PERFORMANCE

Section A: Learner performance

Over the past several years the overall matric pass rate has shown a steady decline. Results for 2009 showed a 2% decline from the previous year. The pass rates for the past seven years are as follows:

• 2003: 73.3%	• 2004: 70.7%
• 2005: 68.3%	• 2006: 66.5%
• 2007: 65.2%	• 2008: 62.7%
• 2009: 60.6%	

Source: ETDP-SETA, (2010). Sectorial analysis of the ETDP Sector. June 2010 Version II, South Africa

Section B: Learner performance in general

Pass rate 2010	Pass rate 2011
70.16 %	68.1 %

Source: Department of Education: Province of KwaZulu-Natal: School's Report: National Senior Certificate 2011, p. 68

Section C: Learner performance in Mathematics and Physical Sciences

Subject	% pass above 40 % and above
Mathematics	23.15 %
Physical Science	30.80 %

Source: Department of Education: Province of KwaZulu-Natal: School's Report: National Senior Certificate 2011, p. 66

APPENDIX K: DEMOGRAPHICS OF SCHOOLS

Demographics		SCHOOL A	SCHOOL B	SCHOOL C
Teachers	Total #	37	34	17
	# African (%)	5 (14%)	7 (21%)	10 (59%)
	# Indian (%)	32 (86%)	26 (76%)	6 (35%)
	# Coloureds (%)		1 (3%)	
	# Whites (%)			1 (6%)
Learners	Total #	1025	862	558
	# African (%)	974 (95%)	776 (90%)	558 (100%)
	# Indian (%)	51 (5%)	83 (9.5%)	
	# Coloureds (%)		3 (.5%)	
Grade 12 Learners	Total #	92	89	53
	# African (%)	87 (94.5%)	80 (90%)	53 (100%)
	# Indian (%)	5 (5.5%)	7 (8%)	
	# Coloureds (%)		2 (2%)	

Table 4.2   Demographics of sample school

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