THE EFFECT OF SIGN LANGUAGE BARRIERS AMONG DEAF LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY OF A SPECIAL SCHOOL IN MOTHEO DISTRICT SOUTH AFRICA

by

NGOBENI WINNIE POELANE

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the

Faculty of Education

at the

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Supervisor: Dr MP Rankhumise
Co-Supervisor: Dr JR Maimane

SEPTEMBER 2017

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not submitted it at another educational institution.

Signed:

W.P. Ngobeni

Date: 31-07-2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge all those who offered their support and guidance during the time in which I conducted this study.

- Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr M.P. Rankhumise and Dr J.R. Maimane, for their overall assistance and for helping me to see things from a more in-depth perspective. The completion of the research would not have been possible without their valuable guidance, support and advice.
- My gratitude also goes to the Faculty of Humanities for giving me the opportunity to conduct research.
- I am also grateful to my family, my husband, J.A. Ngobeni; my son, Innocent; and my daughter, Nhlamolo; for always being patient and understanding with regard to my constant absence, and the strain that my commitment to this project may have placed on our family life.
- My sincere appreciation goes to my colleagues who inspired me throughout my studies. Without their constant encouragement and motivation, I would not have made it this far.
- My deepest gratitude also goes to the teachers and learners who participated so willing in this study, and who offered up their time to make this project a success.
- Lastly, and most importantly, I wish to thank the Almighty God whose blessed assurance sustains me and gives direction to all of my work.

ACRONYMS

ASL	American Sign Language
DES	Department for Education Skills
DoE	Department of Education
DoBE	Department of Basic Education
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DEAFSA	Deaf South Africa
DPA	Disabled Persons Act
FET	Further Education and Training
ODL	Open Distance Learning
H.E	Higher Education
PSE	Pidgin Sign English
SASL	South African Sign Language
SADC	Southern African Development Community
CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
SADC	Southern African Development Community

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of sign language barriers among deaf learners in the form of a case study which focused on one of the special schools for the deaf and the blind in the Motheo District. It consisted of seven educators (two males and five females), ten learners (six males and four females) and a class of grade eight learners who use sign language as their first language. This study employed a qualitative research method, namely a case study. The simple random sampling method was used in which each member of the population under survey had an equal chance of being selected.

Data was collected by means of interviews, classroom observations and a literature review. Semi-structured questions were used when interviewing the educators and learners of the selected school in the Motheo District as they had knowledge of the statistics with regard to the performance related to the use of sign language as medium of instruction, as well as the causes of problems related to the low performance of the learners at their school. A qualified sign language interpreter was used to translate the data.

The results of the study indicated that a lack of educator in-service SASL training, as well as learners acquiring language at school rather than from the time that they are still in their mothers' wombs, and a lack of physical resources are responsible for the problems with regard to the system.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Deafness is a condition in which an individual suffers from hearing loss, and which has an effect on the acquisition of language or the reproduction of sounds. Deaf people have a serious degree of hearing loss with a very slight or no auditory perception for speech at all (Moore, 2010). People working with them should have a basic understanding of deafness in terms of the audio-logical aspects and characteristics of deafness. These are the main causes of the severe disadvantaging of deaf people (Rietveld-Van Wingerden & Tijsseling, 2010).

According to Hardin, Blanchard, Kimmery and parker (2014) citing (Hardonk, Daniels, Desnerck, Van Hove, Van Kershaver, Sigurjonsdottir & Loucks, 2011) when a child is born deaf or becomes deaf (e.g. through illness or accident), family members are faced with a number of important decisions, especially with regard to the medium of communication their child will use, a decision that shapes every aspect of a child's life. This is a very personal decision and is influenced not only by the child's parents, but also by professionals working with the family, friends, and extended family members Hardin et al. (2014:107) citing (Ingber & Dromi, 2010) argued that, the degree to which professionals use family-centred practices, influences the life decisions of the parents as well as their feelings about whether or not they have been supported by professionals

Sign language is the principal means of communication in deaf communities. However, since they grow up in a hearing world, virtually all deaf signers are functionally bilingual (people who live with the deaf child use their own signs to speak to the Deaf when they do not know Sign language) in western countries. They have a sufficient command of both their Sign language and informal sign language, or have the ability to lip read the surrounding spoken language. In cases where they do not understand, however, a communication breakdown occurs (Bank, 2015). There are numerous examples of communities that consist mostly of bilingual

speakers (Grosjean, 2010); including minority languages that only have bilingual speakers. Speakers of minority languages are likely to know a majority language (Bank, 2015). There are numerous examples of communities that consist mostly of bilingual speakers (Grosjean, 2010); including minority languages that only have bilingual speakers. Speaker of minority language are likely to know a majority language (Bank, 2015).

According to Hiddinga & Crasborn (2011), there is no single situation in the world in which sign language forms the dominant language for a discussion on the global situation of sign languages. As far as the present generation of adult deaf signers in western countries is concerned, sign language is typically acquired informally from peers in school situations (Hiddinga & Crasborn, 2011). The minority of deaf people acquire their sign language from signing deaf parents, siblings or deaf people in their extended families. By contrast, spoken language has typically been taught formally in school programmes to all of today's generations (Bank, 2015). Throughout the 20th century, deaf education has seen a major focus on acquiring spoken language skills which, only in the last two decades, has received a slow increase in attention for sign language as a language of interaction between teachers and learners, as a language of instruction, and as a subject language (Rietveld-Van Wingerden & Tijsseling, 2010).

Outside the western world, there is more variation in terms of the impact of school settings on the acquisition of spoken language. In certain cases, there is no education for deaf children at all (Zeshan & De Vos, 2012). The most pronounced examples of these situations are 'deaf villages' such as the one in Worcester, Cape Town, where nearly all deaf people are monolingual signers (Zeshan & De Vos, 2012). Nyst (2012) claims that a significant part of the hearing population in Wooster in Cape Town is fluent in both the spoken and sign language of the village, and provides a comparable case for an overview of such communities around the world.

The researcher has observed that there is no single universal sign language. As is the case with other languages, sign language arises naturally through its use by the community of users in a natural context, and evolves and develops over time as it is passed down from generation to generation. Sign language used in one country is

identifiably distinct from the sign language used in another country, particularly where the countries are geographically and historically unrelated (Moore, 2010). Moore (2010) continues saying that Sign languages are not related to the spoken language of the geographical area in which they occur. Although English is the language spoken primarily in Britain and the USA, the sign languages of these two countries are different. Some countries, such as Britain and America, have fostered the development of their sign languages. In these two countries, users of sign language learn the written language and it is consistent (Unit for language Facilitation, 2004: 29).

The South African School Act of 1996 states that South African sign language is to be the medium of instruction (now known as the language of learning) in schools for the deaf. Although sign language is not considered to be an official language in our country, it does have the status of a medium of instruction in schools that have been set up to cater specifically for the needs of deaf learners.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

According to National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) (2010), the ear is involved in the function of hearing and equilibrium (balance), and is also an energy converter. It receives the mechanical energy of sound waves (vibrations in the air) and converts it into electrical signals. The ossicle acts as a transformer that converts the sound vibrations in the air into sound vibrations in the fluid in the inner ear. Sound passes from the inner ear to the auditory nerve and, ultimately, to the brain where sound is interpreted. There are two types of hearing loss, namely conductive hearing loss and sensory neural hearing loss (Myers & Fernandes, 2010). They continued saying, conductive hearing loss occurs as a result of an abnormality in the external or middle ear which, in turn, results in the failure of sound waves being transmitted through the tympanic membrane, through the ossicular system into the cochlea of the inner ear. Sensory neural hearing loss, on the other hand, occurs as a result of a problem in the inner ear or auditor nerve which causes sensor neural or perceptive hearing loss. It affects the ability to hear some sound frequencies, as well as the ability to distinguish between complex sounds such as speech. It may result from disturbing

the inner ear fluid circulation, fluid pressure or a disturbance in nerve transmission. This results in deafness (Rietveld-Van Wingerden & Tijsseling, 2010).

Sign language is not one of our eleven official languages in South Africa, but it is as important as other languages. It is mentioned explicitly in Education White Paper 6 of 2001 as one of the languages of South Africa that must be promoted, and for which adequate conditions must be created. The deaf people of South Africa have their own ongoing development and have created their own culture just as others have in this post-modern world (Quinn, 2010). They have diverse membership in many different cultures, based on religion, lifestyle, beliefs and education. They identify with the deaf world and shared experiences that come from being hearing-impaired, and participate in community activities (Unit for language Facilitation, 2004). The researcher supports the above statements from her own experience they enjoy living only as a deaf community.

Deafness results from different causes. Some are born deaf, whereas others become deaf due to accident or illness during the course of their lives. For this reason, their degrees of deafness are not the same (Biggs & Tang, 2009; Cambron-McCabe, McCarthy & Thomas, 2009). The researcher wishes to deal with those Sign Language barriers to learning that affect the performance of deaf learners at special schools. She also wishes to discover a way to understand the strengths and needs of diverse language communities, including integrated speaking languages such as English, and families and schools using South African Sign Language (SASL).

According to the South African Social Welfare Department, in South Africa, every child under the age of eighteen years must attend school or the parents will be charged for criminal offence. Sometimes, however, some parents do not take a child to school until community members realise this and report the matter to the authorities. Thus, they introduce their children to formal schooling at the age of ten or older because of the pressure they receive from the community members who report the matter to the South African Social Welfare Department. Consequently, these Deaf children feel rejected by society due to loneliness and their lack of language skills.

According to research, when Deaf learners only start attending school at the age of ten years or older, it is difficult to place them in the correct grade since they would not have acquired the relevant knowledge to start in the higher grades which would consist of learners in their age group. As a result, the children in the lower grades may make fun of them, thus causing a great deal of frustration and unhappiness on the part of the Deaf learner. Moreover, they end up being placed in the skills-based classes, where some do not have a passion for the skills they are meant to develop, with the result that they drop out of school.

The gap created by not developing any spoken or sign language between the time of birth and the time of starting school does not cease to exist (Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005), a notion that is supported by Botha, Smit and Oosthuizen (2009). Sign language also becomes part of their challenge as they become frustrated when they are supposed to use it as their first language in all subjects (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005). It is very difficult for some Deaf learners to start learning Sign language while being under tremendous pressure to cope with mastering the rest of the curriculum. This also presents a challenge to some educators who work with Deaf learners despite not knowing how to use SASL themselves. In the classroom situation, such educators fail to effectively explain concepts to Deaf learners and to ensure that they have an understanding of the course material, due to a communication breakdown (Akach, 2010). Traditionally, educators demonstrate and explain course material using spoken language to ensure that learners understand and can learn and retain information. In a situation where the learners are unable to understand, and educators are unable to explain adequately, the communication barrier can result in some learners under-performing academically (Biggs & Tang, 2007).

If learners do not have a good foundation in terms of using Sign language as a first language, this may cause them to divert from academic classes where Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) is followed. Consequently, this leads to such learners being placed in skills classes where they do practical work only. The school has occupational therapists that help to assess learners who cannot cope with CAPS.   It is always better to start teaching our Deaf children at an early stage where they start acquiring language skills and developing fine motor skills at pre-

school that form the building blocks for their future learning. Deaf children who attend pre-school in a hearing pre-school situation where the parents enroll them because they are working or feel that he child is still young for hostel life, acquire none of the early developmental skills acquired by hearing children (Akach, 2010). The language that is used there is a spoken language that do not benefit the Deaf child. In terms of future development, it would be much better if these children were given the opportunity to attend schools for the deaf. Unfortunately, schools that cater solely for the deaf are very scarce and are often far away from some home. The other challenge is that parents are afraid of sending their infants to boarding schools (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005; Ryn & Deci, 2009). Sometimes, it is very difficult to learn or sign fluently if either the educator or the learner is not well versed in signing (sign language is their first language at school). This can become a barrier to the teaching and learning processes.

(Deaf South Africa Unit for Language Facilitation, 2004; Akach, 2010) states that almost 90% of deaf children in South Africa are born to hearing parents. These figures show that learners from hearing families do not have a first language from their day of birth until the time they go to school. However, educators must find ways of dealing with the sign language problem and somehow overcoming or compensating for it. After completing this study, the researcher will be in a better position to assist universities to amend their registration policies for those who wish to study education, and make SASL a compulsory module.

Educational transformation advocates have dedicated huge amounts of time and energy to improving public schools and raising student achievement. The researcher will focus on factors such as improving the time allocated for sign language as the first language in the curriculum, physical resources such as DVD and make SASL a standard of communication for everyone in Deaf schools. Another major factor that has been overlooked in the past is the motivation of the students themselves. All of the aforementioned factors will assist learners in gaining a greater conceptual understanding, satisfaction with school, self-esteem, and social adjustment, as well as lowering dropout rates (Vitthal & Jasen, 2004; Gottfried, 2009).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The South African education system lacks skilled and fluent sign language educators and learning resources. This has an effect on the teaching and learning of deaf learners. Most Deaf learners go to school without any language as their first language. This means that they do not have a way of dealing with sign language barriers during the teaching and learning process. Deaf learners are visually-oriented people. They use their eyes as their ears, and their hands as their mouths. Therefore, they cannot 'listen' while performing a task (Chataika, 2010). Therefore the absent of skilled Sign language educators is a barrier to learning of Deaf learners

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What was the effect of being taught by non-fluent Sign language educators on Deaf learners in special schools for the deaf?
- What is the effect of sign language barriers on the teaching and learning of deaf learners?

1.5 AIM

The aim of this study is to investigate the effects of sign language barriers on deaf learners in special schools.

1.6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To investigate the effects of sign language barriers on deaf learners in special schools; and
- To determine the effect of sign language barriers on the teaching and learning of deaf learners.

1.7   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study could help to provide solutions on how to deal with sign language barriers to learning of the deaf learners in the education system, as well as guidelines on achieving quality education in special schools for the deaf. It might provide solutions to these problems by means of specific actions to be taken to successfully address the challenges experienced by special schools for the deaf. This study would support both the special schools and the Free State Department of Education in terms of how to increase the number of Deaf learners who complete Grade 12. In addition, it will increase the odds of deaf learners appreciating their first language from an early age and having a healthy self-esteem.

1.8   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The researcher considered Piaget's theory of Intellectual Development. According to the researcher's experience, deaf people are visually-orientated, and cannot perform two duties at once such as listening and writing. If you want to explain something to them, they must stop writing and look at the educator. Their problem is that they are unable to hear sound or voice, e.g. an educator cannot teach deaf learners sound. The reason is that their vocal tracts do not have an opening, which helps with the vibration of the vocal cords so that the voice can be introduced. In other words, it does not make sense. In reality, people want their experience to make sense, and have an intrinsic need for understanding, order and certainty (Bernd, 2000). They are unable to do phonics or spelling with their mouths. Instead, they finger spell. This means that the development of schema has never taken place satisfactorily. Piaget states that what is said above is an equilibrium need for understanding. This is a unit of sound system of language that forms the nucleus of a syllable (Paul & Don, 2010). According to the *Unisa Custom Edition* (2014), there are three questions across the theories' general principles of development which are based on the brain and cognitive development. Vygotsky's *sociocultural perspective of individual thinking* involves infants developing psychomotor schemes such as reaching for and holding objects. When they reach the school-going age, they develop more abstract schemes of classification and proportional reasoning. On the other hand, Sternberg and Sternberg (2012) assert that human intelligence can be viewed as an integrated

9

or 'umbrella' psychological construct for a great deal of theory and research on the cognitive process to enhance learning and the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment.
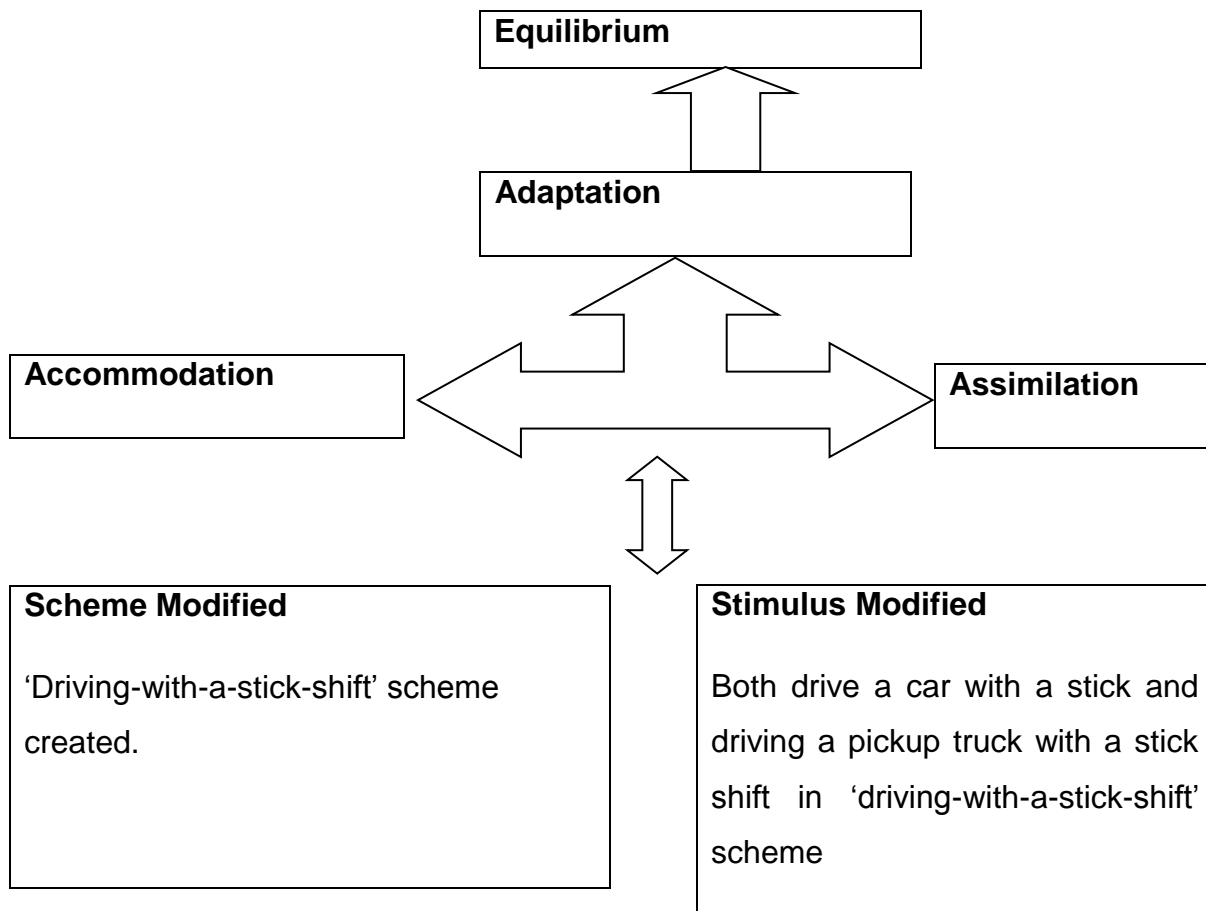
Figure 1.1: Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development

People create schema in order to make sense of their experiences and reach equilibrium. As we organize and come to understand these experiences, they become our 'driving schemes'. Infants develop psychomotor schemes such as reaching for and holding objects; at school age, they develop more abstract schemes such as classification and proportional reasoning. Piaget used the idea of schemes to refer to a narrow range of operations, such as infants' objectives permanence schemes – the idea that an object still exists even when they cannot see it (Paul & Don, 2010).

As an individual acquires new experiences, existing schemes may become inadequate, i.e. they cannot explain the new experience and his or her equilibrium is

disrupted. To re-establish it, he/she adapts. Adaptation is the process of adjusting schemes and experiences to one another to maintain equilibrium. Adaptation consists of two reciprocal processes, namely accommodation and assimilation (Paul & Don, 2010). Accommodation is a form of adaptation during which individuals modify an existing scheme and create a new one in response to an experience. Assimilation is a form of adaptation during which individuals incorporate an experience in the environment into an existing scheme.

1.9   REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

For this study, the researcher would like to examine the bounded system. The main aim is to uncover multiple realities in terms of the deafness, as well as to discover the barriers that they are facing with regard to learning, and to ensure that she does not repeat what has been researched before. In America, a literature review was conducted to identify issues and concerns related to services for families with members who are deaf. (Note that person-first language [i.e. 'persons with hearing loss'] is not used in some instances because of the terminology preferred by participants in the deaf community, with particular emphasis on those using ASL, to develop focus group topics and questions). According to Mullen (2010), the results of the deafness review are described and organised according to four themes which include: (a) modes of communication, (b) deafness and self-identity, (c) family interactions, and (d) education.

According to Belinda, Hardin, Sheresa, Boone, Blanchard, Megan, Kemmery, Margo & Samuel (2014), American Sign Language (ASL) is the primary language used by people who are deaf and hard of hearing. They use various modes of communication to effectively communicate with those who do not know or use ASL. Each mode of communication is described as ASL: 'an autonomous linguistic system independent of English'. They further state that 'In ASL, hand shape, movement, and other grammatical features combine to form signs and sentences'. ASL is a visual language that was derived from French Sign Language in the early 1800s (Shaw & Delaporte, 2011). Though many different sign languages exist, ASL is considered to be the most widely-used manual language in the United States. Belinda et al. (2014) describe ASL as 'an autonomous linguistic system.'

South Africa is still in the process of developing the language (Education White Paper 6). Belinda et al. (2014) assert that, in addition, ASL varies due to racial, cultural, regional, and/or ethnic factors. Thus, similar to regional dialects used in spoken languages, ASL in the South east may contain signs different from those in other regions of the United States. They claim that for a child who is deaf, depending on the degree of hearing loss, early language acquisition is usually easier through signed language rather than the exclusive use of oral methods (McCaskill, Lucas, Bayley & Hill, 2011).

When learner or the educators enter a system without South African Sign Language (SASL), both teaching and learning is affected in the classroom. Consequently, when the educator writes a word on the chalkboard, the Deaf learners that have the background knowledge of signing give the right to the educator until he or she can communicate fluently with the deaf learners (Akach, 2010).

Language acquisition is a natural process that occurs without effort for most hearing children (Owens, 2010). Most hearing students begin school with good language skills and a strong background knowledge (Federal, 2009). Educators use these essential skills to teach children to read and write, acquire content knowledge, and develop social skills. Quite simply, oral and written language is the media through which educators teach academic content. Moreover, oral and written language serve as the primary means by which students demonstrate their knowledge of subject matter. Virtually all school learning occurs through the medium of language. Not only do people need to acquire strong language skills to communicate with others, but the very use of language enables people to acquire concepts and ideas, and to sharpen their thinking (Botha, Smit & Oosthuizen, 2009).

USING SIGN LANGUAGE TO COMMUNICATE

Sign languages are the principal means of communication in deaf communities. However, since they grow up in a hearing world, virtually all Deaf people are functionally bilingual because those who live with them use unstructured signs to communicate with them (they have sufficient command of both their Signed

language and the surrounding sign language, at least for daily communication). There are abundant examples of communities that consist mostly of bilingual speakers (Grosjean, 2010); including minority languages that only have bilingual speakers. Speakers of minority languages are also likely to know a majority language. This is, in fact, what we see in deaf communities, where there is not a single situation in the world where sign language forms the dominant language (Hiddinga & Crasborn, 2011) for a discussion of the global situation of sign languages. For the present generation of adult deaf people in western countries, sign language is typically acquired informally from peers in school situations. Only a small minority of deaf people acquire their sign language from signing deaf parents, siblings, or deaf people in their extended families. By contrast, spoken language has typically been taught formally in school programmes to all of today's generations. Throughout the 20th century, deaf education has seen a major focus on acquiring spoken language skills which, only in the last two decades, have received a slow increase in attention for sign language as a language of interaction between teachers and children, as a language of instruction, and as a subject language (Rietveld-Van Wingerden & Tijsseling, 2010).

According to Zeshan and De Vos (2012), outside the western world there is more variation in terms of the impact of school settings on the acquisition of spoken language and, in certain cases, there is no education for deaf children at all. There has recently been increasing attention on the resulting multi-lingual, combined knowledge of a spoken and a signed language, especially in the psycholinguistic literature (Ormel & Knoors, 2010). While we tend to think of all deaf people firstly as bimodal bilingual, there are substantial numbers of hearing people who acquire a signed and a spoken language from birth: both hearing children of deaf adults and hearing siblings of deaf children in signing families with hearing parents can be considered fully bimodal bilingual as they have full exposure to both the signed and the spoken language from an early age. Studies on language production have revealed code-mixing phenomena of the same type as that observed in spoken languages (Bank, 2015). Bank, 2015 continue saying that, as a result of the bilingual nature of western countries Deaf communities, spoken language items found their way into signers' communication. In spontaneous signing in the Sign Language of The Netherlands, signs are usually accompanied by either mouthing or mouth

13

gestures (Bank, 2015). Mouthing refers to silently articulated words, or parts of words, originally stemming from the surrounding spoken language. They are, presumably, lexically bound to the manual part of the sign since they are generally temporally aligned and share the meaning with the manual sign (Bank, Crasborn & Van Hout, 2011). Mouth gestures are all other linguistically-relevant mouth movements that occur with signs (lip reading in South Africa).

1.10   RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative approach was undertaken in conducting the study as such a design enabled the researcher to conduct the research in the natural setting of social factors. Qualitative research is a holistic research strategy as it seeks to understand events in the natural context rather than in sections to gain trust and understanding and to get close to the subjects' focus on the subject (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009). The study stems from a phenomenological approach and uses a case study as a method since it is a descriptive study of how individuals experience a type of research. The researcher will try to gain access to individuals' life-worlds, which is their world of experience; it is where consciousness exists.

1.11   RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The sample consisted of a class of Grade 8 learners from a special school for the deaf and blind in the Motheo District. The class was composed of ten (10) learners, i.e. six (6) males and four (4) females from a population of fifty (50) Grade 8 learners who were conveniently selected. A sample of seven (7) educators was purposefully selected from a population of fifty-five (55) educators.

1.12   DATA COLLECTION

The researcher collected data through semi-structured interviews and video recordings of classroom observations. Conducting in-depth interviews presented a common method for gaining access to individuals' life-worlds. The researcher observed one educator in class who used sign language as a medium for teaching deaf learners, and video recording the lesson as evidence. After that, learners and

14

educators were interviewed (semi-structured), using Sign language to obtain in-depth information for the study.

1.13   DATA ANALYSIS

The data pertaining to the interviews was categorised according to their response, using thematic analysis. Video-recorded lessons were analysed by observing the participants' reactions and the way in which the educator presented the lesson, using sign language. The main task in the data analysis stage was to identify common themes from the participants' description of their experiences (Creswell, 2005). The video was analysed with the help of a qualified sign language interpreter.

1.14   POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to the small sample used in the study, the results may not be adequate enough to be generalised beyond the specific population from which the sample was taken. In addition, the literature on the effects of Sign language on Deaf Learners may be limited.

1.15   DEFINITION OF TERMS

Barrier: An obstacle that keeps people or things apart. It prevents communication and bars access to advancement. It is something that causes a blockage or problem, i.e. it is an obstacle that prevents movement or access. Synonyms are: obstruction, hurdle, stumbling block, impediment, hindrance and curb. The barrier on which this study concentrates is a language barrier. When people speak different languages and there is no one who can translate or facilitate the flow of information between them, there will be a breakdown in communication. This is the beginning of a barrier to communication (Dweck, 2010).

Deafness: Any degree more than 15% of hearing loss due to accident or from the birth time. A person has an outer ear, which channels sound through the ear canal to the middle ear that consists of the ear drum and, finally, the inner ear which has a Eustachian tube that carries messages to the central nervous system and the brain. If the middle ear is damaged, then no messages can pass to the inner ear. This

15

results in what are colloquially known as dumped people. They are given this name as they have been cast off by society at large and often by their families. There are also two types of deaf people. The first is defined through the writing of an uppercase letter 'D' and the second is written with a lowercase letter 'd'. The uppercase 'D' means that a person has been born deaf, whereas the lowercase 'd' implies that deafness has occurred during the course of life (Cambron-McCabe, McCarthy & Thomas, 2009).

Special: When something is referred to as special, it is seen as unique. It has no competitor. It is of its own type. In many cases, the word special is used to refer to things that are used occasionally. Other words for special are: irregular, jagged, uneven and patchy Grosnjean (2010). The focal point of this study is learners with special needs. This means that the focus is not on all learners, but rather on those who are irregular, i.e. those learners with whom people think it is difficult to work (Du Preez & Roux, 2010).

1.16   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher abided by the code of professional conduct by respecting the norms and values of the participants, striving for honesty, and respecting the codes and policies of the institutions within which the research was undertaken. The researcher obtained permission from the parents of deaf learners regarding their participation in the research, and asked learners and educators for their consent before undertaking the research. Upon completion of the study, the results, ideas, tools, and resources will be shared and will be open to criticism and new ideas. It was imperative that the researcher obtained clearance from the Free State Provincial Department of Education. The participants remained anonymous when completing the questionnaires. The researcher also did not coerce any of the participants into taking part in this research.

1.17   OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

- Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

- Chapter 2: Literature Review
- Chapter 3: Research Methodology
- Chapter 4: Results and Analysis of Results
- Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

1.18   CONCLUSION

The South African policy document on inclusive education (Education White paper 6) is based on providing education that is appropriate to the needs of all learners, whatever their origin, background, ability or circumstances. The implementation of this policy requires the accommodation of the full variety of educational needs. The system should incorporate inclusive education to accommodate learners with special needs, rather than separating or discriminating against the learners to suit the needs of the system. David, Sandy & Nadeen (2014) state that quality education can be judged in various ways, sometimes it is judged based on the academic performance of students (e.g. annual national assessment or Grade 12 results). Another, more holistic way of judging quality is by looking at the nature of the social interaction in the process of education. If what happens is really meaningful to those involved and results in the healthy development of the whole, competent and confident persons and empower all not some, then we can say it is quality education.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background on the impact of sign language barriers on deaf learners in a special schools classroom. An in-depth literature review was conducted as it informs the researcher, and forms the basis of good research. Books, as well as journal articles and Internet sources were consulted. Institutional polices were also consulted. The aim was to find out what has been written with regard the topic under investigation and to avoid repeating similar studies. Moreover, the aim was to establish the need for the research and to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework for the study.

Upon reflection, it becomes clear that the changes lead to an increase in diversity and the complexity of the kind of learners attending special schools. Landsberg, Kruger & Swart (2011) contend that understanding learners more effectively and more clearly, is critical to educator's ability to cope with and learn from the massive changes currently taking place and that this is something towards which educators should strive.

Hardin et al (2014) citing (Keen, 2007; Belinda et al., 2014) said that effective parent-professional partnerships include attention to the well-being of the family, rather than just an individual family member. Hardin et al. (2014) argued that an understanding of the successes and challenges experienced by families of American Sign language explain that the family is the best position to determine the needs and the well-being of the child; supporting the family is the best way in which to help the child, which includes having an understanding of the family's community; and family choice and decision making in the provision of services respect and affirm family's strengths.

Mutswanga & Mapuranga (2012) from Zimbabwe are of the opinion that the advent of inclusive practices ushered in a new participation dispensation into the university systems such as Open Distance Learning (ODL) institutions with a view to improving

the governance of disadvantaged students. They further state that the principle of inclusion provides opportunities to access Higher Education (HE) and to succeed in learning, using either the conventional or open distance learning (ODL) mode. Both ODL and inclusion philosophies are experiencing a rapid growth worldwide. For decades, elitism has negatively impacted the principle of inclusion. This is evidenced by exclusive types of assessments and the elitist schools for the wealthy only that still exist.

Higher Education in Zimbabwe (H.E) represents the acme of epistemologies. It is usually considered an imperative opportunity to a better future (Chataika, 2010). Furthermore, the Department for Education Skills 2002 (DES) coded by Mutswanga and Mapuranga (2012) postulates that those who have degree qualifications have better chances of job promotion as compared with non-graduates. Does this include people with disadvantages and/or disabilities? The elite are the dominant people who are privileged and who are in a position to influence and change things to suit themselves. Usually, elitists endorse the exclusion of the minority or certain groups of people. Most people with disadvantages do not complete their education and, when they complete their high school education, they usually do not meet H.E admission criteria (Brett, 2010). Thus, they are considered vulnerable to exclusion. There seems to be a lack of interest in terms of developing policy for students who are disadvantaged in H.E. This lack of policy on H.E means that institutions of higher learning cannot invest in the elimination of barriers such as exclusion. The lack of interest with regard to developing policy on the education of students with disabilities may be attributed to a poor attitude, ignorance, professional protectionism towards segregated education, and antagonism towards inclusive education (Kochung, 2011; Khan, 2013). On the other hand, pressures from the elitist philosophy are said to control H.E to be selective in terms of its enrolment to keep its reputation. Moreover, little research has been done on the influence of elitism on ODL inclusive education. The goal of this research is to reach out to all Deaf learners. Why, then, does it remain a challenge? How does the elitist philosophy influence ODL inclusive practices in Zimbabwean H.E? Mutswanga and Mapuranga's (2012) experiences as an ODL lecturer plus the related literature review will contribute towards this debate. This demonstrates that Deaf people are visual-orientated people.

2.2   CIRCUMSTANCE AND ISSUES

The diversity of learners, as well as the language barriers that affect both learners and educators with regard to teaching and learning in the classroom involves learning the language while being expected to teach at the same time. Consequently, when the educator writes a word on the board, deaf learners signal the educator until he or she can communicate fluently with the deaf learners. If a learner does not have the necessary reading skills, this adds to the problem (Belinda et al., 2014). Learning is the process of bringing skills, such as values, emotions and cognitive skills together. This takes place when the teacher and the leaners focus on what happens when learning takes place.

The action that takes place during the teaching and learning process is based on learning theories. Landsberg, Kruger & Nel (2011) state that learning theories have two important values, namely vocabulary and conceptual framework, and the example is observation; the second is when learners look for the solution to the problem. The researcher realises that the three theories employed by Paul and Don (2010) in order to investigate the learners' equilibrium in terms of learning compared to that of hearing learners, include behaviourism, cognitive theories and constructivism. Behaviourist theories focus on objective observation, whereas cognitive theories explain brain-based learning, and constructivism refers to the learner building new ideas (Jordan, Carlile & Stack, 2009).

Jordan, Carlile and Stack (2009) claim that behaviourist, cognitive and contractive learning theories are those which take place in the classroom, and which include the steps that show development in a human brain. The most obvious behavioural domain is the psychomotor domain. These theories work hand-in-hand. Paul and Don (2010) assert that behaviourism breaks information into specific items which allows the learner to display observable behaviours that can then be reinforced. Cognitive refers to the level of evoking prior knowledge and building on what is already known (contractive). Deaf learners are totally different as they are born without knowing any spoken language, meaning that equilibrium is not achieved during the development of these three theories. According to the researcher's

observations, if a person is blind or deaf, the body of that particular person is not in balance.

Hardin et al. (2014) citing Gudyanga, Eliphanos, Gudyanga & Wadesango (2014) contend that although ASL is the primary language of focus in their study, people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing use a variety of modes of communication to communicate effectively with those who do not know or use ASL. Each mode of communication is described as ASL which is 'an autonomous linguistic system independent of English' (Belinda et al., 2014). They further state that 'In ASL, hand shape, movement, and other grammatical features combine to form signs and sentences'. Hardin et al. (2014) cite Shaw and Delaporte (2011) to explain that ASL is a visual language that was derived from French Sign Language in the early 1800s in addition Hardin et al. (2014) citing Belinda et al., *(*2014) assert that ASL varies due to racial, cultural, regional, and/or ethnic factors (McCaskill, Lucas, Bayley & Hill, 2011). Thus, similar to regional dialects used in spoken languages, ASL in the Southeast may contain signs that are different from those in other regions of the United States. They assert that for a child who is deaf, depending on the degree of hearing loss, early language acquisition is usually easier through signed language rather than the exclusive use of oral methods.

Hardin et al. (2014) said: Pidgin Sign English (PSE) is known as 'contact signing' and typically features the sentence structure of English in addition to aspects of ASL. PSE differs from signed English systems in that signed language involves signing the words in English order and typically includes word endings and articles (e.g. the, -ly, -ing) but not ASL syntax (Hauser, 2000; Lucas & Valli, 2001; Belinda et al., 2014). According to Hardin et al. (2014) PSE is more commonly used when communicating with hearing people who are unfamiliar with ASL.

Hardin et al. (2014: 109) state that "Auditory/oral communication is used when a person who is deaf employs his or her residual hearing and the use of listening technology (e.g. hearing aids, cochlear implants) to produce and understand spoken language". Hardin et al. (2014: 109) add that "auditory/oral users typically participate in speech therapy to listen to and produce spoken language similar to that of their same-age peers". Today, many auditory/oral users have cochlear implants.

21

According Hardin et al. (2014: 109), the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (Owens, 2010), it is estimated that 188 000 people have received cochlear implants. This communication strategy involves a person looking at the mouth of the speaker to understand what is being said Hardin et al. (2014: 109).

Hardin et al. (2014: 109) citing Spencer & Marschark (2010) and (Grosjean, 2010), few people who are deaf are able to read lips as only some 30% of all spoken sounds are visible on the lips. Hardin et al. (2014: 109) continued also said "the process of a bilingual or multilingual individual switching from one language to another to improve communication with someone is referred to as code switching." Hardin et al. (2014: 109) explain code switching is not a single mode of communication, but rather a means of facilitating a communicative interaction between two individuals who do not share a common language. The use of this communication strategy has been found to occur with children two years and older who are from bilingual families (Zeshan & De Vos, 2012 and Belinda et al., 2014). Hardin et al. (2014: 109) made an example of code switching as a person who is deaf stops signing and begins voicing in English or begins signing in a more English-based system to facilitate communication with someone who is not fluent in ASL.

Hardin et al. (2014: 109) explain deafness in terms of self-identity, depending on factors such as the degree of hearing loss, age of onset, and mode of communication used, an individual with hearing loss may have an identity that is radically different from those of other individuals with a similar type of hearing loss, and may or may not classify him- or herself as deaf. David and Resnik (2011) distinguish between deaf (medical view) and Deaf (cultural view). The traits of a dual or bicultural identity consist of feeling comfortable in both 'worlds', i.e. the Deaf community and the hearing community. Hardin et al. (2014: 109) said "these individuals might use both sign and spoken language to communicate, utilising a total communication approach or some form of PSE" Many within multiple contexts Leigh (2008) and Humphries & Humphries, (2011). Hardin et al. (2014: 109) continued   saying two prominent aspects of deaf identity are the degree to which a person identifies with Deaf culture and how a person views his or her deafness. The word Deaf that begins with an uppercase letter is the political and social term that

refers to individuals who are members of the Deaf community and who consider themselves to be culturally Deaf. By contrast, the word deaf beginning with a lowercase letter is used to describe the medical or physiological condition of hearing loss or deafness.

Research has revealed four types of self-identity, namely marginal identity, hearing identity, dual/bicultural identity, and deaf identity (Most et al., 2007). Marginal identity is defined as when people who are deaf do not feel that they belong to either a hearing or a Deaf environment. As a result, they may experience difficulties in both worlds (Most et al., 2007; Nikolaraizi, 2007; Brueggemann, 2009). In contrast, dual or bicultural identity consists of feeling comfortable in both worlds, i.e. the Deaf community and the hearing community. This identity type has been linked to positive outcomes (Most et al., 2007). In addition, individuals who identify themselves as having a Deaf-dominant bicultural identity may feel comfortable in both the deaf and hearing worlds, but may prefer to interact in the Deaf world (Holcomb, 1997; Humphries & Humphries, 2011). These individuals appear to be able to maintain a balance and be successful in both the dominant hearing society and Deaf culture. Finally, those who categorise themselves as having hearing identities are individuals who relate to the dominant hearing society. In summary, many factors, such as home life, interactions with the community, and modes of communication, shape the way in which individuals who are deaf identify themselves. When professionals working with families routinely use family-centred practices, the identity the family chooses should be protected and affirmed.

Family Interactions, especially with parents, they have a significant impact on the socialisation of their children. However, if a child who is deaf attends a residential school for the deaf, at times surrogate parents (e.g. teachers and other staff) could also have a considerable impact on the child. A person's social identity is formed when experiences are shared with others, whereas a personal identity is formed through a biological and emotional bond with parents (Humphries & Humphries, 2011). When a parent is hearing and a child is deaf, there may be challenges in the formation of personal identity due to the differences that exist between the parent and the child.

2.3 LANGUAGE, VOCABULARY AND LITERACY DELAYS

Language acquisition is a natural process that occurs without effort for most hearing children (Owens, 2010). Most hearing children begin school with good language skills and a strong background knowledge of the spoken language (Federal, 2009). Educators use these essential skills to teach children to read and write, acquire content knowledge, and develop social skills. Quite simply, oral and written language is the media through which educators teach academic content. In addition, oral and written language serve as the primary means by which students demonstrate their knowledge of subject matter. Virtually all school learning occurs through the medium of language. Not only do people need to acquire strong language skills to communicate with others, but the very use of language enables people to acquire concepts and ideas and to sharpen their thinking (Owens, 2010).

2.4 TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR DEAF LEARNERS

Some established theoretical models demonstrate the importance of environmental factors in learning that have been influential in education (Gudyanga et al., 2014). There are four levels influencing children's learning outcomes that have been identified. These are the microsystem, which is the immediate context of the child such as the school, classroom and home; the exo-system, which is about the outside demands that affect children; and the macro system, which is about the cultural beliefs or institutional policies that influence individuals' behaviour. The ecosystem perspective indicates that the learning environment needs to be considered in the light of the students' needs, and includes all aspects of the system described above as each can influence the educational outcome (Quin, 2010). Understanding the importance of the environment can minimise the effects of a learning difficulty and enhance performance and self-esteem (Gudyanga et al., 2014). In regular secondary schools, there are two groups of hearing-impaired children, namely those wearing hearing aids and those whose hearing disability does not require them to wear assistive devices. Hearing aid users have residual hearing, and the hearing aid brings their hearing almost to a normal level through the amplification process (Gudyanga et al., 2014). Some students may require lip-reading to reach a normal

level of comprehension, and these will need preferential seating arrangements (Gudyanga et al., 2014).

2.5   SIGN LANGUAGE AND SYMPTOMS OF ELITISM (INCLUSIVE)

In view of the above, the need for knowledge reconstruction, the critical scrutiny of existing paradigms, epistemological foundations of existing paradigms and the identification of the limitations of Open Distance Learning (ODL), inclusive practice (Shava, 2013), and the need for ODL institutions to engage pro-actively are justified. Elite education often inculcates a false sense of self-worth. Agreeably, Perry and Francis (2010) are of the opinion that elite institutions encourage their students to flatter themselves for being there and for what being there can do for them. This has, in some instances, closed the minds of some Africans with regard to whom they are, where they come from, their values and the accommodation of others in their circles. Resources are developed with the elite in mind; too many resources are devoted to the elite such as infrastructures and a number of other materials.

Glaser and Van Pletzen (2012) state that most Deaf adults who use signed language as their preferred language demonstrate poor textual literacy skills. In South Africa, as few as one in three Deaf adults who use South African Sign Language (SASL) is functionally literate (Aarons & Glaser, 2002; DEAFSA, 2009) and the average Deaf school-leaver has a written language comprehension ability equal to that of a hearing child of eight (Aarons & Reynolds, 2003; DEAFSA, 2009). Inevitably, compromised textual literacy skills impact on Deaf school-leavers' education and employment. This situation could be prevented by providing Deaf learners with an education which is on a par with that offered to hearing children.

Aarons and Akach (2002), and Glaser and Van Pletzen (2012) clearly set out the conditions for such provisions, arguing that policies on Inclusive Education (enrolling all children in ordinary mainstream schools) cannot be applied straightforwardly to Deaf learners since the barrier that they experience in mainstream classes is 'crucially a matter of language, and not of physical disability'. They further argue that Deaf learners cannot access spoken language, and are therefore excluded from important learning and teaching processes in the hearing classroom. These

25

researchers explain how Deaf learners can fully access education through a signed language, which leads them to conclude that 'the educational needs of Deaf learners can be most efficiently, equitably and cost-effectively met in South African Sign Language (SASL) centres' (Aarons & Akach, 2002; Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012) where schooling in all subjects (including additional languages and textual literacy) would be provided through the medium of a signed language. This study fully endorses the argument put forward by Aarons and Akach (2002) and Glaser and Van Pletzen (2012) for primary and secondary schooling. However, they shift the focus to a South African reality where Deaf students still emerge from various forms of schooling with unconsolidated language abilities. Most of these students would have been taught in institutions where teachers use mixed and degraded language forms. These include haphazard and simplistic signing, exaggerated spoken languages which learners are expected to lip-read, or arbitrary manually-coded systems of spoken languages (usually English or Afrikaans) that fall short of being fully functioning languages such as SASL.

Many schools for deaf children in South Africa now report the adoption of signed language as the language of learning and teaching (DOE, 2004). Only 14% of teachers have well-developed South African Sign Language (SASL) skills (DEAFSA, 2009) said most of them have had no specialised training in teaching through this medium, and no training in using a signed language to scaffold textual literacy skills in an additional language. Some have no teacher training. Furthermore, there are very few Deaf educators in the school system (Aarons & Akach, 2002; DEAFSA, 2009), and only about 20 qualified sign language interpreters in South Africa, few of whom work in education. For older students trying to complete secondary schooling or beginning tertiary education, therefore, Aarons & Akach's (2002) recommendations will have come too late. It is also neither feasible nor educationally appropriate for Further Education and Training (FET) colleges or tertiary level institutions to be established separately for Deaf students.

Very little research is available on secondary and post-secondary education and training for Deaf students in African countries (Chimedza, 1998; Kiyaga & Moores, 2003; Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012). While some conference presentations give descriptions of teaching programmes or the challenges facing Deaf students, no published research specifically focuses on Deaf students at higher levels of

education, and thus far, very little is known about the experiences of Deaf students, teachers and interpreters in inclusive classrooms in South Africa. There seems to be a lack of interest in developing policy for students who are disadvantaged in H.E. This lack of policy on H.E means that institutions of higher learning cannot invest in the elimination of exclusive barriers. The lack of interest in developing policy on education for students with disabilities may be attributed to poor attitude, ignorance, professional protectionism towards segregated education, and antagonism towards inclusive education. These are other gaps that need to be addressed (Khan, 2013 and Kochung, 2011).

2.6 THE ROLE OF SIGN LANGUAGE IN DEAF STUDENTS' EDUCATION

Internationally, the single most important contributing factor to poor literacy acquisition in Deaf people has been identified as the language of learning and teaching. In many schools for deaf children, this language was, historically, a spoken language, for example French, rather than the Signed language of that particular country, i.e. French Sign Language. In the past, educational practice in schools for deaf children focused on developing speech and lip-reading skills rather than a language system appropriate to their sensory abilities. This widespread practice restricted deaf children's access to content areas in the curriculum (Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012).

A growing body of research and associated practice have indicated that using a signed language as the language of learning and teaching exposes Deaf learners to a visual (as opposed to an aural) language that they can easily acquire, given biological readiness and adequate language stimulation (Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012). Unlike the practice of teaching speech and lip-reading skills, the practice of teaching a signed language as the primary language of learning and teaching facilitates access to an appropriate language system through which content knowledge, be it numeracy, science or history, can be absorbed. However, since signed languages do not have a written form, Deaf children taught mainly in signed languages still face the challenge of learning to read and write in a non-signed language. In order to develop textual literacy skills, they have to learn an additional language. For them, the process of learning to read and write is inevitably a matter of

understanding English when it comes to writing (Grosjean, 1992; Mayer & Akamatsu, 2003; Paul, 1998; 2006; Prinz & Strong, 1998; Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012).

Among themselves, Deaf people in South Africa use SASL (DEAFSA, 2009). As in many multilingual countries, English is positioned as a dominant language of learning and teaching in South Africa (Kapp, 2006 and Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012). Deaf students, therefore, may be learning SASL as their primary language of communication (under optimal conditions), may encounter English as the dominant language of learning and teaching at school, and may come from families who speak yet another South African language at home. Thus, they potentially find themselves in a position of having to know at least three languages as Signed languages simultaneously, at different levels, and for different purposes.

The bilingual approach to literacy education for Deaf students is principally based on the Linguistic Interdependence Principle (Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012) which posits that a common underlying proficiency across languages will allow positive transfer to occur from a first to a second language if there is adequate exposure to the second language and motivation to learn.

Children with hearing impairment may have partial or full hearing loss in one or both ears (Gudyanga et al., 2014). The characteristics exhibited by the students depend on the degree of hearing loss and the onset of such loss. Gudyanga et al. (2014) citing Chimedza & Petersen (2003) said, earlier the hearing loss show itself in a child, the more difficulty he or she will have in developing the spoken language. A hearing handicap or deafness involves not only the loss or impairment of hearing, but the loss or limitation of the ability to acquire language and speech naturally or spontaneously (Gudyanga et al., 2014). Impaired or total lack of language has serious implications for the child's development. It is worth noting that the characteristics of a child with mild hearing loss are, in many ways, more similar to a hearing child's than a deaf child's characteristics. It causes a number of other serious problems that are linked to the inability to receive or express messages and thoughts (Adoyo, 2008). According to Gudyanga et al. (2014), because of its insidious and hidden nature, hearing loss can be devastating. It can be particularly traumatic because it is often mistaken for absent-mindedness or senility. For most

28

learners, having hearing loss threatens their self-image and may manifest as feelings of inadequacy, being constraining to other people, being abnormal or handicapped. Most of the literature is in agreement about the feelings people experience when they lose their hearing. The literature has shown that deaf children are less socially mature than hearing children, and that the gap between hearing and deaf children widens with increasing age (Marschark, 1993 as cited by Gudyanga et al., 2014). It has been shown that deaf children and deaf adolescents generally have less positive ideas about themselves than do comparable groups of hearing peers. It has also been reported that there is a high incidence of emotional and behavioural problems in hearing-impaired children of all ages (Grosjeean, 2010).

Reasons advanced for the difficulties of hearing-impaired children include absence of interaction and appropriate mode of communication among these children and their hearing parents (Gudyanga et al., 2014). The delayed language development experienced by most hearing-impaired children results in more limited opportunities for effective and satisfying interaction. Unless a hearing-impaired child has other disabilities such as brain damage, there is no causal relationship between deafness and intelligence. However, the child will be slow in reaching his or her full potential without early stimulation and training in communication (Grosjeean, 2010). . They add that language is not a necessary ingredient for complex cognitive processes. It is a misconception that the hearing-impaired are limited in terms of cognitive development. It has been proven that they are not delayed in terms of visual-motor-perceptual functioning. This may be the case if brain damage is involved, but if the disability is solely in the hearing mechanism, then this appears to be false. Deafness itself does not affect a person's intellectual capacity to learn, and deaf children have the normal range of intelligence when tested on performance rather than on verbal ability. Gudyanga et al. (2014) point out that this is particularly so in deaf students of hearing parents as compared to their hearing peers. The ability to read, which relies heavily on the main language skills, is cited as the main area affected (Glaser & Van Pletzen, 2012). Even at school-leaving age, deaf students are still known to have poor reading attainment levels. Generally, it appears that the child's social development (through socialisation) is closely related to his or her normative cognitive development. If the child's cognitive functioning is limited, or development is hampered by certain conditions such as hearing impairment, social and normative

29

development will likewise be deficient because the inadequate acquisition of insight into what is acceptable and unacceptable (abstract values) will cause problems (Bank, 2015). Deafness is often mistakenly associated with helplessness and the need for protection. Hence, the greatest obstacle facing the hearing-impaired child or adolescent is not the hearing disability, but the failure of parents, professionals and the general public to understand and accept the person with this disability (Bank, 2015).

2.7   MODES OF COMMUNICATION

Hannah (2013) observes that the modes of communication and other communication strategies include gesturing, sign language, oral language, lip-reading, written communication, drawing, finger-spelling, and baby signs. Participants identified multiple decision points about communication choices and shared experiences that illustrated the complexities surrounding their personal choices. The decision to use a primary mode of communication was viewed as an evolving process that could be re-evaluated throughout an individual's lifetime according to personal needs and preferences. Modes of communication varied in response to family (Hannah, 2013). He also explains that deaf children are immersed in educational environments which are not inclusive (only with other deaf and hard-of-hearing children).

2.8   NEGATIVE ATTITUDES

The problem with Sign language barriers is that they do not end with basic education, but continue into higher education. Kochung (2011) asks whether the elitist system provides room for Deaf people. Students who enrol in HE institutions are expected to pass through high school. However, too often high expectations and requirements with a view to maintaining quality education compromise the essence of inclusive practices. While education is the hope for enlightenment of people who are marginalised, its goals are usually derailed by such perceptions. As a result, HE inclusive practices are facing a number of challenges. Barriers to HE inclusion are many as cited by Kochung (2011) and Kerr and West (2010). Some of these include negative attitudes towards those who are disadvantaged and disabled, and discriminative policies and practices. A focus group discussion held in 2005 and

2006 in twelve African countries by Mutswanga and Mapuranga (2014) led to similar findings. Traditionally, in African society, education included every member on an equal basis within his or her community and everyone participated on his or her own level. In essence, this was inclusive education (Kochung, 2011). The indigenous systems respected individuals and did not permit any person to suffer because of differences. It promoted equity and social justice. However, currently, the traditional expectations are overlooked because of western influence. The elitist philosophy plays a part in creating first- and second-class citizens. This marks the beginning of inequality in the name of providing quality education (Kochung, 2011). Thus, hiding behind the banner of setting standards, inequality in HE continues to exist as a norm. It appears as though the exclusion of learners who are disadvantaged in schooling is here to stay at the expense of maintaining quality. They, however, lack epistemological inclusion implementation procedures. Inclusion aims to address social inequity and exclusionary practices (Shava, 2013). The elite dominant are in favour of excluding others, using the set parameters. This is evidence to educationists that colonialism did not end with independence because its effects are still deeply embedded within systems (Mutswanga & Mapuranga, 2014).

The main challenge regarding the implementation of inclusive education pertains to policy issues in Zimbabwe (Mitchell, 2010), while some African countries have made political declarations about their commitments, particularly through the adoption of other countries' legal frameworks and policies to support inclusive practices. It is, therefore, not surprising that in most African countries, inclusive education is still at a very low level. South Africa has not yet reaches a number of government policy issues which are consistent with the intent of inclusive education through the 1987 Education Act and the Disabled Persons Act (DPA) amended in 1996. In addition, there are various supportive circulars from the Primary and Secondary Education sectors (Mutswanga & Mapuranga, 2014). The DPA requires that all students, regardless of race, religion, gender, creed or disability, have access to basic education. The inclusive education circular, amended in 2006, is vague about its commitment to inclusive practices in H.E. As a result, most human rights policies enacted in most African countries only exist on paper and are hardly translatable into practice because they are unclear. Institutions are more often evaluated against

31

their own self-defined missions than against an institutional model defined by a regulatory agency (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbley, 2009).

Deaf children and adults experience significant inequalities in many aspects of their lives, including health (Alexander et al., 2012), well-being and education. Fellinger, Holzinger, Sattel, Laucht and Goldberg (2012) as well as Marschark et al. (2011) are of the opinion that many Deaf children, whose first language is a signed language, grow up in families where their family members do not become competent signers (Fellinger, Holzinger, Sattel, Laucht & Goldberg, 2009a; b). Deaf children have been found to experience higher levels of mental health and emotional difficulties, and one reason for this is the struggle to be understood and to take part in everyday communication (Fellinger et al., 2009a; b). Many deaf children experience challenges with regard to acquiring language skills (Spencer & Marschark, 2010). In the UK, deaf children experience difficulties accessing appropriate linguistic support as far as their education is concerned (Hannah, 2013), resulting in an 'achievement gap' at Key Stage 4, particularly for literacy and numeracy (Hannah, 2013). The long-term impact of these inequalities presents a pressing need to address these issues. Recent research into the factors influencing the mental health of deaf children suggests that early, meaningful and effective communication with peers and family members is beneficial (Fellinger et al., 2012).

Deaf culture, for example refers to 'schools for the Deaf' and 'deaf education' as terms that incorporate a wider group of young people, such as those who consider themselves to be hearing-impaired or who do not identify with the culture (Myers & Fernandes, 2010). These people who are classified by small letter 'd' they got deafness through accidents. The ones with identified with letter big 'D' they are born Deaf. These cause implications in this argument about the nature of identity (whether it is fixed or fluid) and when it emerges in childhood which, unfortunately, will not be fully explored here (Brueggemann, 2009). Developments to address the needs of deaf children have tended to exacerbate communication difficulties, and current trends for mainstreaming have isolated deaf children from other deaf peers. Whereas, in the past, deaf children were educated together in boarding schools, many deaf children are now educated in mainstream non-residential settings where accesses to deaf peers and opportunities for developing fluent sign language are

limited. In the informal dormitory environment, children not only learn sign language but the content of the culture as well. Even though sign language was banned in the classroom, it continued to flourish among the young people whenever they were together and not under surveillance (Quinn, 2010).

2.9   CONCLUSION

In line with the policy on inclusive education (White Paper 6), in 2008, South Africa's then Minister of Education adopted a Southern African Development Community (SADC) initiative called Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL). This is a comprehensive, co-ordinated multi-sectoral approach to addressing barriers to learning. The aim was to strengthen the protective factors that make learners vulnerable. Curriculum support, co-curriculum support and material support must be priorities for the learners. The educators should be appropriately skilled and have access to all the necessary learning and teaching support materials available. Activities that augment the curriculum, and which are offered either in- or outside the school, could include peer education, sport, and social and drama clubs. This involves the provision of resources to address material and financial barriers, such as school fees, uniforms and transport. Each of these is influenced to different degrees by the interaction of external and intrinsic factors.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 examined the effects of sign language challenges on deaf learners in special schools. This chapter provides an outline of the research methodology, which explains how this study was conducted. Each research approach uses specific research techniques, for example case study, interviews and historical analysis. In this study, questionnaires and observations were the primary data collection methods. The reason for this was that questionnaires and observations provide a simple means of gathering and interpreting information in a qualitative manner.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

A qualitative approach was used to conduct the study because such a design enabled the researcher to conduct the research in the natural setting of social factors. Qualitative research is a holistic research strategy as it seeks to understand events in their natural context rather than in isolation in order to gain trust and understanding, and to get close to the subjects who form the focus of the subject under investigation (Creswell, 2005; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

The qualitative case study methodology provides the researcher with the necessary tools to study complex phenomena within the research context. When the direct approach is applied correctly, it becomes a valuable method for this type of research to develop theory, evaluate programmes, and develop interventions. The purpose is to guide the novice researcher in identifying the key elements for designing and implementing qualitative case study research projects. An overview of the types of case study designs is provided, along with general recommendations for writing the research questions, developing propositions, determining the 'case' under study, binding the case and discussing data sources and triangulation (Louis, Lawrence & Keith, 2011).

3.   RESEARCH APPROACH

3.3   A Case Study

Case studies are in-depth investigations into a specific and relatively small area of interest, and may be based on one individual, several individuals or one group of individuals. The idea behind the case study is to discover as much information as possible about a situation. According to Imenda & Muyangwa (2006), a case study in education may be used to address particular research problems such as whether or not the use of a second language as a medium of instruction inhibits or promotes learning among Grade 1 learners; the validity of Grade 12 symbols in determining entry into tertiary institutions; and the effect of some aspects of learners' home background (e.g. parental marital status) on scholastic achievement. Case studies are also used in counselling and remedial situations (Mitchell, 2010).

3.4.   OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS

The great advantage of the observation process is that it enables the researcher to collect direct information about human behaviour that can only be collected indirectly by means of measurement techniques such as paper-and-pencil tests and questionnaires. Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit (2009) claimed that, the use of observations and interviews enables the researcher to better explore the variables and obtain an idea of the spectrum of possible responses. David & Resnik (2011) assert that interviews allow respondents to be more at ease, and not to waste time. Qualitative research methods are used to test the theories about reality, look for cause and effect, and gather data to test questions (Henning et al., 2009). The researcher conducted an in-depth study on a specific area of human behaviour, namely Deaf education and the way in which learning takes place using Sign language. Interviews with 10 Deaf Grade 8 learners, who had diverted from academic to skills-based classes (Pre-Vocational Training) and 7 educators, were also forming part of the research. The interviews were based on the effect of sign language barriers on deaf learners in a special school. The questions focused on the learners' Sign language challenges that result into incompetency and attitudes to the use of sign language as their first language. Learners and educators were interviewed by the researcher through the use of semi-structured questions with

35

regard to the learners' disability. A timeframe was attached to the completion of the interviews.

The researcher observed that one of the seven educators, who were teaching the Grade 8 learners English, was using a hearing aid. The educator once taught at a school for hearing learners. He was not born deaf but, instead, became deaf during the course of his life, which has led to him working at the school for the deaf. When he started at the school in 2009, it was with the intention of learning SASL, but he eventually ended up teaching there. The Department of Education saw that as a result of the disability he had developed, they could not place him at any other school; therefore, he ended up working at the school for the deaf. It is not easy for a person who was once able to hear and speak to simply accept that he is now deaf and that he must use sign language full time. He uses a hearing aid that does not always assist him. At some point it simply makes a great deal of noise of which he is unaware until other people make him conscious of it. One can only imagine the challenges experienced by someone who has not yet come to accept the fact that he, himself, has a disability, and who is expected to teach learners with the same disability.

According to the (*Unisa Custom Edition* 2014), even though learners in a classroom are highly diverse in terms of ethnicity, language, race and economic status, educators are much less so. The percentage of White educators is increasing (90%) while that of Black educators is decreasing (approximately 7%). It is important for all educators to work effectively with all of their learners. The school was supposed to provide him with a classroom assistant, who is both able to hear and Sign fluently. The reason for this is that he is still developing his ability to use sign language. At some stage, the researcher observed that the learners did not understand what the educator was saying and ended up looking bored. In terms of the classroom setting, the learners were supposed to sit in a horse-shoe pattern so that the educator could see whether or not they were signing while he was teaching. The class was supposed to have an overhead projector, and welcoming wall charts, since deaf people are visually-orientated people. Each learner was supposed to have his or her own textbook but they were sharing. The educator had to stand still in order for the learners to be able to clearly see the Signs. When an educator is making a great

deal of movements when teaching the Deaf, they will not be able to see what the educator is signing. The researchers observe that Deaf learners used to say: '*My eyes are windows to your world and your hands are windows to mine'.* This means that I can understand you when you use your hands to talk because my eyes do the work of the ears (hearing), and my hands do the work of the mouth (speaking).

3.5 POPULATION

Population is defined as the group of interest to the researcher. It may be virtually any size that covers almost every geographical area. The definition of a population is generally a realistic choice, not an ideal one (Babbie, 2010). A selected special school for the Deaf in the Motheo District made up the core population of this study. Below is an outline of the sample that was selected from the identified population.

3.6 SAMPLE

A sample is 'a smaller (but hopefully representative) collection of units from a population used to determine truths about that population' (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009). Convenient sampling was used for this study. In South Africa, there are only a few schools for Deaf learners; in the Free State Province, there are only two schools for the Deaf. The researcher's focus was on the Motheo District, which only has one school for the deaf. As far as this school is concerned, the researcher used the South African School Management System (SASMS) to sample both learners and educators. The learners' focus group consisted of Grade 8 learners. The sample used in this study consisted of seven educators and ten Grade 8 learners. During the class observation, one of the seven educators presented a Grade 8 English lesson. Due to the size of the population in the district, the researcher used the primary technique to collect data (Cohen et al., 2011).

Advantages of Sampling:

- Sample easy to select;
- Suitable sampling frame can be easily identified; and

- Sample evenly spread over entire reference population.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Sample may be biased if hidden periodicity in population coincides with that of selection; and
- Difficult to assess precision of estimate from one survey.

3.7   DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected by means of data collection instruments such as observations, interviews and related literature. According to Marilyn and Goes (2013), literature consultation, also known as literature review, is an examination of scholarly information and research-based information on a specific topic. In other words, it is a review of what is known, not suspected or assumed, about a specific subject. Its goal is to create a complete, accurate representation of the knowledge and research-based theory available on a topic.

Marilyn and Goes (2013) assert that there are four kinds of interviews in qualitative research, namely unstructured interviews, non-directive interviews, structured interviews, and focus group interviews. According to Cohen et al. (2011), the qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of investigation but not a specific set of questions that must be asked in particular words or in a particular order. These will essentially establish a general direction and explore a specific topic raised by the respondent (Marilyn & Goes, 2013). Cohen et al. (2011) add that there are three types of questions in an interview, i.e. descriptive, structural and contrast questions. Descriptive research questions used to describe characteristics of population or phenomenon being of the study. Structural research questions determine stresses and strain in a given structure. Contrast research questions a linear combination of variables. Cohen et al. (2011) and Marilyn and Goes (2013) further assert that questions are usually presented in one of the following forms: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. In semi-structured questions, the question is phrased to

allow for individual responses in that it is an open-ended question but fairly specific in its objective.

The researcher conducted qualitative research, which was based on a case study, in order to understand the effect of sign language challenge on Deaf learners in special schools in the Free State. One-on-one interviews were conducted with ten Grade 8 learners who had diverted to skills-based classes, as well as with seven educators. Observations took place in a class of Grade 8 learners. The researcher discovered that interviews and observations would be user-friendly to deaf learners, and would provide a useful technique for gathering and interpreting qualitative information. The purpose of choosing observations and interviews is that they are easy to compile and are inexpensive. Marilyn & Goes (2013) refer to observation as a formalised and stylised interview by proxy, which is normally applicable to a large sample. The teachers were selected randomly, using their roll-call book. Interview questions focused on experiences or behaviours, opinions, values, feelings, knowledge, sensory perceptions, individual background and demographic information (Shamoo & Resnik, 2009). The researcher used an interview guide to structure the questions, but eventually did not use the questions as they appeared in the interview guide. Instead, they were framed to suit the setting (Marilyn & Goes, 2013). The following questions were asked during the one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the learners and educators.

Interview Questions: Learners (Semi-Structured)

SECTION ONE

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1	GENDER	Male	Female	RACE	Black	Coloured	Other
2	AGE	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 -19	Other		
3	YEARS OF SCHOOLING						
4	SUBJECTS						

SECTION TWO

Answer the interview schedule questions below based on your knowledge.

1.   What effect does sign language have on teaching and learning?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2.   What causes some of you to underperform academically?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3.   What are some of the challenges that you have experienced during teaching and learning?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4.   What is the effect of being taught by educators who do not have any knowledge of SASL?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. How do you learn when being taught by a teacher who has no knowledge of SASL?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. How do you feel when you are diverted from academic to skills-based classes?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Interview scheduled Questions: Educators (Semi-Structured)

SECTION ONE

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1	GENDER	Male	Female	RACE	Black	Coloured	Other
2	AGE	20 - 30	31 - 40	41 -50	Other		
3	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE						
4	TEACHING SUBJECTS						

SECTION TWO

Answer the questions below based on your experience and knowledge.

1. Why are some learners unable to perform academically at schools for the Deaf?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2.   What causes deaf learners to divert from academic to skills-based classes?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3.   What is the effect of sign language barriers on Deaf learners?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4.   How do you feel about negative feedback?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5.   What are the interventions for learners who do not progress academically before they are sent to skills classes?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6.   What are the challenges related to teaching Deaf learners? Do teachers have sign language skills when they are appointed for the first time?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7.	What causes large numbers of Deaf learners not to complete Grade 12?

_____

_____

_____

_____

## 3.8	DATA ANALYSIS

The study used a procedural method to analyse the data that had been collected, using the following qualitative data collection instruments: observations and interviews. This section explained the procedure that was followed.

The researcher collected data by means of interviews and video-recording classroom procedures (observation), and categorised the data according to themes with the help of a Sign language interpreter. The main task in the data-analysis stage was to identify common themes based on the participants' descriptions of their experiences (Creswell, 2005). The interviews were analysed with the help of a qualified sign language interpreter. Many questions were pre-coded, i.e. each response was immediately converted into a score in an objective way (Resnik, 2011).

43

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four focuses on the findings and analysis of the questions distributed to the educators and learners in the Motheo District Special School for the Deaf. It presents the findings of the study and the results of the class observation and interviews which have been used from the chosen sample in the population.

The educator is supposed to be a classroom manager in a real setting. He or she must have self-management skills, and an overview of the classroom management of tasks. The educator must be able to plan, organise, lead and control the millennial learners (Mokoena, Wydeman & Niekerk, 2015). The study aimed to investigate factors that contribute towards the effect of sign language barriers among Deaf learners in a special school in the Free State province. The following objectives served as the focal points or driving force behind this investigation:

- To investigate the effect of sign language barriers with reference to deaf learners in special schools; and
- To determine the effect of sign language barrier on the teaching and learning of Deaf learners.

This involves both teachers and learners who are involved in teaching and learning without South African Sign Language (SASL) as the medium of instruction in the Special School for the Deaf in the Free State Motheo District.

4.2   DATA PRESENTATION

The population was one special school for the Deaf in a rural area in the Motheo District. The sample consisted of ten Grade 8 learners and seven educators from the school. The instruments used were observations and interviews. Interviews were

conducted with seven educators, while 10 Grade 8 learners were also interviewed and observed during English period.

4.2.1 The Responses from the Interviews

The responses from the interviews were as follow: All seven (n=7) educators and ten learners (n=10) were positive about sharing information, which led to 100% response rate.
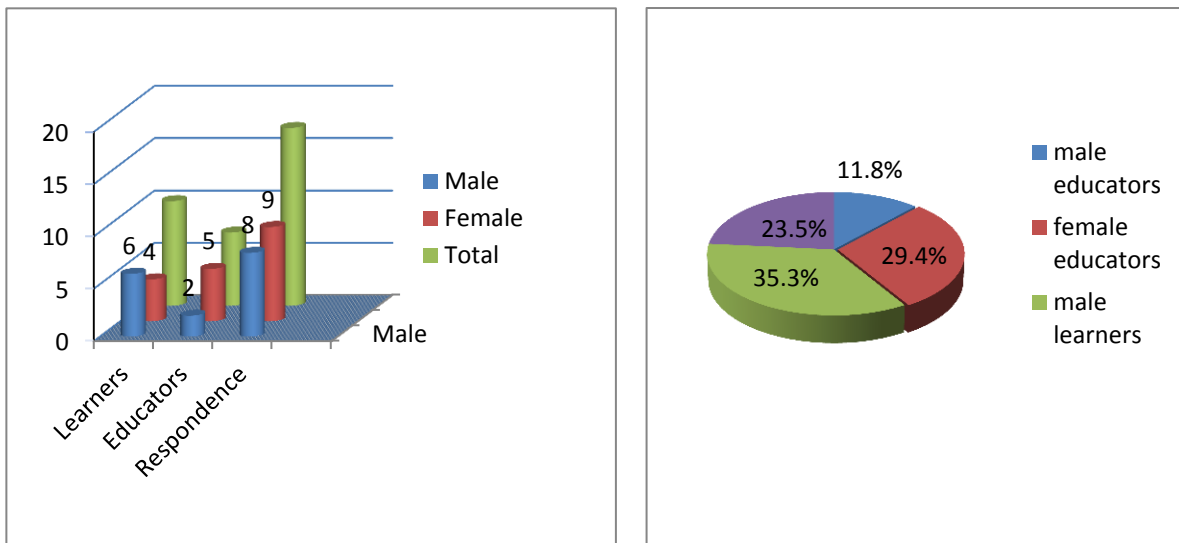

Figure 2.1: Graph representing statics of learners' and educators' responses

Seven educators, five of whom were female (71.4%), and two (n=2) were male (28.6%) participated in this study. Ten learners, six of whom were male (60%) and four of whom were female (40%) participated in this study. Responses were offered by ten learners and seven educators with a total response rate of 100%.
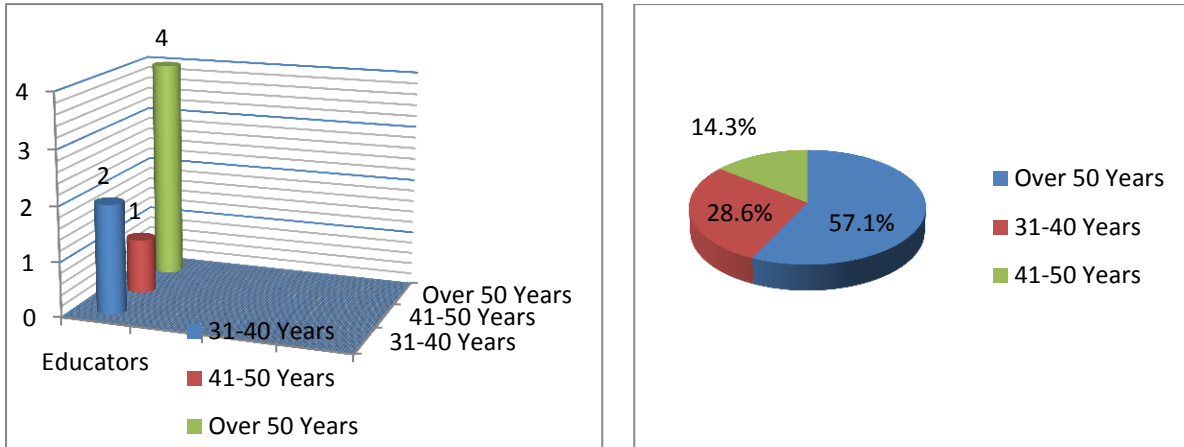
Figure2.2: Age differences of Educators

The indication herein is that the largest number of educators who have experience in using sign language to teach are above the age of 50 (n=4), i.e. 57.1%, followed by those between the ages of 41 and 50 (n=2), i.e. 28.6%, those between the ages of 31 and 40 (n=1), i.e. 14.3%, and those between the ages of 20 and 30 (n=0), i.e. 0%. This shows that within a period of five years, the system will employ new educators who are not experienced Sign language users. Thus, Sign language as a barrier to learning will remain a problem.
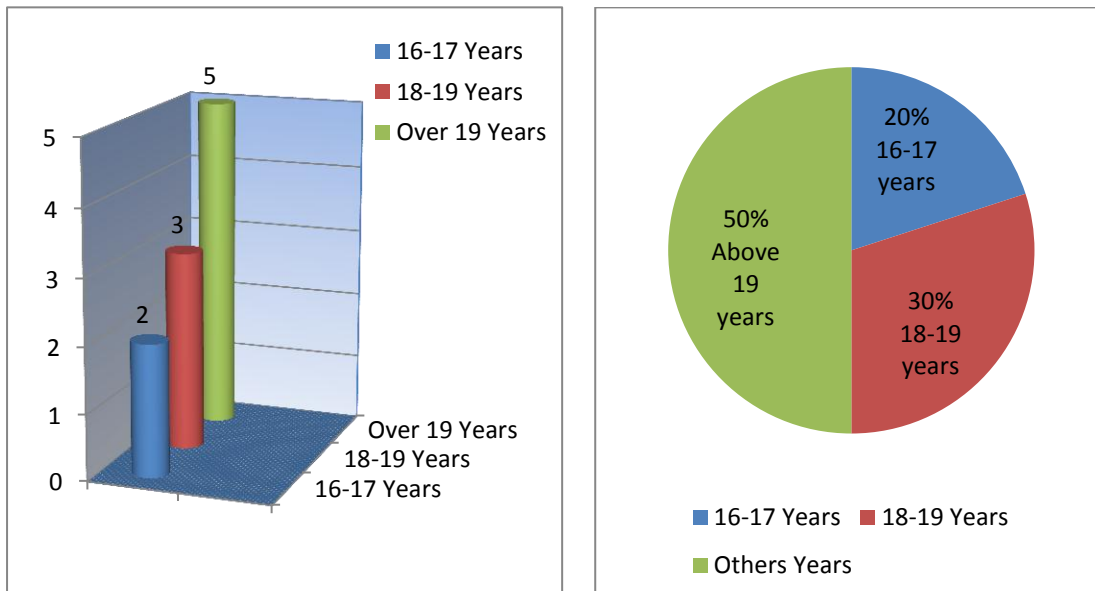
Figure 2.3: Age differences of learners

The figure shows that there are high numbers of learners who are above nineteen years of age. According to the South African School Management System (SASMS), they were supposed to have finished their schooling. However, because of their disability, they are still at school.

Figure: 2.4: Educators' years of experience

The more experience the educator has, the older he or she is and will soon leave the system.

Figure 2.5: Learners' years of schooling

47

A hearing child mostly attends school for twelve years. Deaf learners, however, are completely different as they attend school for approximately fifteen years. Some come to school without knowing any language, whereby they start by learning language. Some are introduced to the school system at an early age, e.g. 3 years, and have the potential to perform well academically.
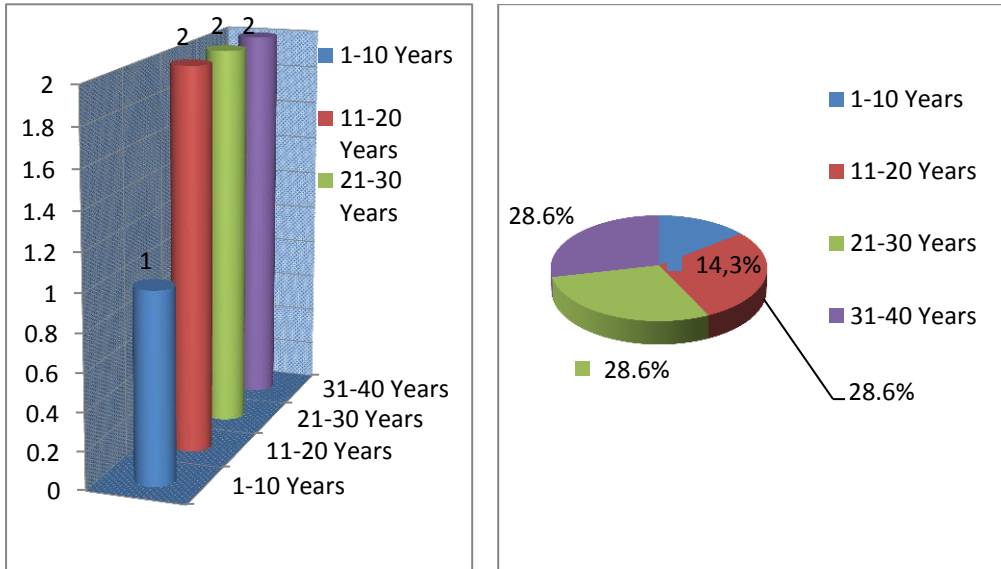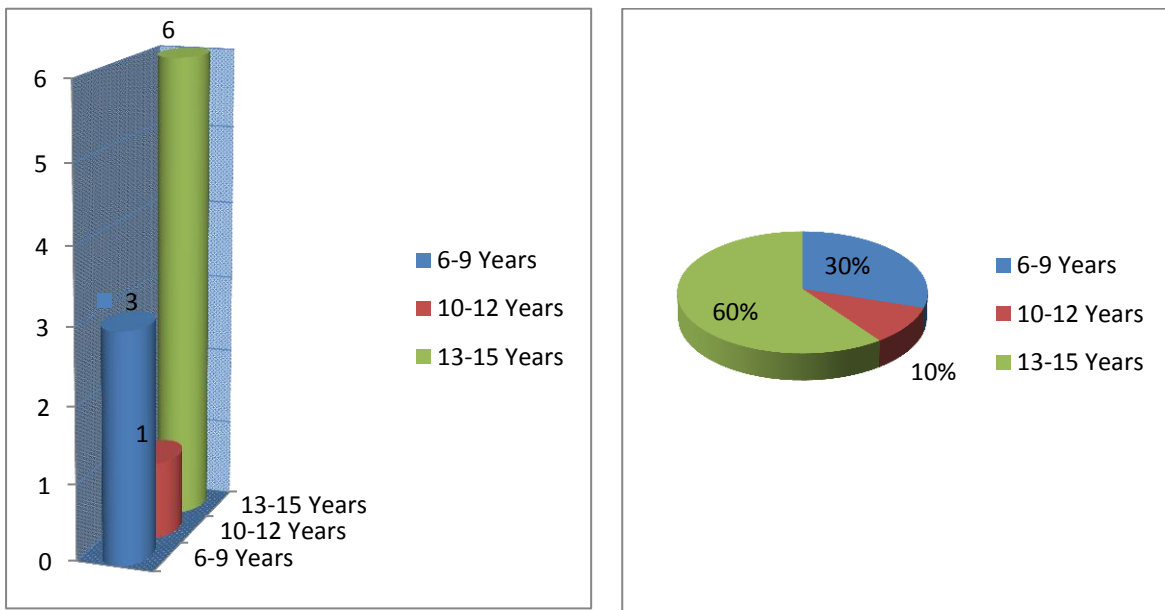
4.3   OBSERVATIONS

The researcher attended the English lesson presented to the Grade 8 learners. The educator in that class taught literature. He read from Chapter One of a book entitled 'Leo's Life' by Lesley Bake. The book was about Leo who had been lying in hospital, hearing mysterious drum beats and dreaming about gold and strange faces who belonged to people from all over Cape Town who were trying to find him. Why did they want him? Or was it his anxious friends, the girl, Manala, and others from the community of people selling their crafts at Greenmarket Square? The story, which builds to a thrilling climax, draws the listeners into a world of stolen African treasure and heroism of ordinary people who live on the edges of society. He was supposed to use overhead projector to get the focus of the learners and be able to read with him.

The researcher was expecting to find welcoming walls with lot of visual information, only when she entered the classroom, she noticed that the classroom's walls were without learning charts. It was unattractive to Deaf learners who learn by seeing. There was no stimulation of learners to learn. It was just a room that was no different from other rooms. The educator started by reading the book; learners could not read along with the educator. The reason for this is that deaf learners are visually-oriented people, and to read without seeing does not provide them with meaning. Some of them were without reading books, and shared with others. The classroom was supposed to have an overhead projector to help the learners read along with the educator. It seemed as though the educator was telling them a story. The learners were seated as though they had been afraid of something, and were not focusing. The educator had become 'deaf'. He was not fluent in SASL. He experienced a language barrier and used more actions than those used in SASL. Learners looked as though they were lost in terms of the topic for the day and

48

seemed bored. There was no active participation in the classroom. The Deaf learn more by means of pictures than construction learning. The researcher found that there was a miscommunication between the learners and the educator because the educator was not fluent in Sign language with the result that the Deaf learners were unable to participate.

- There were no adequate resources to teach literature, using SASL, such as PowerPoint presentations, books, or an assistant teacher.
- The classroom did not stimulate the learners to learn because, as visually-orientated people, their classrooms must have pictures with captions.

4.4 EDUCATORS' INTERVIEW RESPONSES

After the classroom observation, the researcher used semi-structured questions to interview some of the educators and learners. She interviewed seven educators, two males and five females. The educators were interviewed in Sign language (with the help of an interpreter). 10 grade 8 Deaf learners were interviewed, using Sign language (six males and four females) and observed during English perriod. The interviews were summarised in sub-headings and categories were identified. The interviews were transcribed and analysed, and the following themes emerged.

Theme 1: Lack of Sign language

The following was said by the educators:

Educator A: Mmm … *Lack of educators' in-service training because educators come to school without knowing South African Sign Language (SASL). At minimum if educators were employed with basic sign language skill, because the educator fines herself in a classroom without any language of communication with learners. Learners, some of them … hmm … acquire language at school, whereby a normal child acquires language when a he or she still in the womb.*

49

Educator B: *Shoo! Learners born from hearing parents come to school without acquiring SASL. When teaching and learning takes place, if learners neither the educator cannot express herself or himself, a communication breakdown takes place. Again is the limitation of the SASL some words are not there in SASL, as an educator you role play the activity until the learners understand what you want to say.*

Educator C: *Learners that come to school late without SASL because of late identification. These make our work as educators very difficult at the end of the day. You do not know where to start with such learners.*

Educator D: *Learners are not the same mentally, physically and academically. Their abilities in their studies also count.*

Educator E: *Late identification of a deaf learner. No stimulation of a Deaf learner prior to learning, low cognitive of learners, educator not skilled enough in SASL.*

Educator F: *Language barrier that is caused by educators that comes to school without SASL. Instead of teaching, they acquire language from learners. Late identification of deaf learners from homes.*

Educator G: *Only primary disability of being Deaf is known where else other learners have other disabilities, e.g. intellectual impairment, etc.*

Theme 2: Language problems and secondary disabilities experienced by educators

Educator A: *Late identification and other learning barriers, it is difficult to discover their learning potential when you do not know about their secondary disability. This puts the school in the difficult situation where learners end doing skills in Pre-Vocational Training section (PVT).* The other thing is that *they learn by visualising people and work more with their hands. Always they want a role model more than standing in front of them and try to teach. Their understanding is not constructive enough to perform academically.*

50

Educator B: *Late identification and other learning barriers, it is difficult to discover their learning potential when you do not know about their secondary disability. This puts the school in the difficult situation where learners end doing skills in Pre-Vocational Training section (PVT).* The other thing is that *they learn by visualising people and work more with their hands.*

Educator C: *Not all learners are academically equipped to learn SASL on a high note where Sign language has not develop from the birth. Other learners come to school too late to learn SASL and at the same time be able to perform academically. Ahhh! … Poor background, deaf learners also contribute towards their studies.*

Educator D: *Late identification and other learning barriers, it is difficult to discover their learning potential when you do not know about their secondary disability. This puts the school in the difficult situation where learners end doing skills in Pre-Vocational Training section (PVT).* The other thing is that *they learn by visualising people and work more with their hands. Always they want a role model more than standing in front of them and try to teach. Their understanding is not constructive enough to perform academically.*

Educator E: Slow pace in academics. *Low concentration span, misunderstanding of the subject matter and high age in the low classes.*

Educator F: *Late identification and other learning barriers, it is difficult to discover their learning potential when you do not know about their secondary disability. This puts the school in the difficult situation where learners end doing skills in Pre-Vocational Training section (PVT).* The other thing is that *they learn by visualising people and work more with their hands.*

Educator G: *Deaf learners divert to skills when they fail to cope with academics and the remedial has been given and it does not help.*

It seems that all of the educators agreed to the question by stating that: *Most of our learners have multi-learning barriers; too much theory does not help them. Out of 100%, it's only 5% that make it until higher education. Sometimes you find that a*

51

learner is deaf and has a sight problem, is physically impaired, dysplasia, etc. on top of deafness. This limits a learner for the skills she or him must choose. They end up doing something they do not like but because of their conditions.

Theme 3: Sign language as medium of instruction

Educators A: *(difficult to state the facts) Educators that do not know sign language confuse learners. If learners are confused, automatically they do not understand the signing of an educator. These cause serious communication breakdown. The educator starts to lose interest for his or her work. These learners reach their potential before their Grade 12 and this make them to have low self-esteem. Because of that, very few deaf are educated. They are channeled in certain careers that are not of their choice.*

Educator B: *90% of learners are from hearing families that know nothing about deafness; these learners find it difficult to start signing fluently.*

Educator C: *The misunderstanding of SASL from both sides – educators' side and learners' side, these lead to drop out of learners, educators lose interest in their work.*

Educator D: *Educators not knowing SASL might be a problem to the system, seriously an educator cannot perform his duty if the language of teaching and learning is a problem. Resources are also a problem whereby an educator finds him- or herself in a class without overhead projector, knowing that deaf learn by seeing.*

Educator E: *(difficult to state the facts) Educators that do not know sign language confuse learners. If learners are confused, automatically they do not understand the signing of an educator. These cause serious communication breakdown. The educator starts to lose interest for his or her work. These learners reach their potential before their Grade 12 and this make them to have low self-esteem. Because of that, very few deaf are educated. They are channeled in certain careers that are not of their choice.*

52

Educator F: *The problem of learning SASL at the later age, e.g. the age of 3 years, we cannot call this SASL home language for these kids, they are not born with this language. We know that a baby learns home language when still in mother womb, but these ones are totally different. When they are born in hearing parents they are like an island.*

Educator G: *I did not observe that at all.*

Theme 4: Communication breakdown

Educator A: *What is being taught to deaf learners does not register in their brain. Theory is difficult for them. Theory is difficult for them because of the limitation of the language that was not developed from early age.*

Educators B: *Deaf learners lack concentration and understanding because of their disability of not developing any spoken language. Sometimes we end up asking ourselves that is it learners who fail or is it us educators?*

Educator C: *I do not understand the question.*

Educator D: *Deaf learners lack concentration and understanding because of their disability of not developing any spoken language. Sometimes we end up asking ourselves that is it learners who fail or is it us educators?*

Educator E: *Shoo! There is communication breakdown; meaning of the lesson is lost that time. The educator must find alternative way to convey the message.*

Educators F and G: (both of them said exactly this) *Jaa! This situation hurts and frustrates us and we end up not knowing which method to apply to reach these kids cognitive level.*

Theme 5: Interventions to support learners

Educators agreed on one answer related to this theme, i.e. that procedures are followed to cater for learners who experience difficulties: *We engage with deaf learners one-on-one and report to the parents for support. The learner repeats a grade for extra support. If this does not work, he or she is sent to an Occupational Therapist (OT) for sessions. The educator and the OT discuss the learner; the matter is taken up with the School-Based Support Team (SBST). The District Support Team (DST) comes to screen the child and identify the problem. Furthermore, after screening, he or she is referred to the Pre-Vocational Training Section (PVT).*

Theme 6: **Co-sessions for deaf learners (Writing of Deaf learner as the result of English structure)**

Educators A, E and F: *(said exactly the same wording) Deaf learners did not develop any spoken language from birth so they speak their unique language, e.g. when they want to write: I am going to school instead, they write,* **schools go I.** *If someone who is marking does not understand the disability and gets something like (***school go I***) without knowing the deaf will mark it wrong. So it is very important to write for them so that the right structure of English can be used. Sometimes you find that the learner has all answers but not able to express him- or herself in writing so is where the co-sessions come in.*

Educators B: *Deaf learners did not develop any spoken language from birth so they speak their unique language, e.g. when they want to write: I am going to school instead, they write,* **me go school.** *If someone who is marking does not understand the disability and gets something like (***school go I***) without knowing the deaf will mark it wrong. So it is very important to write for them so that the right structure of English can be used. Sometimes you find that the learner has all answers but not able to express him- or herself in writing so is where the co-sessions come in.*

54

Educators C: *Deaf learners did not develop any spoken language from birth so they speak their unique language, e.g. when they want to write: I am going to school instead, they write,* **go school I.** *If someone who is marking does not understand the disability and gets something like (* **school go I** *) without knowing the deaf will mark it wrong. So it is very important to write for them so that the right structure of English can be used. Sometimes you find that the learner has all answers but not able to express him- or herself in writing so is where the co-sessions come in.*

Educators G *Deaf learners did not develop any spoken language from birth so they speak their unique language, e.g. when they want to write: I am going to school instead, they write,* **go school I.** *If someone who is marking does not understand the disability and gets something like (* **school go I** *) without knowing the deaf will mark it wrong. So it is very important to write for them so that the right structure of English can be used. Sometimes you find that the learner has all answers but not able to express him- or herself in writing so is where the co-sessions come in.*

4.5   LEARNERS' INTERVIEW RESPONSES

The following was said by the learners:

Theme 1: The importance of Sign language

Learners A, C and H: *When teaching and learning take place, the language is SASL, you find that most of the educators came to teach without knowing SASL. It is very difficult and stressful for us to understand what the educator is trying to teach because he or she does not have the interpreting of what he or she is teaching.* The other one said, '*It is the only language we understand,' and if an educator does not know how to sign, is difficult for us to learn.*

Learners B and E: *SASL is the only language we use for communication. Sometimes teaching and learning does not take place because we teach educator SASL. Some of us come to school without SASL and if both teacher and learner do not know SASL, it is very difficult to learn. The third one said these cause a serious*

Learner D: *When teaching and learning take place, the language is SASL, you find that most of the educators came to teach without knowing SASL. It is very difficult and stressful for us to understand what the educator is trying to teach because he or she does not have the interpreting of what he or she is teaching.* The other one said, '*It is the only language we understand,' and if an educator does not know how to sign, is difficult for us to learn.*

Learner F: *barrier of communication … one in a group ask to read what they wrote on the paper for the appropriate teaching and learning to take place, an educator must be at his or her simplicity so that we can understand and learning can give effective answers. It will be easy for us to develop academically if the language flows simply. These will build positive effective society.*

Learners I and J: *SASL is our first language. If we do not have it, we struggle to understand educators during teaching and learning. SASL is the only language we understand effectively.*

Theme 2: Lack of Sign language

Learners A, I and J: *At home, where we are born, most of us parents do not know SASL. The language that is spoken at our families is just for communication with family members, when we come to school is the only time we get formal SASL.*

Learners B: *At home, where we are born, most of us parents do not know SASL. The language that is spoken at our families is just for communication with family members, when we come to school is the only time we get formal SASL.*

Learners C: *At home, where we are born, most of us parents do not know SASL. The language that is spoken at our families is just for communication with family members, when we come to school is the only time we get formal SASL.*

56

Learners D and F: *At our homes, there is no one who is signing unless the parents are deaf too. We learn our first language when we arrive at school and it is very difficult for us to learn a home language and to start Signing fluently.*

Learners E, G and H: *Our parents do not know SASL to teach us from early age. There we find ourselves using street signs, no one to teach us sign language; we are come school without any language. Our parents send us to deaf schools to be taught SASL for the first time at the age of 4-5 years.*

***Theme 3:* Communication breakdown**

Learners A, B, G, H and I: (said the same thing) *Some of us come to school at the age of 10-12 years and educators are not patient with us to teach subjects and the language at the same time. They start answering from the answers they agree on….Some educators come to school without SASL and if there is interpreters, interpreter are not equipped to teach the message we receive; sometime is not exactly what the teacher mean. When a deaf learner come to school without SASL, it is difficult for a learner to learn subject and language at the same time; is where we end up being transfer to skills-based classes. Hearing people forget that we do not have sound to hear or produce, e.g. vowels. These make us to progress very slowly because of the language restriction and limitation caused by lack of free communication. If we do not understand the teacher, there is no force to study, what we will study?*

Learners C: *Sometime we fail to understand the educator because of language she uses in class. If an educator does not know SASL, we cannot understand the lesson; we end up losing concentration and become bored. Most of educators are not trained how to teach in sign language; starting teaching them sign is wasting our time. These cause big confusion in the process of our learning. The communication breakdown in class affects us to underperform academically and seeing yourself in pre-vocational skills.*

Learner D: *Educators are not trained in SASL and do not know deaf culture. Educators do not have SASL and no interpreters of what try to teach us. There is shortage of learning resources in our classes.*

Learner E: *Educators are not trained in SASL and do not know deaf culture. Educators do not have SASL and no interpreters of what try to teach us. There is shortage of learning resources in our classes.*

Learners F: *Sometime we fail to understand the educator because of language she uses in class. If an educator does not know SASL, we cannot understand the lesson; we end up losing concentration and become bored. Most of educators are not trained how to teach in sign language; starting teaching them sign is wasting our time. These cause big confusion in the process of our learning. The communication breakdown in class affects us to underperform academically and seeing yourself in pre-vocational skills.*

Learners J: *Sometime we fail to understand the educator because of language she uses in class. If an educator does not know SASL, we cannot understand the lesson; we end up losing concentration and become bored. Most of educators are not trained how to teach in sign language; starting teaching them sign is wasting our time. These cause big confusion in the process of our learning. The communication breakdown in class affects us to underperform academically and seeing yourself in pre-vocational skills.*

Theme 4: SASL as language of teaching and learning

Learners A: *If we do not understand educator, we fail the subject. The teachers do not reach learners; learners become frustrated and drop out. The educator, if does not know SASL, does not stimulating us to learn. The educators also fail to express themselves.*

Learners B: *The educators do not know the culture of deaf. An educator fail to present lesson to us, this make us feel less important. Educators cannot reach our potential.*

58

Learners C and I: *Educators that do not know SASL increase the number of us not progressing. Communication is breaking down.*

Learners D: *Educators that do not know SASL increase the number of us not progressing. Communication is breaking down.*

Learners E: *The educators do not know the culture of deaf. An educator fail to present lesson to us, this make us feel less important. Educators cannot reach our potential.*

Learner F: *If we do not understand educator, we fail the subject. The teachers do not reach learners; learners become frustrated and drop out. The educator, if does not know SASL, does not stimulating us to learn. The educators also fail to express themselves.*

Learners G: *Educators that do not know SASL increase the number of us not progressing. Communication is breaking down.*

Learners H: *The educators do not know the culture of deaf. An educator fail to present lesson to us, this make us feel less important. Educators cannot reach our potential.*

Learner J: *If we do not understand educator, we fail the subject. The teachers do not reach learners; learners become frustrated and drop out. The educator, if does not know SASL, does not stimulating us to learn. The educators also fail to express themselves.*

4.6 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

In this study, it was found that deaf learners experienced barriers to effective learning due to insufficient teaching and learning resources that work hand in hand with Sign language. Three learners (Learners C, F and J) said that sometimes they fail to understand the educator because of the language used in class; they end up

59

losing concentration and becoming bored. This is echoed by Akach (2010) who states that deaf learners are visually-orientated people, i.e. they learn by seeing. After observing the lesson, the researcher came to the realisation that the resources were insufficient. SASL is a practical language; it has never been written. A lack of resources creates a serious barrier for the educator as the manager of a classroom, and learners suffer the consequences. Deaf classrooms must have pictures as the learners learn by seeing. Unfortunately, the classroom did not stimulate the Deaf learners to learn.

There were similarities between the learners' and educators' answers to the interview questions. This shows that educators and learners experience similar problems with regard to the education system (SASL language barrier). Educators A and E complained about the fact that educators teach Deaf learners without knowing Sign language – a statement that was supported by Learners B, E and H. They added that educators use their own signs that confuse Deaf learners, and lead to a serious breakdown in communication. Educator B said that 90% of learners are from hearing families that know nothing about deafness or Sign language, and that these learners find it difficult to sign fluently. Learners A, B, G, H and I supported this statement by saying that some of them are from hearing families where SASL is not used. Educator C reported that the misunderstanding with regard to SASL stems from both the educators and the learners, which leads to learners dropping out and educators losing interest in their work. Supported by Learners C, F and J, Educator D mentioned that the lack of resources were a problem in that the educator found him- or herself in a class without an overhead projector despite knowing that deaf learners learn by seeing. Educator F stated that learning SASL at a later age was a problem, for example at the age of 3 years, as this cannot be called SASL home language for Deaf children since they are not born with this language. When they are born to hearing parents, the Deaf feel like an island. Learners A, B, G, H and I agreed on this point.

According to Akach (2010), this shows that the language used in the teaching and learning of Deaf children makes a serious impact. A person develops a capacity for language when he or she is still in the mother's womb, but the Deaf are totally different in that they sometimes reach school-going age without knowing any official

60

language. When parents realise that the child is Deaf, they quickly take him or her to a special school. Another problem is that the majority of educators come into the system without knowing SASL. Imagine an educator who does not have any knowledge of the language of instruction coming into a classroom and being as blank as the learners. Coetzee and Van Niekerk (2015) assert that the interaction between the characteristics of the educator and those of the learners lead to the manifestation of a specific style of leadership. Belinda et al. (2014) concur, saying that learning is the process of bringing skills, values, emotions and cognition together. The characteristics of learners and educators will affect the learners' ability to take part in the management of the classroom. In this case, a communication breakdown takes place when the educator or learner does not understand the language that is being used for teaching and learning.

Educator D, as well as Learners B, E and H said that some educators are not familiar with the culture of the deaf. It is very important for an educator to understand the norms and values of learners so that they can feel equally important as everyone is supported (Kruger & Swart, 2011). Educator F stated that some parents are not aware that their children are deaf until the child reaches the stage where he or she is supposed to start talking. This has a great impact on the child's language development, and the child grows up without knowing any language.

As far as SASL as the first additional language is concerned, although children vary with regard to the exact time at which they produce their first word or sentence, there is a remarkable similarity in terms of the stages through which they go. Deaf children, however, do not go through these stages. Sounds and symbols are the most basic characteristics of language, and are the manifestation of language as a physical system. We use sound when we speak, but for the Deaf it is completely different. They use hand signals for sign language (Coetzee & Van Niekerk, 2015). There are elements of language, namely the phonological, morphological, syntactic discourse and pragmatic elements, which Deaf people do not have (Anita, 2013). This causes them to experience difficulties with their studies, the language challenge that they come across from the time they are still in their mothers' womb disadvantage them.

Most people who are able to speak use sound to get the spelling of the word right. Deaf people, however, do not develop speech, and have a limited number of sounds which they are able to produce in writing or when learning a language (Lorenzo, 2011). SASL is still under development, and people sign according to the areas in which they live. If you go to a certain area, you need to adapt to the signing structure used in that area.

Learning methods: Constructivism is a learning theory found in psychology which explains how people might acquire knowledge and learn. It therefore has a direct application to education. This theory suggests that humans construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences. It also contributes towards the shaping of behavior, as well as cognitive and contractive development of a human being. According to learning theories and Piaget's theory of Intellectual Development equilibrium theories (Paul & Don: 2010), an educator cannot manage the class if he or she has a language barrier in the classroom. It also affects the performance of the learners.

Language acquisition is a natural process that occurs without effort for most hearing children (Owens, 2010). Most hearing learners begin school with good language skills and strong background knowledge of spoken language (Federal, 2009). Deaf learners, on the other hand, are completely different, except in cases where they are born to Deaf parents. Van der Walt, Evans & Kilfoil (2014) state that a person must grow up having at least one language that he or she can speak properly, but that with the deaf child, it is totally different. Ursula (2015) supports this notion by stating that most Deaf learners come into the education system at the age of ten or eleven without knowing any language. There is no way that a person can start Signing fluently or without experiencing difficulties when using the language as a first additional language for the first time at the age of ten. Furthermore, this also causes Deaf learners a great deal of confusion.

4.7   SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The researcher found that there is a gap in language acquisition that needs the involvement of parents and educators. As soon as parents realise that their child is deaf, they must start looking for language acquisition at early age so that learners must not be confused. Educators who enter the system without SASL cause barriers

62

in the classroom for the deaf. Teaching and learning are detracted from. Deaf learners who attend school without knowing any language find it very difficult to learn language while learning other subjects

4.8   CONCLUSION

For some Deaf learners the absence of Sign language is not the only issue. Additional disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorders, visual impairment, epilepsy, etc. also impair their education. As soon as parents realise that their children are Deaf, they must be willing to learn Sign language, which will, in turn, help their children to learn Sign language at an early age. The Department of Basic Education must consider the needs of SASL at schools for the Deaf in terms of the provision of resources offered and the personnel's experience of Sign language. Deaf learners must have special resources, e.g. televisions and DVD players for each subject because they are visually-oriented people.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study was to investigate the effect of sign language challenges on deaf learners. Chapter Four highlighted the results of the data collected from the respondents through observations and interviews. This chapter provides a summary of the study, as well as recommendations with regard to some of the issues, and a conclusion. An area for further research is also suggested.

5.2   SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The study focused on investigating factors that contribute towards the challenges that sign language has on the teaching and learning of deaf learners.

Chapter 1 outlined the problem statement and the rationale behind the study. An attempt was made to investigate those factors that contribute towards sign language as a barrier to the learning of deaf learners as it is used as their first language. Attention should be shifted towards investigating the attitude of both educators and learners who go to school without sign language, because it is not a written language; the contribution of using a foreign language (English) in the teaching and learning of deaf learners; how parental involvement affects the teaching and learning of deaf learners; and the provision of teaching and learning resources for sign language in schools for the deaf. This would lead to providing guidelines on how to improve the learners' performance in their first language (Sign Language).

In Chapter 2, the researcher reviewed some of the literature on the condition of the study. According to Federal (2009) and Owens (2010), language acquisition is a natural process that occurs without effort for most hearing children. Most hearing students begin school with good language skills and strong background knowledge. Educators use these essential skills to teach children to read and write, acquire content knowledge, and develop social skills. Quite simply, oral and written language

is the media through which educators teach academic content. In addition, oral and written language serve as the primary means by which students demonstrate their knowledge of subject matter. Virtually all school learning occurs through the medium of Language. Not only do people need to acquire strong language skills to communicate with others, but the very use of language enables people to acquire concepts and ideas, and to sharpen their thinking (Owens, 2010). Deaf learners are completely different from the normally-developed child.

Some established theoretical models show the importance of environmental factors for learning which have been influential in education (Guadiana et al., 2014). Four levels that influence children's learning outcomes have been identified. These include the microsystem, which is the immediate context of the child such as the school, classroom and home; the exon-system, which is about the outside demands that affect children; and the macro system, which is about the cultural beliefs or institutional policies that influence individuals' behaviour. The ecosystem perspective indicates that the learning environment needs to be considered in the light of the students' needs and include all aspects of the system described above as each can influence the educational outcome. Understanding the importance of the environment can minimise the effects of a learning difficulty and enhance performance and self- esteem (Guadiana et al., 2014). Deaf schools have two groups of hearing-impaired learners: those who wear hearing aids and those whose hearing disability does not require them to wear assistive devices. For learners and educators to succeed optimally in teaching and learning in Sign language, material support must be provided by the state. Resources for teaching and learning play a pivotal role, and in special schools, the adequate and timely provision of physical resources is of paramount importance. It is essential to develop new educators on Sign language, and know the culture and norms of the deaf so that they can interact more effectively with the learners.

This raises the question of how deaf children acquire sign language if they are born to hearing parents. More focus was directed at the way in which deaf children learn if they attend school without sign language, and how deaf learners feel regarding the situation of being taught by educators who do not know sign language. This also brings the researcher to the point of looking forward in terms of learning about the

65

impact of this situation on these learners. Parents must become involved in the teaching and learning of their children, using Sign language as their first language because Deaf learners are born into different cultures, where they observe the norms and values of the Family. When Deaf learners attend school to meet with Deaf society (learners and deaf adults who are working at school, helping with language development) it is important for them to learn Deaf culture (Deaf people say they are a society on their own and that they do not belong to any society or tribe) as their performance and mastery of their first language is affected.

The nature of sign language as a medium of teaching and learning must also be given attention. The literature reviewed highlighted a number of ways in which success had not yet been achieved by using Sign language. Sign language is visual. There is a strong emphasis on demonstrating or modelling Sign language, as well as on explaining and illustrating pieces of this language, which will result in learners working more effectively.

Sign language is not one of our eleven official languages, but it is as important as other languages, as mentioned explicitly in the Constitution of South Africa. Learners are expected to develop sign language as soon as possible, resulting in negative, as well as positive influences, on Deaf learners' learning. Educators who entered the system without sign language also have the impact on the learning. Perceptions were based on what they saw regarding learning, e.g. that it's a difficult learning area and causes problems in that some of the learners attend school without knowing Sign language. This led to him frustrations on the part of the learners, causing low self-esteem. An educator finds him or herself in a classroom of deaf learners without the ability to use sign language. On the other hand, learners' perceptions regarding the educator's knowledge and expertise in teaching it, led to the formation of negative and/or positive attitudes towards the mastery of Sign language do not have vowels (problem of learners not developing speech).

Chapter 3 discussed research methodology. Observation of the class of Grade 8 learners during their English period, followed by interviews held with learners and educators in a special school for the deaf in the Motheo District. Interview

questions were semi-structured and were asked of seven educators and ten learners in the chosen special school for the deaf in the Motheo District of the Free State Province. Out of the seventeen participants, 100% responded.

In Chapter 4, the results of the data were presented, interpreted and discussed. From the chapter, the researcher came to realise that parents will have to learn Sign language as early as soon as they realise that their children are deaf so that they can be more involved in the education of their children. Educators indicated that learners attend school without Sign language as their first language and learners complained about educators teaching them without Sign language. Instead of teaching, they end up learning Sign language. Again, the state needs to consider the needs of Sign language in terms of the provision of resources. In addition, educators need to be exposed to more networking and obtain advice from more successful schools and their educators in terms of Sign language. Universities must ensure that they train more educators in Sign language, and the state must provide bursaries for such courses. These should include building a well-equipped Sign language studio.

5.3   RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the inability to use sign language as a barrier or challenge to deaf learners in the Motheo District. In order to recommend ways of addressing the ongoing challenges regarding to the use of Sign language as medium of teaching and learning, the general findings of the empirical investigation need to be presented.

The researcher discovered aspects that affect the performance of Deaf learners and which cause them to divert to skills-based classes. These include lack of educators' in-service training (they teach at the school for the deaf without knowing how to use South African Sign Language (SASL); some learners acquire Sign language at school, whereas hearing children acquire language while still toddlers; when teaching and learning take place, the inability of learners and educators to express themselves leads to a breakdown in communication. Other limitations of SASL include the fact that some words do not exist in SASL (language limitation). Therefore, the educator must role play the activity until the learners understand what

67

he or she wants to say (then the learners give it a sign for the purpose of reaching an understanding). This is reminiscent of other indigenous languages that also borrow some English words. The difference, however is that Sign language is created. Late identification of disability also causes problems in that there is no stimulation of a Deaf learner prior to learning which leads to low cognition of learners. Only the primary disability of being Deaf is known rather than being aware of other disabilities, such as intellectual impairment, dyslexia, etc.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEACH

5.4.1   Recommendation 1: Establishment of factors to address the absence of Sign language, resulting in a barrier

Motivation

The factors that lead to poor performance are numerous. Some are found in schools and are knowingly and subconsciously perpetuated by both the educators and learners. Teachers in these schools need to find solutions by learning from successful schools, and learners need to remain silent regarding their expectations in terms of learning and teaching in sign language. Learners do have to engage with their parents more frequently regarding their insufficiencies so that their parents can come up with solutions as to how they can assist the educators and their children.

5.4.2   Recommendation 2: Establishing the attitude of learners towards SASL

Motivation

Educators' and learners' attitudes towards Sign language depend on various factors that shaped the learners' perceptions about the learning area. The educator's ability to teach using Sign language played a significant role in shaping the attitudes of the learners towards the learning area. Some learners felt comfortable with those educators who can teach them throughout the lesson without the assistance of an interpreter, and who were able to reach their level of understanding. They also felt

comfortable with those who had arranged to give them extra classes during weekends and/or after school hours.

Educators are classroom managers and should not hesitate to make decisions during classes as this also contributes towards the shaping of their learners' attitudes towards learning. Educators must be prepared well in advance and anticipate all sorts of signs, and must not hesitate to sign in front of learners. Hesitation in front of learners gives learners the wrong impression that the educator does not know South African Sign language, which causes them to panic since they are desperate to do well in the learning area.

5.4.3 Recommendation 3: Effective use of English in the teaching and learning of SASL

Motivation

Although Sign English is different from Sign language, educators and learners need to understand that using a first language, especially SASL, in the teaching and learning of all subjects is of paramount importance. SASL is integrated with Sign English, mastery forms the foundation of teaching and learning other signs depends on learning areas such as Physics, Geography, Accounting, etc. To regard SASL as foreign, especially in special schools for the Deaf, is off-limits because almost all subjects must be taught and learners must adopt SASL as their first language and they are to master it.

5.4.4 Recommendation 4: How parental involvement can affect the teaching and learning of SASL

Motivation

Parents have to learn SASL as soon they realise that their children are Deaf so that they will be able to interact with them on a daily basis regarding their school work in all learning areas. This can be achieved by physically going through the learner's books as well as discussing these with their children. In situations where parents do

69

not have knowledge of SASL, they will need to make arrangements with their children regarding involving them in group study efforts at school and trying to benchmark with other Deaf schools who share similar challenges.

5.4.5 Recommendation 5: The provision of (SASL) learning resources

Teaching and learning

Motivation

The provision of teaching and learning resources for Mathematics at schools has a major impact on the performance of both teachers and learners. The role of the Department of Education is quite important with regard to the timeous delivery of resources. In addition, arrangements should be made by schools to collect such resources themselves instead of relying on government agencies to deliver them to the schools. Early identification of the needed resources, and the installation of hard- and software (e.g. DVDs and TVs) at schools should be done a year in advance. Similarly, the training of teachers by the Association of SASL Educators of South Africa should take place well in advance.

The Department of Education should make it its business to establish continuous self-assessment for Mathematics teachers. These efforts should be accompanied by providing on-going workshops and conferences for teachers to remain abreast of new developments in teaching and learning Mathematics nationally, provincially as well as regionally.

5.5   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the performance of both learners and teachers in Sign language is critical and is gauged along international and national standards. Therefore, the above statement has implications for the Department of Basic Education, schools, the families of learners, and the learners themselves, in terms of their contribution to the end product. Concerted efforts have to be made and no costs spared to achieve the goals and objectives of the department, the school and the family, including the

child. All role players need to be aware of each of their inputs and go the extra mile in performing their individual duties. Parents who cannot afford to make extra payments for classes need make alternative concessions such as exposing their children to group efforts of similar-positioned families. Those families that can afford to make payments for extra classes and purchase or subscribe to educational packages aimed at assisting learners should be encouraged to do so. Schools are also encouraged to subscribe annually or in other ways to secure software packages that are uploaded onto the schools' computer videos that are related to learning. School Governing Bodies and the Department of Basic Education need to be informed of the benefits of such extra efforts and they need to support the school.

REFERENCES

Adult Education 2007. Introducing Adult Education @ the Informal Education Homepage. Available from: http://www.infed.org/lifelonglearning/b-aadedgn.htm [Accessed: 26 August 2007].

Akach, P.A.O. 2010. *South African Sign Language* (SASL) in a Bilingual-Bicultural Approach in Education.

Alexander, A., Ladd, P. & Powell, S. 2012. Comment: Deafness might damage your health. Lancet: 379.

Altbach, P.G., Reisberg, L. & Rumbley, L.E. 2009. World Conference on Higher Education. SIDA/SAREC: France: UNESCO.

Anglin-Jaffe, H. 2011. Sign: Play and Disruption: Theory and Sign Language. *Culture: Theory and Critique: Peer Learning of Sign Languages,* 52(1): 29-44.

Antwerpen, L. 2009. *Promotion of Self-Determined School Engagement*: Motivation Learning and Well-Being Hand Book for Motivation at Schools. New York: Routledge.

Bank, R. 2015. *Centre for Language Studies*: Radboud University Nijmegen and International Max Planck Research School for Language Sciences. Nijmegen: The Netherlands.

Bank, R., Crasborn, O. & Van Hout, R. 2011. Variation in Mouth Actions with Manual Signs in Sign Language of The Netherlands (NGT). *Sign Language and Linguistics*, 14(2): 248-270.

Bauman, H. & Dirksen, L. 2004. Audism: Understanding the Metaphysics of Oppression. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 9(2): 239-246.

Bauman, H., Dirksen, L. & Murray, J. 2010. *Deaf Studies in the Twenty-First Century*: 'Deaf-Gain' and the Future of Human Diversity.

Biggs, J. & Tang, C. 2009. *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*. 3rd ed. McGraw Hill.

Botha, P., Smit, M.H. & Oosthuizen, I.J. 2009. *The Educator as Caring Supervisor*.

Bradford, J. 2009. *Teaching Dyslexic Students at College or Uni*versity. Available from: http://www.dyslexia-college.com/teacher:html [Accessed: 23 February 2009].

Brett, M. 2010. *Reframing Disability in Higher Education. University of Melbourne*: Disability and Equity Programmes. In: Nelson, K.Clark, J. Kifts, S. and Creagh, T. 2000–2010Trends in policies, programs and practices in the Australasian First Year Experience literature. Brisbane, Australia: Queensland University of Technology.

Brian, E. 2010. *Evidence Based on Policy Unpalatable Circumcision is Immoral*: *Should be Banned.* In: Lavia, J and Moore, M (Eds.) 2010. Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Policy and Practice: Decolonizing Community Context: Routledge, New York: London

Brueggemann, B.J. 2009. *Deaf Subjects: Between Identities and Places*. New York: New York University Press.

Budelmann, B.U. 2000. *Cell and Molecular Biology of the ear.* Edited by Lim Kluwer Academic/plenum New Kluwer Academic/Plenum New York.

Cambron-McCabe, N.H., McCarthy, M.M. & Thomas, S.B. 2009. *Legal Rights of Teachers and Students*. 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Chataika, T. 2010. *Inclusion of Disabled Students in Higher Education in Zimbabwe.* In: Lavia, J. & Moore, M. (editors) cross cultural perspectives on policy and practice: decolonizing community contexts. Routledge New York

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2011. *Research Methods in Education.* 7th ed. Routledge.

Crasborn, O., Van der Kooij, E. & Rose, J. 2012. On the Weight of Phrase-Final Prosodic Words in a Sign Language. *Sign Language and Linguistics*, 15(1): 11-38.

Creswell, J.W. 2005. Planning: Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research. 2nd ed. New Jersey: Pearson.

David, D., Sandy, L. & Nadeen, M. 2014. *Education Psychology in Social Context:* Ecosystemic Application in Southern Africa: Oxford University press.

De Vos, C. 2012. Sign-Spatiality in Kata Kolok: How a Village Sign Language of Bali Inscribes its Signing Space. Nijmegen, The Netherlands: Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics.

Du Preez, P. & Roux, C. 2010. Human Rights Values or Cultural Values*?* In Dunne, T. & Wheeler, N.J. eds. 1999. Pursuing values to maintain positive discipline in multicultural schools. *South African Journal of Education volume,* 30(1):13-26.

Dweck, CS. 2010*. Mind Sets and Equitable Education* Principal Leadership. Federal Interagency. 2009. Forum on Child and Family Statistics. *America's Children: Key national indicators of wellbeing.* Washington, DC: U.S.

Eggen, P. & Kauchak, D. 2010. *Pearson International Edition* Education Psychology Windows on Classroom. 8th ed.

Federal Interagency. 2009. *Forum on Child and Family Statistics.* America's Children: Key National Indicators of Wellbeing. Washington, DC: US.

Fellinger, J., Holzinger, D. & Pollard, R. 2012. *Mental Health of Deaf People*. Lancet: 379:1037-1044.

Fellinger, J., Holzinger, D., Beitel,C., Laucht, M. & Goldberg, D.P. 2009. *The Impact of Language Skills on Mental Health Difficulties of Adolescents with Hearing Impairment. Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavia*, 120:153-159.

Fellinger, J., Holzinger, D., Sattel, H., Laucht, M. & Goldberg, D. 2009. Correlates of Mental Health Disorders amongst Children with Hearing Impairments. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, 635-641. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-8749.2008.03218.

Glaser, M. & Van Pletzen, E. 2012. Inclusive Education for Deaf Students: Literacy Practices and South African Sign Language. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies,* 30(1):25-37. DOI: 10.2989/16073614.2012.693707.

Gottfried, A.E. 2000. *The Role of Environment in Contextual and Social Influence on Motivation:* Generalities Specificities and Causality. Handbook for motivation at schools. New York: Routledge.

Grosjean, F. 2010. *Bilingual Life and Reality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gudyanga, E., Eliphanos, H., Gudyanga, A. & Wadesango, N. 2014. Hearing Impairment Disability Salience in Students: Measures and Correlates with Social Acceptance. *Regular Schools Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences MCSER Publishing*, 5(9):415.

Hannah, A.J. 2013. *Signs of Resistance: Peer Learning of Sign Languages within 'Oral' Schools for the Deaf.*

Hardonk, S., Daniels, S., Desnerck, G., Van Hove, G., Van Kershaver, E., Sigurjonsdottir, H.B. & Loucks, F. 2011. Deaf Parents and Pediatric Cochlear

Implantation: An Exploration of the Decision-Making Process. *American Annals of the Deaf*, *156*, 290– doi:10.1353/aad.2011.0027.

Hermans, D., Ormel, E. & Knoors, H. 2010. On the Relation between the Signing and Reading Skills of Deaf Bilinguals. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 13(2): 187-199.

Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W. & Smit, B. 2009. *Finding your Way in Qualitative Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Hiddinga, A. & Crasborn, O. 2011. *Signed Languages and Globalization*. Language in Society.

Ingber, S. & Dromi, E. 2010. Actual Versus Desired Family-Centered Practice in Early Intervention for Children with Hearing Loss. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, *15*, 59-71. doi:10.1093/deafed/enp025.

Jordan, A., Carlile, O. & Starck, A. 2009. *Approaches to Learning: A guide for teachers.* Berkshire: Open University Press*.*

Joubert, R. & Prinsloo, S. 2009. *The Law of Education in South Africa*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Kerr, K. & West, M. 2010. *Social Inequality: Can Schools Narrow the Gap?* Cheshire: British Educational Research Association. www.bera.ac.uk accessed 18/10/13.

Khan, H.S. 2013. Foster Inclusive Education through Community Development and Participation in the Present Teacher Education Systems in India. *Global Research Analysis,* 2(5):2277-6160.

Kochung, E.J. 2011. Role of Higher Education in Promoting Inclusive Education: Kenyan Perspective. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies.* (JETERAPS): 2(3):144-149.

Landsberg, E.D. & Nel, N. 2005*. Addressing Barriers to Learning.* South African Perspective. 1st ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Lorenzo, T. 2011. Disability Catalyst Africa. Disability Studies Programme: School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. University of Cape Town: Disability Innovations Africa (ed.).

Maree, K. & Pietersen, J. 2007. *First Step in Research: The Quantitative Research Process.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Maree, K. & Van Der Westhuizen, C. 2009. Head Start. *In Designing Research Proposals in the Social Sciences.* Pretoria: JUTA.

Marilyn, K.S. & Goes, J. 2013. *Dissertation and School Research.*

Marschark, M., Spencer, P.E., Adams, J. & Sapere, P. 2011. Teaching to the Strengths and Needs of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 26(1):17-23.

Maxwell, J.A. 2014. *Remedial and Special Education September/October 2014 35: 267-274*, first published on March 31, 2014.

McCaskill, C., Lucas, C., Bayley, R. & Hill, J. 2011.*The Hidden Treasure of Black ASL: Its history and Structure*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

McMillian, H. & Schumacher, S. 2006. *Researching in Education: Evidence Based Inquiry.* 6th ed. Cape Town: Pearson.

Mhtml:file://C:/Documents and Settings/uvp/My Documents/Attention *Deficit Disorder*.mht [Accessed: 28 February 2009].

Mitchell, D. 2010. *Education that Fits: Review of International Trends in the Education of Students with Special Educational Needs*. Taylor and Francis Group.

Moore. 2010. *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Policy and Practices*. New Bank.

Morgans, H. 2009. The Attitudes of Deaf Adults in the Area of Johannesburg to Writing English as a Second or Third Language. Unpublished Master's thesis.

Mutswanga. P. & Mapuranga, B. 2012. Inclusion of Deaf Students in Mainstream Rural Primary Schoolsin Zimbabwe: Challenges and Opportunities © Kamla-Raj *2012 Stud Tribes Tribals,* 10(2):107-116.

Myers, S.S. & Fernandes, J.K. 2010. Deaf Studies: A Critique of the Predominant US Theoretical Direction. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 15(1):30.

NDCS. 2009a. *Educational Achievement of Deaf Children*: *What the Data Tells Us about Performance in GCSEs.* London: National Deaf Children's Society.

NDCS. 2009b. NDCS Education Survey 2009. Briefing Paper 2: *Number of Deaf Children Belonging to Local Authorities and Education Settings in England*. London: National Deaf Children's Society.

NDCS. 2010. *Hands up for Help: Giving Deaf Children a Fair Chance at School*. London: National Deaf Children's Society.

Nyst, V. 2012. Shared Sign Languages. In Pfau, R., Steinbach, M. & Woll, B. eds.. *Sign Language: An International Handbook,* pp. 552-574. Berlin, Germany/Boston, MA: De Gruyter Mouton.

Owens, R.E. 2010. *Language Disorders: A Functional Approach to Assessment and Intervention.* 5th ed. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Paul, E. & Don, K. 2010. *Educational Psychology*. Personal International Edition. 8th ed.

Penzeller, I., & Parker, S.D. 2014. *Family-Centered Practices and American Sign Language (ASL): Challenges and recommendations*, 81(1): 107-123.

Quinn, G. 2010. *Schoolization: An account of the origins of regional variation in British Sign Language. Sign Language Studies,* 10(4):476-501.

Resnik, D.B. 2011. What is Ethics in Research & Why is it Important? https://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/resources/bioethics/whatis/index.cfm? Uploaded 07July 2016

Rietveld-Van Wingerden, M. & Tijsseling, C. 2010. *Ontplooiing door communicatie. Geschiedenis van het onder wijsa and ovenenslech thorenden in Nederland.* Antwerpen, Belgium/Apeldoorn, The Netherlands: Garant.

Robert E., *Johnson* Scott K., & Liddell Carol J.1989. Unlocking curriculum: Principles for Achieving Access in Deaf Education

Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L. eds. (2009). *Promotion Self-Determined School Engagement:* Motivation Learning and Well-Being Hand Book for Motivation at Schools. New York: Routledge.

Shamoo, A. & Resnik, D. 2009. *Responsible Conduct of Research.* 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Shava, S. 2013. *The Inclusion of Indigenous Epistemologies in Higher Education.* Johannesburg: UNISA. Kopanong Conference Centre: 2nd National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Shaw, E. & Delaporte, Y. 2011. New Perspectives on the History of American Sign Language. *Sign Language Studies*, *11:*158-204.

Silverman, D. 2000. *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook.* London: Sage Publications.

Sinha, S. 2010. Dialogue as a Site of Transformative Possibility. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 29:459-475.

Smith, H. 2009. Including Deaf Culture: Deaf Young People and Participation. In Gibson, S. & Haynes, J. eds. *Perspectives on Participation and Inclusion: Engaging Education.* London: Continuum.

Spencer, P.E. & Marschark, M. 2010. *Evidence-Based Practice in Educating Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Student*s. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Staff.htt://www.gla.ac.uk/services/studentdisability/informationforstaff/staffguidelineso ndyslex [Accessed: 23 February 2009].

Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L. eds. 2005. *Research at Grass Roots for the Social Science and Human Service Professions.* 3rd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Students Disability Service. 2009. *Guidelines on Dyslexia for Glasgow University*.

Woolf A. 2014 *Educational Psychology* Custom Edition UNISA

Unit for Language Facilitation. eds. 2004. *South African Sign language Journal,* 1:4-89.

Van de Sande, I. & Crasborn, O. 2009. Lexically Bound Mouth Actions in Sign Language of The Netherlands: A Comparison between Different Registers and Age Groups. *Linguistics in The Netherlands,* 26(1):78-90.

Vinson, D.P., Thompson, R.L., Skinner, R., Fox, N. & Vigliocco, G. 2010. The Hands and Mouth Do Not Always Slip Together in British Sign Language. *Dissociating Articulatory Channels in the Lexicon Psychological Science,* 21(8):1158-1167.

Vitthal, R. & Jansen, J. eds. 2004. *Designing a First Research Proposal*: *Manual for Researchers in Education and Social Sciences.* Pretoria: JUTA and Co. Ltd.

Zeshan, U. & De Vos, C. eds. 2012. Sign Languages in Village Communities. *Anthropological and linguistic insights,* Berlin, Germany: Mouton De Gruyter.

APPENDIX 1: Research Questions: Learners (Semi-Structured)

SECTION ONE

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1	GENDER	Male	Female	RACE	Black	Coloured	Other
2	AGE	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 -19	Other		
3	YEARS OF SCHOOLING						
4	SUBJECTS						

SECTION TWO

Answer the questions below according to your knowledge. If the space is insufficient, you may add an extra page to explain further.

7.   What effect does sign language have on teaching and learning?

_____

_____

_____

_____

8.   What causes some of you to underperform academically?

_____

_____

_____

_____

9.   What are some of the challenges that you have experienced while teaching and learning take place?

_____

_____

_____

_____

10.   What is the effect of educators who teach you without any knowledge of SASL?

_____

_____

_____

_____

11.   How do you learn when a teacher comes to school without knowing SASL?

_____

_____

_____

_____

12.   How do you feel when you are diverted from academic to skills-based classes?

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX 2: Research Questions: Educators (Semi-Structured)

SECTION ONE

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1	GENDER	Male	Female	RACE	Black	Coloured	Other
2	AGE	20 - 30	31 - 40	41 -50	Other		
3	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE						
4	SUBJECTS YOU ARE TEACHING						

SECTION TWO

Answer the questions below according to your experience and knowledge. If the space provided is insufficient, you may add an extra page to explain further.

8.   Why are some learners unable to perform academically at schools for the Deaf?

_____
_____
_____
_____

9.   What causes deaf learners to divert from academic to skills-based classes?

_____
_____
_____
_____

10.   What is the effect of sign language barriers on Deaf learners?

_____
_____

_____

_____

11.   How do you feel about negative feedback from Deaf learners?

_____

_____

_____

_____

12.   What are the interventions for learners who do not progress academically
       before they are sent to skills classes?

_____

_____

_____

_____

13.   What are the challenges related to teaching Deaf learners? Do teachers have
       sign language skills when they are appointed for the first time?

_____

_____

_____

_____

14.   What causes Deaf learners not to complete Grade 12 in large numbers?

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX 3: Letter to the director of Strategic Planning, Policy and Research, requesting permission to conduct the study

Central University of Technology

1 Park Road

Bloemfontein

9300

23 October 2015

Director: Strategic Planning, Policy and Research

Room 319

Old CAN Building

Maitland Street

Bloemfontein

9300

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE

I am a registered student at the Central University of Technology (CUT). I am currently enrolled for a Master's Degree, and I am conducting research on the effect of sign language barriers on deaf learners in special schools in the Free State Province: A case study of a selected special school for the Deaf and Blind in the Motheo District.

One school has been identified as a participant in my study in your district. I will observe all ethical considerations while conducting the research in private and public places. No personal information with regard to those who will be participating in the

research will be made known. The research findings (results) will only be submitted to the CUT for examination purposes.

Should you have any questions, comments, etc. regarding the questionnaire or my research; please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your valuable support.

Yours Sincerely

Ngobeni W.P
Cell: 0827265514 / 0722749119

APPENDIX 4

Central University of Technology

1 Park Road

Bloemfontein

9300

23 October 2015

The Principal

Bartimea for Deaf and Blind

Poloko Road

Thaba-Nchu

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR UTILISATION OF THE SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT (MOTHEO DISTRIC)

I, Mrs W.P. Ngobeni (760129 0383 080), am a student at CUT registered for MEd. The topic of my study is: **THE EFFECT OF SIGN LANGUAGE BARRIERS ON DEAF LEARNERS IN A SPECIAL SCHOOL IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE.** I am also a teacher for deaf learners and am hereby requesting that your school take part in the research project that I will be conducting.

The research will take place from 2016-2017.

I hope you will consider my request.

Yours sincerely

W.P. NGOBENI

APPENDIX 5

Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

WP Ngobeni
18 Chris van Niekerk Avenue
Generaal de Wet
BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

Dear Mrs Ngobeni

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1. This letter serves as an acknowledgement of receipt of your request to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education.

   Research Topic: The effect of sign language barriers on deaf learners in a special school in the Free State Province: Case Study

2. Approval is herewith granted to conduct research in Bartimea school in Motheo District.

3. **Target Population**: Ten Grade 8 deaf learners in the English class. One Grade 8 English Teacher and ten deaf learners in the Pre-Vocational Needle Work class.

4. **Period of research**: For three months from the date of signature of this letter. Please note the department does not allow any research to be conducted during the fourth term (quarter) of the academic year.

5. Should you fall behind your schedule by three months to complete your research project in the approved period, you will need to apply for an extension.

6. The approval is subject to the following conditions:

   6.1 The collection of data should not interfere with the normal tuition time or teaching process.

   6.2 A bound copy of the research document should be submitted to the Free State Department of Education, Room 319, 3rd Floor, Old CNA Building, Charlotte Maxeke Street, Bloemfontein.

   6.3 You will be expected, on completion of your research study to make a presentation to the relevant stakeholders in the Department.

   6.4 The attached ethics documents must be adheared to in the discourse of your study in our department.

7. Please note that costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.

Yours sincerely

DR JEM SEKOLANYANE
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

DATE: 25/1/16