

**ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED
LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

By

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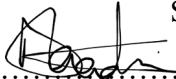
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DECLARATION

I, Masuku Sbonelo Qiniso, declare that the dissertation “ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE” tendered in for the qualification of Master of Education at the University of the Free State, is my personal independent work and that I have not previously submitted a similar work for a qualification at or in any other university.

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DEDICATION

I devote this work to my late brothers; Mlungisi, Bheki and Elfias, who loved and supported me beyond life. God took them before we could celebrate success as a family. Ngiyanithanda bafethu. I am convinced and have the blessed hope that we will meet on the other side of the world. Nilale ngokuthula boMasuku. Siyanikhumbula.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to design a transformatory-bricolage strategy that aims to respond to the challenges faced by Grade 12 progressed learners in English First Additional Language (ENGFAL) in Gert Sibande district secondary schools. The strategy arose against the background of numerous challenges with the current progression policy referred to as National Policy Pertaining to the Program and Promotion Requirements (NPPPPR), which informs the promotion and progression of learners.

This study was equally aimed at finding the impact of using bricolage through a transformative paradigm as a scheme to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in teaching and learning ENGFAL in Grade 12. Learner progression corroborates a challenge facing the South African education system. This qualitative Participatory Action Research furthermore aimed to find possible solutions through bricolage for ENGFAL learners to employ as an intermediation tool to help learners who are progressed through to Grade 12.

Data collection tactics used in this study were Focus Group Discussions, semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, data were collected from records such as support policies used at selected schools. The study population was eight Grade 12 learners doing ENGFAL and four educators from two Gert Sibande district schools. Participants were sampled through purposive and convenience sampling. Data were analysed by means of thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003).

Findings from this study showed that transformatory-bricolage could assist in enhancing the academic performance of Grade 12 progressed learners in ENGFAL. The findings additionally indicated that transformatory-bricolage is likely to lessen failure rate which

eventually

decreases the number of learners who need to be progressed short of meeting promotional requirements. The discoveries also revealed some challenges teachers face in teaching progressed learners, such as a lack of basic understanding of the subject in both grammar and literature, especially the elements of literature. One common feeling was the need for much improved foundations in the lower grades, which prepares learners for the tougher content in the FET phase. Further, findings from this study suggested the need for specialised training and support for teachers in order to assist progressed learners.

Keywords: English First Additional Language, progression policy, promotion, participatory action research, Transformative Paradigm, bricolage, bricoleur, teacher capacitation, thematic analysis, Transformatory-bricolage.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DBE	Department of Basic Education
ENGFAL	English First Additional Language
FET	Further Education and Training
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
NPPPPR	National Policy Pertaining to the Program and Promotion Requirements
PAR	Participatory action research
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1:

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

The study designed a strategy to help improve the academic performance of progressed learners of English as a first language (ENGFAL) in Grade 12. “Progression is the transfer of a learner from one grade level to the next, despite the learner failing to meet all the promotion standards (DBE, 2012, p. xi)”. This is done to prevent a learner from remaining in one phase for more than four years (DBE, 2011). According to the progression policy, academic difficulties that a progressed learner had in a grade they failed must be tackled in the grade level where the learner has been progressed to. “The progression policy was proposed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in 2012 and was executed in schools from Grades R through 12 in 2013” (Munje & Maarman, 2016 p. 187). “The DBE applied the progression policy to ease learner dropout and allow learners to progress within their age cohorts. According to the DBE (2012), a learner may only repeat once per phase; such a learner needs to be within the age range of that phase” (Kader, 2012, p. 14).

“The policy further postulates that learners in all FET Grades be progressed to the next grade provided they offered and done the school-based assessment, oral assessments, and practical assessment activities, and have met the least possible requirements for end-of-year examinations in not fewer than seven subjects. The policy conditions that learners will be progressed if they obtain 40% in three subjects, with an official language at the home language level being obligatory, and 30% in three other subjects, given that the failed subject’s school-based assessment component is submitted” (DBE, 2012, p. 33). “If a learner fails to meet the above-mentioned promotional standards, they should still progress to the next grade level and condoned due to the number of years spent in the phase or age. In addition, the progression policy states that, while progressed learners are more likely to fail the next grade, they should be given all the required assistance to aid them progress to the next grade” (Kolobe, 2019, p. 12). This is done with the goal of fostering self-worth and learner dignity, as well as meeting the requirement for age-appropriate socialisation (DBE, 2012). In her speech about the 2019 National Senior Certificate (NSC) results, the Basic Education minister noted that the DBE strives to assist students to find personal worth, self-fulfilment, communication and

expressiveness abilities, define individual beliefs, and form successful learning systems (South African Government, 2020).

The enactment of the progression policy has, all over the years, elicited equally positive and negative reactions from teachers, students, parents, scholars, and other patrons in the education system. Hartley (2015, p. 98) claimed that the “progression policy is a solid systemic signal of a great education”. In support of the above, Munje and Maarman (2016) argued that “a school progression plan is imperative for providing learners with the support they need to achieve parity and admittance”. Teachers have articulated concern that the progression policy is likely to harm rather than help these learners, which may also raise the failure rate in upper grades (Spaull, 2013). However, Jimerson and Renshaw (2012) suggested that both progression and retention do not have the aptitude to fully help learners at risk. They argue that it cannot give satisfactory solutions to learner underperformance issues for the reason that both systems have a number of shortcomings. “Learners who are not in the proper age category for their grades are more likely to have issues with their studies and may be more prone to dropping out. In this regard, in the South African context, automatic progression is favoured, given that retention is viewed as identical with learner dropout.” (Motala, Dieltiens, and Sayed, 2009, p. 8).

In South Africa, statistics released by the DBE in 2020 showed that 474 718 candidates wrote the ENGFAL NSC examination. Of these candidates, 471 072 achieved 30% and above and 434 080 candidates achieved 40% and above. However, 49.6% of these candidates could not reach beyond the 50% level mark (DBE, 2021). “In the Gert Sibande district in Mpumalanga province, 13 164 candidates sat for ENGFAL in 2018, 6 510 failed to achieve 50% and above,

of whom 2 007 were progressed learners, who failed the examination. In 2019, 11 119 wrote the ENGFAL NSC examination, 4 258 candidates failed to break through the 50% level, of whom 1 177 candidates failed to achieve 30% and above. In 2020, 11 037 candidates wrote the ENGFAL NSC examination, 2 185 candidates could not achieve beyond the 50% level, of whom more than 839 progressed candidates failed to attain 30%” (Mpumalanga Department of Education, 2021, p. 9).

The continuous poor performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL is a cause for concern and necessitates research to identify a strategy to improve progressed learners' performance. “Despite the resources dedicated to assisting these learners, few progressed learners perform well, as revealed by the 2018 Grade 12 results (DBE, 2018). 128 634 progressed learners

were itemised in the country in 2018. In line with the commencement of the Multiple Examination Opportunities initiative in 2017, which was phased out in 2019, merely 33 412 learners were

ready to write the mandatory seven subjects, and 95 222 were modularised” (George, 2020, p. 13). “The program was intended to warranty that progressed learners wrote the NSC examination in phases, with the help of teachers, by picking subjects that they may perhaps take to the next examination calendar year” (DBE, 2018, p. 44). “Languages such as ENGFAL, were detached from this curriculum, grounded on the proposition that learners perform well in languages” (Ditshego, 2020, p. 2). However, as seen by the data quoted above, this was not the situation with ENGFAL.

1.2 Research interest or problem

Despite various interventions, the academic performance of progressed learners in the English language remains poor. The interventions provided to improve English First Additional Language have not yielded good results among progressed learners. Thus, the study intended to contribute to mitigating this problem.

1.3 Preliminary Literature review

This proposed study contrasted with other enquiry studies in English education. Kolobe (2019), for instance, investigated using technology to assist progressed learners in ENGFAL understanding. Kolobe’s research sought to “ascertain the influence of information and communication technology (ICT) as an integrated component for progressed learners in the teaching and learning of ENGFAL comprehension in the intermediate phase at schools in Tembisa, Gauteng”(Kolobe, 2019, p. 6). The study refers to technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPCK) and contends that the lack of appropriate methods to aid progressed learners by assigning them at a similar level as promoted learners in the equivalent grade level remains an issue. Salehi and Salehi (2012) have the same belief and emphasise the significance of the teacher's capacity to create the lesson more learner-centred in ENGFAL and through technology resources to help learners, particularly second-language speakers. According to Bingimlas (2009), as an ICT tool, computers may aid learners in their learning processes and mitigate the impacts of a teacher-centred teaching space by providing them with tools to enhance teaching and learning and improve their educational practice. The study found that the use of ICT as a pedagogy in lessons has been proven effective, both

locally and internationally.

The same is not true for using computers in semi-urban and rural schools. The limitation of Bingimlas' (2009) study is that it cannot be comprehensive as a representative of a larger populace of schools in South Africa. This is because most rural and township-based South African schools, notably those in the Gert Sibande district, lack access to ICT. Some even lack access to basic electricity. Kolobe's (2019) study focuses merely on the intermediate phase, not the FET phase, and it misses the other components of ENGFAL, as ENGFAL includes both grammar and literature. George (2019) investigated the barriers and expeditors affecting the academic achievement of progressed learners in KwaZulu-Natal. According to George (2019), despite the progression policy mandating schools to make intervention techniques available for progressed learners, many of them fail to matriculate. This study was based on Bandura's social cognition theory and aimed to investigate and comprehend the facilitators and barriers that impact the academic performance of progressed learners. The research did not concentrate on ENGFAL in Grade 12; it concentrated on obstacles and expeditors rather than strategies to advance the performance of progressed learners.

Ditshego (2020) examined "the experiences of Grades 10 and 11 ENGFAL instructors who educated progressed learners to advance their communication skills. The research was conducted in Mount Fletcher, Eastern Cape, and was based on Vygotsky's social development theory". The study discovered that, in low-resourced schools, progressed students were not provided with the necessary help to locate essential material for CAPS in full 1st-time compliance activities. The failure to sample progressed learners was a limitation to Ditshego's study. The study was mostly concerned about teachers' views rather than the learner sample, particularly progressed learners. Maarman and Munje (2015) investigated the extent and implications of learner progression in Cape Town quintile 1 schools. They contend that while the progression strategy is well-intended, major implementation and monitoring problems severely affect elementary school learners' academic expectations. Hartley (2015) expresses a similar viewpoint, stating that the school management team's failure to evaluate and monitor resulted in a blanket policy that ignores the progression policy entirely or merely implements the school management team's policy directives in different and seemingly ironical ways, thereby limiting learner freedoms. The study analysed the problem using Sen's (2005) capability method, and discovered that the progression of learners who do not have the requisite subject knowledge, especially in ENGFAL, leads to various complications and "unfreedoms" for learners.

Leepo (2015) investigated techniques for refining the academic achievement of progressed learners in Free State secondary schools. The goal was to look at the effect that intervention

techniques, such as extra classes and camps, had on the academic achievement of Grade 12 learners. The study was founded on Mertens' definition of constructivism (2010a). Leepo discovered that the majority of progressed learners had bad academic outcomes and concluded that the education system would be severely impacted so long as the progression policy is in place, and the quality of results will continue to decrease. What Leepo's study lacks is what Reddy and Mahavidyalaya (2016) contend: "not only is it a necessity to create knowledge of the implications of progression, it is also necessary to identify the variables that lead to a pass mark." According to Cekiso (2012), comprehension strategy teaching covers various reading methods and has been justified as useful in assisting progressed learners to become strategic readers. As a result, their reading comprehension improves. The need for reading strategy teaching in South Africa should be prompted by learners' low reading performance at elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels. As a result, teachers must offer reading strategies to learners that focus on reading techniques that will assist them in becoming strategic readers (Cekiso, 2012).

Some concepts in ENGFAL are difficult for progressed learners. Zhou and Zhao (2014) consider reading to be practical learning, which is a difficult nut to crack. Progressed learners are unable to read smoothly and efficiently, and they usually struggle to grasp texts. According to Cekiso and Madikiza (2014), progressed learners struggle to grasp written material. "Learners' lowly performance in text comprehension was visible on the Annual National Assessment (ANA) of 2011, as informed by the DBE (2011), which indicated that the proportion of learners who underperformed ranged from 30% to 47%, whereas those who did well ranged from 12% to 31 %"(Kader, 2012, p. 10).

In discussing the topic that this research addresses, it is imperative to remember that ENGFAL consists of three interconnected papers: Paper 1 (comprehension and language, 80 points), Paper 2 (based on literature, 70 marks), and Paper 3 (Writing skills, 100 marks). In Paper 1, learners are expected to read and grasp a text before answering questions, and are required to read, grasp, and write with a thorough knowledge of comprehension texts. As students advance in their reading abilities, they struggle to grasp the material and, as a result, fail to answer questions. Poetry, short tales, novels, and plays in Paper 2 use figurative language. The majority of these genres use Shakespearean-era vocabulary, which necessitates critical thinking and a basic understanding of figures of speech learned in elementary school. Struggling learners mix up metaphors and similes, while others fail to distinguish between figures of speech and parts of speech.

None of the aforementioned research papers addressed the matter of learner progression in the context of public schools in the Gert Sibande district, nor did they employ the bricolage theory, which investigates ways of using or discovering solutions using locally accessible and available instruments. The proposed study identified a gap in the sense that researchers have not approached the teaching of English to progressed learners with the lens of bricolage theory. The literature quoted above is not generalisable to most schools in the Gert Sibande district, particularly not in relation to the performance of Grade 12 ENGFAL progressed learners. All the studies quoted above focused on the intermediate phase, primary school in general, and Grades 10 and 11, while others focused on using ICT, which is not applicable to most schools in rural areas, which dominate the Gert Sibande district. The researcher believes that all schools in the Gert Sibande district have resources, though they may be limited; however, if the little that is available can be used to address a problem, a difference will be made and better results achieved. The study is unique because, to the researcher's paramount knowledge, a study similar to the proposed one has not been conducted with Grade 12 progressed learners doing ENGFAL in the Gert Sibande district. A further unique feature of the anticipated study relates to using participatory action research (PAR) methodology to help improve the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL.

1.4 Theoretical framework

A bricolage technique was used in this study. Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966), a cultural anthropologist, first used the term "bricolage" to characterise distinctive arrangements of mythical thought. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) broadened the original meaning to incorporate the idea of the researcher as a handyman or -woman who makes use of the equipment at hand. Researchers such as Lincoln (2001 p. 8) describe the evolution of the term bricoleur as "one seeking for nodes, links, nexuses, the delicate ties between disciplines, the interconnections, between the bodies of knowledge, between understanding and knowing themselves." Bricolage theory is crucial to this suggested study since it provides deep access to new types of social research complexity and rigor. Bricoleur is a term used to describe a researcher who concentrates on new grids of relationships instead of the final result (McLaren, 2000). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), the bricoleur develops the study issue in a complex framework. Furthermore, bricolage focuses on processes, interconnections, and connections between objects. This approach will tense help the effect

analysis in this investigation, guiding

the bricoleur to a variety of multi-logical dimensions (Dahlbom and Ljungberg, 1998). In this setting, research on learner progression yield a number of highly relevant categories from which different views may be formed, namely: theory, technique, interpretation, narratology, and power relations are all things to consider. According to Kincheloe (2001), bricolage goes to the heart of interdisciplinary research. It is important for this research because it combines history, ethnography, literary analysis, aesthetic critique, and philosophical analysis with discourse analysis, and theatrical and dramatic methods of perceiving and producing meaning. The use of bricolage theory provided productivity and profundity to the study of learner progression, particularly in ENGFAL. This fullness and depth will guide the methods used to improve the learners' performance. Bricolage allows the researcher to investigate the utilisation of local tools to liberate progressed learners in English teaching and learning. I chose bricolage theory to investigate the problem of learner progression in ENGFAL because viewing the research problem as a matter of complexity in the setting of educational inquiry assists progressed learners, teachers of these learners and the entire education sector in using the “tools at hand” to help advance the achievement of progressed learners.

1.5 Research questions

Main research question

- How can the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL in Grade 12 be enhanced?

Sub-questions

- What are the challenges facing teachers and learners when teaching progressed learners ENGFAL in Grade 12?
- Which solutions can address the challenges faced by progressed learners in Grade 12 ENGFAL?
- What are the opportunities for progressed learners in ENGFAL in Grade 12 from a bricolage approach?
- How could threats hinder the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL in Grade 12?
- What are the anticipated successes of implementing a strategy to enhance the performance of ENGFAL Grade 12 progressed learners?

1.6 Research aim and objectives

Research aim

The aim of this study was to design a strategy to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in Grade 12 ENGFAL.

Research objectives

The following are the research objectives.

- “Identify the challenges faced by progressed learners and teachers in ENGFAL in Grade 12.
- Explore possible solutions to the challenges faced by progressed learners and learners in ENGFAL in Grade 12.
- Find opportunities that are available for progressed learners in ENGFAL in Grade 12 through bricolage.
- Identify threats that can prevent the success of the strategy to enhance the performance of progressed ENGFAL learners in Grade 12.
- Discuss the anticipated successes of the strategy to enhance the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL in Grade 12.”

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.7.1. Research paradigm

The proposed study employed the transformative paradigm based on Guba and Lincoln's (2005) early work. According to the paradigm, research and assessment are critical for detecting and eliminating marginalisation and discrimination based on variables such as ethnicity, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, and socioeconomic position (Romm, Nel, Tlale and Nkoli, 2015). According to Chilisa (2012), the transformative paradigm is a research outline that centres on the understanding of marginalised populations, power differentials that have subsidised marginalisation are examined, and study findings are linked to actions aimed at reducing disparities. Transformative paradigm also emphasises the strong

point of communities who confront discrimination and oppression as a result of their ethnic practices and beliefs. (Mertens, 2007, 2009, 2010b).

Transformative paradigm gives rise to a philosophical framework that is channelled on integrities in terms of cultural awareness, recognises those angles of multiplicity connected with power differences, develops ways and means favourable to collective change, and builds trusting interactions through the bricolage theory.

1.7.2. Research method

This study used Participatory Action Research (PAR) design as a method to collect data. PAR is seen as a liberating, democratic, life-enhancing, and fair qualitative investigation that is unique compared to common qualitative techniques (Kach & Kralik, 2006). It is a systematic inquiry conducted by teachers and other education staff to gather and analyse data that help them improve and implement their methods (Mills, 2003).

Susman (1983) provided a detailed action plan of PAR which stipulates that the issue is first recognised. It was followed by a group discussion of many potential solutions, from which an action strategy emerges and is carried out. Data from the engagement outcomes is gathered and evaluated, and the results are deduced in light of the action's success.

The problem is re-examined at this stage, and the process echoes again. This procedure is repeated until the issue is fixed. Below is the model that explains how PAR was employed in this study using the steps provided by Susman (1983).

In this study, PAR employed bricolage through focus group discussions to obtain qualitative data. Focus group discussions are defined by Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick, and Mukherjee (2018) as an organised discussion between six to eight individuals in which members are given room and a chance to explore a certain issue. According to Boddy (2016), a focus group discussion is a type of in-depth interview that is conducted in a group to gather and analyse viewpoints and the meaning behind those views. The researcher will use PAR in this proposed study with the intention of enhancing Grade 12 progressed learners' performance in ENGFAL, and the approaches, support, and engagements of parents, parents, and all education participants.

The approach for this study will be qualitative research. "Qualitative research is a type of social discipline research that gathers and analyses non-numerical data in order to deduce

meaning and increase our understanding of social life via the study of individual people or places”

(Punch, 2013, p. 7). This study will use a qualitative research technique to examine why progressed learners struggle with ENGFAL progressed and to investigate methods to assist them in performing better.

1.8 DATA COLLECTION

“Data collection is the practice of obtaining information on detailed variables to evaluate results or attain actionable insights” (Maree, 2012, p. 44). Focus group discussions were utilised as a data collection tool in the proposed study. Participants in the focus group discussions were able to agree or disagree on answers to the research questions of this study, which are related to the influence of the progression policy on the academic achievement of progressed learners in ENGFAL. Focus group discussions also allowed the researcher to learn more about what participants believe about a topic, as well as their practices and experiences (Carey and Asbury, 2016). The researcher purposefully chose the people who engaged in group discussions; during the group discussion. The researcher took notes of the points raised how?

According to Barbour (2014), a focus group discussion is a method in qualitative research and data collecting approach whereby a small group of individuals debates a research topic thoroughly while being led by a moderator. It is an approach used to elicit the attitudes and views, experiences and knowledge, and practices of participants, which are discussed with other group members throughout the interaction. Studies that strive to comprehend academic-related issues in a specific social, political, ecological, cultural, and economic context employ focus group discussions (Barbour, 2014). Doing so is possible because focus groups emphasises group participation and allow data to be created collectively (Wong, 2008).

In justifying the use of focus group discussions for this study, it is critical to highlight that this data collection approach takes advantage of humans' propensity to tell tales and is thus especially appropriate in societies with low literacy and/or strong oral customs (Grbich, 1999; Bromley et al., 2003). The participants who were purposively sampled had room to talk and address the research question, which relates to the challenges progressed learners face in Grade

12 ENGFAL. The FGD was done in the participants' natural setting, which should be comfortable and conducive for them to express themselves.

1.9 RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLING

1.9.1. Population

Population in research is a group of people or items that is the major subject of a study and from which a sample is drawn (Larson & Sheeber, 2008). The planned study's population will include ENGFAL learners and ENGFAL teachers.

1.9.2. Sampling

Polit and Beck (2012) define sampling as a subset of a population that has been chosen to participate in research. Purposive and stratified sampling were used in this qualitative research project. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), the researcher in purposive sampling picks a specific group of learners and teachers with important qualities that will be instructive about the study topic. Population will be split into small groups and purposively sampled (Csikszentmihalyi and Larson, 2014). Purposive sampling will be used to identify relevant populations for the aims of this study, namely ENGFAL progressed learners, teachers, and English curriculum implementers for ENGFAL. Two (2) schools will be sampled and each school will consist of 6 participants, comprising learners and teachers, whereby 2 ENGFAL Grade 12 teachers will be sampled per school, 4 progressed learners will be sampled per school, and 3 ENGFAL curriculum implementers will be purposively sampled. In total, this proposed study will involve 12 participants.

1.10 DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, REPORTING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE.

1.10.1. DATA ANALYSIS

The data that were collected were analysed using the thematic analysis approach, as suggested by Laws, Marcus and Harper (2003), which proceeds along seven steps:

- “ Step 1: Review and reread all of the obtained data: The data from the focus group talks will be read and reread to get to the heart of the problems experienced by advanced ENGFAL learners.
- Step 2: Make a rough list of themes that emerge from the data: Major topics and themes will be discovered and organised in accordance with the study's research questions.
- Step 3: Reread the information: The researcher will reread the data to see if the identified themes match what the participants said and the study questions.
- Step 4: Using quotations and notes to connect the themes: The themes that emerge from the data will be related to various scholarly perspectives.

- Step 5: Examining the topic categories to interpret them: The researcher will consider the research questions when interpreting the data.
- Step 6: Create a tool to aid in the detection of patterns in the data: During the analysis, the researcher will be able to identify patterns in the data.
- Step 7: Interpreting and extracting meaning from the data: The researcher will discover topics, which will subsequently be broken down into subheadings.”

1.10.2. Validity

To assure the validity of the research, the unchanged sampled group of participants will be used during the course of the study (Neuman, 2003). The procedures and directions for taking part in this study will be clearly given to the participants. The focus group discussions will be performed equitably in order to analyse the achievement of progressed learners in ENGFAL and to guarantee that the perspectives of both sides, teachers and learners, are heard and presented in the findings. Data from focus group discussions will be transcribed, classified, and categorised into numerous themes that indicate participants' lived experiences in connection to curriculum implementation. To guarantee data veracity, member checking will be done. That is, topics will be reverted to participants to confirm that the data corresponds to their daily experiences.

1.11 Value of the proposed research

The study's goal will be to provide strategies to help advance the academic achievement of progressed learners in ENGFAL. It will also seek to use different resources available in the environment to advance the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL. The study will aim to shed light on the sources of poor academic performance by progressed learners in Grade 12 ENGFAL. The research will seek to establish and navigate an atmosphere that is favourable to the creation of quality outcomes for both instructors and learners. ENGFAL should be a subject in which learners can thrive (Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Molla & Sylvester, 2014). The research will also aim to enhance DBE knowledge of the problems experienced by progressed learners, with an aim to collectively resolve challenges related ENGFAL in the Gert Sibande district.

1.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Morse (2016 pp), social research entails ethical concerns since it involves "the gathering of data from individuals concerning themselves and others." Because this will be a social sciences study, I shall first seek permission from the University of the Free State to perform the study. Second, I will seek authorisation from the Department of Education in Gert Sibande district to conduct focus group discussions.

1.12.1. Informed consent

According to Armiger (2005, p. 34), informed consent is defined as involving a person who offers their permission consciously, willingly, and intelligently, and in an evident and unambiguous manner." Individuals' consent will be obtained for the purposes of this study, and they will be informed that participation in the study is optional and participants may pull out from the research at any time.

1.12.2. Confidentiality and anonymity

According to Beebe (2008), confidentiality means that participants are allowed to withhold and disclose as much information to the researcher as they choose. Beyond conventional loyalty, it is the researcher's obligation to guarantee that secrecy is maintained. As a result, the names of participants and schools will not be disclosed anywhere in this study, and their personal information will be kept private.

1.12.3. Respect for privacy

The participants' privacy will not be violated without their permission. This will be indicated in the consent form to guarantee that the subject does not suffer any damage caused by participating in this study.

To safeguard their privacy, pseudonyms will be used instead of the schools' real names. To engage in this study, all participants will complete consent forms.

Beneficence and non – maleficence are critical ethical considerations that cannot be ignored.

1.13 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS AND MAJOR SECTIONS OF STUDY:

“Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Theoretical framing and literature review

Chapter 3: Methodology

Chapter 4: Presentation of the data and analysis

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations”

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMING AND LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework employed by the researcher in this study. The researcher first defines bricolage theory, outlines the history of bricolage, explains the different use of bricolage, elaborates on the major emphasis of bricolage, the relevance of bricolage to the study, and lastly, the limitations of bricolage. This chapter also reviews the literature on the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in teaching and learning English First Additional Language. This chapter also replies to the objectives of this study by focusing on policies around learner progression, debates on learner progression, which include proponents and opponents of learner progression, learner progression from an international and South African context, Possible solutions to the challenges, opportunities that are available for progressed learners from a Bricolage perspective, and threats to the possible solutions and opportunities for progressed learners in ENGFAL.

The following section discusses the history of bricolage by defining what bricolage is and what it entails and its origin as discussed by Claude Levi-Strauss (1962). It further discusses the proponents of bricolage, from Denzin and Lincoln, who conceptualised the theory, and Kincheloe, who later theorised bricolage. It also discusses other scholars who contributed to the rise of the theory and its use.

2.1. HISTORY OF BRICOLAGE

Bricolage is a term used by cultural anthropologist Levi-Strauss (1962) to illustrate the contrast flanked by a French handyman (Monsieur Bricolage) employing non-specialist equipment for a diverse of determinations while tackling pre-constrained and limited situations, including an engineer who uses 'his' expert tools. Lévi-Strauss (1966) and Berry (2006) argue that bricolage is a multi-perspectival, critical, multi-methodological and multi-theoretical approach to investigation. Bricolage, according to Rapport and Overing (2014), is the merging of many traditional forms in order to invent and produce something new or more suited to the task at

hand. Bricolage is commonly allied with invention and uniqueness, and bricolage in action is often seen as encapsulating distinct intervention and perception.

A bricoleur is somebody who participates in bricolage and "makes things function by cleverly employing whatsoever that is available, not mindful of the "right" resources or tools" (Thayer, 1988, p. 2). Another definition of a bricoleur is "a type of French handyman who devises practical clarifications to a wide range of minor repairs" (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p. 1). Lévi- Strauss applied this mode in his book *The Savage Mind* (1962) illustrates how cultures merge and recombine disparate codes and social aspects to create recurrent structures. Bricolage has since become a common phrase to denote a variety of systematic improvisation techniques.

Bricoleurs exclusively utilise "at-hand" equipment and materials to create their bricolage works of art (Levi-Strauss, 1966). Mythological denotation-making bricoleurs, according to Lévi- Strauss, incorporate their thoughts with every tool of knowledge available in their collection (e.g., observation, observation, social practices) and every available object in their given framework (e.g., institutions, dominant knowledge and institutions) to complete a variety of tasks concerned with knowledge production. Bricolage takes on a new meaning-making role in this new setting, challenging structural rationality's foundations. It specifically questions the ontological and epistemological assumptions which view the world as a container of worldwide structures that occur irrespective of human rationality. In his quest for fundamental mechanisms that control meaning-making of humans, Lévi-Strauss employed the bricolage metaphor. He utilised the metaphor more precisely in the framework of his contest to anthropological thought, which was then dominant and divided between mythical and scientific rationality. He proposed that all forms of reason derive from an intrinsic mental structure that motivates humans to seek understanding, therefore disrupting the structuralist dichotomy (Denzin and Lincoln, 1999).

Denzin and Lincoln (1999) conceptualised bricolage research, which was later theorised by Kincheloe (2001) and Berry (2011).

In his definition of bricolage, Lévi-Strauss (1966) said that the idea arose from an awareness of the cultural domain's complexity and unpredictability. Since cultural inquiry is complex, the researcher must provide a detailed description that evades the reductionism of characterising an individual's "functional role." In a thorough study, such a "literacy of complexity" recognises all human beings' overlapping roles and social places, as well as the various layers of self-interpretation layers, social actors, and surroundings (Dicks and

Mason, 1998).

Bricolage, according to him, is in disagreement with the engineer's artistic thought, which moves from aims to procedures. According to Lévi-Strauss, mysticism tries to tackle new issues by repurposing prevailing elements.

In the following section, I, as the researcher, discuss the different uses of bricolage theory mainly focusing on the use of bricolage in educational research as this study is educational.

2.2. DIFFERENT USES OF BRICOLAGE

Bricolage has been employed in the entrepreneurship literature to describe issues such as market formation (Baker and Nelson, 2005) and fledgling business growth (Baker and Nelson, 2005). (Baker et al., 2003). Bricolage is a concept used in the innovation literature to describe how to generate strong designs in unpredictable circumstances (Ciborra, 1996; Garud and Karnoe, 2003). Chao (1999), Innes and Booher (1999), and Weick (1993). The concept 'bricolage' appears to have gained currency outside academic discourses, as have notions like innovation and entrepreneurship, which had a growing effect on public dialogue, policy and research agendas over the previous decade.

Bricolage is a cultural studies word that describes how people collect belongings from many social groups to build innovative cultural identities. Pinar (2001) argued that bricolage is particularly common among subgroups like the punk movement. Objects that in the dominant culture have just one meaning (or no meaning at all) are developed and given a new, frequently subversive significance. In punk culture, for example, the safety jot became a kind of adornment. "In social psychology, the phrase 'psychological bricolage' refers to psychological processes through which an individual discovers unique solutions to issues by merging previously unrelated knowledge or concepts they already possess" (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 7). Bricolage-like trends are employed in the fashion business by integrating things that are generally used for different reasons. Sweet wrappers, for example, are plaited together to form a handbag (McLaren, 2001).

2.2.1. BRICOLAGE IN EDUCATION RESEARCH

Seymour Papert (1991) discusses two approaches to problem-solving in education and the discussion of constructionism. He defines bricolage as a method of learning and problem-solving that involves experimenting, testing, and experimenting some more. Kincheloe coined the term "bricolage" to describe the usage of multi-perspective research techniques in educational research. In Kincheloe's theory of research bricolage, "several theoretical traditions

are utilised in a larger theoretical/critical pedagogical framework to build the basis for a transformational style of multimethodological inquiry” (Lincoln, 2001, 17). Researchers may develop more rigorous and practical insights on socio-political and educational issues by using these distinct frameworks and approaches. In light of contemporary cultural, psychological, social, and educational research, Bricolage serves as a technique for recognising and organising prevailing impulses. It fosters knowledge and communication in this setting while also providing mechanisms that allow for a more cognizant and rigorous manner of operation.

According to Lincoln (2001), educational researchers' present adaptations of research as bricolage appear to be "very much a poststructuralist effort, or at the very least, a mixture of a structuralist and poststructuralist analysis." To put it another way, bricolage is rooted in a postmodern tradition that tries to replace the pursuit of truth with a “celebration of the variety of (equally legitimate) perspectives” (Burr, 1995).

2.2.1.1. Educational Bricolage promotes creative improvisation in the learning of ENGFAL.

Dron (2014) outlines that educational bricolage involves learning through creative improvisation, similar to how a baby might turn a leaf pile and sticks into an airplane. 'Rather than school education replacing forms of informal, self-organised pretend play, bricolage might add to innovative practices in grade 12 ENGFAL progressed learners' education such as experiential learning activities.' Bricolage provides a foundation for creative innovation by combining and adapting tools and theories to develop new insights (Leeming, 2014). Since educational bricolage promotes collaboration and interaction across disciplinary, organisational, and cultural boundaries. The thinking process is not based on deduction but on creative design. Collaboration is one of the best ways to enrich the performance of ENGFAL-progressed learners in grade 12.

2.2.1.2. Educational Bricolage enhances the personal learning environments of ENGFAL.

Dron (2014) argues that ‘bricolage’ is well appropriate to social, networked, open-ended learning than traditional learning design approaches. Transfer Learning / Personal Learning Environments: Bricolage is a collage created when students blend small bits and pieces from many disciplines and learning experiences. As such, 'bricolage' is useful for illuminating the transfer learning process. Allowing bricolage to equip a learner's customised learning environment connects the often-fragmented experience that can possibly disrupt students'

learning paths.

2.2.1.3. Educational bricolage promotes the active learning process of ENGFAL.

Bricolage offers chances for both ENGFAL teacher and learner involvement through open, participatory design processes, in contrast to the typical engineering paradigm in which the end product decides the means and techniques (Lamb, 2012). Because the end product is not known at the outset, it allows for unexpected and chaotic developments. It prioritises building, refining, and testing (and possibly discarding) over defining, planning, and implementing Dron, (2014).

Learners that are bricoleurs explore what they can do with a given material and think in abstract ways while creating something new. Bricolage can be utilised as a technique for improvisation, interaction with one's own material, and social-environment development, according to research conducted in these educational situations. According to Willet (2015), bricolage exercises in English are best suited to the expansion of critical and creative thinking, reflective writing, collaboration, and synthesis because they require students to begin constructing knowledge by understanding the resources that are available rather than finding resources to construct knowledge.

2.2.1.4. Educational bricolage promotes boundary crossing in teaching and learning of ENGFAL

Boundary crossing is the learning process that occurs when people (or groups of people) come into contact with unexplored area, create new, fluid identities, and combine concepts from many domains to accomplish a specific goal (Dron, 2014). Boundary crossing as a tool in educational bricolage may help in addressing and enhancing the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12.

Kincheloe (2008) outlined that educational bricolage is the process of engaging in a conversation with a diverse array of educational tools and materials in which objects are repurposed and reorganised to address a challenge. Having a certain goal in mind is not necessary for college. On the contrary, the participants must be honest and begin with a hazy concept. The project's elements are formed gradually.

The next section discusses the major emphasis of bricolage.

2.3. MAJOR EMPHASIS RELEVANCE OF BRICOLAGE TO THE STUDY

Bricolage in social research gives perception into new sorts of precision and complexity. The bricoleur develops a more elaborate framework around the topic of study by focusing on networks of relationships rather than things as separate entities. (Kincheloe, 2001) argues that the focus of this approach is on processes, relationships, and interconnections between phenomena. Bricoleurs are led to various dimensions of multi logicality as a result of such examination. On one level, bricolage might be regarded as a method of delving into the details of transdisciplinary study. McLaren (2001) outlines that the methodological bricolage includes ethnography, hermeneutics, semiotics, textual analysis, psychoanalysis, phenomenology, historiography, discourse analysis, reductionism, phenomenology, history, discourse analysis, philosophical assessment, literary analysis, artistic analysis, and theatrical strategies for observing and producing meaning are all examples.

2.3.1 Bricolage promotes precision and complexity.

Bricoleurs operate under the premise that theory is more of a clarification of our relationship to nature than it is of nature itself. Bricoleurs are methodological bargainers who join the research process. The bricolage, as envisioned here, fights its embedding in concrete while encouraging its pliability, constantly respecting the needs of the work at hand. According to Lincoln (2001), the difference between two sorts of bricoleurs: individuals who (a) are devoted to research extensiveness, consenting status quo to mold methodologies utilised, and individuals who (b) desire to participate in the lineage/archeology of disciplines with a larger aim in mind.

At its foundation, bricolage is attempting to discover and create a variety of techniques for overcoming this one-dimensionality. Knowledge producers pay a high price when this

connection is neglected. The expenses of not considering that what we see is affected by a variety of circumstances are included in this expenditure. Weakening our capacity to interpret the world around us by mistaking perspective for reality not only impacts individuals with the least power to declare what is true (Karunaratne, 1997), but also disadvantages those with the least authority to say what is true (Karunaratne, 1997). Bricoleurs try to avoid making definitive statements. Bricoleurs offer fascinating insights into their engagement with reality and the unsolved paradoxes that define such encounters due to the dynamic and transitory nature of the universe (Karunaratne, 1997; Lomax and Parker, 1996; Young and Yarbrough, 1993).

Because of the complexity of cultural examination, the researcher must provide a detailed description that evades the reductionism of characterising an individual's "functional role." In a thorough study, such a "literacy of complexity," a bricoleur recognises all human beings' overlapping roles and social places, as well as the various layers of self-interpretations, social actors and surroundings (Dicks and Mason, 1998). Bricoleurs put their understandings into action in order to deal with the complexities of everyday life.

2.3.2 Bricolage promotes variation in research.

Bricoleurs argue that the topic of study is ontologically complicated in the sense that it must not be defined as an enclosed entity. Bricoleurs who follow the complexity principle recognise that identifying social systems is always challenging and subject to contextual contingency. Bricoleurs know that they cannot rely on a patriarchal theory to explain what happened in a given case. Instead, they dig, scratch, and examine from all angles, adopting a variety of research tools and interpretative tactics to study various aspects of the issue. Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 23) recognized five dimensions of bricolage, in addition to the principal emphasis on bricolage: "procedural bricolage, theoretical bricolage, political bricolage, interpretative bricolage, and narrative bricolage".

2.3.3. Bricolage promotes consciousness of knowledge creation in ENGfAL

Bricoleurs become conscious of their own and others' historicity as they learn about the construction of knowledge socially, cognition, and subjectivity of humans, what many academics have referred to as the rise of this awareness, this grasp of the historical, social, cultural, conceptual, and conversational production of science and the enquiry it creates, as the crisis of historicity. In this setting, bricoleurs acknowledge that distinguishing between

multiple social truths and diverse researcher explanations is more problematic than previously

thought. Bricoleurs, with such consideration, are always presented with degrees of complication that less informed people are not. Bricoleurs begin to recognise the fuzzy border between the historical and historiographical as they exchange their method between the created and found production of scopes of knowledge.

Bricoleurs explore the rationality and psychology of research plan creation and deployment in the greater endeavour to yield knowledge. Such rationalities and psychologies can only be understood in the context of their historical background. The significance of this point to this study is that historicisation of exploration allows bricoleurs to ask previously unasked questions about knowledge creation in ENGFAL and, as a result, gain insight into previously undiscovered processes affecting how we come to explain and act in the world., In this case, it is about the progression and promotion policy that serves as an ongoing process in which both ENGFAL teachers and learners must gain a thorough understanding of the English subject. Bricolage work gets heavier, further insightful, savvier, and more demanding as a result (Bridges, 1997; McCarthy, 1997; Zammito, 1996).

In this context, critical interpretivist aids bricoleurs' efforts to reveal socially restrictive kinds of meaning production and research methodologies. Bricoleurs recognises that constructivism and historicity may be rendered ineffective if this critical component of power and its consequences is not addressed. According to McLaren (2001), focusing solely on meaning production may not contribute to "resisting and altering the prevailing circumstances of exploitation."

2.3.4. Bricolage recognises human beings as creators of knowledge.

Smith (1999) alluded that bricoleurs pay close attention to the act of clarification in research, noting the dissimilarity between recitations and comprehending a phenomenon. According to Kincheloe (2002), bricoleurs educated by hermeneutics realise that any act of diligent investigation entails:

- linking the entity of investigation to the numerous settings in which it is rooted
- recognising the connection between the researcher and the subject of the research;
- linking the creation of connotation to human experience
- utilising textual modes of analysis but not losing sight of the fact that live, breathing people are creatures with whom and where meaning is created; and

- constructing a link between different modes of comprehension and knowledgeable action.

In this context, the researcher's understanding of the goal of this study is that both teachers and learners are living creatures with whom knowledge is created, as such, engaging with them on a topic that affects their daily lives at school can help gain insight to the problem and develop proper mechanisms to address the challenges faced by teachers and learners in English FAL, as a result of the progression policy.

2.3.5. Bricolage aspires to liberate knowledge creation equally in ENGFAL.

McLaren (2001) argues that bricoleurs want to better comprehend the powers of dominion that influence the lives of persons of various races, classes, sexual, ethnic, genders, and religious origins outside of dominant culture(s), as well as their worldviews, in order to add to social reform. Bricoleurs aspire to liberate knowledge creation and its benefits from elite control in this context. This sort of control perpetuates exclusive privilege while pushing disadvantaged populations further away from the epicentre of power. Bricoleurs, as investigators of subjugated intuition, avidly learn from hard work conflicts, marginalisation of women, the "double awareness" of the racially plagued, and anti-colonial insurgencies (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1993). In this study, possible solutions to address the challenge faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 are attained from contributions made by the very same learners under the belief that regardless of them being progressed, they still can contribute significantly to solutions that may help enhance their academic performance in ENGAL. Progressed learners in ENGFAL should not be further disadvantaged from making meaningful contributions.

2.3.6. Bricolage promotes uniqueness in the study of ENGFAL.

Contextual variations may limit a researcher's ability to generalise results to the point where they may be used universally. As a result of the acknowledgement of complexity, common definitions of aptitude, for example, may need to account for how individuals and groups in varied social situations understand the idea (Kincheloe, Steinberg, and Villaverde, 1999). This links to the study of ENGFAL because if the challenge of progressed learners may be studied in relevance to the variation of social situations, with the different and unique resources available in each situation, then the challenge may be addressed to fit the needs of the learners rather than a holistic approach which ignores bricolizing tools. This principle is important in this study as the issue of learner progression cannot be tackled through the usage

of resources,

techniques and strategies that are not feasible in the Gert Sibande district, given its uniqueness and placement. Although the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 may be common, general knowledge used universally may not be applicable in addressing this challenge in Gert Sibande schools because the researcher believes that geographical location, infrastructure and other social and environmental factors play a momentous part in the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL, as such, these factors should be considered thoroughly in a study to enhance learner performance in ENGFAL, rather than using a universal approach.

2.4. LIMITATIONS OF BRICOLAGE

There has not been much attention put into defining what constitutes good bricolage. Bricolage studies do not often give the exact meaning of what is meant by ‘resources’ as the term is broad (Hobfoll, 2011); some information about the categories of resources employed and how, when, and why diverse combinations are accomplished is essential. Bricolage has not been employed in a variety of frameworks, and little attention has been given to how bricolage procedures may alter based on geography, policy, or welfare (or other) regime. Bricolage seems to have gone unnoticed in research studies.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the theoretical framework employed by the researcher in this study; the researcher defined bricolage theory, outlined the history of bricolage, explained the different uses of bricolage, elaborated on the major emphasis of bricolage, the relevance of bricolage to the study, and lastly, the limitations of bricolage. The following chapter elaborates on relevant literature concerning learner progression.

2.5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Before I begin with the review of literature, I first draw my readers back to the objectives of the study as this literature attempts to respond. See page 8

2.5.1. Key terms

Promotion-is defined by the DBE (2012, p. xi) as “the automatic progression of a learner from one grade to the subsequent. This is when that learner achieves the least required levels of achievement per subject in a specific grade and fulfils the promotion requirements specified in the aforementioned policy

document. (National Policy pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12)”.

Progression-is defined as “the non-automatic promotion of a learner from one grade to the next (apart from grade R), even when the learner has not met all promotion conditions (Department of Basic Education, 2012). The policy aims to safeguard that learners go through a phase with the right age cohort in addition to certifying that they do not spend more than four years in a phase. In this regard, the policy encourages learners who are not yet prepared to achieve at the expected level, who have been retained in the present phase for four years or longer, and who are probable to be retained in the following phase for four years or longer, to obtain the support they to advance to the next phase” (DBE, 2012, p. xi). The policy was also introduced to minimise learner dropout rate.

2.5.2. LEARNER PROGRESSION IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Learner progression is not only practised in South Africa, but in various countries of the world. The only thing that differs is the terminology. This section focuses on learner progression as practised in different countries.

2.5.2.1. Learner progression in India

India is among the countries that practice learner progression in schools. According to Bhukkal (2013), learner progression in India is called the "No-Detention Policy" (NDP), which is a national social promotion program that was made available to all schools in 2010. The Right to Education (RTE) Act, a national law intended to revamp India's primary education, included the policy when it was first adopted. The NDP decreed that until a learner reaches grade nine, schools (both public and private) may no longer hold them back in a grade (Nawani, 2015). Numerous Indian states had different grade retention systems before to the introduction of the NDP (Bhukkal, 2013). For instance, the state of Gujarat had a social promotion strategy up to and including Grade 2, Jharkhand up to and including Grade 5, and West Bengal up to (and including) Grade 4. The NDP required all states to implement social promotion up to Grade 8. This led to a difference in the policy's exposure at the state-grade level, with some state grades being impacted while others were unaffected.

Hari et al. (2018) outlined that there is a clause on the RET's “No Detention Policy,” which postulated that learners could not be asked to repeat a grade before passing grade 8. The government cited the lack of proof that grade retention enhances learning outcomes as justification for enacting this policy and the desire to create a "stress-free" learning environment (Bhukkal, 2013). The policy prevented schools from failing learners, but urged them to evaluate learners on a regular basis using "Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluations" (CCE). According to Mehrotra (2012), the grades that were available for social promotion varied greatly between states in India. Learners in Grades 1 through 4 are not impacted

by the federal policy because, for instance, West Bengal, a state in eastern India, had a social promotion policy in place in government schools until Grade 4, even before the policy went into force in 2010. However, the federal regulation has an impact on Grade 5 to Grade 8 learners in West Bengal because they can no longer be detained until they finish Grade 8. This proves that learner progression is practised in several parts of the world, not only South Africa.

2.5.2.2. Learner progression in the United States of America.

Knight (2014) debates about the lengthy history of learner progression in the United States of America (USA), referred to as social promotion, by outlining that the development of social promotion started in 1930 as a response to the detrimental impacts of retention practices. This trend started to wane slightly during the 1980s as a result of declining academic performance. In 1982, social marketing was fully banned in New York City schools. Social promotion was reinstated in 1987 as a result of the avalanche of issues caused by the retention policy. After social marketing was once again outlawed in New York City in 1999, “it was reinstated there in 2004 after more than 100,000 learners joined the ‘club of retention’” (Carifio, 2010, p. 23). The education department in the USA introduced and implemented the “No Child Left Behind Act” (NCLB) in 2001, (U.S. Department of Education, 2001)., This meant that distinct schools, school districts, and teachers continued to be highly held responsible, now more than before, for the educational triumph of every learner beneath their instruction and care.

According to Knight (2014), there are several reasons why learners are socially promoted in the USA. Some school districts have implemented rules requiring social promotion protocol. Some school districts hold the view that a learner can advance to the next grade if they demonstrate "mastery" in two of the four central subjects: social studies, science, math, and English. This policy requires the learners to take part in some type of remedial action the next year to support their academic progress, but the failure to develop the abilities required at whichever grade level or in any subject area may do more harm than good.

2.5.2.3. Learner progression in South Africa

“The grade progression policy was approved for the FET phase in 2013 and implemented as of that date. The policy states that progression in Grades 10 through 12 does not ensure a learner's final certification in Grade 12, and such a learner must adhere to the National Senior Certificate (NSC) certification requirements” (Ditshego, 2020, p. 26). According to Kika & Kotze (2019), “entrants who do not fulfil the minimum promotion and certification requirements may consider registering for the

supplementary examination for a maximum of two subjects the following year” p.11. “Candidates who do not pass the supplementary examination are eligible to reapply as full-time repeat candidates for the NSC as long as they meet the following criteria: They should register as a part-time repeater candidate at a Public Adult Education Center or sign up for the Senior Certificate, that is a school-leaving credential for adults and out-of-school learners, and they must be younger than 21 years old” (DBE, 2013, p. 16). Most schools take learners who have failed their matric, provided that they have a good track record.

2.5.3. Debates on progression vs retention

Introduction

There is a robust debate about the concepts of retention and progression; nonetheless, what is noteworthy is the connection between drop-outs and retained learners. “Learners repeating two grades have a nearly 100% likelihood of dropping out. The best way to curb this high drop-out rate is when retained learners obtain special intervention” (Kader, 2012, p. 16). This section engages in debates by both proponents and opponents of learner progression.

2.5.3.1. Proponents of learner progression

Kika and Kotze (2018) are of the view that given the fact that progressed learners are stigmatized and convey the label all the way through their schooling years, truancy may be viewed as an escape from the humiliation and desire to have self-reliance that the progression policy is in their goodwill. They further argue that schools that carry on to retain learners do so regardless of substantial proof that shows potential undesirable effects persistently outweigh positive results, such as learners’ likelihood to drop out of school or develop behavioural problems like truancy, as mentioned above.

Additionally, studies have shown that retention sends pupils down a protracted path of subpar performance (Wicaksono and Witoelar, 2019). Some claim that such poor performance levels continue from high school and into potential future career opportunities (Jimerson et al., 2006). It may be useful to evaluate the psychological repercussions of being kept by understanding why this can occur. Academics have well-documented the psychological effects of retention (Hughes et al., 2018). Learners find the prospect of being kept in the same grade to be quite unappealing, perhaps even more so for those who are younger. They are compelled to hang out with children who are younger than they are, in addition to losing friends from their own age group. It is a "huge" change even if their new classmates may only be a year younger.

Failing a grade could have detrimental social and intellectual effects and consequences (Zhang and Huang, 2022). The social promotion appears to be deeply ingrained in cultural ideals connected to "saving face" or shielding the learner from the disgrace of being retained and forced to retake a grade in the majority of South East Asian nations. Although it can be viewed as a remedial intervention, enabling pupils to progress to the next grade regardless of their ability to satisfy the minimum levels of achievement in the prior class can help them catch up with their peers.

Lekalakala (2013) emphasizes that pupils who advanced to the following grade perform worse on average when retained compared to when they had continued without repeating. Vandecandelaere et al. (2016) concur with Lekalakala (2013) by arguing that retained would have learned more if they had been progressed along with their peers. This would show that the retention of little help is not only possible, but it may even be hurtful to learners' academic success. According to Kolobe (2019), the gap between promoted and retained learners becomes insignificant as the advantage of retention be likely to wane over time. Anti-retentionists argue that a learner who first experiences inadequate learning and instruction will continue to be ineffective. At times it is not fair to blame the learner's failure solely on them as there are many external contributing factors than just a learner being lazy to work hard on their studies. The issue is not being faced with learners who fail but simply repeat the same lesson or curriculum.

Not only could the practice of grade retention be bad for students, but it could also be expensive for schools. Given that retention is largely unproductive for the reasons mentioned above, it follows that continuing to adopt this strategy is an egregious waste of the already few financial resources allocated to education (González-Betancor & López-Puig, 2016). Hughes et al. (2017) argue that when a learner repeats a year of education, it is likely that the youngster will not benefit academically from staying in the school system for an additional year, therefore it is practically a waste of money to keep them there. Eren et al. (2020) suggest additional unintended consequences of retention strategies, including excessive unemployment, criminality, and a lack of productive citizens as a result of school dropouts. Lamont (2020) states that the economic costs of retaining learners are high. These are not only expenditures of having additional learners within the system for longer periods, rather the possibility of these learners working as low-earners once they drop out.

The idea of grading and evaluation, in general, presents a final issue with regard to grade retention. According to Jacobs & Mantiri (2022), there may be significant differences in how teachers grade the same piece of work. A practical essay would be an Essay in ENGFAL, learners may write on the same topic differently and there is no wrong or right answer, rather, a rubric. This appeals to question the accuracy and validity of assessments used to determine which pupils to keep. The question of whether there is a "real" difference between a grade that is one or two per cent below the passing mark and one that just about qualifies as a "pass" must also be considered. Additionally, the fabricated criteria and

averages disregard the unique growth of each pupil. It also raises concerns about the idea of having children repeat a grade, starting from the very beginning of the same year, while neglecting the possibility that they may already be proficient in some of the concepts. The curriculum of the repeated year frequently does not differ significantly from that of the previous year. In this regard, the student will likely fall farther behind when faced with new content in the following school years. It raises the point that retention is not only pointless but also a time and resource waster.

2.5.3.2. Opponents of learner progression

Various scholars have argued on progression and retention in schools. Manarcoda (2012) argues that although progressed learners may show initial progress in relation to matched control in the short-term of their academic performance, such benefit and improvement disappears in the long term. This dispute is based on the proposition that retention does benefit progressed learners. Roberts (2017) concurs with Manarcoda (2012) by postulating that retention enables learners to “catch up” on prerequisite skills, confirm capability at the end of their academic schooling, and help raise educational standards. Scott et al. (2015) argue that retention reduces the likelihood that learners will fail when they are promoted to the next grade. They further outlined that retention actually lowers the dropout number of learners with learning barriers because such will not be permissible to compound. What is more imperative in the above argument is that when learners are retained, teachers must recognize any progress from the side of the learner throughout the repeat year itself as evidence of retention being effective.

Kader (2012) alludes that the public generally supports and has extraordinary levels of confidence in the retention policies and tactics in the Western Cape. However, the challenge of School Management Teams (SMT) and teachers is that, at times, the application of the policy may result in too many or too few learners being failed and this may tarnish the confidence of the public in such schools. Haidary (2013) argues that teachers are the leading opponents of learner progression but are often overlooked by scholars as being misguided by classroom knowledge of the short-term remunerations of repetition. Most teachers are of the view that grade repetition is acceptable because it motivates learners to work hard and prevents them from facing daily failures.

Belot and Vandenberghe (2014) reject the positivity of the risk of retention in cultivating learner performance; they contend that these assumptions are rooted to be faulty. They argue that these assumptions are based on the premise that learners who fail are un-satisfactorily apply themselves, instead of low-achievers who really do work their level best, and that the risk of failure is quite discouraging instead of motivating.

A belief shared by Stott et al. (2015) is that permanent labelling will not result from retaining learners in lower or higher grades. They believe that if there is a solid foundation for promotion criteria, retention is essential for forthcoming achievement in the school-state-directed criteria for each

grade. They

concur with other pro-receptionists that retention rates are higher when learners are younger and that teachers do not want to be blamed for letting a pupil “squeak through.” Through retention, learners may build a good strong leadership style and self-concept.

2.5.4. Challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL.

In this section, I will be engaging various literature on the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL. This includes overcrowded classrooms, the pace of CAPS and the lack of resources

2.5.4.1. Overcrowded classrooms

The first challenge to be discussed is that of overcrowded classrooms. The challenge of learner progression, predominantly in the South African context, is that most classrooms are overcrowded. Munje and Maarman (2016) argue that this challenge has resulted in more difficulty for teachers to maintain order within the classroom. This adversely impacts learning negatively as teachers end up spending more time trying to maintain order, which results in a loss of learning time for the progressed learner. In overcrowded classrooms, progressed learners who require additional support are unable to depend on individual support from teachers and may end up losing interest (Marais, 2016). What I have noticed is that post-provisioning plays a key role in ensuring a fair learner: teacher ratio, which will ensure that individual learners’ needs are met. Therefore, the main challenge is to address the number of learners per class and teacher allocation with a fair number of classes, especially in ENGFAL.

The increasing poor results in Grade 12, together with the current rates of retention, signify the challenges that South Africa’s education faces. Ndebele (2014) provides evidence that the most influential factor linked with poor performance is overcrowded classrooms. “Overcrowded classrooms are a result of a lack of school infrastructure, and shortage of teachers, to name a few, this contributes to the low academic performance of progressed learners” (Emmanuel, 2013). I concur with Emmanuel (2013) that overcrowded classrooms present a threat to the academic performance of progressed learners as they are a catalyst for the absence of fresh air, and uncontrollable high noise altitudes that may lead to a deficiency of attention and creation of stress among learners.

It is clear that the problem of overcrowded classrooms is a major challenge in many South African public schools. According to Madisaotsile (2012), the DBE currently has a teacher-learner ratio of 1:32, which is an improvement from the previous 1:34. Although the ratio has been improved, a significant number of schools have reported a shortage of teachers, (DBE, 2014). In the setting of this study, there are some schools in the Gert Sibande district that exceed this number as a result of teacher shortages, undocumented learners-learners who do not have proper documents such as birth certificates and identity documents, and change of schools to Mathematics, Science and Technology

Academy

(MSTA). The change of schools to MSTAs results in progressed learners flooding to schools that offer other streams, not limited to Mathematics and Science. This results in classroom overcrowding as most public schools, specifically rural public schools in the district, do not have adequate infrastructure. This increases the workload for ENGFAL teachers since the subject is obligatory to all learners and the core language of teaching and learning. Through the lens of Bricolage, overcrowded classrooms are unjustifiable and often create negativity among teachers and learners. This results in a drop in the academic performance of learners, especially progressed learners. This study, through Bricolage, seeks to respond to this challenge so that the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12 may be enhanced.

2.5.4.2. Lack of resources

The second challenge faced by both teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL is the lack of resources to enhance their academic performance. “The term ‘resources’ not merely refers to teaching materials and methods but similarly the knowledge and skills of teachers obtained through training and experience and the time available for instruction” (Owoko, 2010, p. 7). Oyugi and Nyaga (2010) further note that teaching and learning resource includes; support staff, parental and community involvement, and special and regular teachers, among others. Insufficient trained special teachers are an obstacle to the enhancement of the academic performance of progressed learners (Kochung, 2011). “It is claimed that teachers in rural areas are forced to labour in environments with scarcer resources and little authority over the curriculum, which results in frustration” (Khumalo & Mji, 2014). According to researchers, this circumstance means that learning may rely exclusively on what teachers tell teachers, “leaving learners at a disadvantage because of being unaware of everything they are not directly informed” (Khumalo and Mji, 2014). Poor resource provision has a significant impact on effective teaching and learning (DBE, 2017).

2.5.4.3. Lack of teaching and learning materials

Okongo et al. (2015) allude that teaching materials include audio-visual and electronic material such as textbooks, maps, charts, radio, and a recorder. Paper provisions and writing materials like exercise books, pencils, pens, crayon, chalk, eraser, workbook, work notes, drawing books are incomplete. The availability of such materials have a very substantial impact on the academic performance of progressed learners. Lyon (2012) maintain that teaching and learning resources are basic resources of a school which a lack of them results in high drop-out rates, low academic achievement rate, behavioural problems, unmet educational goals and poor teacher motivation. Schools that lack these resources are at high risk of performing poorly in examinations. These teaching and learning resources help aid

progressed learners' understanding of the subject content both visually and orally. The schools under study in this research are situated in rural and township areas. They lack most of the resources as defined by Okongo et al. According to Chingos and West (2010), learners without textbooks perform significantly poorer than those who have. Through a Bricolage approach, in which Lincoln (2001) argues that a resource is anything available at the disposal of a handyman, this study is under this motivation of Lincoln that although schools may lack the above-mentioned resources, there are those resources that are available at their disposal. Approaching this challenge through a Bricolage perspective may help find possible solutions of how to best use the already available resources for the betterment of a grade 12 progressed learner in ENGFAL.

2.5.4.4. Lack of physical facilities

Lack of physical facilities negatively affects the learning process Kochung (2011). According to Momoh (2010), physical facilities include; auditorium, classrooms, laboratories, sick bays, assembly halls, workshops, playgrounds, libraries, admin blocks, toilets, kitchen and cafeteria, among others. Most public schools in Gert Sibande have overcrowded classrooms, unattractive school buildings and yards, no playgrounds, and toilets in extremely poor conditions (source). Okongo (2015) posits that the organization of a school and its physical condition can either facilitate or inhibit academic performance. I agree with Okongo (2015); through observations and experience, most learners from schools with buildings that are nearly worn out and old often focus more on creating havoc and other disturbances than learning. A building can indeed motivate or discourage a learner's learning.

DBE (2013, p. 41) reported that "inadequate school infrastructure includes 41.8% of schools without electricity, 79 % of schools without libraries, and 70% of schools without access to computers". These are challenges that may hinder the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12. Lack of electricity, for example, may disturb successful teaching and learning and mediation strategies for progressed learners. Mainly because at times, teachers may need to make copies of learning material or teach in the afternoon only to find out that it is dark. At times, cloudy weather may mean that learners who are seated at the back of an overcrowded classroom will not see clearly what is written on the chalkboard if there is no electricity. South Africa is also currently faced with load shedding; this disturbs a lot of schools as they do not have backup plans.

A lot of public schools in Gert Sibande are without most of the above-mentioned facilities. Most of them depend on community sports fields for their sporting activities. Some learners fear participating in sports during school hours caused by lack of safety and security, and being pick-pocketed. Sports is essential for learners' mental and physical health; it helps learners to be mentally sharp during the learning process in class (UNICEF, 2013). However, due to a shortage of sports facilities, some learners end up not participating at all in sports because of the limited options they have. Sports in rural and

township schools are mainly about soccer and netball, Those who are good in other sporting activities are often side-lined., Some of these side-lined learners are those who have been progressed. This affects the performance of progressed learners because if they can be accommodated inclusively in the sporting activities that they are good at, it will make them find purpose in schooling.

2.5.4.5. ENGFAL teachers' workload

In its policy changes, the DBE introduced the Curriculum Assessment Policy Schedule in 2012 (DBE, 2011). Moodley (2013) describes the CAPS document as a policy document that is based on the content that learners need to be taught per term, the form of assessment tasks, and the number of tasks (both formal and informal) per week and term. Moodley (2013) also outlines that the CAPS document follows a rather constructivist approach as it is more learner-centred, putting more importance on teaching basic knowledge content and skills.

Gumede and Biyela (2016) outlined that “with CAPS, teachers rush through the curriculum in order to complete the subject content”. This is because the pace of CAPS is too rapid. This makes teachers to have less time to focus on progressed learners' academic needs. In Grade 12, for example, a teacher should finish teaching the content by May so that by the time the June examination starts, learners would be doing revision. In practicality, this is hindering the success of those progressed from Grade 11 to 12 because in ENGFAL, the teacher has to cover the content of three different papers, which include writing, literature and language. There are also formal tasks that teachers in ENGFAL Grade 12 have to administer within that period. The CAPS document does not provide specific times for administering formal mid-term tasks (Spaull, 2013). This means that teachers have to administer formal tasks whilst teaching because the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) provides content that should be taught weekly, which teachers have to divide into days., This does not cater for formal tasks, except the examination. Therefore, when an ENGFAL teacher in Grade 12 administers a formal task such as prepared speech in an overcrowded classroom since most classes in rural and township public schools are, learners will lose teaching time, and more knowledge gap will be created on the ones who are progressed because on average, teachers take more than one day to complete administering formal oral activities.

A study by Phasha, Bipath and Beckman (2016) found that teachers spent most of their time assessing and marking language subjects instead of teaching. This is because subjects like ENGFAL are done by all learners, unlike stream subjects. As such, ENGFAL teachers normally have overcrowded classrooms, which results in more marking. June and preparatory examinations, like any other ENGFAL examination in the FET phase, consist of three papers. When teachers mark, they end up not having enough time to jot down notes and feedback for each learner, which disadvantages the progressed learners even further. “Although CAPS is more structural, clear, and provide specific time frames and

clear guidelines, some teachers, especially the experienced ones, expressed difficulties in relation to the amount and quality of training, lack of resources, amplified workload, and the fast-teaching pace needed for content coverage” (Pasha et al., 2016, p. 14).

2.5.4.6. Poor foundations in lower grades.

“The poor foundations laid in lower grades affect the learners in the FET, especially Grade 12” (Leepo 2015, p. 14). Cekiso and Madikiza (2014, p. 7) argue that “progressed learners were finding it problematic to understand a printed text”. “The learners’ poor performance in understanding texts was apparent in the Annual National Assessment (ANA) of 2011 as reported by the DBE (2011), which revealed that learners who underachieved varied from 30% to 47%, and those who achieved varied from 12% to 31%” (Leepo, 2015, p. 15). The poor performance of learners in comprehension texts cannot be remedied in a grade like Grade 12 because teaching time is too short. Covering all papers in Grade 12 requires a teacher to be quick and learners to be at par. Spaul (2013) claims that a continual crisis in South Africa’s education system adversely affects the vast majority of the youth. Most learners in South Africa can neither read, write nor understand at the level required for their grade.

2.5.4.7. Lack of high-quality education

Dube (2021) contends that progressed learners in rural areas have limited access to high-quality education. Newly trained teachers flock to urban schools for prospects and professional advancement and innovation, as well as access to better facilities. This is because even support from departmental officials in deep rural based communities is scarce. At times teachers are inconvenienced transport-wise, with poor living conditions and quality of life in such areas. This adversely affects progressed learners as they, at times, stay for longer periods without a teacher. Botha et al. (2008) stated that a lot of teachers in RSA have not developed an understanding of teaching writing, literacy and reading. Learners are expected to read and comprehend a text in Paper 1 before answering questions. Read, comprehend, then write. As progressed learners struggle with reading, they adversely cannot comprehend a text, then fail to answer what is required. Paper 2 contains a lot of figurative in Poetry, Short Stories, Novel and Drama. Most of these genres contain the Shakespearean language which requires critical thinking and basic knowledge of figures of speech learnt in the lower grades. Struggling learners end up confusing metaphors with simile; others fail to differentiate figures of speech and parts of speech. It is imperative to note that most schools (public) use English as a medium of teaching, so more than not, 6 out of 7 subjects are taught in English except the Home language. This shows the importance of the English subject in the Gert Sibande region. That is why it should not be overlooked in learner progression.

2.5.4.8. Teaching uninspired and unmotivated learners

Large quantities of uninspired, ill-prepared and ill-disciplined progressed learners create enormous emotional pressure and amplified work on teachers working in South African schools that are already demanding (Stott et al., 2015). Teachers are finding it difficult to provide segregated support to progressed learners because of the workload, according to Kika and Kotze (2018), due to the mistaken progression policy in the FET phase. Progressed learners, according to Stott et al. (2015), are unmotivated, indifferent, ill-disciplined, and frequently skip courses and extracurricular activities, as well as failing to finish class and homework assignments. Mentors in the Motheo district of Free State Province suggested that teachers were burned out as a result of the need to teach extra classes in the mid-afternoons and on weekends. They were demoralized by the DBE's push to improve learners' performance and the low performance of the progressed students (Stott et al., 2015). As a result of the challenges presented by the progression law, the research participants reported that there had been accounts of teachers quitting, threatening to leave, or declining to teach progressed learners.

Notwithstanding the obvious circumstances of overcrowding in classrooms and the principal challenges that this overcrowding presents, there is a belief that the enactment of inclusive education is deprived by a mixture of a deficiency of resources and the defiance of teachers in classrooms.

This section outlined the possible challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12. The next section explores the possible solutions that are available for both ENGFAL teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12.

2.5.5. Possible solutions to address the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL.

This section attempts to explore possible solutions for the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL.

2.5.5.1. Provision of teaching and learning resources

Sawchuck (2011) suggests that the availability of textbooks at a ratio of either one book per learner or one book for every two learners creates a very noteworthy positive impact on achievement. The DBE in Mpumalanga replaces and provides new textbooks for learners every 5 years (MPUED, 2016). This is the department's effort in ensuring that learners are given material to enhance their academic performance. Although this is a good initiative by the department, most schools struggle with their retrieval systems of textbooks from learners and most public schools do not have relevant learners' books for short stories, drama, poetry and novels; teachers have to rely on making copies for learners, which is not sustainable. Fernandez (2014) articulates that the eminence of learning materials, such as textbooks, is focal to quality education. The Mpumalanga Department of Education has recently

introduced a system of tablets for Grade 12 learners and laptops for teachers teaching the very same grade (MPUED, 2022). The system provides good learning opportunities for learners in Grade 12 as the tablets contain previous question papers and examination guides. However, most ENGFAL teachers have not received the laptops, which makes it difficult for them to keep up with the learners' work, and although this is a great initiative by the department, as this is the 4th Industrial Revolution, some learners who were progressed did not receive these tablets to date. This makes them feel left out of the group that belongs in grade 12, and may hinder their academic performance. Delvin et al. (2011) caution that the ordinary availability of materials is consequently not adequate. Additional pioneering insights into the functionalities of the schools and how excellence may be deepened are the concerns. Hence the need for this study which embraces bricolage innovatively.

2.5.5.2. Adequate physical facilities

One of the most important and possible solutions to the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL is the development and maintenance of physical facilities in schools. Okongo (2015) outlines the importance of facilities, such as the expansion and preservation of physical facilities in schools by the education department, community, and sponsors, as something that should be encouraged. He further emphasizes that learning practices are productive when there are acceptable amounts and quality physical resources; and that unappealing school buildings, congested classrooms, non-availability of playing ground and environments that have no artistic beauty can result in poor academic performance. When learners have playing fields on the school premises, they become active during breaks and take the very same energy to the classroom. This makes them to be attentive and active rather than passive; as they always say, "a healthy mind is in a healthy body"; physical facilities bring that. In his research on educational success, Najumba (2013) found that schools with access to resources perform significantly better than those without them in standardized tests like the Grade 7 examination. These facilities include textbooks, libraries, and even labs. The accessibility of instructional materials like charts, workbooks, and syllabi is then the main aspect that sparks instructor effectiveness toward teaching in primary schools. However, if teachers lack didactic and pedagogical abilities and if these tools are not used to their full potential, students will still fail.

2.5.5.3. Adequate human resource

KESSP (2010) alludes that one of the important tools for enhancing the academic performance of progressed learners is to warrant that there is adequate manpower in schools. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, in 2020, introduced the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) to reduce the rate of unemployment and increase manpower in schools (South African Government, 2020). The initiative saw a significant number of youths employed in schools as education assistants. This helped to ease the workload on teachers. Although this initiative was well-intentioned, the majority of these

education assistants were not qualified teachers, as such, had no expertise in teaching. This left teachers with the very same workload in the number of learners and classes they had to teach, especially the overloaded ENGFAL teachers. Perhaps this initiative may be considered through the government increasing the number of teachers per school by relooking at the current teacher: learner ratio. West, J. and Meier, C. (2020, p. 6) argue that “assistant teachers may be able to help with a variety of other classroom-related responsibilities, including administration, management of behaviour issues, and assessments. Dropping the noise levels in the classroom, will significantly reduce the teacher's workload and improve classroom discipline and thus minimize the mental burden of learners”. Therefore, the appointment of assistant teachers might reduce the LER in full 1st time from the existing average of 33:1 to 33:2, which could ultimately be estimated as 16:1.

2.5.5.4. Time management by teachers.

Time management is mentioned as an important element of ineffective teaching. Some learners frequently participate in sports. School performance suffers with all play and no effort. To ensure that students learn enough material to pass examinations, teachers must efficiently manage their time and complete the whole curriculum. Schools that manage their time effectively have an advantage in terms of effectiveness. How effectively resources are used to yield outcomes is measured by a school's efficiency in managing time, meaning time is the most significant resource that schools should efficiently utilize (Delvin, Kift and Nelson, 2012).

2.5.5.5. Quality teacher training.

The third driver that may work as a possible solution to the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL is the training and valuing of teachers that is of a high standard. Finland prides itself on quality teacher education and training. The brightest secondary school graduates are drawn to the classroom teaching profession because it is regarded as a creative, independent, and high-status career (Sahlberg, 2010). South African teachers are not given much independence in teaching; this is because there are lots of guidelines, criterion and curricula that dictate teachers' practices. Sahlberg (2011) further alludes that in Finland, the entry requirement for one to qualify as a permanent teacher is a Master's degree in all elementary and secondary schools. This ensures that the teachers recruited are academically well-equipped and trained to ensure successful learning. In South Africa, statistics released by the DBE in 2021 showed that there were more than 5000 underqualified and unqualified teachers in schools (DBE, 2021). However, new data released on 11 July 2022 showed more than 2800 unqualified teachers in KwaZulu Natal schools (thesouthafrican.com). This negatively contributes to the number of progressed learners and the quality of education that learners receive in the country.

A teacher should be a specialist in their subject; as such, they should be highly trained and qualified as Finland does. South Africa can learn from Finland's educational practices as there is now compelling

evidence that, particularly for learners from less disadvantaged backgrounds, the effectiveness of teachers is by far the most significant school-based determinant of educational performance and learner achievement (August et al., 2010). Many nations give lip service to the value of luring and keeping talented teachers, but a few have pursued this objective with the same tenacity as Finland. What is more important is that Finland has managed to make teaching one of the most respected and popular career choices among young Finns by increasing the requirements for entry into the field and giving more autonomy and control to teachers over their classrooms, and good working conditions than their counterparts do elsewhere (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

There is a belief that good teaching and learning depend on teachers having a particular amount of expertise. Experience is one of the central mechanisms that leads to operational teaching, says Mavhundutse (2014). Majority of people believe that familiarity is the best teacher. Instead, the Department of Education (2012) argued that newly qualified teachers and those with less experience were more effective than their more experienced colleagues. It implies that because they possess more recent knowledge, training, and skills, recently qualified individuals are more valuable than those with longer experience. The question that arises is whether teachers employ the learned skills.

2.5.5.6. Bricolizing ENGFAL.

Taking into consideration Levi-Strauss's (1966) definition of the term 'bricoleur'- a handyman that uses locally available tools to create something new and improved, it is safe to say that bricolage encourages both teachers and learners to utilise the already available material to enhance their learning in ENGFAL. This includes old textbooks, notes, classwork books, portfolios, newspapers, cell phones, television and games/plays. It is very imperative to note that the most important tool in Bricolage is the mind of the bricoleur. Blankenship (2020) postulates that since bricolage requires learners to begin constructing knowledge through understanding the resources that are already available, instead of finding resources that are not yet there, results that Bricolage best serves are the advancement of skills such as critical thinking, being inquisitive, reflective writing, synthesis and collaboration. These skills provided by employing Bricolage in an ENGFAL class are very critical, this is because critical thinking and reflective writing skills make learners think independently., This is key to progressed learners performing better in creative writing exercises and preparing them for Paper 3, a paper mainly about creative writing (essays, longer transactional text, and shorter transactional writing). These skills are also important in helping learners perform better in School-Based Assessment tasks (SBA) such as reading. The skill of synthesis and collaboration through Bricolage may help progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 to perform better in Paper 1, a paper about language comprehension and synthesis. Collaboration through Bricolage may help learners to be confident in tasks such as prepared and unprepared speech as they will be familiar with engaging with their peers on general constructive topics about their normal daily routines and experiences.

Willet (2015) wrote an article, “Everyday Game Design on a School Playground: Children as Bricoleurs.” In Willet’s article, learners who played the role of bricoleurs during creative play added aspects that showed a desire to “transform it into a game they devised and shared with others as part of a friendship activity.’ These activities assist learners in making connections between their past experiences and the tools they need to produce something new. Taking Willet’s findings into the context of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12, it shows that learners as bricoleurs are able to generate meaning on their own by integrating the already available materials. These findings also showed that learning is best achieved when made to be more fun; as such, from a Bricolage perspective, learners in grade 12 may be taught drama, novels and short stories through role-playing instead of instructional teaching, which is more teacher centred than being learner centred. Through Bricolage, learning ENGFAL follows a more constructivist approach as learners must be encouraged to participate in intricate negotiations between the available resources/ persons and knowledge in order for these connections to be created. Activities that allow learners to become what Blankenship (2020) refers to as ‘bricolearners’ give them control over their learning.

Snell (2016), in her article, “Play and Bricolage in Adult Second Language Classroom” corroborated that the use of only the prescribed language, such as English textbooks, denies learners the language required to discuss past experiences and present abilities as well as future goals and dreams. I, therefore, argue that the use of Bricolage in ENGFAL may help curb this since it allows learners to not only use prescribed textbooks to learn, but any English book in Bricolage is useful provided that it is readily available; such integration may help learners as this would mean that they will not only learn under the pressure of a looming assessment task, rather learning for fun and relating what is learnt to the learner’s daily life experiences which may come in handy in assisting progressed learners to apply what they learn in the English language by themselves to what they are supposed to know in the subject content as Kramsch (2016) argues that historical knowledge is key. Hence Bricolage offers insight through the complexity phenomenon for external content to be meaningful.

Another possible solution available for progressed learners in ENGFAL is ‘empirical appreciation for a licence to play’ which Waring (2013) defines as “doing being playful.” For ENGFAL learners, it means getting into an alternative world unconstrained by the setting and roles of the classroom and doing so cheerfully. There are a number of benefits that play can contribute to ENGFAL learners by providing intrinsic motivation, lowering the affective filter, allowing learners to participate in different ways and helping vocabulary acquisition (Waring, 2013). Learners in the Gert Sibande district, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds/rural areas, may be encouraged to utilize their ‘natural resources’ to acquire critical poetry skills. Poetry is more often related to oral tradition. In the South African context, clan praises are regarded as roots of surnames and their pride; they are also very poetic as they contain rhythm, rhyme, tone, mood, and alliteration. These are important elements of literature in ENGFAL, so learners learning and mastering their clan praises may be very

helpful towards

their understanding and analysis of poetry. The same can be said with folklore, short stories, drama and novels. Emphasis should be put on the spoken word.

The biggest opportunity that Bricolage provides for us is that our natural setting is the most important resource for learning as it is naturally available. “Bricolage does not only offer efficient learning affordances for learners but could be a critical way whereby they develop and display their symbolic competence” (Snell, 2016).

The following section focuses on the threats that can hinder the strategy to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12.

2.5.6. Threats that can hinder the success of a strategy to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12

Since the challenges, possible solutions and opportunities were discussed in the previous sections, this section focuses on the threats that may hinder the academic success of a strategy to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 by looking at schools in an unequal society and entrenched divisions.

2.5.6.1. Schooling in an unequal society and entrenched divisions.

This is the first threat in terms of education. Kallaway (2009) labelled South Africa as having "two nations." He outlined the first "country," whereby teachers implement the new curriculum in well-equipped schools with computers and libraries. This opens up incredible possibilities and allows for more innovative education than ever before. The shortage of resources in the second "country" of schooling, which most educators encounter, leads to a never-ending standoff with education authorities who have a shaky grasp on what is required. Therefore, the shortage of funds and resources to ensure equal educational opportunities and provision for all learners may hinder success. According to Kader (2016), the new curriculum's unrealistic demands and requirements for the educational system to educate learners for civic engagement and the global workforce have overwhelmed instructors. He remarked that it is very difficult for teachers to connect with academic issues in the classroom in these institutions since there is a dearth of information and textbooks (Kallaway, 2009).

Rural and township schools make up the second system of education, which keeps learners trapped behind the second economy's massive barriers. These learners are eventually locked in the second economy of poverty and unemployment, encountering significant obstacles as a result of the two unequal educational systems in place. Most of these learners are progressed to the next grade through the learner progression policy. Bloch (2009) contends that for learners to introduce and practice consistency and regularity, well-functioning schools' "space and order" are essential. Bloch (2009) further postulates in his book 'Toxic Mix' that 60–80% of schools are dysfunctional, meaning they

are

failing to produce the important outcomes that are their primary objectives. Most of these are township and rural schools. Hence the researcher took it upon himself to study the issue of learner progression in these schools in the Gert Sibande district by using the theory “bricolage” which does not depend on external sources but those that are ready, or can be made readily available to assist these schools in ensuring good opportunities for these learners to understand, pass and apply ENGFAL, which also serves as the language of teaching and learning in the sampled schools, and more within the region. It is also no secret that ENGFAL is not only the medium of instruction in most schools in the Gert Sibande district, but in South Africa as a whole, English is dominant in schools.

Summary

This chapter responded to literature and the objectives of this study by focusing on policies around learner progression, debates on learner progression, which include proponents and opponents of learner progression, learner progression from an international and South African context, Possible solutions to the challenges, opportunities that are available for progressed learners from a Bricolage perspective, and threats to the possible solutions and opportunities for progressed learners in ENGFAL.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In order to address the research issues, this chapter utilizes the conceptual frameworks created in Chapter 2. To help readers grasp PAR better, the first section discusses the theoretical justifications. In the second practical portion, it is explained how the data that was analysed in Chapter 4 to operationalize how bricolage is created. The chapter also demonstrates how thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) was used to analyse the generated data in collaboration with the coresearchers. This chapter provides a full account of the research sites' and coresearchers' credentials and activities. The ethical considerations that were taken into account for this study are covered in further detail in this chapter. The first section gives detail to the research paradigm employed in this study.

3.1 Research paradigm: Transformative paradigm

The transformative paradigm, as defined by Chilisa (2011) is a research framework that concentrates on the familiarities of disregarded communities, examines power disparities that have played a role in marginalization, and links research findings to initiatives aimed at decreasing inequalities, serves as the theoretical foundation for this study. Transformative paradigm is relevant to this study because the coresearchers are from disadvantaged communities in the Gert Sibande district; this includes Grade 12 ENGFAL progressed learners who are, in most cases, marginalized based on their performance. According to the transformative paradigm, research's goal is to dismiss inappropriate information, impressions, and myths so that people are better fortified to act to change society (Glassman and Erdem, 2014). This study, through a transformative paradigm, aims to enhance and transform the performance of these learners and challenge the myths, discrimination and beliefs associated with progressed learners in ENGFAL. In order for learners to act as change agents and question the status quo, transformative education aims to equip them with the apparatuses they need to comprehend social reality differently and through a wider ethical lens.

The transformative paradigm also emphasizes the assets present in groups of people who are subjected to prejudice and injustice because of their cultural beliefs and experiences (Mertens, 2010).

The transformative paradigm was established from early work by Guba and Lincoln (2005), who identified four sets of conventions as instituting a paradigm:

1. Beliefs regarding the definition of consciences and moral deportment are referred to as axiology.

2. Beliefs regarding the nature of reality are denoted as ontology.
3. When referring to the nature of knowledge and the linking between the knower and the thing to be known, epistemology is used.
4. The term "methodology" refers to ideas about how systematic investigation is conducted.

According to the transformational paradigm, learning means altering our perspectives on reality as well as how we interact with it and behave in daily life. It has a personal and a community component and includes both individual and social transformation (Mertens, 2012). Learning involves undergoing a significant, structural change in one's core assumptions about one's ideas, feelings, and actions. The way we connect with the outside world is fundamentally and permanently altered by this transformation in consciousness. Our perception of self, our actual location, and our interactions with others and the environment are all impacted by this transformation. Our perceptions of different ways to live, our comprehension of power relations in intertwined structures of class, race, and gender, and our sense of the prospects for both social justice and individual pleasure are also involved.

Education should ultimately promote thoughtful reflection and informed action. The term "critical reflection" refers to the careful analysis of social circumstances and everyday experiences with a particular emphasis on questions of privilege, power, and social structure. After critical thought, it becomes necessary to act and think in ways that will improve the status quo. The following section discusses the research design of this study.

3.2 Research design: Qualitative research

According to Creswell (2014, p. 44), "qualitative research analyzes a social or human problem through an understanding-based inquiry process based on a number of methodological traditions. The study is carried out in a natural situation while the researcher builds a sophisticated, comprehensive picture, analyzes language, offers in-depth insights into the data, and produces the picture". This suggests that qualitative research investigates something in its natural scenery in order to comprehend its significance (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). To better understand the strategies employed to solve the challenges faced by advanced learners in ENGFAL, the researcher in this study collected data using a qualitative research design. It is crucial to keep in mind that this strategy focuses more emphasis on comprehension than on statistical analysis. The study was designed to understand the challenges faced by advanced learners in Grade 12 ENGFAL and potential solutions to the challenges with a strategy to improve their academic performance in ENGFAL, which also serves as the language of teaching and learning in the sampled schools so a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate. The study did not simply seek to give an account of the activities and procedures as correct or incorrect for the selected coresearchers. The study

methodology and its guiding principles are covered in part after that, which explains why PAR was selected as a methodology and tool for gathering data.

3.3 Research design: Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The method of PAR was utilized to produce the data for this investigation. In a qualitative research approach known as participatory action research, participants and researchers cooperate to comprehend societal concerns and act to bring about social change (Lopez, 2015). Dube (2016, p. 103) adds that PAR also refers to a route where researchers and coresearchers communicate about all facets of research. It entails "investigating actual practices rather than abstract practices and learning about the real, practical, concrete, and specific practices of specific individuals in specific places". (Dube, 2016, p. 105) "It works as a catch-all phrase for all exploration methodologies that include participants in each stage of the research process". Additionally, PAR is a strategy for conducting research as opposed to a specific research methodology (Pain, Whitman, Milledge, and Lune Rivers Trust, 2011); with those who a program will most impact, the strategy aims to place power in the research process. The participant and researcher are meant to be partners on an equal footing (Boyle, 2012).

3.4 Relevance of PAR to this study

This study's foundation in the PAR approach was based on transformative paradigm, more particularly, Bricolage, "a theoretical framework that aims to empower the community through research by utilizing readily available instruments for their improvement" (Masuku & Dube, 2021, p. 255). Additionally, the choice of PAR as an approach was made since it includes developing fresh ideas that encourage change (Glassman and Erdem, 2014).

The move away from outdated research methodologies, often characterized by uneven collaboration between scholars and participants, is a distinctive aspect of participatory research models (Bergold and Thomas, 2012). PAR is a "principle-driven" research approach. These principles, if followed, provide a powerful means for communities to achieve better outcomes. PAR is used to better understand how people interact with their social settings (Appel, Buckingham, Jodoin, and Roth, 2012). The degree to which participants own the process distinguishes empowerment evaluations from PAR approaches. The contrast is fundamentally based on the extent to which the techniques swing the balance of power from scholars to the studied (Appel et al., 2012).

It is up to the PAR participants to decide which components of the program will be looked at, how the data will be gathered, and what will be done with the findings. The objective is to heighten the sense of obligation that emanates with involvement in activities, which can expand opportunities for

self-

determination and fortify community capability (Boyle, 2012). If coresearchers are involved in all stages of the research process, they are more likely to feel a feeling of proprietorship and obligation to the program. Long-term, more lasting increases in academic achievement can also result from active student and teacher involvement in the PAR approach (Patton, 2008).

3.4.1 PAR pays careful attention to power relationships

PAR is about recognizing and appreciating the people that researchers work with and for. In order to provide coresearchers authority over the research process, it asks for a cooperative or consensual approach to research (Dube, 2016). Bricolage, a theoretical framework that seek out to empower the society through research and the use of readily available materials locally, serves as the theoretical base for this study's use of PAR as an approach (Dube, 2016). Additionally, the choice of PAR as a strategy was made because it involves developing fresh ideas that encourage change (Glassman & Erdem, 2014). “Promoting the deliberate sharing of power between the researcher and the research subjects, thereby obfuscating the distinction between them until the research subjects become the researchers. The subjects of the research stop being treated as objects and start participating in all aspects of the research process, such as choosing the research topic, gathering data, analyzing it, and deciding what course of action should be taken in light of the findings” (Glassman & Erdem, 2014, p. 209). In this specific study, transformatory-bricolage is a recommended new methodology to responding to the challenges faced by ENGFAL progressed learners in Grade 12 from a pedagogical perspective. The promotion of power sharing in this study meant that the coresearchers were regarded as experts throughout the research, and their contributions were vital. This helped promote collaboration, freedom and willingness of all parties involved in the study.

3.4.2 PAR promotes social change

In order to study a social issue and bring about social change, participatory action research brings researchers and people together. This technique helps provide more pertinent discoveries and recommendations by utilizing the collective knowledge of the researchers, participants, and the communities under consideration (Vaughn, 2020). Dube (2016, p. 110) argued that “in order to better understand the world, PAR seeks to transform it. Its key component is a joint, self-reflective inquiry that researchers and participants conduct to better understand and improve the behaviours they engage in and the situations they find themselves in”. The reflective process is intertwined with action, impacted by historical, cultural, and environmental knowledge, and incorporated into interpersonal relationships. The PAR process should be effective and lead to freedom.

3.4.3 PAR contrasts with less dynamic approaches

The PAR stands in contrast to less dynamic practices that decontextualise data and information. Most of educational research encompasses individuals, even if they are merely inactive subjects, "respondents," or other participants. PAR encourages active participation from the subjects of the research. It increases the focus on collective research activities at every phase of the research cycle, including program preparation, execution, and assessment, shifting the focus away from action and change (Appel et al., 2012). The degree to which participants own the process distinguishes empowerment evaluations from PAR approaches. The contrast is fundamentally based on the extent to which the techniques move the balance of power from researchers to the studied. PAR primarily strives to involve stakeholders, whereas empowerment assessment seeks to foster a sense of proprietorship (Bergold and Thomas, 2012).

3.4.4 PAR promotes ownership, commitment and responsibility through participation

Participants choose which components of the program will be evaluated, how data will be collected, and what will be done with the findings in the PAR process (Boyle, 2012). The objective is to heighten the sense of obligation that emanates with contribution in activities, which can expand opportunities for self-determination and fortify client and/or community capacity (Bergold and Thomas, 2012). Participation in all phases of the study process increases the likelihood that participants and program staff will feel a feeling of ownership and commitment to the program (Patton, 2008). Long-term, more lasting improvements in program delivery may also arise from program practitioners' and workers' active involvement in the PAR method (Patton, 2008). PAR is largely intended for people who are viewed vulnerable. In Indigenous communities, where the method helps lessen "colonizing consequences" (including exploitation, contempt, helplessness, and misrepresentation) on native societies and culture, PAR is thought to be especially pertinent (Bergold and Thomas, 2012). PAR can strengthen the capacity of groups with diverse cultures and languages. This is relevant to this study as the aim was to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12. ENGFAL is a language taught in public schools in the Gert Sibande district to learners of diverse cultures and languages.

3.5 Benefits of using PAR

Participatory action research is a democratic research procedure as well (Streubert and Carpenter, 2011). Since everybody involved has some obligation during the study process, participatory action research strongly values participant participation and democracy (Greenwood and Levin). Additionally, PAR's democratic component makes sure that all participants, including learners and teachers, participate as co-researchers. Koch and Kralik (2006) deliberate how PAR is a democratic method of producing new knowledge. Additionally, they mention that academics collaborate with participants to co-create knowledge that solves an issue (Koch and Kralik, 2006). Due to this connection and surrounding circumstances, PAR encourages a democratic and non-hierarchical engagement between researcher and participant (s). PAR also enables real-time observation of behaviour, which improves the effectiveness of data collecting

- PAR reduces the chance of misunderstanding because of the strong connections made with the community. Dahl (2014) carried out a PAR study to modify the teacher-dominated, authoritarian relationship between students and teachers. Participants (students and teachers) expressed sense of empowerment as the end result of the project. The teachers were more willing to carry on developing and examine their practice outside of the PAR initiative, as a result, increasing their use of participatory teaching techniques (Dahl, 2014). These results align with those of Feldman (2007), who discovered that working on a PAR project causes participants to become more mindful of their resources and skills, boosting their self-assurance and problem-solving skills.

- Participants or stakeholders in the research already have the necessary information and skills to help improve the program. Bywater (2014) worked with students on a PAR project at her institution to examine how commonplace behaviours could worsen poor environmental and human health. According to Bywater's pedagogical research, a PAR project inspires participants to gain information, skills, and opportunity to solve problems. Learners had the chance to enhance their investigative and critical thinking skills through this project as well. The instructor in this project served as a research facilitator, which allowed learners to design and carry out every component of the project, increasing their interest, engagement, and ownership in the creation of knowledge (Bywater, 2014). These are just a few examples of learners who took part in a PAR project, but they show how beneficial collaboration between teachers and students can be.

3.6 Limitations of PAR

Hall (1981) acknowledged that there are some risks associated with participating in PAR. Hall observed that social scientists frequently turn to participatory research as a means of persuading people to accept a viewpoint, a course of action, or a policy that others (such as social workers, adult teachers, etc.) believe is crucial to their objectives. The participants' or communities' goals may not always be the

same as these goals. In this manner, PAR can be utilized as a powerful and deceptive "weapon" for influencing those who disagree with the state's dominant ideas (Hall, 1981).

- may be subject to researcher bias because the researcher is involved

Even when participatory research activities are implemented, factionalism can still exist. For instance, Pigozzi (1982) noted that certain participatory relationships—particularly those in Third World nations—including class structures—whether actual or perceived—that researchers should be mindful of. Researchers need to be aware of the regional limits that support the existence of class systems. Additionally, elements like ethnicity, factionalism, and class tensions can influence the participation method, all of which can directly affect participatory research.

Participants in PAR may potentially experience additional unanticipated negative effects. Due to their participation in the research endeavour, participants risk alienating themselves from their local community. For instance, increased consciousness of persecution by a marginalized group may result in greater sadness (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995). Participants could experience the complete opposite and start to identify with or think like the elite. A participatory elite within the local population has developed as a result of some programs. In other words, participants start to think that their newly acquired information or skills somehow put them above non-participating community members (Pigozzi, 1982).

Working with local people is far from straightforward, according to some scholars, most notably Cornwall and Jewkes (1995), who noted this while involved with PAR. The fact that not everybody in the community will aspire to partake in participatory research is one of the features that brands it challenging for researchers to execute this type of study. Additionally, natives might not want to dedicate their time and energy to any research attempt since they are doubtful about the claimed benefits of the study. In this regard, Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) pointed out that community involvement frequently has greater relevance for outsiders than it does for individuals already a part of the community.

The above-mentioned weaknesses of PAR were evident in this research as some of the coresearchers pulled out of the study as they felt it was time-consuming. Although PAR has been described as a bricolage that supports the socially excluded, it has several drawbacks, particularly when the coresearchers are unfamiliar with this method of conducting research. Lykes et al. (2011) emphasize the challenge of dealing with a complex PAR research procedure with limited resources and attention, particularly from coresearchers habituated to one-off questionnaire-type studies. The many requests for questionnaires made by the coresearchers demonstrated how strange it was. I had to clarify the research paradigm, in particular the transformational paradigm (PAR), which substitutes focused group discussions for questionnaires (FGD). The team was able to develop a common understanding of how to use PAR to generate data as a result of the explanation. Another flaw is that PAR is

selective in that

it only focuses on ostracised people. It overlooks the powerful people in society who frequently work to keep repressive systems in place. In order to genuinely engage with the marginalized in power discussions and, eventually, reform the oppressive social institutions, I believe the dominant also needs room in this strategy.

In light of my findings, I believe that PAR is a crucial strategy for ensuring the social insertion of public stakeholders in a given research project. It recognises the importance of the ancillary and makes an effort to include individuals deemed unimportant during the investigation. I chose PAR for this study because it includes the presumed underprivileged community members, which were the progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12. As a result, the team established participatory spaces to foster comprehension among progressed learners in ENGFAL, whereby inclusion is essential and anticipated for the enhancement of social conditions (Dube, 2016). Coresearchers are able to contribute their expertise because PAR emphasizes their involvement as equivalent partners with the researcher in data generation. The strategy made it clear to the coresearchers and I that a successful research study required power relations to be negotiated in favour of providing the coresearchers more control over data generation and the creation of transformatory-bricolage. PAR, in a nutshell, is a technique that involves marginalized people in bettering their situation.

3.7 Overview of the research site

For eight years, of which six were spent at the research sites that were chosen between 2016 and 2021, I, the researcher, worked as an ENGFAL teacher. According to my experience working in this environment, although the schools had implemented the progression policy as required by the DBE, the strategies used to assist progressed learners were implemented using a "one-size-fits-all" approach without a clear understanding of the needs of specific progressed learners. Thus, this research study was conceptualized as an action research of these institutions that had adopted the progression strategy and its support methods for progressed learners, explicitly within the FET Phase. But more crucially, the researcher was interested in learning what Grade 12 teachers and ENGFAL progressed learners thought about the difficulties they experience and how their performance may be enhanced.

This study was carry out in 2 high schools in the Breyten circuit under the Gert Sibande district of the Mpumalanga province. The Gert Sibande District is the second biggest district in the province and the selected schools are in a rural circuit. The selected schools are categorised as Quintile 3, "which is considered to be under-resourced schools with a high level of Government subsidy according to the Quintile ranking system" (Yamauchi, 2011). Since the schools are in rural areas, most of the learners depend on scholar transport to commute as they live in surrounding farms. The identified schools are anonymised in the dissertation write-up because ENGFAL is taught in both these schools, it is also used as the language of teaching and learning, which makes it a very crucial subject for the learners' progress

in all the other subjects. Both are no-fee public schools. In line with bricolage, the study presented an opportunity for ENGFAL progressed learners of Gert Sibande to be heard. They were ostracised people, nevertheless had the right to be coresearchers (Shallwani and Mohammed, 2007) in their academic pursuit.

3.8 Sampling method

The study included four teachers from the two schools. A total of four (4) learners was selected as coresearchers. The coresearchers who reacted to the request were called to a meeting. From the principal meeting, we decided to form a team with a goal of enhancing the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 by questioning the issues concerning ENGFAL Grade 12. Eventually, the purpose of the group was to develop a strategy to enhance the academic performance of these progressed learners in Grade 12, which will adversely help these learners perform better in the other subjects as they are taught in English.

Utilizing purposeful sampling, researchers were able to "maximize the breadth of precise information that can be gathered from and about that environment" (Babbie & Mouton, 2005, p. 7). The sample was only comprised of progressed students in Grade 12 at the study sites. Purposive sampling was used to choose the teachers for the sample based on their duties and responsibilities, which included teaching Grade 12 and carrying out the progression policy's requirements. Thus, the chosen teachers were given the task of working with learners in Grades 10 through 12, as well as the execution of support measures, supervision, and tracking of success in each of their grades. The sample size was also constrained by the availability of the researcher to coordinate schedules with the availability of consenting and assenting participants, the will of suitable participants to join, the consent of relevant learners' parents to participate in the study, and the agreement of the learner participants to contribute in the study. Given these limitations, it was necessary to use a convenience method for additional sampling among the progressed learners (Lamont, 2020). All students who had progressed into and were currently enrolled in the FET phase at the research site comprised the largest possible population, which was first identified. The selected teacher sample was invited for individual interviews, whilst the learners were invited to participate in a focus group discussion. The overall study sample comprised twelve participants – 8 learners and 4 educators. Although this is a small sample, Lamont (2020, p. 30) suggests that "within qualitative research, the study samples tend to be smaller in order to support the depth of case-oriented analysis that is fundamental to this mode of inquiry."

3.9 Overview of the coresearchers

Learner participants were aged between 19 and 21 and comprised four males and four females. The learners resided in Gert Sibande district – 5 using scholar transport, whilst the other 3 lived in the township. Participants in this study were progressed in the FET phase in the 2021 school year to Grade

12. Learners are mentioned to in the dissertation by their pseudonym, gender and grade and teachers by their pseudonym, designation, and gender. Participant 1 (“Lindo”), (M, Gr 12); Participant 2 (“Neli”) (F, Gr 12); Participant 3 (“Sonke”), (M, Gr 12); Participant 4 (“Linda”), (M, Gr 12) ; Participant 5 (“Sethu”), (M, Gr 12); Participant 6 (“Lwazi”) (F, Gr 12); Participant 7 (“Esihle”), (F, Gr 12); Participant 8 (“Owami”), (F, Gr 12). The teacher participants in this study were selected based on their roles in the schools (“Ms Khabo”; “Ms Prudy”; and “Mr King”) and the fourth educator is a Grade Head (“Mr Langa”) – all within the FET Phase and teaching grade 12. Pseudonyms have been consigned to safeguard the identities of the coresearchers. This is in line with the ethical moralities apprising this study.

3.10 Data Collection

For the purposes of this study, only information gathered from teacher interviews and focus groups with progressed learners was analysed. In order to explore the cognitive, behavioural, and environmental processes connected to the enhanced academic performance of progressed learners, the data was analyzed using both an inductive and a deductive method. Four learners participated in the focus group discussion, and four teachers were interviewed. Maree (2014, p.46) points out that “choosing the right data collection method is essential since privacy has a significant impact on response bias when it comes to questions about delicate subjects or socially unacceptable behaviour”. “The focus group discussion and interviews were the selected method based on concrete reasons like time constraints, as well as the advantage of participants building on each other’s ideas” (Lamont, 2020, p. 30). Therefore, it was anticipated that the focus group discussion with progressed learners and the individual interviews with teachers would produce a comprehensive, detailed understanding of the difficulties faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 from both the learner and educator points of view. Interviews are described as a potent means of gathering information by Maree (2014). In this study, learners were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule with three primary headings and general questions. The one-on-one teacher interviews lasted for almost an hour. A focus group comprised of the coresearchers was guided utilizing a semi-structured focus group guide and open-ended questions and lasted...

Additionally, the focus group discussion guide for learners included open-ended probing questions and group discussion themes (Harrell and Bradley, 2009). The questions provided to teachers were on

their role in assisting with the enhancement of student performance using school resources, particularly in

relation to the progression policy and their interpretation of the policy. This was in line with bricolage, the theoretical framework that underpinned this study. The implementation of the curriculum, classroom management, challenges encountered during curriculum implementation, classroom dynamics in relation to the progression policy, and their perception of the personal, behavioural, and environmental processes in relation to the difficulties they encounter as progressed learners were also covered in the questions.

Bricolage served as the foundation for the interview and focus group questions that were created. The researcher created the inquiries in accordance with the theoretical framework. The participants' awareness of the personal, behavioural, and environmental processes connected with academic advancement, as well as the difficulties faced by progressed learners and teachers, was meant to be elicited by the questions in both the focus group discussion and the interviews. Semi-structured interviews are advantageous because they feature "some pre-set questions, but give more space for open-ended answers," according to Lamont (2020). While Harrell and Bradley (2009) advocate using probe questions and discussion themes to direct and shape focus group discussion responses. For the goals of this study, it was crucial to employ open-ended questions to obtain detailed information during both the focus group discussions and the interviews. This information was intended to highlight the unique experiences of progressed learners in Grade 12 ENGFAL and the significance attached to those experiences, as well as the academic performance of progressed learners from the perspectives of both progressed learners and the educators who are primarily responsible for their academic attainment. The chosen approach allowed the researcher to learn more about individual interpretations of the opinions expressed during focus group discussions and interviews about personal experiences. Additionally, this was consistent with PAR used in this study's methodology (Goldkuhl, 2012). The following section discusses the method employed in this study for data analysis.

Many social science fields, either as a stand-alone technique or more frequently in conjunction with other techniques. For many years, the focus group has been a popular qualitative data collection technique in the social sciences (Parker and Jonathan, 2006). Its beginnings can be traced back to the late 1940s at Columbia University. Focus groups provide researchers with a wealth of knowledge that is invaluable, and the opinions of the participants enhance the originality of the researcher's own thinking (Bloor et al., 2001). Additionally, individuals are able to recognize various (hidden) aspects of a topic (Longhurst, 2010). Due to the method's high degree of resourcefulness and adaptability, which ideally complements other research techniques including surveys, questionnaires, and personal interviews (Longhurst, 2010).

The fundamental component of this approach is the participatory component, which encourages lively discussion among participants under the direction of a moderator in a way that all group members are actively involved. The discussion is typically semi-structured because the themes are established

before

a focus group is conducted. A focus group cycle typically comprises two to ten conversations, although the exact number varies and is dependent on the objectives of the research, the variety of topics, and the time and financial resources available. Each focus group discussion has a different number of participants, ranging from the ideal six to eight to the practical adjustments of three to fourteen.

3.10. 2. Putting Method into Practice

The following steps were taken into consideration in the implementation of the FGD:

3.10.2.1. Create the Focus Groups

As Crabtree and Miller (1999) recommended, creating an implementation guide was a crucial component of the preparatory phase. On the basis of earlier research steps—specifically, the outcomes of PAR, in-depth interviews, and multi-criteria research analysis for assessing both teachers' and learners' perceptions—a list of semi-structured questions was created, building on the research topic. The areas addressed by the questions were poetry, fiction, drama, short tales, language ability, grammar, and literary components. Background check on teachers was done through the evaluation of teaching styles and methods in ENGFAL.

The focus group needed technical kit for audio and video recording. Video recording was needed for the analysis of interactive connections and nonverbal communication. The discussion was conducted in English; however, learners were allowed to code-switch where they had challenges as they were progressed learners. This was done to ensure more freedom and comfort in participation.

3.10.2.2. Selecting and Recruiting Participants

“The quality of the data collected greatly depended on the participants, so the group composition was highly important. We paid particular attention to participants’ heterogeneity and diversity, which were both acknowledged in the literature” (Lamont, 2020, p. 34). The internal diversity also measured gender and age balance. The shared denominator of our stakeholder groups for learners is being a progressed learner in grade 12 doing ENGFAL, while for teachers is teaching ENGFAL in the FET phase, particularly grade 12.

The group configuration generated a challenge, which is denoted as “power imposition” (Cooke and Kothari 2001). Some of the coresearchers considered themselves less knowledgeable and good enough to participate in the study as they believed that gifted learners are the ones to be selected for research. To overcome the coresearchers’ self-perceived inferior position and subsequent impediment,

I emphasized that our goal was only to collect personal attitudes, experiences, and reflections on the

challenges they face in ENGFAL and that their voice is important in ensuring that such challenges are addressed and possible solutions are found. This proved effective and encouraging enough for the coresearchers to participate.

3.10.2.3. The Moderator, Key Person, and Group Dynamics

As the focus group's moderator, I was responsible for introducing the objective and steering the discussion. I stated the purpose of the focus group discussion with a wide, open-ended question to set the parameters of the conversation and introduce the subject. "What part does ENGFAL play in you as a learner?" was the study's opening query. A moderator should only utilize the guide to navigate the group and provide a methodical approach to gathering comments, not to direct the conversation that follows. Thoughts that are unpredictable and unexpected may arise during the debate, therefore, the moderator must stay open-minded, responsive, and capable of responding properly. Probing questions can be used by the moderator to get participants to elaborate.

The focus group discussion yielded thorough clarification and reflection as well as completely new and unanticipated viewpoints. By conveying in their individual and family familiarities, coresearchers met the aims and objectives of this study. To a researcher, they provided an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12 and possible solutions from a bricolage perspective.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed through the thematic approach model suggested by Laws et al. (2003), which offers seven steps:

- "Step 1: Reviewed and reread all of the obtained data: Data from the focus group discussions were read thoroughly to get to the heart of the problems experienced by advanced ENGFAL learners.
- Step 2: Make a theme list that roughly emerges from the data: Major topics and themes were discovered and then organised according to the research questions.
- Step 3: Reread the information: Data was reread by the researcher to see if the identified themes correlate with the study questions and what the participants said.
- Step 4: Using quotations and notes to connect the themes: Data emerging themes were related to various views of scholars.

- Step 5: Examining the topic categories to interpret them: The researchers kept research questions in mind while interpreting the data.
- Step 6: Create a tool to aid in the detection of patterns in the data: During the analysis, the researchers were able to identify data patterns.
- Step 7: Interpreting and extracting meaning from the data: The researchers discovered topics that were subsequently broken down into subheadings.”

After each focus group discussion and interview, notes were taken on what the researcher thought was connected to or in opposition to the recently published findings. Links between interviewees that were discovered were also mentioned. The researcher verbatim recorded how the discussions from the educator focus group and the individual learner interviews. In the first stage of the thematic analysis, "patterns of meaning and issues of possible relevance in the data" were sought after (Braun and Clarke, 2006). These were recorded as soon as the focus group discussions and interviews were over, and additions were added while listening to the tapes before transcription.

The researcher verbatim recorded the discussions from the focus group and the individual interviews. In the first stage of the theme analysis, "patterns of meaning and issues of possible relevance in the data" were sought (Kolobe, 2019). These were recorded as soon as the focus group discussions and interviews were over, and additions were added while listening to the tapes before transcription. Additional notations were made while the transcription was being done. As well as possible quotations for debate, potential themes in regard to the similarity of ideas among transcripts were highlighted. Additionally, the transcripts were carefully examined several times. This particular thematic analysis was conducted because it is a common methodology in qualitative studies. These comments followed a theoretical framework for theme analysis as laid out by Braun and Clarke (2006). The approach of "finding, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data" is known as thematic analysis (Lamont, 2020). According to the method, a thorough thematic approach to data analysis "may generate an informative analysis that addresses specific research objectives" (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The careful attention used in data transcription, as emphasized by Lapadat and Lindsay (1999), facilitates the close reading and interpretive abilities required to analyze the data.

The subsequent significant contemplation was to clarify patterns or themes within data recognised in an inductive and empirical manner through bricolage (Lincoln, 2005). Parker (2006) stresses the significance of striking a stability between initiation and inference in every study. The theoretical framework and research questions have to be used in order to apply them to the discovered themes and quotations during the data analysis procedure. In order to explore the phenomena of progression, identify themes, and unravel patterns of interest while still using valuable theoretical viewpoints and

notions to guide the study, it was vital to be aware of maintaining a balance between induction and deduction (Patton, 1991). The low performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 and the lack of sufficient resources in most public schools in the Gert Sibande district propelled this research study to use thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) through bricolage, as it opened opportunities where the awareness of the progressed learners may possibly be deliberated through their inclusion and involvement in the study. Hence, I conclude that thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) endorses my choice of bricolage as a framework behind this study. Bricolage strives to advance human circumstances by solving difficulties that antagonise people in society, which in this case, are the challenges that progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 face. In addition, thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) justifies PAR as a method for generating data as both seek to contest for the disadvantaged and marginalised members of society. The following section discusses the ethical considerations of this study.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

“The phrase ‘ethical considerations in research’ refers to a set of guidelines that govern the designs and methods of your studies. Scientists and researchers must always follow a set of ethical guidelines while collecting data from individuals. Human research typically aims to comprehend real-world events, investigate effective remedies, examine habits, and improve lives in other ways. Both the topic of your research and the methods you use have significant ethical implications.” (Bhandari, 2022, p. 1). These elements support research reliability while defending study participants' rights and upholding its integrity. Below is a discussion of the ethical guidelines that this study followed.

3.12.1 Permissions granted

I requested and received ethical permission from the University of the Free State first (UFS). **UFS-HSD2021/1721/22** is the reference number (see Appendix A). The Mpumalanga Department of Basic Education was then contacted for approval to carry out the study. I presented them with a letter of authorization from UFS asking the Head of Department (HOD) on my behalf to permit me to conduct an empirical investigation (see Appendix B). My study received the provincial Head of Department's approval (see Appendix C). The Gert Sibande District of Education also received the letter. As instructed, I continued to the circuit manager's office in Breyten, where I was given authorization to travel to the schools. I delivered the provincial HOD's letter to two particular schools, and both replied favourably by giving me written authorization to do the research. Additionally, I spoke with the coresearchers, who agreed to participate by signing a consent form and a consent letter (see Appendix D). This was in line with Dube (2016), who stated that before starting the study, researchers must make sure that all pertinent committees, people, and authorities have been consulted and that the research has received approval.

3.12.2 Informed consent

In this study, I sought consent from the coresearchers and informed them that participation in this study was voluntary; should they feel the need to, participants may withdraw at any time. The coresearchers were also informed of the aims of the research with its anticipated conclusions; this was done so that they would be able to choose whether to partake or not without any fears or harm (Bisit, 2010). Teacher participants, parents of learner participants and learners were given consent forms which they signed to participate in this study.

3.12.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

Beebe (2008) argued that confidentiality means that coresearchers are free to contribute and reserve as much information as they wish to the researcher. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that confidentiality is maintained beyond ordinary loyalty. Therefore in response to this principle in ethics, the names of contributors and of schools were not mentioned anywhere in this study, and confidentiality forms were given and signed. Coresearchers were assured of confidentiality and that their answers would be treated with discretion. The consent letter also contained details of this.

3.12.3 Respect for privacy

The privacy of the coresearchers was not invaded throughout this study. This was also stated in the consent form to warrant that no harm was done to the coresearchers as a result of this study. To protect the schools and coresearchers, pseudonyms were used as a replacement for mentioning the school's real name.

Beneficence and non - maleficence are important ethical issues that cannot be ignored

Summary of the Chapter

The study's research technique was described in this chapter. The qualitative research method was thought to be the most effective in attaining the objectives of this study since it gave the researcher access to relevant data about the difficulties faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12. Profiles of the sites and coresearchers were the chapter's main topic. In addition to examining the topic of data analysis, it demonstrated how thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) was utilized to analyse data at the textual, conceptual, and social context levels. Discussions were held regarding the ethical issues supporting the study. The data generation process for the research was described in the chapter. The data generated is presented and examined in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

Data presentation, analysis, and discussion are the main topics of Chapter 4. I used participatory action research (PAR), a methodology, to produce the data I offer in this chapter. The generated data tried to address the study's purpose and goals. I conducted an examination of the generated data using critical theme analysis. The empirical data was examined using the seven phases for thematic analysis laid out by Laws et al. (2003). The information generated expands upon the notions addressed in Chapter 2. The group also established the framework for creating a transformatory-bricolage strategy, described in Chapter 5.

Firstly, I retell the readers of the intention of the study, which is to develop a strategy that replies to the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12 in the Gert Sibande district. The data presented in this chapter answers the objectives of this research. See page 8.

The chapter's themes were developed using individual interviews and focus group discussion data. The researcher coded and categorized the data before identifying the themes, looked for similarities and variances in the codes and categories among and between individuals, and then honed these into distinct themes. Textual descriptions were prepared based on these themes in an effort to comprehend the participants' perspectives on their challenges in the teaching and learning of ENGFAL Grade 12 (Creswell, 20014).

Table 4.1 works as a graphic illustration of the research questions and the themes that were found by the researcher and coresearchers during the thematic analysis.

Table 4.1. Thematic table

Research questions	Themes	Sub-themes
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL? 	<p>Lack of support</p> <p>Lack of resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of family support. • Lack of teacher support. • Lack of peer support. • No extra classes for ENGFAL. • Shortage of learning material. • Lack of adequate physical facilities. • Workload of ENGFAL teachers VS contact time.
<p>Which possible solutions are there to address the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner profiling • Differentiated instruction to the teaching of ENGFAL • Proper monitoring of ENGFAL tasks • Reduction of ENGFAL teachers' workload 	
	<p>Finland's approach to education through transformative bricolage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-being orientated equity-driven education • Management of learners with special needs and learning barriers • Highly trained and valued teachers

4.2 Challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12.

The following section presents the findings from the coresearchers on the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 as generated by the transformatory-bricolage team. I first discuss theme 1, which is lack of support. A number of challenges were raised by the coresearchers during the focus group discussions. This included structures and stakeholders who are key to the enhancement of the academic performance of Grade 12 progressed learners in ENGFAL.

4.2.1 Lack of family support

Learners in the study outlined that there was little or no support at all from their families towards their schoolwork. This was caused by a lot of factors in relation to the families' academic, social and environmental backgrounds. According to the NPPPPR, parents of progressed learners must sign consent and commitment forms that they provide the necessary support at home for their children when progressed to ensure that the learner does not fall behind their peers in the next grade (DBE, 2013). However, information revealed by most learners showed that this was not the case. Sethu and Neli state their views on their families' involvement towards their education:

Sethu: *"I don't really get enough assistance from teachers, family, friends and community because they believe in the grade that I'm in. I'm supposed to know everything, so since I am a progressed learner, they also refer me as a slow learner. I don't know anything and don't get help from anyone anymore, I do everything all by myself. Teachers are very busy to assist me, my friends are focusing on their academics and well my family expects that I know much since I'm in grade 12."*

Neli: *"No one is concerned about my academics except myself. My parents only care about my end-of-year report only; that's where they'll show care that I must put in more effort."*

Analysis at this level shows an oversight from the parents or family members of progressed learners. This is seen in Sethu's statement, *"...and well my family expects me to know everything since I'm in grade 12..."* Most families expect their children to be at the level of their peers academically, forgetting that, unlike their peers, they were progressed through to Grade 12. In order to understand the difficulties they experienced and to help them more effectively throughout the year, learners articulated a wish for parents to interact with the school. Learners believed their families did not have enough interaction with the school to deliberate academic progress, learn about the current educational standards and criteria, or learn how to offer support. According to Sanders and Sheldon (2009), schools succeed when there is a strong bond among the community, parents, teachers, and learners. If their atmosphere at home is encouraging, all learners have a greater chance to succeed academically. The fact that Neli says, *"...my parents only care about my end-of-year report..."* shows that some parents do not understand that year-end results are the fruits of hard work, support and encouragement given to the learner during the course

of the year. Ngwaru (2010) alludes that one of the causes of minimal parental involvement is that most parents from disadvantaged backgrounds notice all the authority to be bestowed in the school. Furthermore, Williams and Sanchez (2011) maintain that many families struggle to manage to demand unpredictable schedules and situations while balancing other commitments like work, family time, sports, and parental involvement, which is crucial for children's educational success. As a result, there is rarely enough time to support a child in any one particular area. This makes parents think that their children's education is solely the role of the school since teachers are the ones who are paid to teach. This leads them not to attend important parents meetings in schools or check their children's progress at school during the year. This is proven by Neli's sentiment:

"My parents attend parents' meetings once or twice a year; then, after that, they wouldn't bother to communicate with the school concerning my academics."

Furthermore, Mr Langa, the grade head, said:

"In most cases, it is the parents of the gifted learners and those that are not struggling academically who attend meetings and avail themselves when called, parents of progressed learners mostly send their relatives to attend meetings on their behalf, and we have a large number of progressed learners in grade 12."

The two statements above prove what was said by Njogu (2008) that a significant number of parents from disadvantaged socioeconomic circumstances are worried about challenges of trying to make ends meet, leaving too little room for assisting their learners academically at home. Hill and Taylor (2004,

p. 163) state that "parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds have considerably more challenges to involvement, including nonflexible work hours, lack of resources, transportation problems, and stress related to live in impoverished communities." According to Emeagwali (2009), low-income urban parents can and desire to be involved in their children's education just as much as middle-class parents. Hornby (2011, p. 45) also states that "rigid leave regulations and child-care obligations frequently make it difficult for single parents to participate in society. Many school administrators frequently conclude in advance that working single and low-income parents cannot be contacted or trusted." They are not expected to help with home learning activities, participate in their children's school activities or attend meetings.

This study also revealed that some of the progressed learners are being labelled negatively by their families, with some having unfair expectations and little support. This was evident in Linda and Sethu's statements:

Linda: *"I only get support from my mother, who is very worried, yet she believes I'm not trying enough and I achieve better than the poor marks I get."*

Sethu: “...they believe in the grade that I'm in, I'm supposed to know everything, so since I am a progressed learner, they also refer to me as a slow learner...”

Ladd and Linderholm (2008) found that categorizing learners negatively by parents and teachers could result in a variety of social and psychological negative effects, including decreased self-esteem, decreased self-confidence, and increased delinquent conduct. Teachers have a significant impact on learners' lives from early childhood through maturity. Learners' self-esteem can be positively or negatively influenced by teachers' actions (Corrigan, Larson, and Rusch, 2009). This can result in students realizing their value and valuing themselves, or it can result in failure, hopelessness, and harm to both themselves and those around them. Boyle (2013) argues that a learner under negative labialization malfunctions in numerous significant aspects of life. Therefore, it is crucial to model positive conduct for learners and educate them on how to value the behaviours that are most likely to lead to a positive self-concept and high levels of self-esteem. Furthermore, Anyiendah (2017, p. 5) notes that “labelling of learners decreases their self-esteem and confidence level, making them feel negative about themselves because they lose the self-confidence to try new things”. It is imperative for families to know that most progressed learners in ENGFAL lack self-esteem, so when crushed, it may be near impossible for them to recover. These learners need constructive feedback, motivation and support from their loved ones. Parents are the one group that children have natural confidence and a feeling of security in; as such, they should allow them to read English books in front of them to develop their confidence and vocabulary.

4.2.2 Lack of teacher support

Another challenge identified and discussed during the FGD was the lack of support by ENGFAL teachers to progressed learners. Learners complained that teachers taught them using a one-size fits all approach, and there were no individualized programs for the progressed learners in ENGFAL. Esihle said this with regard to teacher support:

Esihle: “They expect me to pass but never take the time. Even when they see I'm failing, they don't bother asking me what's wrong they just assume. Even when they are in the class, they only come for a few minutes. Sometimes, they don't come at all, which really affects us.”

Esihle's statement shows that there is a gap in contact time with teachers. Teachers should always be in class to teach when it is time. Esihle further mentioned, "They only have extra classes for science and since I'm struggling in English there are no *extra classes*." This proves the content shared in the review of literature that ENGFAL is overlooked, whereas it forms the base of teaching and learning in most schools in Gert Sibande district as it is the language of teaching and learning in the sampled and majority

of schools in the district. However, Ms Khabo alluded that it was difficult to go the extra mile in assisting progressed learners as most of them were ill-mannered and disregarded ENGFAL for subjects like Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Life Sciences.

Ms Khabo: *“When you organize ENGFAL extra classes, only a few learners will show up, even during afternoon studies; they do not bother with the subject, they only practise the subjects they are told to be critical.”*

Another teacher Mr King said: *“I do extra classes, but most of my learners are uninspired and unruly; this makes it hard for these classes to serve any purpose.”*

Mr King’s statement proves the review of literature in 2.5.4.8. About ‘teaching uninspired and unmotivated learners. It was evident during the interviews with the teachers that most of the progressed learners seem to carry the belief that they are entitled to be progressed, forgetting that there is no progression in Grade 12. As such, they become lazy, thinking that, just like in the lower grades, they will be promoted due to age. This also confirms my literature review where I outlined Kika and Kotze (2018), who are of the view that given the fact that progressed learners are defamed and convey the label all the way through their schooling years, truancy may be viewed as an escape from the humiliation and desire to have assurance that the progression policy is in their goodwill. My analysis of both the teachers' and learners’ statements is that there is a negative attitude towards each other, and uncommunicated expectations, labelling and stratifying. I am saying this because it can never be that all progressed learners are uninspired and unmotivated. Bojuwoye et al. (2014) argue that learners learn better in an environment where they feel wanted, recognized and made to feel worthy of being there. I, therefore, concede that it is imperative for teachers to develop a positive attitude towards progressed learners and treat them fairly. Soomro et al. (2016) alluded that when teachers are unwilling to diversify their teaching methods, learners’ performances will deteriorate. The one-size fits all approach can never assist progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12. This is because of the discussion made earlier in chapter 2, see 2.5.4.7. It will forever be a challenge for a learner who struggles in poetry and short stories to be taught only these two genres instead of being taught even drama and novel so that they may have a choice to answer questions on the genres they understand better, not the ones the teacher thought they would understand. Another challenge that hinders the support by teachers towards ENGFAL is what Ms Prudy alluded to by saying:

“How can you assist 45 progressed learners in a class of 54 learners? We do not even know how to assist them individually. I, for one, went to university to study how to teach learners, not progressed learners with special needs.”

Ms Prudy’s statement is supported by Kutame (2021), who proposed that support measures for progressed learners should be put in place by the DBE together with other stakeholders by organizing workshops for both teachers and progressed learners as this would help them stay motivated and

develop

several learning skills. Brahmhatt (2020) also outlined that most teachers do not know how to support progressed learners. Contrary to the above-mentioned scholar, according to Lim's (2015) claim, learner profiling aids the teacher in identifying themes that students struggle with or that require immediate attention. According to Park, Ji, and Lim (2015), the teacher chooses appropriate strategies to support the progressed learners so that they enhance their academic performance when obstacles in a subject are discovered in this way. According to Park et al. (2015), learner profiling is the best method for determining a learner's difficulties so that they can be given the right assistance. Before students take the end-of-year exams, according to Fleisch (2016), teachers should teach and cover the material outlined in the curriculum. I therefore argue that it is not that teachers are not willing to support these learners; rather, they are frustrated because they do not know how. If teachers were to be thoroughly developed on assisting progressed learners, especially in ENGFAL, they would willingly apply the methods learned from the workshops.

4.2.3 Lack of peer support

Another contributory factor to the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12 is the lack of peer support. Undoubtedly, peers play a pivotal role in their friend's education. This is because they can easily relate to one another more than they can relate to their teachers. It was thus identified in this study that in most cases, peers do not support their fellow progressed friends with their studies because they feel like they will be wasting their time, while others believe that progressed learners are not in the league/ level, as such, they segregate themselves from them in accordance with their abilities. This was evident in Mr Langa's comments when he said:

"It is very rare to find gifted learners being friends with progressed learners; this is because, in most cases, progressed learners are seen by their peers as lazy and not caring for their books; even when you try to group them heterogeneously, it will only be for that lesson, then they will go back to their friends."

Another point made by Owami to support Mr Langa's sentiments was:

"Most of my friends don't care about my academics except for two who also believe I'm not taking my academics seriously; most of them want us to talk about general stuff; the moment I ask them to explain the usage of figures of speech in poetry, they just laugh and say it is simple without giving me the answer."

This goes to prove the argument raised by proponents of learner progression in Chapter 2 of this study, whereby Kolobe (2019) argued with other anti-retentionists that a learner who first experiences inadequate learning and instruction will continue to be ineffective. So progressed learners being labelled

as lazy contributes to the challenges they face, specifically in ENGFAL. Some learners alluded that their peers are being laughed at by their peers when they try to speak in English. Lwazi and Sonke said this with regard to their peers in an ENGFAL lesson:

Lwazi: *“It is very difficult for me to get good marks when I deliver a speech in class; I say this because my classmates who can speak English properly always laugh at me when I speak broken English; this makes it difficult for me to know where I am.”*

Sonke: *“I remember during the first term when we had to do a prepared reading as a formal task, I asked my friend to help me pronounce some of the words from the article I got; he taught me; I thought he was assisting me, only to find out that he was teaching me to pronounce them wrongly so that they will laugh at me in class, I scored low marks and cried, since that day it has been hard for me to ask for help because I doubt my friends.”*

The aims of the progression policy were reviewed; see 2.5.1. However, analysis from the statements made by the coresearchers above shows that although progressed learners are placed in the same grade as their peers, there is still a gap in the sense of belonging to that particular grade as some make others feel like they are not at their level. This necessitated the need for the strategy that will be discussed in Chapter 5 of this study. Kolobe (2019) asserts that as time goes on, the benefit of retention tends to diminish, making the difference between promoted learners and those retained insignificant. Hughes et al. (2017) contend that when a learner repeats a year of education, it is likely that the child will not benefit academically from remaining in the school system for an additional year, making it practically wasteful to keep them there. The primary opponents of learner progression, according to Haidary (2013), are teachers, who are frequently viewed by scholars as being misled by classroom knowledge of the immediate remunerations of repetition. Because it encourages students to put in extra effort and keeps them from cheating, the majority of teachers believe that grade repetition is acceptable. Transformatory-bricolage is more concerned with providing opportunities for these learners that make them feel a sense of belonging in their respective grades and empower those that are gifted to not undermine others.

4.2.4 Lack of formalised extra classes for ENGFAL.

The last challenge that was identified during the discussions and interviews was that the DBE had labelled some subjects as more important than others., They even hire teachers to assist struggling schools during holidays on those “critical subjects”; these include Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, Accounting, etc. ENGFAL is never on the intervention program by the department. The assumption is that ENGFAL is normally passed by all learners, forgetting the quality of marks that learners get, as some pass by a mere 30%. Ms Khabo and Mr King stated the following:

Ms Khabo: *“When you teach ENGFAL, it is your sole responsibility from the first day until the last to ensure that learners pass well. The Department of Basic Education only prioritizes science and commercial subjects; they ignore languages on their intervention strategies; this makes learners not to take the subject seriously because they never see an outside teacher organized by the department to teach them.”*

Mr King: *“At times, I wish my learners could be taught short stories, poetry, novel and drama by a teacher from a different school, but the school and the department does not allow outsourcing of language teachers.”*

It is important to note that most public schools generally in South Africa and Gert Sibande specifically use English as a language of teaching, learning and assessment. In this regard, ENGFAL as a subject should never be overlooked because learners first need to read English questions in 5 if not 6 of the 7 subjects taught, understand what is required, analyse and interpret the question, then write an answer in English. Learners need to develop the basic knowledge and understanding of English in order for them to pass the other subjects that are said to be critical. Furthermore, Lindo said:

“I do have answers at times to some questions, but the problem starts when I have to explain in English.”

Lindo’s statement shows that for the progressed learners to pass well, they need to be able to speak and understand English fluently. After all, a learner can never excel in a language subject that he/she hardly speaks. This actually proves that learner progression is not an issue, rather, the support measures provided by schools and the DBE mostly exclude ENGFAL. In fact, the head of communications in the DBE, Mr Elijah Mhlanga, concurred that learner progression is good and provides equal opportunities for South African learners by stating that what should be strengthened are the support programmes for progressed learners (Teke, 2015). According to Leithwood, Harris, and Strauss (2010), many performance-improving techniques have actually disadvantaged schools even more. This is partly due to neglecting to consider the context of the school and placing the onus of failure entirely on the shoulders of the institution. Malone (2013) backs the aforementioned viewpoint when he claims that far too often, techniques and interventions intended to improve outcomes fall short of having any meaningful, long-lasting impact on learners and learning outcomes. According to Leithwood (2010), due to the slower pace of instruction, learners in underachieving schools are exposed to teaching that is less engaging, less task-focused, less academically concerned with knowledge grasp and covers less content. Kutame (2021) further outlined that the Department of Basic Education specified that teachers should have knowledge that qualifies them to teach the grades they have been given; they do not provide workshops to capacitate them on content delivery concerning the progressed learners. I concede that it is imperative for the DBE to specify and make available the required support measures for progressed learners; this should be done by providing the

'how' part of teacher capacitation in ENGFAL.

4.2.5 Lack of resources

The second theme that was identified in this study was the lack of resources to enhance the effective teaching of ENGFAL to progressed learners in Grade 12. The definition of resources in relation to bricolage, the theoretical framework underpinning this research, was provided in Chapter 2 of this study, as such sub-themes for resources were developed and further discussed below.

4.2.5.1 Lack of infrastructure

Lack of infrastructure as a sub-theme confirms the literature in Chapter 2. It was more of a consensus among the coresearchers that there is a need for a school library which may come in handy for the learners to improve their vocabulary skills. This was confirmed by Owami, who said:

“A school library is a need which might help in some ways for us who are having challenges in ENGFAL, which might help us improve vocab words and skills.”

This was evident in the literature where Kochung (2011) claimed that the lack of physical facilities such as libraries negatively affects the learning process. I concede that a library provides a calming effect and a conducive learning environment with a breath of fresh air to learners. It is, therefore, a need for schools and communities to have school and community libraries. Most public schools in the Gert Sibande district do not have libraries, even those that had community libraries were burnt down by community members during service delivery protests. It is imperative for education, political and economic stakeholders to come together and explain the importance of educational facilities within the community and the need to safeguard them at all times. Okongo (2015) postulates that the physical conditions and organization of schools facilitate or inhibit the construction of a culture of success. Neli said:

“The DBE can try to renew the culture of school libraries with librarians which will be opened during working hours and as well as on the weekends whereby learners can find help with reading and other activities concerning ENGFAL.”

Some scholars, such as Munje (2017) argued that resources are not the only factors that affect learner performance because some schools in rural areas perform better without proper resources. To further support this, du Plessis (2019) noted that the lack of resources sometimes motivates these learners to progress so that they can better their families and secure an even better education for their children in the future. I argue that the availability of libraries in schools and the community can enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL. Through bricolage, members of the community may be asked to donate books that they no longer use at home to revive libraries.

4.2.5.2 Shortage of teaching and learning material

During the discussions and interviews, teachers and learners were of the few that shortage of teaching and learning material is a huge challenge that hinders learners' academic performance in ENGFAL. The following coresearchers made the following statements:

Owami: *“We do not have learner’s books for ENGFAL; we do not have short story books, poetry or novels. It is difficult to understand a short story when you are only given notes and not the real texts.”*

Mr Langa: *“Earlier this year, the DBE in Mpumalanga provided grade 12 learners with tablets, and teachers with laptops; however, as English subject teachers, we are still awaiting our laptops with the teaching and learning content that matches that of the learners, there are also some learners that are yet to receive their tablets as well, what is more painful is that these are the most struggling learners who were progressed to grade 12, not having these tablets make them feel like outcasts in grade 12.”*

Owami’s statement confirms the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 whereby Chingos and West (2010) posit that learners without textbooks perform significantly poorer than those who have. This means results may be even worse for progressed learners in ENGFAL without textbooks. Lyon (2012) concurs by alluding that teaching and learning materials are the basic resources of a school and can help aid the performance of progressed learners. Mr Langa’s statement shows that although the DBE in Mpumalanga has made efforts to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners and all learners in grade 12, there is still an oversight of ENGFAL. The other challenge with regard to the tablets was raised by Ms Prudy when she said:

“The service provider for these tablets and laptops is Telkom, and well, Telkom’s signal is bad in our schools and village as it is more rural.”

This statement means that the needs of schools were not bricolised by the Mpumalanga Department of Basic Education. I believe that the department was supposed to look at the signal strength of the service provider and advise them to strengthen it where it is poor because the department spends millions paying for data and services provided by Telkom (Mpumalanga Department of Basic Education, 2022). The performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL is hindered by the lack of textbooks such as short stories, poetry, novel and drama. This confirms the literature where I outlined Chingos and West's (2010) sentiments that learners without textbooks perform significantly poorer than those who have. A contributory factor is what Mr Langa outlined by saying

“...all learners do ENGFAL and when given textbooks, they lose them during the year, the DBE is against us on retrieving textbooks. I am saying this because we are not allowed to withhold a learners’

report/statement of results in grade 12 if they do not bring the textbooks, so learners end up not taking care of the textbooks because they know that even if they lose them, they are not obliged to pay”.

I believe that there should be means of retrieving textbooks that do not take away responsibility from the learners., There should also be a motivation, such as a sworn affidavit detailing why the learner is in no position to pay for the lost textbook because the shortage disadvantages the next.

4.2.6 Workload of ENGFAL teachers versus contact time.

The coresearchers revealed during the interviews that the workload of ENGFAL teachers is way bigger than the other subjects that are said to be critical. This challenges the level and time available to support progressed learners in ENGFAL. Mr King and Ms Prudy made the following statements:

Mr King: *“As ENGFAL teachers in the FET phase, particularly in grade 12, we have to teach learners, preparing them for 3 examination papers starting from term 2 until term 4; there are also other formal assessments during these terms which should be administered and need a lot of time...”*

Ms Prudy: *“You can never have enough time to solely focus on progressed learners as an ENGFAL teacher because while preparing learners for an examination, you should also administer tasks such as prepared speech, reading aloud, unprepared speech, creative writing, etc. all these tasks take time to complete especially given the fact that one ENGFAL teacher teaches more than 120 learners in grade 12, even double in the lower grades.”*

The above statements by the teachers confirms the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 where Gumede and Biyela (2016) mentioned that ENGFAL teachers have to rush through the syllabus to complete the subject content. This makes ENGFAL as a subject to be more assessment driven rather than knowledge driven. Teachers end up teaching with an aim to ensure that all assessments are done by the end of each term, this adversely shifts the focus from what learners have to know to what should be assessed (see 2.5.4.5), which means that teachers in schools have to administer these tasks while teaching, and that is difficult because tasks such as speech and reading may take more than 3 days to complete in a class of more than 40 learners. This also negatively affects struggling learners because as these tasks are administered, there is less time for feedback as the teacher rushes to move to the next. Marking formal tasks for more than 120 learners and giving valid feedback per learner may be time-consuming, so a relook at the teacher-learner ratio is imperative.

The following section discusses the possible solutions to the challenges mentioned in 4.2.

4.3 Possible solutions to address the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL.

This section will attempt to explore possible solutions for the challenges faced by progressed learners (see 4.2.) in ENGFAL as outlined by the coresearchers.

4.3.1 Learner profiling

The coresearchers revealed during the discussion that one of the solutions to the challenges faced by progressed learners is teachers developing a thorough learner profiling. Ms Khabo said:

“Developing learner profiles will help assist where the learners lack, thus identifying where they are good because they can’t be bad in everything in ENGFAL.”

A learner profile, according to Baxter (2012), indicates how a student learns best. Information about a learner's interests, preferred learning methods, and personality, gender, and cultural variances are all part of a thorough learner profile. Additionally, it might contain details on the learning needs, skills, and support strategies that have worked in the past. Since each individual learner is always evolving, a learner profile must be dynamic. Williams (2012) concurs by stating that learners in letting their teachers and others learn about and understand their interests and strengths; Families in sharing pertinent information about their child or young person that may affect learning and inclusion; Teachers in getting to know their learners and developing strong relationships with them; Teachers in realizing what works for their students and what tools, technologies, differentiations, or adaptations may be required; Teachers in creating an inclusive classroom. In support of Ms Khabo’s statement, Ms Prudy said:

“Learner profiling helps in knowing the aspects to focus on when drilling progressed learners; some learners are good in poetry and short stories, not in drama and novel, so the profiles help in balancing teaching to ensure that they are all catered for.”

I argue that teachers and schools can use learner profiles to connect with learners and perceive situations from their points of view. To enable learners to engage and contribute to classroom learning of ENGFAL, this can inform planning, classroom layout, timetabling, and support measures needed to aid the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL.

4.3.2 Differentiated instruction to teaching of ENGFAL

The coresearchers also revealed that another possible solution is the use of different teaching styles for an ENGFAL lesson. Differentiated instruction, according to Fernandez (2015), is "simply

attention to

the learning needs of a specific student or small group of students rather than the more normal practice of teaching the class as though every one were present." The following statements were made by Esihle and Linda.

Esihle: *"What is more difficult is that some of us struggle to understand poetry because of the way we are taught, so it becomes a challenge when we are taught short stories the same way."*

Linda: *"If we can be taught by different teachers all three papers, I think I can pass very well because I used to understand my grade 10 teacher better. This one doesn't give us a chance to speak."*

According to Mourshed et al. (2010), teachers must be empowered to adjust instruction to their students' various learning styles and profiles. "Classrooms became more learner-centred, catering to learners' needs and interests, lower achievers improved" (Lee et al., 2013, p. 8). Watts Taffe et al. (2012, p. 4) acknowledged that "differentiated teaching was not new but that it was gaining popularity as certain accommodations were needed for the many learners who did not meet the highest levels of reading required at school". Differentiated instruction, as defined by Fernandez (2015, p. 2), "is not a teaching technique or approach, it is more of a philosophy that lessons should cater to the needs of all learners". It is evident from the statements made by the coresearchers that differentiated instruction is mainly concerned with 'valuing individuals, owning learner success, provision of high-quality curriculum, evaluating to inform instruction, employing flexible classroom routines which may cater for the needs of progressed learners in ENGFAL through transformatory-bricolage, building diverse opportunities to learning, and distributing accountability for teaching and learning as it promotes team teaching. Tomlinson and Allan (2000, p. 7) stated that "differentiated instruction was not an add-on to teaching. It is the mark of good teaching". However, Baecher et al. (2012) noted that helping ENGFAL learners is even more difficult as the learners in grade 12 progressed from teacher to teacher as they relocated from subject to subject, making it more challenging for teachers to get to discern their upbringings. It was revealed by Mr Langa that,

"Being too flexible sometimes disadvantages the gifted learners as they end up being bored when too much focus is given to the slow/progressed learners, so I try to get information from teachers in the within the language department in the lower grades as it helps me know the learners better in a short space of time."

Some of the factors affecting these learners include the standard of reading ability in their first language. Delisle (2015) believes that differentiated instruction is very problematic to implement in heterogeneous classrooms by arguing that the burdens on teachers made by differentiated instruction were excessively demanding to meet. It is just about unbearable to cater for all the learning necessities of all learners in a large class with a range of capabilities and actions, with learners that comprised talented and average learners, English Language Learners and unruly learners. I concede that in ENGFAL, teachers need to

institute some key differentiated instructional approaches that assist learners to advance both grammar and literature understanding as certainly and proficiently as possible for the inspiration of learners for well-organized learning that also appreciates the goal of all educational mechanisms, the growth of quality in education. Based on their various individual learning styles, they will all learn the same literature from the teacher. Everybody is different in terms of their abilities, preferences, and learning preferences. Students' talents, academic levels, learning preferences, and learning styles vary widely, and they require instruction that is specifically designed to fit their needs (Bender, 2012).

4.3.3 Proper monitoring of ENGFAL tasks

Teachers in the study believed that monitoring tasks may solve the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL. This is because they outlined that both formal and informal tasks play a vital role in the academic enhancement of learners in the subject. Cooperative teaching can also be used for evaluation. In cases like this, there should be an agreed-upon school policy. Staff associates can help each other in observing aspects of classroom practice (UNEG, 2012)). This strategy, which does not require the involvement of senior managers, could be especially beneficial in cross-curricular activities such as the three R's through the syllabus and the use of ICT in teaching as well as learning a technique of obtaining evidence in order to assess the success of the syllabus and warrant that the intended, executed, and attained programs are all aligned. Rogers (2012) corroborated that “this method often focuses on topics such as relevance, consistency, practicability, effectiveness, scaling-up, sustainability, and if learners are getting the anticipated learning outcomes”. It evaluates how well the curriculum aligns with the various needs of the students. This was evident in the statements made by Mr Langa and Mr King;

Mr Langa: *“There should be content audit by departmental heads to ensure that learners are given the correct number of tasks in ENGFAL, which is 4 informal tasks per week, both homework and classwork, and that the tasks are up to standard.”*

Mr King: *“SMT members should always check if the tasks given to learners prepare them for formal assessments, again, they should also check if teachers cover the ATP.”*

However, Reid & Kleinhenz (2015) notes that there are possible issues at any step of Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) in education programs and activities, including:

M&E may not be integrated into activities or programs. Indicators and other metrics may be poorly characterized; there may be a lack of trustworthy and valid data; there may be a lack of access to M&E respondents; there may be incomplete data - including no baseline information; and there may be a limitation in data analytic capabilities.

Monitoring and evaluation problems typically develop when there is little reference to M&E within the project/program planning, implementing, and evaluating cycle. Furthermore, according to the United Nations (2017), poor M&E is typically characterized by poorly defined measures and procedures, ambiguous data collection methods, limited access to evidence and data, and insufficient attention paid to the impact of the activity. I argue that monitoring is crucial because it involves various aspects such as moderation of tasks, both pre and post moderation, to check if learners were marked fairly or teachers were too rigid. It is also important to note that monitoring should involve checking remarks made in learners' tasks and the whether they receive feedback after tasks have been marked. Owami, during the discussion, alluded:

“Sometimes I don't see the need to write homework because my book is never checked.”

Owami's words show the importance of checking learners' books because it also motivates them to keep on writing tasks knowing that their books will be checked and signed and they will receive feedback.

4.3.4 Reduction of ENGFAL teachers' workload

On the positive side, the coresearchers outlined that since the arrival of COVID-19, the workload of ENGFAL teachers has been reduced, allowing them enough time to teach instead of focusing too much on assessment. This was evident in both Ms Khabo and Ms Prudy's sentiments:

Ms Khabo: *“Since the arrival of COVID-19, the number of formal tasks has been reduced from 13 to 7. This gives us more time to teach without stressing about marking.”*

Ms Prudy: *“Learners now receive more feedback and contact time because I only focus on my grade and I can plan once.”*

Wakoli (2013) alluded that teacher overload has a negative impact on the academic performance of learners because these teachers end up lacking the motivation to go to class as they are piled with work. This is obvious because the teacher does not have enough time to adequately prepare and teach the students; individual learner needs are not addressed, especially those of slow learners, because there are too many students in a class and not enough time for lessons, there is no in-depth preparation and understanding of the concepts because there are many subjects to be prepared, and the teacher may exhibit reluctance to perform his duties as required in any given responsibility (Gul, Kanwal & Khan, 2020). Because of the workload, he or she would rather devote more time to studying. Additionally, Faisal (2016) contended that the management of teachers directly impacts learners' performance.

The following section discusses the anticipated successes of a strategy, as mentioned in objective number 3 of this study.

4.4 The anticipated success of the strategy to enhance the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12.

This section will explore the anticipated success of the strategy identified (see 4.3.) to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12.

4.4.1 Promotion of local content in ENGFAL literature

The implementation of the transformatory-bricolage strategy will ensure that learners are conscious of their own history. Mvududu (2012) argues that when learners are taught in an approach that embraces their history, they develop self-consciousness and a sense of belonging to the lesson because education becomes more about who they are than something they cannot relate to. Mr King and Ms Khabo comment:

Mr King: *“What I love about transformatory-bricolage is that it transforms learners’ understanding and knowledge using information available at their disposal, which they can easily relate to.”*

Ms Khabo: *“Transformatory-bricolage is a good mechanism of decolonizing the mind of African learners.”*

Particular difficulties arise while teaching ENGFAL learners, particularly when doing so in an inclusive environment. When applied to English language learners, this sufficiency of addressing the majority of psychological demands may be beneficial. For the best learning and a joyful learning experience, these learners may require a variety of constructivist teaching methods (Mvududu, 2012). Constructivism and transformatory-bricolage are intertwined; this is because constructivism is concerned with what the learners know in order to construct knowledge, while transformatory-bricolage considers what the learner already knows as an important resource to learning. Mr King that Transformatory-bricolage values localized resources to learning, Ms Khabo views the strategy as means of decolonizing the mind. This is essential in transforming our education. If learners in ENGFAL were to be taught literature genres such as poems, short stories, novels and drama written by African writers/poets and authors, they may stand a good chance of performing better because the content written is based on occurrences or places that are not far-fetched from them. Hence, they can easily relate.

Through the use of this strategy, teachers can develop and create a wide range of scenarios in which non-English speaking learners will have a greater opportunity to share their understanding of real-life situations, with the help of teacher encouragement, the use of various media, and the Internet (Ullah, 2020). In these scenarios, learners will be able to hone their speaking skills, work in groups, and improve their English language proficiency. In order to address the demands of pupils, teachers

should make

adjustments concurrently. Through this, teachers and students can assist one another in raising one another's level of global consciousness. Learners would find it simpler to adapt to any new environment in the globe if they are used to learning English in the actual world.

4.4.2 Liberation of knowledge creation in ENGFAL.

Another pointer of success for this study will be when indigenous literature is given its due space in the CAPS curriculum. By the due space, I mean that it should be echoed in the syllabus content and an improved mark allocation, not just as a section but as a full paper in the final national examination. Hooks (2009) outlined that anyone may learn, and education is a method of teaching that. Education is the exercise of freedom. Ms Prudy said:

“For us who teach and contemplate one constituent of our profession is to be sacred—that our task is not only to impart understanding but to partake in the scholarly and spiritual progress of our learners — learning comes naturally. “If we want to generate the settings where learning can most deeply and personally begin, we must teach in a manner that respects and cares for the emotions of our learners.”

Ms Prudy’s words showed that the strength and success of transformatory-bricolage can be measured once teachers teach in a manner that looks after the well-being of learners by transforming their thinking and attitudes towards learning through caregiving. In Africa, an idiom says, “It takes a village to raise a child” ENGFAL learning should shape the lives of individual learners for the better and promote social reforms. Mr Langa revealed it in the discussion that:

“My wish is that we teach these learners postcolonial literature only...”

This statement shows the need for the liberation of the mind of learners and the education system as a whole, particularly for learners in rural areas. Mr King, with his experience, said:

“We can only be happy once our education is able to liberate our children, in grade 12, we teach Western poems such as ‘Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?’ and when you look at it, the months of summer in Europe are winter here, in December we will be wearing short sleeves, yet they will be wearing winter jackets and experiencing snow. Why should we teach our learners content about summer that is not here?”

This brings challenges even more to struggling learners in the subject as they still have to comprehend the months of summer in Europe, which are opposite to ours here in Africa. I, therefore, concur with the coresearchers that African literature is as good enough as the one from Europe; the DBE should make use of it as it is locally made and available. ENGFAL learners should be taught content that embraces the culture and promotes social reforms so that they can easily relate.

4.4.3 Promotion of an active learning process

Education is one of the most important tools for transforming society (Hooks, 2013). That particular society differs from other societies due to its members' acquisition of pertinent knowledge and skills. Dewey, like Hooks, has shown a strong interest in children's education and left behind several excellent concepts that have become the cornerstone of educational practice in contemporary institutions of higher learning. The coresearchers alluded to the importance of a learner-centred approach to the teaching and learning of ENGFAL. Ms Khabo and Ms Prudy said:

Ms Khabo: *“Learners learn best when teaching and learning are based on them than the teacher; it is very much difficult for struggling learners to be active in a foreign content. Transformatory-bricolage will best help learners if the local resources are provided sufficiently...”*

Ms Prudy: *“I think transformatory-bricolage can assist our learners a lot provided we get thorough training on how to assist these struggling learners.”*

Weimer (2012) argued that teachers who are learner-centred discuss learning. They inquire about the lessons learned from the kids in casual chats. They might discuss their own learning in class. They question students' presumptions about learning and exhort them to take accountability for their decisions regarding learning, such as how they prepare for tests, when they complete required reading, and whether they revise, examine their responses or their writing. Teachers that strongly emphasise learning via reflection, analysis, and critique include assignment components in their lessons. The objective is to help students recognize their own capacity for learning and inspire them to develop their learning abilities. However, some scholars argue that sometimes a learner is not intellectually prepared to become the independent learner required to get the most out of learner-centred teaching strategies. If they do not appear to be resistant to additional work or responsibility, and they don't appear to be intimidated, then it could be that they are not cognitively prepared to engage in a specific activity. If this is the case in that situation, you may need to alter the activity or build a bridging experience to prepare them for that activity. I argue that active participation of learners in ENGFAL may be an indicator of the successful implementation of the strategy.

The following section will focus on the possible opportunities that are available for progressed learners in ENGFAL through Bricolage and the manner in which Finland approaches their education through bricolage as an alternative to addressing the challenges mentioned in 4.2.

4.5 Possible opportunities that are available for progressed learners in ENGFAL through Bricolage

In this section, I will discuss the possible opportunities that are available for progressed learners in ENGFAL through Bricolage. As bricoleurs, teachers contribute to the construction of learners' own identity as critical thinkers by ensuring by encouraging creative thinking for themselves and their learners (Levi-Strauss, 1966). Looking at the challenges that teachers and progressed learners face in ENGFAL grade 12 in the context of Bricolage helps us to explore possible opportunities that are available for them; hence they are discussed below.

Taking into consideration Levi-Strauss's (1966) definition of the term 'bricoleur'- a handyman that uses locally available tools to create something new and improved, it is safe to say that bricolage encourages both teachers and learners to utilise the already available material to enhance their learning. This includes old textbooks, notes, classwork books, portfolios, newspapers, cell phones, television and game/plays. It is very imperative to note that the most important tool in Bricolage is the mind of the bricoleur. Blankenship (2020) postulates that since bricolage requires learners to begin constructing knowledge through understanding the resources that are already available, instead of finding resources that are not yet there, results that are best served by Bricolage are the development of skills such as critical thinking, being inquisitive, reflective writing, synthesis and collaboration. These skills provided by employing Bricolage in an ENGFAL class are very critical. This is because critical thinking and reflective writing skills make learners think independently, which is key to progressed learners performing better in creative writing exercises that prepare them for Paper 3, a paper that is mainly about creative writing (essays, longer transactional text, and shorter transactional writing). These skills are also important in helping learners perform better in School-Based Assessment tasks (SBA) such as reading. The skill of synthesis and collaboration through Bricolage may help progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12 to perform better in Paper 1-a paper which is about language comprehension and synthesis. Collaboration through Bricolage may help learners to be confident in tasks such as prepared and unprepared speech as they will be familiar to engaging with their peers on general constructive topics about their normal daily routines and experiences.

Willet (2015) wrote an article, "Everyday Game Design on a School Playground: Children as Bricoleurs." In Willet's article, learners who played the role of bricoleurs during creative play added aspects that showed a desire to "transform it into a game they devised and shared with others as part of a friendship activity.' These activities help learners in making links between their past experiences and the tools they need to produce something new. Taking Willet's findings into the context of progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12, it shows that learners as bricoleurs are able to generate meaning on their

own by integrating the already available materials. These findings also showed that learning is best achieved when made to be more fun, as such, from a Bricolage perspective, learners in grade 12 may be taught drama, novel and short stories through role playing instead of instructional teaching which is more teacher centred than being learner centred. Through Bricolage, learning ENGFAL follows a more constructivist approach as learners must be encouraged to participate in intricate negotiations between the available resources/ persons and knowledge in order for these connections to be created. Activities that allow learners to become what Blankenship (2020) refers to as ‘bricolearners’ give them control in their learning.

Snell (2016) on her article “Play and Bricolage in Adult Second Language Classroom” corroborated that the use of only the prescribed language such as English textbooks denies learners the language required to discuss the past experiences and present abilities as well as future goals and dreams. I therefore argue that the use of Bricolage in ENGFAL may help curb this since it allows learners to not only use prescribed textbooks to learn, but any English book in Bricolage is useful provided that it is readily available, such integration may help learners as this would mean that they will not only learn under the pressure of a looming assessment task, rather learning for fun and relating what is learnt to the learner’s daily life experiences which may come in handy in assisting progressed learners to apply what they learn in English language by themselves to what they are supposed to know in the subject content as Kramersch (2016) argues that historical knowledge is key, hence Bricolage offers insight through the complexity phenomenon for external content to be meaningful.

Another opportunity available for progressed learners in ENGFAL is ‘empirical appreciation for licence to play’ which Waring (2013) defines as “doing being playful”, which for ENGFAL learners means getting into an alternative world unconstrained by the setting and roles of the classroom and doing so cheerfully. There are a number of benefits that play can contribute to ENGFAL learners by providing intrinsic motivation, lowering the affective filter, allowing learners to participate in different ways and helping vocabulary acquisition (Waring, 2013). Learners in Gert Sibande district, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds/ rural areas may be encouraged to utilize their ‘natural resources’ to acquire critical skills of poetry. Poetry is more often related to oral tradition. In the South African context, clan praises are regarded as roots of surnames and their pride, they are also very poetic as they contain rhythm, rhyme, tone, mood, and alliteration, etc. these are important elements of literature in ENGFAL, so learners learning and mastering their clan praises may be very helpful towards their understanding and analysis of poetry. The same can be said with folklores, short stories, drama and novel. Emphasis should be put on the spoken word.

In conclusion, the biggest opportunity that Bricolage provides for us is that our natural setting is the most important resource for learning as it is naturally available. “Bricolage does not only offer efficient learning affordances for learners, but could be a critical way whereby they develop and display their

symbolic competence” (Snell, 2016pp). The following section will discuss Finland’s approach to education as a strategy through transformatory-bricolage.

4.6 Finland’s approach to education as a strategy through transformatory-bricolage

This section will attempt to explore possible solutions for the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL by looking at the manner in which Finland reformed their education system for it to become an international leader thus bricolizing this through transformative-bricolage to fit into the plight of progressed learners in Gert Sibande district. The issue of overcrowded classrooms & increased manpower have been previously discussed by various scholars who studied learner progression, hence I opted to shift from these known and argued discussions to focus on a strategy which I believe may bring a different dimension to tackle the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12, and hopefully all academically struggling learners. Below is my discussion of the Finland’s approach as a possible solution through its drivers to education.

According to OECD (2010), Finland is regarded as an international leader in education; there are little to no variations in results in all schools and learners, whether top or low achievers. The virtue of Finland is not only equity but equality, ensuring that all learners have equal access to high-quality education with publicly funded educational opportunities. In bringing Finland’s approach to light, I would base my argument on Finland’s 3 of the 5 drivers of their education, which I believe are relevant to the plight of teachers and progressed learners in South Africa through Bricolage. These drivers are;

- Well-being orientated equity-driven education
- Management of learners with special needs and learning barriers
- Highly trained and valued teachers

4.6.1 Well-being orientated equity-driven education

This is the first educational driver that I will elaborate on as a possible solution. Burrige (2010) outlined that Finnish society has a strong social safety net, and a broad and deep dedication to children's healthy development and well-being, and this society is reflected in its schools. The virtue of this is that in Finland, education focuses not only on teaching and learning but also strongly emphasises children's welfare and care. All learners are required to have strong excellent support systems in place at school, including learner guidance, psychological counselling, and access to healthy food and other services (OECD, 2011). This is one area where a majority of public South African schools lack; there are no psychologists in schools. In fact, psychologists are assigned in district offices as office bearers. To the researcher's best knowledge, one psychologist in the Gert

Sibande has to deal with more than 3 circuits.

The core of Finland's educational policy is also equality of access to educational possibilities (Eurydice, 2010). In support of each other regarding the lack of equity-driven education in public schools, particularly in rural areas, Ms Prudy and Ms Khabo made the following statements:

Ms Prudy said: *"We go through a lot as teachers, and sometimes we are overwhelmed, we need proper psychological support from qualified people in our schools, unfortunately, we don't have any"*.

Ms Khabo said: *"There is a lot that our learners face which requires psychological counselling, sometimes social workers, we only have one social worker in our community and she does not only work with children but the entire community"*.

Statistics SA revealed that there is quite a large number of qualified psychologists in South Africa, but they do not practise due to not having centres (Stats SA, 2020). The DBE may, as a possible solution, recruit these psychologists and place one per school to help identify special needs and psychological support of these progressed learners early. This will be bricolizing the education sector as psychologists are readily available; they just need to be utilized effectively by the DBE to transform education through transformative-bricolage. Educational regulations strongly emphasise equity and learner well-being in the classroom and adhere to the inclusive education tenet. The goal for every child is to feel that their local school meets both their needs and parent's expectations.

All Finnish children have the option to attend preschool starting from the age of six. More than 98% of children in this age bracket attend preschool, along with half-day childcare and half-day school (Gardner, 2010). South Africa's minister of Basic Education in 2021 stated the department's intention to take over pre-schools from the Department of Social Development (DBE, 2021). Eurydice (2010) postulates that formal education in Finland begins in August of the child's seventh year. The law provides some flexibility, and primary education typically lasts six years, followed by a three-year lower secondary education. Today, it is commonly acknowledged that the six-year lower primary school system offers a reliable foundation for excellent academic success. This is what I believe educational authorities in South Africa need to relook, specifically, the relationship between primary education subjects and those in secondary school, not only the subjects but also the overall development and welfare of the child at the primary level in preparation for secondary education because progressed learners in South African schools are a result of a chain of events from the foundations laid as Gardner (2010) alludes that an investment in primary/elementary education pays off in later grades through improved aptitude and learning abilities as well as excellent overall outcomes.

Another key to Finland's successful education system is that contrary to South African public schools, particularly in the Gert Sibande district, classes normally include 15-30 pupils, and schools tend to be small. Just 4% of all schools had 500 or more learners (Statistics Finland, 2011). In response to the

above-mentioned statistics, Mr King laughed and said:

“Hahaha! You see, 500 is the total number of scripts I mark for all the papers in ENGFAL for my grade, so ay we are far from that as a country, who knows maybe a miracle can happen.”

I believe this takes a high level of investment in education, and although it may not be practically possible to have such a small number of learners in all South African public schools, improving manpower and the school’s infrastructure may help. A child in Finland is required to attend school until they have completed nine years of primary/elementary school or until they become 16 years old. Grade repeat is uncommon, and nearly all Finnish children complete all nine years of basic education (OECD, 2012). I concede that one of the possible solutions to tackle the challenges faced by progressed learners in grade 12 ENGFAL is to lay a strong reading foundation in the lower grades starting from primary schools. Like Finland, South Africa can implement a reading culture especially in lower grades, making reading a compulsory element of the curriculum, not just as a formal task may help alleviate learners’ struggle in ENGFAL. I believe that if learners may be fluent in reading by the time they reach secondary school, it will be nearly impossible for them to struggle in ENGFAL. This can be implemented in Gert Sibande schools and even the entire country as a whole. Some elements in lower primary may be substituted by reading as it most forms the basic part of learning.

4.6.2 Management of learners with special needs and learning barriers

Like any other country, Finland has learners with special needs/learning barriers (OECD, 2011). It took a fundamentally innovative approach to education to bring learners with frequently drastically dissimilar life situations and aspirations together to learn in the same classes and schools. This was essentially true for learners with special needs (Ministry of Education, Finland, 2009). According to the equal opportunity principle, every learner must be given a fair chance to succeed and enjoy their education; as such, Finnish education authorities believe the educational success of learners with special needs depends on the early identification and timely treatment of learning challenges and other specific learning impairments or barriers. This inclusion of special education and pedagogical differentiation in school curricula happened swiftly, and all local governments and schools soon had staff members who had been specifically educated to assist learners with special needs. Currently, South African teachers are the ones with the burden of teaching these kinds of learners, yet they were not specifically trained for it. They have to integrate their teaching to cater for such learners when they are progressed, as outlined in the section above about the challenges. In regard to this, Mr Langa said:

“If only we were to refer learners with special needs to qualified people stationed in the school, it would really help reduce the burden of teachers so that they may focus on teaching. That is why I am in support of a strategy that promotes the recruitment of specialists in school to cater for the needs of our learners.”

The FNBE (2010) alludes that to ensure the academic success of learners with special needs, a welfare team meets for two hours at least twice a month in every comprehensive school. The principal, special education teacher, school psychologist, school nurse, social worker, and the teacher whose learners are under discussion make up the team. Before the meeting, the parents of the teacher being discussed are called, and they are occasionally requested to attend. This initiative will require the Department of Basic Education in South Africa to assign special education teachers and work on an academic program with the Department of Social Development and the Department of Health. This requires more financial investment from the government towards education. It is possible and may help ensure that the social, academic and mental needs of progressed learners are met by people specifically qualified to do such. From a Bricolage point of view, the locally available resources in this case are the human resource ‘social workers’; the country can only assign them to schools. This is another solution through transformative-bricolage as it may transform the education of the country socially.

4.6.3 Highly trained and valued teachers

The third driver that may work as a possible solution to the challenges faced by teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL is the training and valuing of teachers that is of a high standard. Finland prides itself on quality teacher education and training. The brightest secondary school graduates are drawn to the classroom teaching profession because it is regarded as a creative, independent, and high-status career (Sahlberg, 2010). South African teachers are not given much independence in teaching; this is because there are lots of guidelines, criterion and curricula that dictate teachers’ practices. Sahlberg (2011) further alludes that in Finland, the entry requirement for one to qualify as a permanent teacher is a Master’s degree in all primary and secondary schools. This ensures the teachers recruited are academically well-equipped and trained to ensure successful learning. In South Africa, statistics released by the DBE in 2021 showed that there were more than 5000 underqualified and unqualified teachers in schools (DBE, 2021). However, new data released on 11 July 2022 showed that there are more than 2800 unqualified teachers in KwaZulu Natal schools (thesouthafrican.com). This negatively contributes to the number of progressed learners and the quality of education that learners receive in the country.

A teacher should be a specialist in their subject, as such, they should be highly trained and qualified as Finland does. South Africa can learn from Finland’s educational practices as there is now compelling evidence that, particularly for learners from less disadvantaged backgrounds, the effectiveness of teachers is by far the most significant school-based determinant of educational performance and learner achievement (August et al., 2010). Many nations pay lip service to the value of luring and keeping

talented teachers, but a few have pursued this objective with the same tenacity as Finland. More importantly, Finland has made teaching one of the most respected and popular career choices among young Finns. They have done so by increasing the requirements for entry into the field and giving more autonomy and control to teachers over their classrooms. They have also created better working conditions than their counterparts elsewhere (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

According to Schwab (2010, p.13), what makes teachers independent in Finnish schools is “the development of rigorous, research-based teacher-education programs that prepare teachers in pedagogy, content, educational theory, and the capacity to conduct their own research and craft innovative pedagogical solutions for teaching”. Sahlberg (2011, p. 12) concurs by stating that “the development of a respected profession in which teachers have significant authority and autonomy, including responsibility for curriculum design and learner assessment, which engages them in the continuing analysis and improvement of practice, ensures that learners are given the best quality education equally”. In South Africa, teachers enter into the profession with a minimum of a bachelor’s degree; some that entered the system a decade ago have only a diploma in teaching (SADTU, 2018). The South African Council of Educators introduced a program of Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) for teachers to engage in professional development programs, but only a few teachers are taking this program seriously despite the Department of Basic Education’s push on the importance of a teacher being a lifelong learner (SACE, 2020). Teachers voluntarily enrol for a postgraduate degree after having been permanented; this makes a lot to relax and not engage in programs that advance their academic knowledge, especially through research. Adopting Finland’s approach will help ensure that teachers are lifelong learners who are at liberty of various research methods. This may create a podium for teachers to engage in research that may help their schools with cases of progressed learners and their challenges.

Finland’s approach to education/Finnish’s way of educational reform as is normally referred to. It is among the possible solutions for the challenges faced by English teachers and progressed learners in ENGFAL because the thorough training of Finnish teachers to early detect learners’ individual needs and intervene before progressed/struggling learners lose interest or motivation and fall behind their peers helps in ensuring that these needs are addressed as early as possible to make the child fall in love with school and education (Schwab, 2010). The presence of qualified intervention experts in every school, such as the special education teacher, means that struggling learners are considerably less likely to go overlooked or fall through the cracks, and that regular classroom teachers have quick access to support. This is an area of improvement in South Africa as it is still the subject teacher's role to find intervention strategies for a learner that was progressed in the previous grade taught by another teacher.

Coordination of resources in Finnish schools brings in the element of Bricolage as most teachers utilize them whilst teaching the same group of learners from the first through sixth grade for several

years, which allows them to get to know their learners quite well. In South Africa, Grade 1 to Grade 6

comprises two different phases, namely, the foundation phase and the intermediate phase (DBE, 2013). These two separate phases are normally taught by different teachers, this plays a role in the foundations of the child's development, of which the repercussions are seen mostly in the FET phase in general and Grade 12 in particular. I therefore concede that the Finnish approach to education through transformative bricolage is a possible solution to the challenges faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12. The truth is that these challenges cannot be tackled only by looking at ways to assist the learners in Grade 12 because there is less teaching time in the grade due to the number of examinations, which includes; the June Examination, Preparatory Examination and Final Examination, of which each one takes approximately a month and week. This means that Grade 12 examinations take almost four months, which reduces the contact time even more than the lower grades. As such, the challenges should be addressed before learners reach this grade as it is an exit grade more than one to remedy the wrongs and shortcomings of the previous grades.

This section examined the possible solutions to address the challenges teachers and progressed learners face in ENGFAL Grade 12 using Finland's approach and Bricolage. The following section will examine possible opportunities that are available for progressed learners in ENGFAL through transformative bricolage.

4.4 Summary of the chapter

The major findings of the study were given and analyzed in this chapter with references to pertinent literature and the theoretical framework. The research results support Bricolage in that the difficulties experienced by progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 and potential solutions are ingrained in the realities and contexts with which the progressed learner interacts, adding a dimension of transformation and improvement to their academic performance. Several unforeseen implications of the progression policy are evident, and they have been covered in this chapter. The challenges that these learners and teachers face in this school were discussed. Possible solutions to the challenges, opportunities available to progressed learners through bricolage, and Finland's approach to education were discussed in relation to the theoretical framework underpinning this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS, RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As the researcher, I provide a summary of the work done for this study in this chapter. I give a brief synopsis of the issues discussed in each chapter to start this one. The chapter identifies potential research directions for future scholars, including educators and other academically interested researchers, in order to either improve the academic performance of advanced learners in ENGFAL or other school subjects or to find more effective solutions to issues related to learner progression that may not have been sufficiently addressed by transformative bricolage in this study. I offer my final thoughts on this research study as I draw to a close this chapter.

5.2 Summary of chapters

5.2.1 Chapter 1: Introduction to the dissertation

In Chapter 1, I gave my readers a brief overview of this study's goals and purpose: to improve the academic performance of advanced students in ENGFAL Grade 12 in the Gert Sibande district schools. I outlined the study's goals and research questions. The history of student advancement in South African schools and its objectives were presented. I emphasised that the lack of a clear course of remedial action for advanced learners was at the heart of the progression policy's difficulties. It was suggested that academic research could benefit society. I also presented the transformational paradigm, bricolage, PAR, and theme analysis by Laws et al. to the audience in this chapter (2003). The study's boundaries were as follows:

5.2.2 Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and literature review.

Chapter 2 consisted of 2 sections. The first section was mainly about the theoretical framework employed in this study, which is bricolage. The second section focused on the review of literature relevant to this study. The two sections are summarised below.

5.2.2.1 Theoretical framework: Bricolage

In the first section, I focused on the origin of bricolage from Levy Strauss (1966) as a way of utilizing the already available tools to create something new. I further focused on the history of bricolage, its theorizing and conceptualization as discussed by Lincoln and Kincheloe (2001). I traced the different uses of bricolage by focusing mainly on educational bricolage, which I believe to be more relevant in this study as it is about education. My analysis of educational bricolage helped me to come up with four principles of the theory as outlined by Dron, (2014) which include: promoting creative improvisation in the learning of ENGFAL, enhancing personal learning environments of ENGFAL, promoting the active learning process of ENGFAL, and promoting boundary crossing in teaching and learning of ENGFAL. I also discussed the relevance of bricolage to this study which includes the promotion of precision and complexity as outlined by McLaren (2001), the promotion of variation in research as outlined by Kincheloe (2002), the promotion of consciousness of knowledge creation in ENGFAL, recognition of human beings as creators of knowledge, bricolage's aspiration to liberate knowledge creation equally in ENGFAL and the promotion of uniqueness in the study of ENGFAL (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The limitations of bricolage were also discussed in this chapter.

5.2.2.2 Literature review.

In the second section, the focus was on reviewing related literature on learner progression and promotion. The chapter made an effort to respond to the objectives of the study. In the first subsection, I therefore engrossed on learner progression in other parts of the world, which included India and the United States of America. I then brought my readers to local content by reviewing literature about learner progression in South Africa. In order to show a balance in this study and avoid biases, I then focused on debates around learner progression, which included proponents of learner progression such as Kika and Kotze (2018), who argued that labelling of progressed learners leads to problems such as truancy and that retained learners would learn more if they are progressed with their peers. Opponents of learner progression, such as Manarcoda (2012), were reviewed as they argued that retained learners get a chance to grasp the required knowledge and skills for the next grade. In an attempt to address the study's first objective, I then focused on the challenges of learner progression, which included: overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, the workload of ENGFAL teachers, poor foundations in lower grades, lack of high-quality education and teaching uninspired learners. The evaluation of related literature looked at many potential solutions, including the best methods used in other nations to solve the difficulties faced by advanced learners in ENGFAL and learner advancement in general, in an effort to achieve the second goal of this study. I concentrated on a number of nations, including Finland, the UK, and the USA. I was given the task of creating an

alternative strategy based on bricolising ENGFAL

to address the difficulties of learner advancement in the Gert Sibande district schools because the current method of learner progression has a number of issues of its own.

The third goal was on potential dangers to a plan to raise the academic performance of advanced students in ENGFAL Grade 12. In accordance with the study's fourth purpose, the relevant literature also discussed the predicted dangers. One of the threats identified is overworked ENGFAL instructors. Kader (2016) stated that the new curriculum's excessive demands and requirements for the educational system to educate pupils about democratic citizenship and the global workforce have overburdened teachers.

5.2.3 Chapter 3: Methodology

The transformative paradigm and the method utilized to produce data, known as PAR, were the subjects of Chapter 3. According to Chilisa (2011), the transformative paradigm is a research framework that focuses on the experiences of marginalized communities, analyzes power imbalances that have contributed to marginalization, and links research findings to initiatives aimed at reducing disparities. As such, the transformative paradigm was relevant to this study's objectives. In this study, which sought to improve the academic performance of advanced learners in ENGFAL, this was the case. The debate centred on the applicability of participatory action research (PAR) to this study, its significance as a research methodology, and how it is perceived as a social change agent that fosters ownership, commitment, and responsibility through participation. Because of its "transformative [effects] and empowerment of the individuals who have been pushed to the fringe of the society," PAR was chosen for this project (Eruera, 2010). Given this, PAR supports Bricolage's revolutionary efforts in a complementary manner. The second part of the essay concentrated on how the researcher and the bricolage team worked together to produce the data. Additionally, I concentrated on the thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) in Chapter 3. This chapter described the seven processes of theme analysis that were used to analyze the generated data.

The lack of resources in most public schools in the Gert Sibande district and the poor performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL Grade 12 prompted this research study to use the thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) through bricolage, as it provided opportunities for taking into account the progressed learners' interests through their inclusion and participation in the study. Therefore, I contend that thematic analysis by Laws et al. (2003) supports my decision to use bricolage as the study's conceptual framework because both thematic analysis and bricolage aim to improve human conditions by addressing issues that people in society face, in this case, the difficulties faced by progressed learners in ENGFAL grade 12.

5.2.4 Chapter 4: Presentation of the data and analysis

The presentation, analysis, and interpretation of research-based data were the main topics of this chapter. The information in this chapter addressed the study's goals and ultimately helped to fulfil its promise, which was to develop a plan that would improve the academic performance of advanced learners in ENGFAL Grade 12. Laws et al. used theme analysis to analyse the presented data (2003). I reached various conclusions regarding learner growth as a result of the discussions I had with the Bricolage team. The data that was examined and presented made a substantial contribution to the creation of transformational bricolage.

5.2.5 Limitations of this study

Just like any other research, this study has boundaries. I hope other researchers will adventure these shortcomings to advance the study of learner progression in South African schools. One of the limitations of this study is the fact that bricolage is mainly about readily available resources locally; resources that are readily available in Gert Sibande district may not be the same as the other districts in Mpumalanga province or South Africa as a whole. Hence, the application of these findings to a larger population outside the Gert Sibande district may be a gigantic task. The second weakness of this study is that it is mainly focused on learner progression in ENGFAL, not the other subjects taught in schools; the findings, therefore may be mostly subject specific than addressing the challenge of learner progression holistically. This study may be seen by other scholars as one that is against decolonisation of education as it encourages the use of the English language regularly in schools.

5.2.6 Recommendations for future work

In this section, I highlight several research areas that other scholars should explore to enhance the academic performance of progressed learners.

I recommend forthcoming studies to focus on learner progression policy and its application in schools, especially how to help SMTs, teachers, parents and learners understand the responsibilities of each stakeholder in ensuring better academic performance of learners. I believe a study on this area could come up with different strategies that can be used to help ease the pressure on teachers and negative attitudes towards the policy and progressed learners. I believe that the problems associated with learner progression, such as labelling, truancy and absenteeism, may be reduced.

I recommend that future studies focus on the parental roles to progressed learners in schools. This is important because it will bring insight and understanding that will help close the gap between the school

and home, which will adversely impact the learner positively towards school. I also recommend future studies to focus on learner progression as a whole or look into other subjects using different research methods and theories.

5.2.7 Conclusion

A lot still needs to be done to ensure that learner progression not only serves the purpose of keeping the learner in school, but also creates opportunities for such learners that will make them productive members of society. The biggest concern raised by teacher participants in this study was the progression of learners from Grade 11 to Grade 12, whereas there is no progression in Grade 12. I believe that the progression policy will not be a problem if all stakeholders in the education sector may understand it, specifically teachers, learners and parents, and not only a select few members of the SMT in full as it was the in the sample. Understanding the fact that there are learners who have the potential to move beyond being progressed to automatic promotion may help teachers do away with negative attitudes and labelling of progressed learners, which leads them to be defensive and negative towards such teachers and the school as a whole. Schools should also be encouraged to positively engage with parents of these learners, whereby individual sessions may be made during the year to trace the progress and struggle of these learners, as this will help reduce elements of surprise and tension between teachers and parents. Early detection is very important as it gives enough time for remedy and involvement of all parties concerned in ensuring progress.

Factors such as overcrowded classrooms are, without a doubt, contributory to learner indiscipline which results in academic underperformance leading schools to push learners to the next grade where they will still be overcrowded. The teacher ratio in schools should be relooked in order to ensure effective learning. Subjects such as ENGFAL require teachers to mark 3 papers, often consisting of a large number of learners, as outlined in this study, should be relooked because the more the marking, the lesser the teaching time and constructive feedback to learners. Employment of more teachers in schools means that each teacher has few learners to teach. This may help enhance the learners' academic performance as there will be more time for feedback and individual attention may be possible to struggling learners in a small class size. Lastly, I believe that all learners do have the potential to be automatically promoted. The most important thing is to ensure that good foundations in lower grades are placed, the education sector may restructure the curriculum in the foundation, intermediate and senior phases, and possibly increase the number of years for specialised subjects from 3 to 5 years.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIC A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

31-Jan-2022

Dear Mr Sbonelo Masuku

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2021/1721/22

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

**Dr Adri
du
Plessis** Digitally signed
by Dr Adri du
Plessis
Date:
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education
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Private Bag X11341, Mbombela, 1200.
Tel: 013 766 5562/5115, Toll Free Line: 0800 203 116

Litiko le Temfundvo, Umnyango we Fundo

Departement van Onderwys

Ndzawulo ya Dyondzo

Mr S Q Masuku
PO Box 14
Breyten
2330
Email: sboneloginiso@yahoo.com

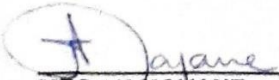
RE: ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN GERT SIBANDE DISTRICT

Your application to conduct research study was received and is therefore acknowledged. The title of your research project reads: **“Enhancing the academic performance of grade 12 progressed learners in English first additional language in Gert Sibande District”**. I trust that the aims and the objectives of the study will benefit the whole department especially the beneficiaries. Your request is approved subject to you observing the provisions of the departmental research policy which is available in the department website. You are requested to adhere to your university’s research ethics as spelt out in your research ethics.

In terms of the research policy, data or any research activity can be conducted after school hours as per appointment with affected participants and COVID -19 regulations to be observed. You are also requested to share your findings with the relevant sections of the department so that we may consider implementing your findings if that will be in the best interest of the department. To this effect, your final approved research report (both soft and hard copy) should be submitted to the department so that your recommendations could be implemented. You may be required to prepare a presentation and present at the departments’ annual research dialogue.

For more information kindly liaise with the department's research unit @ 013 766 5124/5148 Or nmadihlaba@mpuedu.gov.za

The department wishes you well in this important project and pledges to give you the necessary support you may need.


MRS LH MOYANE
HEAD: EDUCATION

19 / 01 / 2022
DATE



APPENDIC C: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

P.O. BOX 14
BREYTEN
2330

The Director
Strategic Planning Policy and Research
Mpumalanga Department of Education
Ermelo

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT:
SCHOOL A (Circuit 1, Gert Sibande District, Ermelo)
SCHOOL B (Circuit 1, Gert Sibande District, Breyten)

I, Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku am doing research under supervision of Dr Bhekithemba Dube, a senior lecturer in Curriculum Studies towards M Ed at the University of Free State (Qwaqwa campus) in the faculty of humanities, under the education department. We request two English First Additional Language teachers from each school who give instruction in Grade 12, 4 progressed learners and 3 English Language curriculum implementers to participate in a study entitled 'ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE,' in Gert Sibande District. Although our request is to have teachers and learners participating in the research, participation is voluntary. Participants have the right to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason as they are under no obligation to participate.

The aim of this study will be designing a strategy to help improve the academic performance of progressed learners of English as a first language (ENGFAL) in Grade 12 in Gert Sibande district. The schools have been selected because they practice the phase progression policy and offer English First Additional Language which are the main focus in this study.

The study will entail focus group discussions with participants. Before the establishment of the focus groups, the researcher will visit each sampled school to see the principal and departmental heads for permission to see and sample teachers and learners. After data collection, all data will be used and kept confidentially for the purpose of study only and personal information will not be shared with unauthorised persons.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. The benefits of this study are: knowledge and appropriate skills will be generated to teach ENGFAL effectively even to progressed learners who have ENGFAL as a barrier to learning. The research report which will be given to participating schools on completion of the study will help to develop ENGFAL teachers professionally and enhance progressed learner performance.



The potential risk is of inconvenience include minimal time consumption for participants. No other risks are expected as the research sites (schools) and participants will not be identifiable in report writing. Pseudonyms will be used.

Feedback procedure will entail member-checks during data analysis to confirm that transcribed data reflects the exact words of participants. On completion of the dissertation, a meeting with participants will be requested. Feedback on important findings and recommendations will be presented in the meeting and a hard copy of the research report will be given to each school that participated in the research.

My contact number is: 0787698235 Email address : sbonehqiniso@yahoo.com

Supervisor: 0676197610 Email address: DubeB@ufs.ac.za

Yours sincerely

S.Q. Masuku



WHAT IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD TO DO THIS?

Your child can refuse to take part even if you have agreed to his/her participation. He/she can stop being in the study at any time without getting in trouble.

PLEASE RETURN

Name of child: _____

Name of Parent: _____

- Do you understand this research study and are you willing to let your child take part in it? Yes No
- Has the researcher answered all your questions? Yes No
- Do you understand that you can withdraw from the study at any time? Yes No
- I give the researcher permission to make use of the data gathered from my child's participation Yes No

Signature of Parent

Date

I, the undersigned Parent, further confirm that—

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process,



performance of English First Additional Language progressed learners in Grade 12. This is because I have observed that these learners do not perform well in this subject which also serves as a language of teaching and learning.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

Yes, the study has received ethical clearance approval. A copy of the research ethical clearance approval is obtainable upon request from the researcher.

Approval number: UFS-HSD2021/1721/22

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOUR CHILD IN THIS STUDY?

The role of your child as a participant is to participate on the focus groups discussions. a focus group discussion is a method in a research and data collecting approach whereby a small group of individuals debate a research topic thoroughly while being led by a moderator. Your child will participate in a WhatsApp group to respond to questions about the challenges that progressed learners face and how they can be addressed in English First Additional Language grade 12.

CAN ANYTHING BAD HAPPEN TO YOUR CHILD?

If something might be painful, your child should inform you if he/she becomes sick or in pain as a result of being in the study.

CAN ANYTHING GOOD HAPPEN TO YOUR CHILD?

Your child will gain understanding about progression and also learn on how to engage with people on a formal group about an educational topic.

WILL ANYONE KNOW YOUR CHILD IS PART OF THE STUDY?

Participation in the study will be kept confidential.

WHO CAN YOU TALK TO ABOUT THE STUDY?

If you have questions or problems about the study, please contact Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku on: 0787698235, email address: sboneloqiniso@yahoo.com. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr Dube B. at 0733852436, email address: dubeB@ufs.ac.za.

**APPENDIC D: RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND PARENTAL
CONSENT FORM**

RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

DATE 24 JUNE 2022

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST
ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

RESEARCHERS NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku 2020694473
Contact number 0787698235

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

Name of Faculty: Education
Name of Department: Curriculum Studies

STUDYLEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Name of Study Leader (UFS staff member): Dr Dube B.
Contact number: 0733852436

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH PROJECT ALL ABOUT?

This research is about identifying the challenges that progressed learners and teachers in Grade 12 face in the teaching and learning of English First Additional Language. It is also about designing a strategy that will help them improve their results.

WHY HAVE YOUR CHILD BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

Because the researcher believes that your child's opinion and understanding can help improve the performance of progressed learners in the subject.

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

I am Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku, working for the Mpumalanga Department of Basic Education as a teacher. I am doing this project with an aim to design a strategy that will enhance the academic



as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;

7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Parent, agree to the recording of the insert specific data collection method.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX E: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

P.O. BOX 14
BREYTEN
2330

The principal
School B

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT: SCHOOL B (Gert Sibande District, Breyten CIRCUIT)

I, Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku am doing research under supervision of Dr Bekithemba Dube, a senior lecturer in Curriculum Studies towards M Ed at the University of Free State (Qwaqwa campus) in the faculty of humanities, under the education department. We request two English First Additional Language teachers from each school who give instruction in Grade 12 and 5 progressed learners to participate in a study entitled 'ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE,' in Gert Sibande District. Although our request is to have teachers and learners participating in the research, participation is voluntary. Participants have the right to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason as they are under no obligation to participate.

The aim of this study will be designing a strategy to help improve the academic performance of progressed learners of English as a first language (ENGFAL) in Grade 12 in Gert Sibande district. The schools have been selected because they practice the phase progression policy and offer English First Additional Language which are the main focus in this study.

The study will entail focus group discussions with participants. Before the establishment of the focus groups, the researcher will visit each sampled school to see the principal and departmental heads for permission to see and sample teachers and learners. After data collection, all data will be used and kept confidentially for the purpose of study only and personal information will not be shared with unauthorised persons.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research. The benefits of this study are: knowledge and appropriate skills will be generated to teach ENGFAL effectively even to progressed learners who have ENGFAL as a barrier to learning. The research report which will be given to participating schools on completion of the study will help to develop ENGFAL teachers professionally and enhance progressed learner performance.

The potential risk is of inconvenience include minimal time consumption for participants. No other risks are expected as the research sites (schools) and participants will not be identifiable in report writing. Pseudonyms will be used.



Feedback procedure will entail member-checks during data analysis to confirm that *transcribed data* reflects the exact words of participants. On completion of the dissertation, a meeting with *participants* will be requested. Feedback on important findings and recommendations will be *presented in the* meeting and a hard copy of the research report will be given to each school that *participated in the* research.

The study has received ethical clearance approval. A copy of the research *ethical clearance approval* is obtainable upon request from the researcher.

Approval number: **UFS-HSD2021/1721/22**

My contact number is: 0787698235 Email address : sboneloginiso@yahoo.com

Supervisor: 0676197610 Email address: DubeB@ufs.ac.za

Yours sincerely

S.Q. Masuku



WHY ARE YOU INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

I chose you and 6 other participants in the school because I believe you are the people directly affected by the progression policy, specifically in English First Additional Language Grade 12. I asked the principal of the school together with the Departmental Head to access last year's learners' results on English First Additional Language and the teacher/s responsible.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

Your role as a participant is to participate on the focus groups discussions. Questions with regard to challenges that both progressed learners and teachers face with regard to teaching and learning of English First Additional Language will be asked for discussion together with ways to address such challenges. The expected duration of participation will not exceed a month and the time needed to complete focus groups will at most be 3 weeks. The time allocated to conduct focus groups will be approximately 4 hours per week. The child will be exposed to an open discussion with the subject teacher where some of the responses may feel like an attack, this will be monitored and addressed by the researcher should there be a need. If something might be painful or scary to the child, they must tell his/her parents if they are sick or in pain during the course of the study.

CAN THE PARTICIPANT WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

Participation is voluntary and that there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation. Being in this study is voluntary, and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The study's goal will be to provide strategies to help improve the academic achievement of progressed learners in ENGFAL. It will also seek to use different resources available in the environment to improve the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL. The study will aim to shed light on the causes of poor academic performance by progressed learners in Grade 12 ENGFAL. The research will seek to establish and navigate an atmosphere that is favourable to the creation of quality outcomes for both instructors and learners; ENGFAL should be a subject in which learners can thrive (Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Molla & Sylvester, 2014).

The research will also aim to enhance DBE knowledge of the problems experienced by progressed learners, with the goal of collectively resolving these challenges related ENGFAL in Gert Sibande district.

By participating in this study, you will gain more insight and understanding on progression policy and how to improve results in English First Additional Language. Schools will also benefit as they will uncover ways through the research on how to improve learner performance in the subject.

Your participation in the study will be kept confidential.



WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED INCONVENIENCE OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The research is likely to be time consuming to participants as during the time of focus group discussions, participants will be expected to fully pay attention and actively participate. This will more likely take their own time of socializing with friends and family. Should a person be identified by others for participating in the research, he/she may suffer from being called names, especially the progressed learner. To avoid identification, participants will be encouraged not to take names during the discussions and treat all information confidentially.

WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Your name will not be recorded, anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a fictitious code number or a pseudonym, and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings. The researcher will have access to the data and will maintain confidentiality by signing a confidentiality agreement. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records. Create. Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, e.g., research report, journal articles, conference presentation, etc. Privacy will be protected in any publication of the information by ensuring that your names do not appear anywhere. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report). Since focus groups are used as a data collection method. According to Barbour (2014), a focus group discussion is a method in qualitative research and data collecting approach whereby a small group of individuals debate a research topic thoroughly while being led by a moderator. While every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the focus group, I cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in the focus group. You have the right to refuse to take part even if your parents have agreed to your participation. You can stop being in the study at any time without getting in trouble.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. Electronic information will be destroyed by being deleted from the password protected computer and removed from recycle bin. After the said period, hard copies will be burnt using fuel. Participant may feel that the password and keys to the cabinet are accessible by the researcher's immediate family. Participants will be assured that such information will be made confidential and not accessible to anyone but he researcher.



WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

Participants will be bought data to participate in the study, they will also be rewarded with academic material for teaching and learning. Cost related to the study that will be incurred by the participant will be refunded by the researcher, if any.

HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANT BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku on: 0787698235, email address: sbonelqiniso@yahoo.com. The findings are accessible for 1 month. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr Dube B. at 0733852436, email address: dubeB@ufs.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, the undersigned,

_____ (participant's full names to be included), (the "Participant")

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

_____ (the "Study") in relation to

and which Study is being conducted by

(insert the name of the researcher), (the "Researcher").

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that—

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the *focus groups*.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

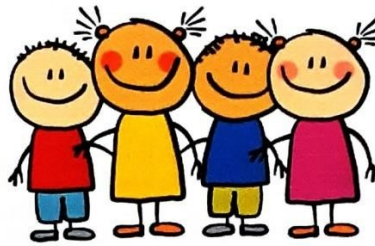




Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____
Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND ASSENT FORM



TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE.

RESEARCHERS NAME(S): Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku

ADDRESS: 62 Hoy Street, Breyten, 2330

CONTACT NUMBER: 0787698235

What is RESEARCH?

Research is something we do to find new knowledge about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about disease or illness. Research also helps us to find better ways of helping, or treating sick children.

What is this research project all about?

This research is about identifying the challenges that progressed learners and teachers in Grade 12 face in the teaching and learning of English First Additional Language. It is also about designing a strategy that will help them improve their results.

Why have I been invited to take part in this research project?

Because the researcher believes that your opinion and understanding can help improve the performance of progressed learners in the subject.

Who is doing the research?

I am Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku, working for the Mpumalanga Department of Basic Education as a teacher. I am doing this project with an aim to design a strategy that will enhance the academic performance of English First Additional Language progressed learners in Grade 12. This is because I have observed that these learners do not perform well in this subject which also serves as a language of teaching and learning.

What will happen to me in this study?

Your role as a participant is to participate on the focus groups discussions. a focus group discussion is a method in a research and data collecting approach whereby a small group of individuals debate a research topic thoroughly while being led by a moderator. You will participate in a WhatsApp group to respond to questions about the challenges that progressed learners face and how they can be addressed in English First Additional Language grade 12.

Can anything bad happen to me?

If something might be painful, you should inform your parents if you are sick or in pain as a result of being in the study.

Can anything good happen to me?

You will gain understanding about progression and also learn on how to engage with people on a formal group about an educational topic.

Will anyone know I am in the study?

Participation in the study will be kept confidential.



Who can I talk to about the study?

If you have questions or problems about the study, please contact Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku on: 0787698235, email address: sboneloqiniso@yahoo.com. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr Dube B. at 0733852436, email address: dubeB@ufs.ac.za.

What if I do not want to do this?

You can refuse to take part even if your parents have agreed to your participation. You can stop being in the study at any time without getting in trouble.

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

YES

NO

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

YES

NO

Do you understand that you can pull out of the study at any time?

YES

NO

Signature of Child

Date

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE.

REFERENCE NUMBER:

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku

ADDRESS: 62 Hoy Street, Breyten, 2330

CONTACT NUMBER: 0787698235

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the study staff or doctor any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary**, and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Free State and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice and the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research.

What is this research study all about?

- *The study will be conducted in 2 Gert Sibande district schools, which each site comprising of 7 participants, 1 subject advisor and the total number of 15 participants for the entire study.*
- *The aim of this study will be to design a strategy to help improve the academic performance of progressed learners in Grade 12 English First Additional Language. I am doing this study because I believe that if progressed learners can perform well in English First Additional Language which also serves as a language of teaching and learning in most schools in the district, they can adversely perform well in all the other subjects as they will have better understanding of the language of assessment.*
- *2 schools will be sampled, each school will consist of 7 participants, comprising of learners and teachers whereby 2 ENGFAL Grade 12 teachers will be sampled per school and 5 progressed learners will be sampled per school. A WhatsApp group will be created where participants will discuss the research questions through focused group discussions. One research question will be discussed at a time. The researcher will jot down the responses from the participants and positively motivate each one of them to participate. The data will then be analysed through the Thematic Approach by Laws et. Al. 2003.*

Why have you been invited to participate?

- *You have been invited together with 4 other participants in the school because I believe you are the people directly affected by the progression policy, specifically in English First Additional Language Grade 12. I asked the principal of the school together with the Departmental Head to access last year's learners' results on English First Additional Language and the teacher/s responsible.*

What will your responsibilities be?

- *Your responsibilities will be to discuss the research questions that will be posted by the researcher in the WhatsApp group using a language that is not offensive to others in the group. Respect all members of the group at all times and directly contact the researcher if there is any clarity needed or discomfort. You should also not disclose any of the information discussed to anyone.*

Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

- *The study's goal will be to provide strategies to help improve the academic achievement of progressed learners in ENGFAL. It will also seek to use different resources available in the environment to improve the performance of progressed learners in ENGFAL. The study will aim to shed light on the causes of poor academic performance by progressed learners in Grade 12 ENGFAL. The research will seek to establish and navigate an atmosphere that is favourable to the creation of quality outcomes for both instructors and learners; ENGFAL should be a subject in which learners can thrive (Bojuwoye, Moletsane, Stofile, Molla & Sylvester, 2014).*
- *The research will also aim to enhance DBE knowledge of the problems experienced by progressed learners, with the goal of collectively resolving these challenges related ENGFAL in Gert Sibande district.*
- *By participating in this study, you will gain more insight and understanding on progression policy and how to improve results in English First Additional Language. Schools will also benefit as they will uncover ways through the research on how to improve learner performance in the subject.*

Are there in risks involved in your taking part in this research?

- The research is likely to be time consuming to participants as during the time of focus group discussions, participants will be expected to fully pay attention and actively participate. This will more likely take their own time of socializing with friends and family. Should a person be identified by others for participating in the research, he/she may suffer from being called names, especially the progressed learner. To avoid identification, participants will be encouraged not to take names during the discussions and treat all information confidentially.

If you do not agree to take part, what alternatives do you have?

- Participation is voluntary, you may withdraw at anytime you feel the need to by informing the researcher or research supervisor.

Who will have access to your medical records?

- The information collected will be treated as confidential and protected. If it is used in a publication or thesis, the identity of the participant will remain anonymous. The researcher will have access to the information.

What will happen in the unlikely event of some form of injury occurring as a direct result of your taking part in this research study?

- Discussion will not be through face to face interaction, the focus group discussions will be done via WhatsApp group discussion, as such, the risk of some form of injury as a result of participating in this study is less likely. Emotional stress that may arise as a result of participating in this study, participants will be referred to for counselling if needs be.

Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

No, you will not be paid to take part in the study, but your data costs will be covered for each study discussion. There will be no costs involved for you if you do take part.

Is there anything else that you should know or do?

- You should inform your family practitioner or usual doctor that you are taking part in a research study. (Include if applicable)
- You should also notify your medical insurance company that you are participating in a research study. (Include if applicable)
- You can contact Dr at tel if you have any further queries or encounter any problems.
- You can contact the Research Ethics Office at 051 4019398 if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by your study doctor.
- You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your records.

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study entitled
(insert title of study).

I declare that:

- I have read or had read to me this information and consent form, and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions, and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurized to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalized or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished if the study doctor or researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (place) on (date) 2022.

.....
Signature of Participant

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by investigator

I (name) declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above
- I did/did not use an interpreter. (If an interpreter is used then the interpreter must sign the declaration below.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 2022.

.....
Signature of investigator

.....
Signature of witness

Declaration by interpreter

I (*name*) declare that:

- I assisted the investigator (*name*) to explain the information in this document to (*name of participant*) Using the language medium of English/IsiZulu.
- We encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I conveyed a factually correct version of what was related to me.
- I am satisfied that the participant fully understands the content of this informed consent document and has had all his/her question satisfactorily answered.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*)

.....
Signature of interpreter

.....
Signature of witness

CONSENT FORM FOR CASE REPORTS¹

For a participant consent to the publication of information about them in a journal or thesis

Name of person described in article or shown in photograph: _____

Subject matter of photograph or article: _____

Title of article: _____

Medical practitioner or corresponding author: _____

I _____ [insert full name] give my consent for this information about MYSELF OR MY CHILD OR WARD/MY RELATIVE [insert full name]: _____, relating to the subject matter above ("the Information") to appear in a journal article, or to be used for the purpose of a thesis or presentation.

I understand the following:

1. The Information will be published without my name/child's name/relatives name attached, and every attempt will be made to ensure anonymity. I understand, however, that complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed. It is possible that somebody somewhere - perhaps, for example, somebody who looked after me/my child/relative, if I was in hospital, or a relative - may identify me.
2. The Information may be published in a journal which is read worldwide or an online journal. Journals are aimed mainly at health care professionals but may be seen by many non-doctors, including journalists.
3. Information may be placed on a website.
4. I can withdraw my consent at any time before online publication, but once the Information has been committed to publication it will not be possible to withdraw the consent.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signature of requesting medical practitioner/health care worker:

_____ Date: _____

¹ Adapted from *BMJ Case Reports* consent form & Stellenbosch University Ethics Templates

APPENDICE I



Postgraduate Office
Faculty of Education
Room 16
Winkie Direko Building
Faculty of Education
University of the Free State
P. O. Box 339
Bloemfontein 9300
South Africa
T: +27(0)51 401 3651
www.ufs.ac.za
Duvenhagecs@ufs.ac.za

14 September 2021

APPLICATION FOR TITLE REGISTRATION

Applicant: Masuku, SQ
Student Number: 2020694473
Discipline: Curriculum Studies
Study Code: Masters (EDCI8900)

Dear Mr Masuku

Your registered title is as follows: "ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

All of the best with your studies.

Yours sincerely,

Prof Patrick Mafora
Chair: CTR committee

Ms CS Duvenhage
Secretary: CTR committee



Our ref...^{EDIT0309}..... Date:10/05/2023...

www.errcd.com
LangEditor@errcd.com
Phone Numbers: +2781 536 9900
6A, Stuart Street, Harrismith, South Africa

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter confirms that Sbonelo Qiniso Masuku's thesis titled "**Enhancing the academic performance of grade 12 progressed learners in English First Additional Language**" was edited by a professional English-language editing staff at ERRCD Forum.

For further information, feel free to contact LangEditor@errcd.com



Anyakudo
Oluchi Anyakudo
English-language Editor
B. A. & M. A. English and Literary Studies

<https://www.errcd.com/ur-services/language-editing>



**ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 12 PROGRESSED
LEARNERS IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

By

SBONELO QINISO MASUKU

B.Ed. (University of Venda); B.Ed. Honours (University of Pretoria)

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

**Master of Education
(M.Ed. Curriculum Studies)
in the
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STUDIES
(CURRICULUM STUDIES)
at the
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE**

January 2023

BLOEMFONTEIN

SOUTH AFRICA

Supervisor: Prof. B Dube

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