

THE APPLICATION OF OBE PRINCIPLES IN THE TEACHING OF
AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN THE SENIOR PHASE

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Maurice Thembhani Babane, declare that **“The Application of OBE Principles in the Teaching of African Languages in the Senior Phase”**, is my own work and has not been previously submitted in any form whatsoever, by myself or anyone else, to this university or to any other educational institution for any degree or examination purposes. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and duly acknowledged by means of complete references

.....

Signature

.....

Date

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late wife, Tintswalo Emmah Babane.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the application of OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. The study was conducted in Vhembe and Mopani District in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. Data were collected through observation, an interview schedule and documentary analysis. The constructivist grounded theory provided a theoretical framework for this study. Data were analysed simultaneously with the data-collection process informed by the constructivist grounded theory.

This investigation revealed that teachers do not apply the investigated OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. Instead, they still teach in the manner they used before the introduction of the OBE approach. There were many reasons advanced by teachers for their failure to apply these principles in their teachings. A lack of knowledge and skills necessary to apply this new approach was prevalent. This lack of knowledge could be attributed to the inadequate teacher training received and non-commitment to OBE approach by the teachers. The study found that the investigated principles were not applied because of a lack of application strategies, the failure to interpret policy documents and resistance to change by teachers. In view of the findings in this study, the researcher deemed it imperative to make recommendations which could be used for further studies in order to achieve the proper application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages.

Key terms:

Outcomes-Based Education, Curriculum 2005, National Curriculum Statement, teaching, learning, African languages, principles of teaching, approaches to teaching (African languages), methods of teaching African languages, and outcomes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
Declaration.....	(i)
Dedication.....	(ii)
Acknowledgement.....	(iii)
Abstract.....	(v)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1	BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY	1
1.2	THE FIELD OF RESEARCH... ..	7
1.3	STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	9
1.4	OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	11
1.5	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	11
1.6	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	12
1.7	DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY.....	13
1.8	DATA ANALYSIS.....	14
1.9	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	14
1.10	DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	15
1.10.1	Education.....	16
1.10.2	Outcomes.....	16
1.10.3	Curriculum 2005.....	17
1.10.4	Outcomes-Based Education.....	18
1.10.5	Facilitation.....	19
1.10.6	Facilitator.....	19
1.10.7	Learning.....	19
1.10.8	Learners.....	20
1.10.9	The Senior Phase.....	20
1.11	CHAPTER DIVISIONS.....	21
1.12	SUMMARY.....	22

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	INTRODUCTION.....	23
2.2	FRAMEWORK OF THIS STUDY.....	24
2.3	REASONS FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT TO A NEW CURRICULUM IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	26
2.4	OBE, CURRICULUM 2005 AND NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT	29
2.4.1.	Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statement.....	29
2.4.2.	Outcomes-Based Education (OBE).....	31
2.4.3.	Theoretical Background of Outcomes-Based Education.....	34
2.4.3.1.	Behaviourism.....	34
2.4.3.2.	Theories of Human Memory.....	35
2.4.3.3.	The educational objectives movements.....	35
2.4.4	Different Approaches to Outcomes-Based Education.....	41
2.4.4.1	The traditional approach.....	41
2.4.4.2	The transitional approach.....	42
2.4.4.3	The transformational approach.....	43
2.5	THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES	44
2.5.1	The role of languages.....	44
2.5.2	Traditional Versus OBE Approach to Teaching African Languages....	48
2.5.3	Language, Literacy and Communication.....	51
2.5.3.1	The rationale for the learning of Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC).....	51
2.5.3.2	Specific outcomes for the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area.....	52
2.6	SUMMARY.....	53

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	55
3.2	THE NATURE OF THE STUDY AND ITS PARADIGM.....	55
3.3	RESEARCH DESIGN.....	56
3.3.1	Sampling and sampling procedures.....	57
3.3.2	Participants selected.....	60
3.3.3	Gaining entry.....	61
3.4	DATA COLLECTION.....	61
3.4.1	Classroom observations.....	62
3.4.2	Conducting the interviews.....	65
3.4.3	Documentary analysis.....	67
3.4.4	Rationale for the choice of techniques used in the current study.....	68
3.5	VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY.....	69
3.6	PILOT STUDY.....	70
3.7	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	71
3.8	LIMITATIONS IN DATA COLLECTION.....	73
3.8.1	Problems relating to observations.....	73
3.8.2	Problems relating to interviews.....	75
3.8.3	Problems relating to the researcher.....	75
3.8.4	Controlling problems relating to observations and responding to interviews	76
3.9	DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGIES.....	76
3.10	SUMMARY.....	77

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	79
4.2	DATA PRESENTATION.....	80
4.2.1	Curriculum developers.....	80
4.2.1.1	Understanding of the new Curriculum.....	81
4.2.1.2	Rationale for developing the new Curriculum.....	82
4.2.1.3	Expectation of the application of OBE	83
4.2.1.4	Suitability of OBE.....	84
4.2.1.5	Resources.....	85
4.2.1.6	Stakeholders involvement	87
4.2.2	Curriculum supervisors.....	88
4.2.2.1	Knowledge on OBE approach.....	89
4.2.2.2	Organisation of workshops.....	91
4.2.2.3	Training of curriculum supervisors.....	93
4.2.2.4	Monitoring after training workshop.....	95
4.2.2.5	Constraints during workshops.....	96
4.2.3	Teachers.....	98
4.2.3.1	Observations schedules.....	98
4.2.3.2	Interview schedule.....	106
4.2.3.2.1	Knowledge about OBE approach	107
4.2.3.2.2	Application of OBE principles in the classroom.....	114
4.2.3.2.3	Problems encountered	119
4.2.3.2.4	Government intervention programmes.....	122
4.2.3.2.5	Relevance of OBE approach.....	125
4.2.3.2.6	Enhancement of OBE approach.....	127
4.3		
	SUMMARY.....	129
4.4	DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	129
4.4.1	Analysis of the observations schedules.....	129
4.4.1.1	The learner-centred approach.....	130
4.4.1.2	Teacher facilitation.....	131
4.4.1.3	Integration of knowledge.....	131
4.4.2	Analysis and discussion of the interviews schedule.....	133

4.4.2.1	Knowledge about OBE approach.....	134
4.4.2.2	Application of OBE principles.....	140
4.4.2.3	Problems encountered with OBE approach.....	144
4.4.2.4	Government intervention programmes.....	152
4.5	SUMMARY.....	154

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	156
5.2	SUMMARY OF THE STUDY.....	156
5.3	FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.....	157
5.3.1	Knowledge about OBE approach	158
5.3.2	Application of OBE principles	159
5.3.3	Problems encountered	160
5.3.4	Government interventions to monitor and promote the use of OBE principles	161
5.3.5	Recommendations	162
5.3.5.1	To the Province.....	162
5.3.5.2	To the District support staff	162
5.3.5.3	To the Curriculum Supervisors.....	163
5.3.5.4	To the School	163
5.3.5.5	To the teachers.....	163
5.4	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	164
5.5	CONCLUSION.....	164
6.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	165
	APPENDICES	178

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Extract

“Our education system needs a new theoretical and operating paradigm...the new paradigm must be success-based in philosophy and outcomes-based practice” (Spady and Marshall 1991:427).

With the advent of a democratic order, and the adoption of the new democratic Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) on 8 May 1996, almost every sector of the society has been characterized by rapid change. Education has been no exception. Changes in the political sector have placed a responsibility on the Department of Education to find a suitable education system for the new democratic South Africa, as stated by the Minister of Education in a message on the provision of education and training published in the Department of Education and Training *White Paper* (DoE1995:1). Charged with such a task, the Department of Education had to undergo a radical transformation as a result of growing concern around the effectiveness, fragmented, inequitable and culturally oppressive system of education, which was associated with the previous apartheid regime into one which would satisfy the requirements of equity, equality, redress and social and cultural empowerment.

During the previous political dispensation, apartheid education was in a state of crisis due to socio-political imbalances (Desai 1994:24). There was also a general perception that this education system was ineffective and irrelevant (Malan 1997:13). The past curriculum perpetuated race, class, colour, and ethnic divisions. Because of an outcry from the majority in South Africa, South Africa decided to reform her education system

in order to keep pace with trends and developments. The new education system thus strives to redress the miasma of the old education system and address issues of equity, equality and racial divisions in education. For that reason, Pretorius notes that “for people of more disadvantaged groups, the new educational strategy has created hope and great expectations” (Pretorius 1998: vi). It was, therefore, imperative that the curriculum be changed not only to remedy the ills of the legacy of apartheid education, but also to reflect the values and principles of the new democracy.

The adoption and implementation of the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) is regarded as a “paradigm shift” from that of apartheid education, which was content-based and teacher-centred, to a new, flexible and appropriate curriculum that is results-oriented and learner-centred. This new approach is associated with “transformation”. The impetus for this approach was initiated by political movements and civil society groups that were actively opposed to apartheid.

Another driving motive behind the introduction of the OBE approach was partly that developments and changes in education are taking place on a global scale. In fact, technology, social change and global focus characterise the complex world of today; hence, the need for the introduction of a new education system which emphasises the cultivation and fostering of critical thinking, understanding and practical application of what is learned.

The history of the OBE approach can be traced as far back as the 1950s. Christie (1996:56) opines that the most immediate origin of the OBE approach took its cue from the early competency debates in Australia and New Zealand, and more recently, from the work of William Spady (1993) in the United States of America (USA), who made a significant contribution to this new system of education. Many scholars, therefore, regard him as “the father of OBE”. Against this background, it is evident that his ideas had considerable influence on the OBE approach that was adopted in South Africa (Jansen 1999:9) and in other countries. Changing to the OBE approach is not a uniquely South African phenomenon. The change in the mindset which influenced the

South African education system also occurred in many parts of the world, including the United States of America, Europe, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Pacific Rim (Spady 1993:254). Although some legislative attempts to introduce the OBE approach in various States of the USA have failed, it has, however, been introduced in 42 States (Kramer 1999:02). In South Africa, the National Department of Education adopted the OBE approach from systems already working in New Zealand, Australia and Canada (Department of Education 1997b).

At this point it will be useful to briefly tabulate a distinction between the old and the new approach (OBE) in order to understand this shift of focus:

Table 1: Distinction between the old and the new approach (OBE)

<i>OLD TRADITIONAL MODEL</i>	<i>OUTCOMES BASED EDUCATION</i>
- passive learners	- active learners
- exam-driven	- learners are assessed on an on-going basis (continuous assessment)
- rote-learning	- critical thinking and reasoning
- syllabus is content-based and broken into subjects	- integration of knowledge. Learning is relevant and connected to real-life situations
- textbook / worksheet bound and teacher-centred	- learner-centred and teachers act as Facilitators
- syllabus is rigid and non-negotiable	- learning programmes seen as guides that allow teachers to be creative and innovative
- teacher responsible for learning	- learners are responsible for their own Learning
- content placed into rigid time-frames	- flexible time-frames that allow learners to work at their own pace

SOURCE: Bengu (1997:6-7)

The above table expresses more or less the same ideas as those from Australia, as tabulated below by Ashman and Conway (1997:16) from the Universities of Queensland and Newcastle, New South Wales.

Table 2: Changes in current teaching and learning orientation in Eastern Australia

	<i>TEACHING ORIENTATION</i>	<i>LEARNING ORIENTATION</i>
Focus	Teachers	Learners
Learner's involvement	Mostly passive	Mostly active
Learning	Teacher responsible Content-independent	Jointly responsible Content-related
Desired learning outcome	Retention	Reflection and application
Teacher's attitude	Experts	Coaches or facilitators
Teacher's role	Good presenters	Good facilitators
Educational outcomes	Production or solution "Tool kit"	Increased skill in applying "tools"

SOURCE: Ashman and Conway (1997:16)

From these tables it is clear that the new approach's emphasis is on what the learner should know and can do at the end of the teaching and learning process. The shift towards the new approach, in South Africa, was achieved through the adoption of an OBE philosophy. Kramer (1999:1) supports this view by stating: "One of the challenging aspects of this transformation is the adoption of an Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) approach that underpins the introduction of the new Curriculum 2005."

Before the phasing in of the OBE approach in the General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET) bands in 1998, a White Paper on Education was released. This Paper envisaged an education system that encourages independent and critical thought on the learners (Education and Training Act 1995:22).

The new curriculum was thus officially introduced in January 1998 as part of the restructuring of the education system as announced by the then Minister of Education, Prof. Sibusiso Bengu (Bengu 1997:7). The new curriculum, using the OBE approach, was termed “Curriculum 2005” because it envisaged complete implementation in all Grades by the year 2005 (Rambani 2000:1). The proposed phasing in of the new curriculum was to be as follows:

Table 3: The proposed phasing in of the new Curriculum

<i>Grades</i>	<i>Year of implementation</i>
1 and 7	1998
2 and 8	1999
3 and 9	2000
4 and 10	2001
5 and 11	2002
6 and 12	2003

The period 2004-2005 was to be devoted mainly to an evaluation of this curriculum with a view to improving and refining it.

By the year 2008, the OBE approach was implemented in all the grades. This approach was implemented in grades 1 (1998), 2 (1999), 3 and 7 (2000), 4 and 8 (2001), 5 and 9 (2002), 6 (2003), 10 (2006), 11 (2007) and 12 (2008). As all the grades have implemented this approach, an investigation of the application of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages, namely, Sesotho sa Leboa, Tshivenda and Xitsonga to senior phase school learners in the Limpopo Province was deemed imperative. In fact, just like other school Learning Areas, these African languages are subjected to investigation to establish if their teaching and learning are on par with the new paradigm of the OBE approach.

This new system of education, just like other sectors of society, such as the economy and politics, has been accompanied by a range of opinions about its successes and also attracted fierce opposition. In fact, there seems to be more criticisms than praises.

In fact, it could be stated that the so-called new “process” paradigm of OBE is not very different from the old curriculum.

It is claimed that OBE has never been proved effective and has failed in some places such as Chicago, for example. Critics further hold the opinion that OBE is a sophisticated model of education which can only be applied in leading industrial countries (Pretorius 1998: v). These are countries with favourable teacher-learner ratios, teachers who have received adequate training and also sufficient resources and educational teaching and learning support materials. However, it could be said that although OBE has failed in some ways in other countries that are at the same level of development as South Africa, examples can be given of industrial countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea, which have successfully and effectively implemented the system.

Some critics of the new approach consider it to be a drastic change from the old approach to learning. Due to this drastic change, Nevhutanda (1997:12) notes that the implementation of “...Outcomes-based education is often more attractive to politicians and administrators than it is to teachers who are faced with the practicalities of implementing it...”

Application is the key word in OBE. Therefore, given its (OBE) continued grip on the field, the application of its principles should be analysed from a variety of critical and theoretical perspectives and evaluated through systematic research. Thus the thrust of this study is contextualised within educational transformation in South Africa with its paradigm of OBE as already indicated. Though OBE involves stakeholders such as the community, administrators, parents, educators and learners, it is ultimately the classroom teacher who is the key to the success or failure of the programme. This is what leads Pretorius (1998: v) to maintain that, “Our country needs dedicated, motivated and well trained teachers to guide our learners to learn effectively in order to achieve the critical and developmental outcomes as envisaged by the SAQA.”

It is true to say that contemporary teachers are faced with more challenges and changes in their work than ever before. Teachers should thus be the driving force in educational transformation in general and, for purposes of this study, in the implementation process of this new approach to education. This sentiment is echoed by Carl (1995:4) who contends that "...successful design, dissemination, implementation and evaluation depend in the final analysis on the teachers and therefore they must be at the heart of the process..."

1.2 THE FIELD OF RESEARCH

Under the new dispensation (since April 1994), South Africa is demarcated into nine Provinces. Education is controlled nationally and the political head of the National Department is the Minister. However, the control of schools and school education is decentralised to the Provinces. Provincial departments are headed by the Members of the Executive Council (MECs). Furthermore, education is further decentralised into districts headed by the district managers and areas of education departments as well as circuit offices headed by the circuit managers while principals administer the schools (*The South African Schools Act* (RSA 1996b:15). Since Provinces receive equal treatment from the National Department, the researcher decided to conduct this study in one Province, namely, Limpopo.

Limpopo Province is divided into six districts: Waterberg, Capricorn, Vhembe, Greater Sekhukhune, Mopani, and Greater Bojale. Accordingly, education is decentralised into these six districts. This study was conducted in the Vhembe and Mopani districts which have been set up in terms of the post-1994 consolidation of Limpopo Province, incorporating schools from the three of the former homelands of Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda as well as parts of the former Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA).

The researcher decided to conduct this research in these districts because they cover all the three major African languages spoken by the majority in the Province. Since the researcher lives in one district and works in another, it was easy to save time and costs

involved in travelling to different Area and Circuit Offices, as well as to the schools, for observation and to conduct interviews. In the Vhembe district two Education Area Offices were selected, namely, Malamulele and Thohoyandou. In the Mopani District only one circuit, Sekgosese, was selected. Map 1 in Appendix B shows the location of the Limpopo Province within the broader context of South Africa.

The investigation in this study is on the African languages spoken mainly in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. These languages are Sesotho sa Leboa, Xitsonga and Tshivenda. Studying Sesotho sa Leboa, Xitsonga and Tshivenda is compulsory in all schools where the speakers are Northern Sotho, Vatsonga and Vhavenda respectively. Generally, more learners enrol for African languages, not because they want to pursue a profession in the languages, but because a learner should do at least two languages, one of which should be the home language, and the second one, the language of instruction. As a result, the home language of learners in the selected schools is an African language, while English is taken as the language of instruction.

In Curriculum 2005, using the OBE approach, there are eight different Learning Areas grouped as follows:

- Human and Social Sciences
- Languages, Literacy and Communication
- Technology
- Numeracy and Mathematics
- Natural Sciences
- Economics and Management Sciences
- Life Orientation
- Arts and Culture

African languages education obviously falls under the Learning Area: Language, Literacy and Communication.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, it became imperative for the present researcher to investigate teachers' application of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of these African languages. A firm position will, however, only be apparent at the end of the study.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to the new education system, teaching and learning must be transformed in accordance with the principles of the OBE approach. Effective teaching and learning are characterised by certain basic principles which must be followed by teachers in their classrooms. Steyn, Badenhorst and Yule (1981:14) maintain that principles are important because they serve as guidelines for selecting relevant teaching methods. The principles referred to in this study include, among others, the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation, and integration of knowledge. The researcher's observation has been that in many instances the application of OBE principles was difficult.

The present study thus also focuses on the difficulty observed in the senior phase of the secondary school. The problem on which this research focused was the gap between policy and practice. The fact is that OBE principles in teaching and learning have been formally established in terms of the new education system, but in practice their application frequently appears not functioning effectively.

While there is agreement that educational change from the old system to the OBE approach was long overdue, there is also consensus that the majority of the teachers find the latter complicated to deal with. Grange and Reddy (1998:1) note that both teachers and learners have limited knowledge of the new Curriculum. In fact, teachers were not well equipped and ready for the actual application of the new education principles. To this end, the application of OBE principles in teaching and learning was a concern raised by many teachers in studies such as Grange and Reddy. This was largely due to the fact that teachers felt that "in-service training" received, in the form of

workshops, was insufficient to empower them to apply OBE principles as Kramer (1992:2) states:

There are difficulties, they say, with understanding major changes, such as implementing OBE while there are still many basic problems unsolved that OBE will not help address or may even make worse. There have also been complaints from educators about the lack of sufficient retraining and support to implement OBE.

In light of the above, the application of OBE principles in teaching and learning, and for the purpose of this study, specifically the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages deserves special attention. The OBE system in general has been an area of concern for several researchers such as Spady (1994), Kramer (1999) and Killen (2000) both in South Africa and other countries. Despite its continued momentum in the field, the application of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages to senior phase learners in the Limpopo Province has not been subjected to in-depth investigation. This study thus set out to address this gap.

Existing literatures, such as Rambani (2000), and Libago (2001) advocate for more research as researchers who have investigated the application of OBE have focused on aspects and areas different from the perspective intended by the present researcher. Rambani (2000) investigated the perception of teachers towards the use of educational technology in implementing Curriculum 2005. In his study Libago (2001) investigated in general the application of learner-centred approach and the proper implementation of its methods during the teaching and learning situation in the foundation phase classrooms. The study revealed that it is still difficult for the foundation phase teachers to implement learner-centred methods. The present study is different from that of Libago since this one looks at the application of this approach in the teaching of African languages in the secondary schools. Furthermore, Nemadzivhanani (2007) focuses on the challenges

experienced by teachers and support offered to educators in the application of OBE assessment in achieving learning outcomes. Given this reality, the present study seems a timely endeavour.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall purpose of this study is to investigate how teachers apply OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages in the senior phase. The researcher is of the opinion that the fact that teachers were not exposed to the OBE approach during their professional training is a serious impediment to effective application of OBE principles in their classrooms.

The objectives of this study are:

- To investigate the application of OBE principles and relate them to the teaching and learning of African languages;
- To identify problems related to the application of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages to senior phase learners in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of the Limpopo Province; and
- To make recommendations on how OBE principles can be applied effectively in the teaching and learning of African languages.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In light of the problems described in 1.2 above, this study addresses the following research questions:

- To what extent are the African language teachers knowledgeable about the OBE approach?

- How do teachers of African languages in the senior phase apply OBE principles in classroom teaching and learning?
- What problems are experienced with the current OBE teaching and learning methods used in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of the Limpopo Province?
- What intervention programmes by the Department of Education are in place to monitor and promote the use of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages at senior phase in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of the Limpopo Province?
- What could be recommended for the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase?

The preceding questions will be discussed in the context of the schools to be selected in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of the Limpopo Province of South Africa. These questions will be referred to again when making conclusions in the concluding chapter.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Oosthuizen (1981:26-27) maintain that the statement of the problem is a prerequisite for identifying research methods to be used because it directs the research programme critically. In this regard Cohen and Manion (1995:38), for example, define research methodology as the range of approaches used in research to collect data which are to be used as a basis for information and interpretation, explanation and prediction. The nature, aims, objectives, and contextual significance of this study dictated that the qualitative approach be chosen as the method for research. Such an approach includes qualitative methods of data collection such as observations, interviews and document analysis, found to be relevant for this study.

The qualitative approach is defined as the collection and analysis of extensive narrative data in order to gain insights into a situation of interest, which will not be possible using other types of research approaches (Gay 1996:208). Neuman (1994:41) asserts that the aim of qualitative research is not to explain human behaviour in terms of the universally valid laws or generalisations, but rather to understand and interact with the meaning and intentions that underlie everyday human actions.

A qualitative research approach was found to be appropriate because:

- the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages takes place in a natural setting;
- it works with people on a person-centred level;
- it investigates a small, distinct group; and
- it allows the exploration of the participant's life experiences

(McMillan and Schumacher 1993:375)

The answers to the research questions will emerge from the observations, interviews and analysis of documents to be conducted and consulted respectively. All these methods will reveal the practical wisdom from those who are daily expected to apply OBE principles in senior phase classrooms.

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages to senior phase learners. To make the study manageable and researchable, the study focused on the Limpopo Province in general and specifically on the Vhembe and Mopani districts in accordance with geographical demarcation of the Limpopo Department of Education. The researcher was of the opinion that the two selected districts have a maximum representation of senior phase learners where Sesotho sa Leboa, Xitsonga and Tshivenda are taught as home languages.

Vhembe and Mopani districts are situated in the far north and eastern sides of the Limpopo Province respectively. The participants were selected from curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors and teachers. This was done to ensure representativity and thus reliability and validity of the data, and the results thereof. This delimitation of the field of the study is also necessary if details are to be achieved.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

In every study the collected data need to be analysed before they can be interpreted. For this study, the purpose of data analysis would be to:

- describe the data clearly;
- identify what is typical and atypical among the data;
- bring to light differences, relationships, and other patterns existent in the data; and
- ultimately answer research questions.

Since the data were collected by means of observations, interviews, and perusal of relevant documents, a qualitative method of data analysis was used. In so far as data analysis in qualitative research is concerned, Gay (1996:227) maintains, "...in a nutshell, qualitative analysis involves making sense out of an enormous amount of narrative data".

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Research on this topic is very important and relevant to South African education since South Africa has just adopted and implemented a new system of education. The present scenario in South Africa's education demands a rigorous reflection on the current application of OBE principles in teaching and learning in order to establish the critical areas for improvement in theory and practice. The researcher intended to contribute to educational transformation by investigating the current application of the OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages to senior phase school

learners in the hope that stakeholders in the planning and implementing process of OBE principles will benefit.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will make teachers more aware of the principles underlying the OBE approach and the importance of their application in the teaching and learning of African languages at senior phase school level. This will, hopefully, ensure that teachers perform their duties in accordance with the values and principles of the new education system, and furthermore help learners in the senior phase classrooms learn effectively.

Another important point is that findings of this study will also constitute a source of information for all teachers of other Learning Areas in general and African languages teachers in particular. A study on the application of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages to senior phase learners had, to the researcher's knowledge, not yet been conducted anywhere else in the Provinces of the Republic of South Africa. The study will, therefore, make an original contribution to the Limpopo Province in particular and other Provinces in general, as well as contributing to new knowledge. The findings of this study will eventually help give direction to both the National and Provincial Departments of Education curriculum developers and educationists as well as teachers in their expectations and theorising regarding the application of OBE principles in teaching and learning.

1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS

It is generally accepted that a given concept may have different meanings to different people. There are also indications that the same concept may evoke more than one meaning in the same group of people depending on the time and context in which it is used. It is, therefore, necessary to define the following concepts fully to understand the meaning and implications of the words in the context of this study. In fact, this section is meant to clarify key concepts used in this study so that readers can understand the context in which these concepts were used or their unusual or restricted meaning

(Castetter and Heisler 1977 as cited by Creswell 1994:106). The following key concepts were used in this research as defined below:

1.10.1 Education

Education is broadly conceived to be a deliberate systematic and sustained effort to transmit, evoke or acquire knowledge, attitudes, values or skills as well as any outcome of the effort (Darkenwald and Merriam 1982:21). According to the *Oxford Dictionary* (1987:144), education is a systematic instruction/development of character or mental power of an individual. In that context education can be seen as a process that continues in one form or another throughout the life of an individual. Its purpose and forms must, therefore, be adapted to the needs of the individuals at different stages in their development. Hawkins (2001:54) is of the opinion that education is a process of training people's minds and abilities so that they acquire knowledge and develop skills.

1.10.2 Outcomes

Debates about OBE reveal widespread confusion about terminology and concepts. The terms "outcomes", "standards" and "goals" are frequently used interchangeably by some authors to refer to what learners will demonstrate as evidence that they understood the full meaning of what they have learned and how to use their knowledge in different situations. For the sake of consistency, throughout this research, the term "outcomes" is used to refer to what learners are able to do at the end of the teaching-learning process (King and Evans 1991:73). Outcomes can be regarded as the end-products which may be observable and lead to internal changes in the learner. This implies that at the end of the teaching process, learners should be able to demonstrate an ability to do something. The same idea has been articulated by Spady (1994:2) when he avers:

Outcomes are clear learning results that we want students to demonstrate at the end of significant learning experiences. They are not values, beliefs, attitudes, or psychological states of mind. Instead,

outcomes are what learners can actually do with
what they know and have learned...

This quotation clearly shows that demonstration is the key word. In fact, an outcome is not a score or grade, but the end product that learners are able to carry out. There are three sets of outcomes identified by Curriculum 2005 and the DoE; namely, critical and developmental outcomes, specific learning outcomes and the lesson's outcomes. Firstly, the critical and developmental outcomes refer to outcomes which are basic, general or generic in nature, and these outcomes inform all teaching and learning which all learners need to achieve at all levels of their development. Examples of these outcomes include communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes and to be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.

Secondly, learning outcomes are outcomes which are derived from the critical outcomes and they refer to the demonstration of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes in a specific learning area. For languages learning outcomes include reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These are outcomes which enable learners to achieve overall competence in a particular field and at a given level.

Lastly, the lesson outcomes are outcomes which a learner should be able to demonstrate at the end of each lesson/learning segment (Pretorius 1998:30). The lesson outcomes, for example, may be that the learner must be able to define the concept "modes", and be able to distinguish the types of modes.

1.10.3 Curriculum 2005

The concepts "Curriculum 2005" and "Outcomes-Based Education" also tend to be used synonymously, which is incorrect. "Curriculum 2005" is the term given to the curriculum introduced by the South African Department of Education in 1997 to implement the new outcomes-based approach. This curriculum was called "Curriculum 2005" or "C2005" because it was hoped that by 2005 it would have been implemented in all grades.

C2005 was regarded as the first major curriculum statement of the South African democratic dispensation, which signalled a significant era in the country's history in terms of a change from the past.

1.10.4 Outcomes-Based Education

The concept "Outcomes-Based Education" (OBE) is easy to conceptualise but difficult to define. However, OBE can be defined as an approach in which the curriculum, teaching and assessment are organised around outcomes. In fact, OBE is based on the philosophy that learners should demonstrate the outcomes they have achieved. It is a result-oriented system of education.

This approach to learning is the opposite of input-based education where emphasis is on the educational process. In short, OBE is a system of education that is learner-centred and result-oriented. Spady (1994:1) defines this concept as follows:

Outcomes Based Education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing the curriculum, instruction and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens.

The main idea behind the above definition is that OBE is an educational approach that has to focus learners' attention on the desired results of education. These results are based on demonstrated achievement by learners' progress.

1.10.5 Facilitation

The concept “facilitation” means to direct, to impart knowledge or to guide the learning process in the teaching and learning situation. Therefore, facilitation can be regarded as the process whereby knowledge from the facilitator is imparted to the learners. In other words, facilitation is an attempt to assist learners in acquiring or changing some skills, knowledge, ideas, attitudes, or appreciation.

From the preceding explanation, facilitation could be understood as a process of helping learners to understand information and to transform it into their knowledge. Therefore, facilitation also includes the process of deciding what methods of instruction are to be used for bringing about desired changes in learner knowledge and skills for specific course content.

1.10.6 Facilitator

There is disagreement over the use of the concept “facilitator”, with other labels such as “educator” or “teacher”. All these terms are used interchangeably by authors to refer to a person who imparts knowledge to learners. The teacher as a facilitator is not expected to transmit his or her knowledge to learners but to facilitate the learning process.

A facilitator is a person who intervenes when learners encounter learning problems. Accordingly, a facilitator of knowledge could be regarded as a competent, productive, accountable, and creative person who performs the educative act of teaching. In this study, the three concepts teacher, educator and facilitator are used interchangeably to mean a professional person who facilitates learning.

1.10.7 Learning

Learning can be defined as the mental activity by means of which knowledge and skills, habits, attitudes, and ideas are acquired, retained and utilised, resulting in the progressive adaptation and modification of conduct and behaviour (Duminy 1992:136). According to Gagne (1985:2), learning is a change in human disposition or capability of such change that persists over a time and is not simply ascribable to the process of

growth. The purpose of learning, therefore, is to bring an outcome: a change in behaviour. The point to be emphasised is that the inference of learning is made by comparing what behaviour was possible before the individual was placed in a learning situation and what behaviour can be exhibited after such treatment.

From the preceding explanation, it is clear that learning can be regarded as the process of acquiring skills, knowledge and/or competence in any learning environment. In this regard, learning involves accommodating new insights within the existing framework of knowledge. This can lead to extending it or having to recognise it according to new experiences that learners encounter throughout their life-long learning (Swart 1988:269). In this study, focus is on learning in senior phase African languages classrooms.

1.10.8 Learners

According to the South African School Act (RSA 1996b: 4), the concept “learner” refers to any person, whether a child or an adult, who receives education or is obliged to receive education. In this study, this term is used to refer to those persons who pursue studies at the senior phase level of secondary school. Sometimes learners are referred to as “pupils” or “students” in some sources because of the learners’ level of mental development. In this study, the learners under investigation are aged between 13 and 14 years. These are people of either sex and are generally under the care of the teacher (facilitator). Furthermore, in this study learners referred to are those taking African languages as a compulsory language.

1.10.9 The senior phase

Schooling in South Africa has been divided in accordance with the learners’ ages and developmental stages such as pre-primary, primary and secondary schools as well as institutions of higher learning. These levels of schooling are further divided into phases. For the purposes of this study, only the senior phase was defined. The senior phase is the phase which includes Grades 7, 8 and 9 (previously standards 5, 6 and 7).

Since the organizational structure of schooling has not changed, Grade 7 is offered at primary school level, while Grades 8 and 9 are still offered in the secondary or high schools together with Grades 10, 11 and 12. To keep this study within one level of schooling, this study focused exclusively on Grades 8 and 9, both found at secondary/high school level. Therefore, all references to senior phase in this study must be understood to refer to these two Grades only. Grade 9 is also the last grade of the compulsory band, the General Education and Training Band, and, therefore, the official exit point after compulsory schooling. This means that at the end of this Grade, learners receive a General Education and Training Certificate.

1.11 CHAPTER DIVISIONS

Chapter one serves as a background for the study and outlines the problem statement of this study. The chapter covers the objectives of the study, the significance for the study, different methods used, and the definition of key concepts.

Chapter two provides a brief overview of the literature on the language phenomenon and different methods and approaches used in the teaching of African languages before the introduction of the OBE approach, and gives an exposition of the OBE approach in general and how African languages fit into this new approach of teaching and learning.

Chapter three shows what research methods were used to collect data for this study. In the chapter, research design, data collection techniques, validity and reliability, ethical considerations, limitations of the study and data analysis strategies are discussed.

Chapter four deals with data presentation, data analysis and discussions thereof.

Chapter five gives the results of the investigation, as well as the reflection on and a discussion of the findings, the conclusions reached, and recommendations from the research.

1.12 SUMMARY

In this introductory chapter, the background and rationale for the study were given. It was indicated that many changes in the education system were perceived as necessary following the democratic elections of April 1994. One of the moves to this end was to implement OBE. Against this background, the researcher noted that inexperienced educators were to implement this new system of education. It was significant for the researcher to identify the statement of the problem related to the application of OBE principles in teaching and learning. The constructivist theory was chosen as the framework of this study. The chapter proceeded to give the objectives of the study followed by the research questions. Attention was drawn to the significance and delimitation of the study. Methods of the research to be used in collecting data were stated and briefly explained.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Since research is not conducted in a vacuum, it was imperative for the present researcher to review what other researchers had written about the topic of this study.

Databases have revealed that a considerable amount of research had been conducted on OBE worldwide as well as in South Africa. However, no previous studies of this kind were conducted in respect to African languages, in general, and Limpopo Province languages, in particular. Although there are many literature sources on the OBE approach, researchers, such as Evans and King (1992:12), note that “despite OBE’s appeal, research documentation on its effects is fairly rare. An earlier literature review reported that existing evidence was largely perceptual, anecdotal, and small scale.” Thus, the limitations of the literature on the application of OBE principles necessitated a study on how it is being applied in the teaching of African languages, especially in the Limpopo Province.

This chapter covers, among other things, the framework of this study, the meaning of OBE, as well as the reasons for the elaborate paradigm shift to OBE. The theoretical background of OBE is exposed. Different approaches to OBE, the relationship amongst OBE, Curriculum 2005, and the Revised National Curriculum Statement are elaborated as well. Furthermore, the Language, Literacy and Communication Learning Area is examined. The motive was to explicate what this new approach entails so that when studying how it is applied it is done against a crystallised backdrop of what is being investigated.

In South Africa, there has been a shift in orientation over the last fourteen years in teaching and learning. This change of focus was necessitated by the educational

changes the world is facing today. The crux of the new mindset in education is what the learner should know, understand, do, and become.

The education system of South Africa is currently much more challenging than it was during the apartheid era. According to the current South African model of education, Outcomes-Based Education, teaching in the twenty-first century assigns to learners the role of being active participants who take charge of their own learning instead of passive recipients of facts. In other words, for effective teaching and learning to be achieved, “at the centre of classroom activity-should be the message to the learners that their opinions are important and that they have a contribution to make towards their own learning” (Vakalisa 2004:6). However, such supposed opinions and contributions by learners inevitably express a specific cultural outlook encoded in the mother tongue.

2.2 FRAMEWORK FOR THIS STUDY

To ensure a strong research design, the researcher in this study chose a research paradigm that is congruent with his belief about the nature of reality. The aim of this section is to provide an overview of the theory underpinning this study. The constructivist grounded theory informed the process of data collection and analysis for this study. This approach is a combination of the constructivist and the grounded theories. The constructivist theory is a research paradigm that believes “that realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals” (Lincoln and Guba 1985:43). On the other hand, grounded theory could be regarded as a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived theory about a phenomenon. This paradigm seeks to construct theory about issues of importance in people’s lives.

The Constructivist grounded theory is a popular research method for research studies in disciplines such as education. This is an approach that informs the transformation of teaching and learning in South Africa. The constructivist grounded theory can be traced to the work of Strauss since 1967. The constructivist grounded theory, as exposed by

Strauss (from 1967 to the 20th century), and Schwandt (1997, 2000) which is an adaptation of the grounded theory, was used in this study. This theory makes the following three assumptions that are relevant to this study:

- (i) Human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as they construct or make it.
- (ii) Knowing is not passive (simple imprinting of sensory data on the mind), but active (that is, the mind does something with these impressions), at the very least, forming abstractions or concepts.
- (iii) Researchers invent concepts, models and schemes to make sense of experience, and continually test and modify these constructions in the light of new experience (Schwandt 1997).

In this study, the form of constructivist grounded theory followed depends on a clarification of the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participants. The constructivist grounded theory uses an inductive approach, an approach in which a systematic set of procedures is used to generate theories about social processes. In this study, the constructivist grounded theory was used to enable the researcher to experience data in such a way that they generated insight, and generative questions were pursued through further data collection to verify the findings.

In using this framework the researcher is required to employ a method of constant comparison. In fact, the researcher is compelled to constantly check the data against the literature. Literature consulted when using this theory should be able to contribute to the emerging information from participants. Therefore, one of this theory's important characteristics is its modifiability as new data are generated.

This theory is particularly useful when little is known about the area to be studied, or when what is known is from a theoretical perspective that does not satisfactorily explain what is going on. The researcher chose this theoretical framework because the goal is to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who

live in it. The participants in this study are curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors and teachers, as role-players in particular places and at particular times. As stakeholders, they are operating in a challenging educational situation and are grappling with the application of the new approach to the teaching and learning of African languages. Within this context the researcher was convinced that the constructivist grounded theory would be the most suitable framework to be used to guide this study.

In seeking a research methodology that would help answer the research questions, the researcher sought a method that would complement the constructivist grounded theory. The constructivist grounded theory framework provides a way to study the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase using the qualitative research method. Three techniques of this method, namely, observation, interview and documentary analysis methods, were employed to gather data for this study.

In summary, the researcher recognises that while the introduction of OBE in South Africa has generated debates and a significant amount of literature, little is known about the application of the principles of OBE in the teaching of African languages. The researcher believes that the application of these principles can be discovered through the constructivist grounded theory and the use of qualitative research methods. The researcher is of the opinion that through this theoretical framework, an in-depth understanding of the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages will be reached.

2.3. REASONS FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT TO A NEW CURRICULUM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Dalin and Rust (1996:31) describe a paradigm shift as “a major change in the way realities are thought about and explained”. The concept “paradigm” originates from the Greek root “paradigma”, meaning “a model”. This term was originally understood as “example”, “pattern” or “model”. Thus, the word “paradigm” has been used in many

sectors to refer to a variety of things. In education, Spady (1997:1) describes the concept “paradigms” as “the patterns of thought that we use to understand and make sense of what we do and experience”. In a similar vein, it could also be stated that paradigms are the lens through which we view the world. They are regarded as the mental frameworks that we impose on our perceptions in order to give them coherence and make sense of them.

In light of the above statement, it is clear that paradigms affect the vision of reality and the actions. Generally, a paradigm shift meets with resistance from people who do not see the need for it. The present researcher is convinced that South Africans are experiencing a major paradigm shift in their vision and approach to education that was brought about by the emergence of the democratic order in 1994. Herman et al (1992:69) identified three issues that influence a paradigm shift. These issues are the global dilemmas, jobs and economic growth, and cultural integration. In South Africa, it was mainly the last issue, following the demise of the separatist ideology, apartheid, which led to the paradigm shift.

Generally, change becomes necessary when the old methods and ways no longer serve the new dispensation. Killen (1999:4) notes that countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the USA started to experience a shift to outcomes-Based Education in the 1980s. In South Africa, the shift to OBE started after the democratic election of 1994. According to the Department of Education’s background document on OBE (DoE 1997a: 2), the new education system would “...meet the economic and social needs of South Africa and its people”, hence a shift from the old dispensation became necessary in order to adjust properly to the new dispensation. The rationale for the shift to the OBE system in South Africa was stated in the 1995 White Paper (DoE1995:15) as follows:

An integrated approach to education and training, linked to the development of a new National Qualification Framework (NQF) based on a system of credits for learning outcomes achieved,

will encourage creative work on the design of curricula and the recognition of learning attainments wherever education and training are offered.

According to Van der Horst and McDonald (2003:3), educational change in South Africa was necessary in order to give all individuals the opportunity of access to lifelong education, irrespective of their race, class, gender, creed or age. Furthermore, this educational reform sought to develop learners' critical thinking, problem-solving abilities and rational thought, and lead to deeper understanding of their world. These skills would enable learners to deal with the challenges of real-life situations and to compete both locally and internationally. Another important reason for making this shift of focus was that many learners did not receive adequate educational and training opportunities under the previous dispensation.

The emphasis in this rationale is on a flexible and appropriate approach to teaching and learning that comes with the demand for creativity on the part of both the educator as a facilitator and the learner as the centre of learning. This was not the case in the apartheid education which encouraged an uncritical consumption of ready-made teaching content, and discouraged critical creativity in the teaching and learning process.

Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:5) note that in the old order learners were not encouraged to value the aspirations and perspectives of other cultural groups. Thus, an important reason for the shift to the OBE approach was to endorse the concept of unity in diversity. The move to the OBE approach presents South African teachers and learners with all the significant challenges of a paradigm shift that need well thought-out interventions. It is critical to bear in mind that there are both opponents and proponents of this philosophy.

Although this shift has led to fear and anger in some educational institutions, as teachers were struggling with the new skills and attitudes required implementing this shift in their lives and working in particular (Lubisi, Parker and Wedekind 1998: v), they are, nevertheless, implementing it. For this reason, it can be concluded that the challenge of resistance has been fairly overcome.

The need for a change of the education system in the new dispensation therefore led to OBE, Curriculum 2005 and later the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). The following section highlights the relationship among OBE, Curriculum 2005 and NCS.

2.4 OBE, CURRICULUM 2005 AND NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT

The crux of this section is to give a brief discussion of OBE, Curriculum 2005 and the NCS. The relevance of this section is to highlight the relationship between these concepts. This is imperative because researchers, educators and many other people in the educational sector use the concepts OBE, Curriculum 2005, Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and NCS interchangeably. This confusion is caused by the fact that the official documentation does not distinguish between these terms (Williamson 2000:144).

2.4.1 Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statement

Jansen (1999:9) also remarks on this confusion when he refers to “the introduction of something called Curriculum 2005 which was ‘weakly coupled’ to OBE in official documents and discourses. There remains to this day confusion about what is meant by Curriculum 2005.”

According to the Department of Education (DoE) OBE background document (DoE 1997a), Curriculum 2005 is defined as “an OBE curriculum derived from nationally agreed on critical cross-field outcomes that sketch our vision of a transformed society and the role education has to play in creating it”. To some educators this meant that OBE would have been introduced in all grades, namely Grades R-12, by the year 2005,

while to some departmental officials, Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and OBE are one and the same thing. Spady, however, is of the view that Curriculum 2005 is just an educational invention and has nothing to do with OBE (Jansen 1999:9).

Despite the confusion, there is a distinction between these concepts. The relationship between OBE and Curriculum 2005 is that they are linked with the goals of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). Chisholm (2000:10) explains the relationship between OBE and Curriculum 2005 by indicating that the former is “an approach to education”, while the latter is “the curriculum that has been developed within an outcomes based framework”.

The implementation of C2005 was officially set to take place in grade 1 classes in 1998, followed by grade 2 in 1999 and grades 3 and 7 in 2000. Chisholm (2000) notes that grades 1, 2, 3 and 7 were implemented as planned. It was hoped that by the year 2003, all grades would have been exposed to C2005 and that the two years that followed would see a fundamental review of the new curriculum with a view to improving and refining the department’s curriculum goals Curriculum 2005 (1997:8, 18). C2005 was then reviewed in 2000. This resulted in a Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) for Grades R-9 (schools). This was not a new curriculum but a streamlining and strengthening of C2005. Accordingly, “[RNCS] keeps intact the principles, purposes and thrust of Curriculum 2005 and affirms the commitment to Outcomes-Based Education” (Department of Education 2002:6).

Later on the RNCS was reviewed. According to the Department of Education (DoE 2002:5), the Review Committee recommended that in order to strengthen the curriculum, its design features should be streamlined and its language simplified through the production of an amended National Curriculum Statement. The curriculum is thus now called the National Curriculum Statement. The overall focus of this curriculum is on what learners should know and be able to do so that ultimately the full potential of each learner will be developed (GCIS 2002:196; Chisholm 2000:10).

The goal behind the introduction of the outcomes-based approach to education, Curriculum 2005 and its later replacement the NCS was to redress the political and educational injustices of the past. Thus, it could be stated that because of their introduction, the roles of all the different educational stakeholders such as teachers, learners, parents, and the community should also change. For example, teachers are to be facilitators, while learners are to be more responsible for their own learning.

2.4.2 Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

Other concepts similar or related to OBE are mastery learning, learner goals, graduation student-performance objectives, standards of learning, management by objective (Chion-Kenney 1994:14). OBE, a relatively new system of education, is an approach in education that broadly refers to an educational theory that guides the curriculum by setting goals for learners to accomplish. It focuses more on these goals, or “outcomes” than on “inputs” or “subject units”. Moreover, OBE is an approach in education that shifts the emphasis from what the teacher does to what the learner does. Hereunder follow some of the definitions of OBE:

Bixler (1997:1) states that OBE “defines a set of competencies that reflect the needs of society, then the teacher makes sure that all students meet or exceed them before they graduate”.

O’Neil (1993:6) mentions that OBE “...is the simple principle that decisions about curriculum and instruction should be driven by the outcomes we’d like children to display at the end of their educational experience”.

Needham (1995:10) defines OBE as “stating what you want students to be able to do in measurable terms, then designing a curriculum that lets them learn how to do it”. Another definition of OBE comes from Towers (1994:19) who writes, “Education that is outcome-based is a learner-centred, results-oriented system founded on the belief that all individuals can learn.”

In South Africa, the new education system (OBE) has been modelled according to Spady's version of OBE. As mentioned earlier, Spady is the main proponent of OBE and he describes this approach (Spady 1994:1) as follows:

Outcomes-Based Education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens.

These definitions clearly indicate that OBE focuses on the desired end-results, known as outcomes. These outcomes must be clearly identified beforehand and the learner's progress is then based on the demonstrated achievement of these outcomes. Furthermore, OBE is learner-centred.

The preceding discussion illustrates that the definition of "outcomes" is also very important in understanding this system of education. "Outcomes" have been defined by Spady and Marshall (1994:20-21) as:

...clear, observable demonstrations of student learning that occur after a significant set of learning experience. They are not values, attitudes, feelings, beliefs, activities, assignments, goals, scores, grades, or averages, as many people believe. Typically, these demonstrations, or performances, reflect three things: (1) what the student knows; (2) what the student can actually

do with what he or she knows; and (3) the student's confidence and motivation in carrying out the demonstration.

In fact, these outcomes should not simply be regarded as vague statements about values, beliefs, attitudes or psychological states of mind. Gultig et al (1998:24) concur with Spady and Marshall that outcomes are what learners can actually do with what they know and have learned. They are tangible applications of what has been learned (Lubisi et al 1998:24-25). Furthermore, outcomes are regarded as actions and performances that embody and reflect learner competencies in using content, information, ideas and tools successfully. According to Spady (1994:8), **what** and **whether** learners learn successfully are more important than **when** and **how** they learn something. Spady's use of "when" in the OBE approach is that in this approach, each learner learns at own pace, and the "how", whose answer is from the learner's cultural perspective.

Based on Spady's model, the South African OBE has two requirements. Firstly, the learning outcomes are clearly and unambiguously identified, made explicit and communicated to all concerned, namely, the teachers, the learners, the public, employers, and other stakeholders. Secondly, the educational outcomes should be the overriding issue in decisions about the curriculum.

According to Spady, OBE is based on the pyramid that consists of five elements, the 5P's. These Pyramids stand for the first letters of paradigm, purposes, premises, principles, and practices. It is important to understand Spady's model of OBE because it forms the basis of the South African version.

In summary, it is clear from the above discussion that OBE is about developing high level competence. It is the type of education, which is implemented through C2005 in post apartheid South Africa. The next section discusses the theoretical background of OBE in general.

2.4.3. Theoretical Background of Outcomes-Based Education

The aim of this section is to discuss the theoretical background of OBE. It is imperative to trace these roots for the purpose of locating the relevance of the approach to the South African situation (Baxen and Soudien 1999:13). OBE has its origins in a variety of histories. Thus, in tracing the roots of OBE, this section first considers Behaviourism and the theories of human memory and later the educational objectives movements. The former two theories had a distinct influence on current teaching and learning theories and practice. According to Ashman and Conway (1997:18) these two traditions dominated thinking on teaching and learning during the twentieth century.

2.4.3.1 Behaviourism

This approach originated in the field of psychology with the work of John Broadus Watson, an American psychologist. However, it has had a wider influence and its concepts and methods are now even used in education. Behaviourism views learning as the acquisition of new behaviour, and believes that this behaviour is shaped by the environment. In this approach, concepts such as memory, thinking and consciousness are not considered. Instead, the focus is on measurable and observable behaviour only. The behavioural approach views the mind as a “black box” in the sense that stimuli (what go into the box) can be observed quantitatively, ignoring the possibility of thought processes occurring in the mind of the learner.

Apart from John B. Watson, other key players in the development of this approach, amongst others, were Pavlov, Thorndike and Skinner. It is from this theory that learning by trial and error emerged. Today, Behaviourism is mostly associated with B.F. Skinner (Jansen 1999:146), who made his reputation by testing Watson’s theories in the laboratory. Skinner’s laboratory results led him to reject Watson’s findings that human beings react in the same way as animals do, that is, by reflex and through conditioning.

Unlike Watson, Skinner believed the concepts of “stimuli” and “response” would solve the learning problems. According to this theory, the idea that instructional design could be prescribed is based on the belief that it is possible to predict a learner’s behaviour.

Skinner later developed the theory of “operant conditioning”. Ashman and Conway (1997:22) note that although this approach has few remaining advocates, OBE has inherited some of the principles of this approach that still have an influence on current teaching and learning. These are:

- Behaviour should be observable and, therefore, measurable;
- Learning changes behaviour; and
- The aim of a behavioural teaching strategy “is to produce change in each student’s performance and to ensure that change occurs as a result of each lesson.”

Unfortunately, such a position is blind to change that goes beyond the classroom to prevent the learner’s cultural estrangement.

2.4.3.2 Theories of Human Memory

Theories of Human Memory can be defined as a theory that deals with how human beings store, retain and recall information, and the past experiences they have learnt in their life. This theory was developed as a reaction to the Behavioural approach as far as cognitive research is concerned. Ashman and Conway (1997:31) note that in the 1960s research on cognition became dominant when it became evident that the Behavioural approach alone was no longer satisfactory. Theories of Human Memory emerged when discoveries were made about how human beings learn, recall and remember information they have learnt. In fact, in the Behavioural approach, cognition (thinking and knowing) of an individual was disregarded and the value of the learners’ own active participation in their learning was not considered, hence, the introduction of the Human memory approach.

2.4.3.3 The educational objectives movements

The foundation of Outcomes-Based Education can also be traced to four movements: setting educational objectives, competency based education, mastery learning, and criterion referenced assessment. According to Van der Horst and McDonald (2003:7),

each of these concepts has its roots in educational movements of the past. The following paragraphs discuss these theories.

- (a) Objectives - The use of objectives in education dates as far back as the 1860s when Spencer formulated objectives according to a classification of human activities (McAvoy 1985:28). According to this approach, the relationship between what is taught and what is being learned is maintained by the setting of objectives for teachers and learners. For education to be considered to have taken place, the stipulated objectives are to be achieved. In fact, in every lesson planning objectives should be stated to guide the teaching activities.

In 1950, Ralph Tyler developed a model in which he stressed the importance of objectives in curriculum planning and teaching practices. Tyler identified four key issues in his model that teachers should consider while planning curricula and teaching strategies (Van der Horst and McDonald 1997:9; du Toit and du Toit 2004:9). These four key issues and their counterpart in OBE correlating with Ralph Tyler's principles are illustrated in the following table:

Table 4: Ralph Tyler's principles

Tyler's key issues	Outcomes-Based Education
Educational objectives	Outcomes statement
Learning experiences (content)	Content
Organization	Process, activities
Evaluation	Assessment

The emphasis placed on the teacher's well-written objectives that then determine the competence of a learner, however, shows that this model supports a teacher-centred approach rather than the learner-centred approach, which the OBE paradigm advocates (du Toit and du Toit 2004:9). Yet it remains true that the founding of the OBE approach has its roots in theoretical endeavours dating as far back as the 1860s and 1950s.

(b) Competency-Based Education (CBE) - Competency-based means that the emphasis falls on what learners can do, and not on what they might be able to repeat. This theory became prominent in America towards the end of 1960. Its origin, however, can be traced back to the 1920s and according to Tuxworth (1989:11), had its roots in teacher education. The main reason for its introduction was pressure from various groups, such as the business fraternity, who started questioning the value of an education that was not preparing the learners adequately with transferable skills that they would require for fulfilling various life roles (King and Evans 1991:74; Kramer 1999:1). This is a common concern and one that is heard from country to country, including South Africa, and from coast to coast.

The same concern has been expressed about education in South Africa. Along the same lines of thought, Pretorius (1998: ix) avers about education in South Africa:

As far back as the 1980s, business leaders started to voice their opinions concerning South African education, namely, that the skills required by the modern workplace are dissimilar to the direction in which the education system prepared the learners in the country.

According to Baxen and Soudien (1999:133), the fundamental premise of competency-based education is that it is built around the integration of:

- Outcomes goals (in terms of specific skills);
- Instructional experiences (to teach the outcomes); and
- Assessment mechanisms (to determine whether the learners have mastered the outcomes).

Furthermore, Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:10-11), observe that competency-based education is similar to OBE because it demands explicit learning outcomes with

respect to the skills and the level of proficiency required in these skills. It requires a flexible time-frame and a variety of instructional activities to facilitate learning. It also requires the criterion-referenced testing of learning outcomes and the certification based on demonstrated learning outcomes by the learner. The last similarity is on programme adaptability which should be managed to ensure optimum guidance to the learner.

The preceding discussion shows that Competency-based education has many things in common with OBE because it focuses on the achievement of specific competencies. Moreover, this theory supports the idea that the learner is at the centre of his/her own learning. This view is supported by Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:11) who aver that this theory:

...supports the idea that all learning is individual and that the individual (whether the teacher or the learner) is goal-oriented. Furthermore, the teaching-learning process is facilitated if the teacher knows what he/she wants the pupil to learn and if the learner knows exactly what he/she is required to learn.

Although competency-based education concentrates on skills, and ignores other aspects of the total learner, such as the cognitive, affective and psychomotor-domains that OBE is concerned with, Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:24) maintain that it could be concluded that OBE originated from this movement in education.

(c) Mastery learning - Morrison originally developed Mastery Learning in the 1930s. However, today, this theory is mostly associated with Benjamin Bloom and his associates who extended the model (competency-based education) produced by John Carrol. Some authors (for example, Kramer (1999)) regard Mastery Learning as the second “parent” of the current OBE. This is the reason why some people confuse this theory with OBE. This approach is built on the assumption

that all learners can master the materials presented in the lesson if given sufficient time (Baxen and Soudien 1999:133).

Proponents of Mastery Learning believed that with sufficient opportunities and the support of favourable learning conditions, different media or materials and proper back-up guidance, most learners (90-95%) would actually master most learning objectives. This idea is also reflected in OBE. Malan (1997:24) notes that the main characteristics of Mastery Learning are also reflected in OBE. They are as follows:

- Ascertaining prerequisite knowledge or skills to attain goals;
- A flexible time frame to achieve goals;
- Using different media and materials to create enriched teaching/learning contexts; and
- Formative evaluation to provide feedback for the improvement of both teaching and learning.

In the case of the mother tongue, the learner's space to reinforce and practise language skills extends to the home, where even illiterate parents do teach or correct language as they interact with their children.

Some educationists regard mastery learning to be the same thing as the outcomes-based approach to learning. However, Spady disagrees by pointing out the difference between the two approaches. His argument is that Mastery Learning is only concerned with the success achieved, while, OBE, on the other hand, focuses on demonstrating outcomes by all the learners (Brandt 1993:66). Moreover, unlike OBE, this theory tends to be teacher-centred and content-based, rather than learner-centred and outcomes based. According to Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:11), for effective learning to take place, the role the teacher plays is crucial. Although Spady notes the difference between the two approaches, he acknowledges that this theory has close ties with OBE. This is also echoed by King and Evans (1991:73-74) who assert:

...Mastery Learning was the vehicle for the development of the network of outcomes-based schools following a meeting in the early 1980s, when a group of practitioners met to discuss the implementation problem of mastery learning and competency-based education.

- (d) Criterion-Referenced Instruction (CRI) - In any educational approach, assessment is one of the most important instruments used by the educator, for example, to determine the learners' achievement. Criterion-referenced assessment refers to testing or assessment for competence in terms of the set criterion stated in the objective (Malan 1997:24). In this approach, the learners' performance is, thus, not compared to that of other learners, but against a predetermined standard (Van der Horst and McDonald 1997:12). This implies that if learners achieve up to the set minimum standard of proficiency, they can proceed to the next level, but if they fail to do so they cannot proceed to the next unit standard and remedial intervention should follow.

The preceding discussion clearly shows that criterion-referenced assessment has a meaningful role to play in OBE where specific outcomes (knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) are required. Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:12) also share this view by agreeing that criterion-referenced assessment is the most appropriate mode of assessment in OBE though they caution that this form of assessment should only form a small part of the comprehensive assessment in OBE.

In conclusion of this section, research and debate on the theoretical background of OBE will probably engage the attention of scholars for some time to come, but many of these scholars generally believe that OBE has its roots in the Educational Objectives Movements, namely, Objectives, Competency-Based Learning, Mastery Learning and Criterion-Referenced Assessment because these approaches share many of the OBE characteristics. Van der Horst and McDonald (2003:11) support these views:

...the four educational approaches (objectives, competency-based education, Mastery Learning and Criterion-Referenced Assessment) together form the theoretical foundation of what is now called Outcomes-Based Education. In Outcomes-Based Education many of the characteristics of these four approaches are integrated.

However, this does not suggest that other approaches that are not discussed in this section are irrelevant. Also, there are other actors in educational facilitation who have not been mentioned explicitly here.

2.4.4 Different Approaches to Outcomes-Based Education

There are different views about OBE. These are the Behaviourist and the Constructivist schools of thought. Various works (Spady and Marshall 1991: 67-72; Spady 1994:63-64; Brady 1995:9 and DOE 1997a:18) state that there are basically three forms of OBE, namely, traditional, transitional and transformational OBE. The key differences among the three types are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

2.4.4.1 The traditional approach

In the traditional approach, priorities are set for learning. This is an approach where the emphasis is on teacher-centred and subject-centred learning (Van Scotter et al 1991:28). Outcomes are formulated directly from the content of an existing curriculum. These clearly defined outcomes are not holistic in nature and may be totally unrelated to the real world outside the classroom and the school (Kramer 1999:32). Furthermore, in this approach, the long-term outcomes of learning are not generalizable or transferable to other learning areas (Spady 1994:18-19).

This approach is based on the pursuit of academic excellence, rooted in knowledge that has been accumulated over the centuries of western civilization. According to du Toit

and du Toit (2004:12), the traditional approach leans towards the Behaviourist point of view. According to Spady and Marshall (1991:69), this approach presents five problems.

Firstly, the demonstration of competence is limited to a small segment of instruction. The second problem is that the content and structure of the curriculum remain the same, except with a clearer focus. Thirdly, the performance context is assumed to be the classroom or the school. Fourthly, the curriculum is only loosely aligned with exit outcomes at graduation, and these outcomes tend to be narrow in scope. The fifth problem is that it does not challenge the time frame of schooling and “credentialing or placement”. The outcomes in this approach are, thus, referred to as traditional outcomes. Some scholars viewed this approach as ineffective. Therefore, the transitional approach was introduced to replace the traditional approach.

2.4.4.2 The transitional approach

This is an educational approach that started in the early eighties (Pretorius 1998: x). It lies between traditional and transformational OBE in terms of its scope and purpose (Williamson 2000:2). This approach responds to questions, such as “What is most essential for our learners to know?” and “What should they be able to do after they have graduated?” Unlike the traditional approach, the outcomes in this approach are characterised by cognitive abilities of a higher level.

The transitional approach emphasises higher-order competencies such as critical thinking, good communication, as well as technological applications of ideas and concepts in problem-solving situations (du Toit and du Toit 2004:12). The curriculum design process begins by looking at the critical outcomes, such as knowledge, skills and attitudes, and not with the existing syllabi (as in the traditional approach). Thus, less emphasis is placed on particular kinds of knowledge and information.

Teaching in the transitional approach is geared towards what is essential for learners to know and goes beyond the narrow objectives of the syllabus (du Toit and du Toit 2004:12). The outcomes in this approach are “relatively complex,...are generalisable

across content areas and require substantial degrees of integration, synthesis, and functional application” (Spady 1994:19). This approach lies between the Behaviourist and Constructivist points of view, and the outcomes are referred to as transitional outcomes.

2.4.4.3 The transformational approach

The traditional and the transitional approaches were criticised for being Eurocentric and not helping learners in different countries to develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to be functional and competent in their society. Thus, a shift in the development of OBE from a traditional approach through a transitional to a transformational approach (du Toit and du Toit 2004:12) was necessary. Spady and Marshall (1991:70) write about this shift as follows:

When viewed from this future-oriented, life-role perspective, success in school is of limited benefit unless learners are equipped to transfer that success to life in a complex, challenging, high-tech future.

According to Spady and Marshall (1991:68), transformational OBE “is a collaborative, flexible, trans-disciplinary, outcome-based, open-system, empowerment-oriented approach to schooling”. Unlike the traditional and transitional approaches, in this approach the critical outcomes describe the package of competencies that learners need in order to be lifelong learners in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This philosophy requires a high level of ownership, integration, synthesis, and functional application of prior learning, because learners need to respond to the complexities of real life (Spady 1994:19).

One of the greatest challenges facing South Africa in its transition from an autocratic and unequal society to a democratic society is developing an education system that is flexible and able to prepare learners who can contribute to the mission and vision of the

transformed society. The new education system has to accommodate learners of all historical origins and the various backgrounds and experiences of learners in the education system. This includes the white learners with a history of privilege and advantage, and black learners, from a historically disadvantaged race.

Out of the traditional, transitional and transformational approaches, the most complex is the last approach. In spite of its complexity, this is the approach policy makers in South Africa have adopted. This approach was chosen because the principles of the former education system, which were based on the traditional approach with Western origins, did not meet the long-term real-life needs of learners. This situation mostly arises when there has been a rapid change in all spheres of a society.

This discussion paves the way for the discussion which will make readers understand the link between OBE and the teaching of languages. This fact will be illustrated in the following section.

2.5 THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES

2.5.1 The role of language

The role of language in any society and in education cannot be overemphasized. In South Africa such a role should be seen in relation to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 (RSA 1996a) and the subsequent Department of Education's Language-in-Education Policy (DoE 1997d). Schools are institutions in which policies relating to languages as media of instruction and as subjects are implemented.

For the purpose of this section, African languages, as first or home languages, are the main focus of this study. Generally, the teaching of African languages has always given the education authorities much cause for concern. Fortune (1964:1) observes that:

Where vernacular languages are used in education in Africa, they usually figure in two

ways: (i) during the early years they are the medium of instruction and the language in which reading and writing are taught. (ii) After the early years, a period which varies from country to country, and after the vernaculars have been replaced as the medium of instruction by a world language such as English, they form a subject of the curriculum.

Fortune's use of the term "vernacular" is in reference specifically to African languages. In fact, in South Africa, the term is commonly used to refer exclusively to local African languages, which is not entirely correct as the term universally means an indigenous dialect, or colloquial speech as opposed to literary language.

Webb and Sure (2000:290) report that among some African language speakers there is a belief that there is no need to study African languages as first languages as learners enter the school with the ability to use these languages. However, in many African countries, and South Africa is no exception, these languages enjoy a prominent position in various school curricula. They are included as both media of instruction and as school subjects.

According to Webb and Sure (2000:290-291), the goals of first language study in African languages include the development of pupils' skills in performing advanced language-based cognitive tasks, such as reasoning, understanding, and explaining abstract concepts; more specifically, listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills need to be fully developed, and school-leavers should have the ability to comprehend complex texts, to produce such texts themselves, and to interpret and evaluate them. Webb and Sure furthermore claim that the development of linguistic skills in the standardized variety of the language, in other words, the acquisition of the ability to operate effectively in formal contexts and public life in the first language, is also important. Moreover, the understanding of the linguistic character of pupils' first

languages and the ways in which language is used in social and public life should be considered.

Another goal to be considered is that of understanding and appreciating the products of the first-language community, including its literary products. Linked to this goal, another goal of first language study is the development of pupils' ability to discover information (language as a heuristic tool), to explore their own inner world, and to develop their creativity (something that can only really occur in a language that is known extremely well). The last goal of first language study as stated by Webb and Sure (2000:290-291) is the understanding of the role of language in cultural life, including the development of an attitude of tolerance towards communities with different languages.

From the above-mentioned first-language goals, it is clear that attention to the study of African languages as school subjects is of critical importance to the development of the learner in particular, and the society, in general. Obviously, the knowledge of these languages is necessary for the success of learners in their other school learning areas.

Although there is not enough support among parents for the teaching and learning of African languages in schools (Van der Poll 1989:13; Babane 2003), curriculum experts found it necessary to include these languages in the school curricula. To be included in the curriculum, subjects have to meet certain standards, after being considered carefully by curriculum experts. Masenya (1991:26) stresses the point that no subject may be included in the curricula without passing "an acid test" to decide whether it will benefit the learners for whom it is being designed. Brumfit and Roberts (1983:94) justify the teaching of African languages in schools by pointing out that:

...there can be no justification for teaching the mother tongue in schools if it is not believed that improvement is thereby made possible in its use. Any kind of teaching presupposes that there is some view of increased competence in the

abilities being developed. So by definition, pupils learning the mother tongue will end up using it differently from the way they used it in the beginning.

This quotation clearly shows that the inclusion of African languages in a school curriculum is for a good cause because it helps the learners in their development. It should be emphasised that the inclusion of these languages in the school curriculum is a result of their usefulness and appropriateness, and not because they are considered to be easy subjects for both learners and teachers (Masenya 1991:27).

The importance of African languages in any school curriculum is to enhance the African language-speaking learners' general educational development by having a good command of their first language. The structure of a particular language helps the native speakers of that language in their perception of reality. It is language, especially one's mother tongue that makes an individual who he/she is. It could be alluded that if, then, it is language more than anything else we can observe which makes us men, it is ultimately the study of language which is most likely to throw light on the essential humanness of human beings.

From the foregoing discussion it should be evident that African languages are very important tools to their speakers. This is the reason why they are included in the school curriculum, both as subjects and languages of teaching and learning. It is this researcher's considered view that African languages, as school subjects, are as important as mathematics, physical science or biology, or any other learning area in the school curriculum.

During the apartheid era African languages were given prominence in the education of Africans, for different reasons from the ones stated above. After the victory of the Nationalist Party in the election exclusively for white people in 1948, the apartheid regime gave prominence to African languages by making them official languages in

their respective areas. This was done to promote the political interests of separate development. In fact, the policy was to keep the African language speaking communities separate from one another and from Afrikaans and English speaking communities (Nxumalo 2000:95).

2.5.2 Traditional methods versus the OBE approach to teaching African Languages

The aim of this section is to do some comparison of the traditional methods and the OBE approach of teaching and learning of African languages. It is crucial for the purposes of this thesis to understand the difference so that readers should have a clear perspective of the type of approach used during the apartheid era and the approach used in post apartheid South Africa.

The syllabi used for teaching African languages during the apartheid era were drafted to be in line with the political needs of the government of the day. The construction of syllabi was in the hands of white South Africans. Syllabi were designed for all African languages in South Africa, namely, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele, Swati, Tsonga, and Venda without differentiating between the specific languages. The syllabi, including the aims, were written in English, although they were supposed to benefit different language groups. It was then the duty of each language teacher to translate every aspect of the syllabus into the relevant language. Compliance to the nationally prescribed and uniform syllabi for each racial group was also non-negotiable before 1994.

Using these prescribed syllabi was viewed in a bad light (Nkondo 1997:9). When the new government took over, many educational theorists and politicians felt there was a need for a paradigm shift because of criticisms levelled against the pre-1994 syllabi and curricula, hence the change and replacement of the syllabi by the curriculum that uses the OBE approach. The following paragraphs look at some of these criticisms.

During the apartheid era the traditional approach to teaching and learning was used, while the OBE approach is used in the democratic era. In the traditional approach curriculum design was teacher-centred and content-driven. This implies that teachers played a central role in the transmission of knowledge, while content formed the most critical components of the curriculum. The role of the teacher in this syllabus was that he/she was at the centre of the teaching and learning. Teachers had direct control of what and how learners should learn, and teachers were regarded as being “expert” knowledge providers. In differentiating between the apartheid and outcomes-based education, Jansen (1999:23) notes that the teacher was subservient to the dictates of the state and the tasks they taught were prescribed by an imposed syllabus. Teachers were expected to teach exactly what was prescribed in the syllabus, with little creativity and innovation expected from them. This then led to the negotiated syllabus, which was launched only after the democratic elections in 1994, as Clarke and Starr (1991:13) observe:

The negotiated model is totally different from other syllabi in that it allows full learner participation in the selection of content, mode of working, route of working, assessment and so on.

The OBE approach, on the other hand, is learner-centred and outcomes-driven. The learner in this approach is expected to be an active participant in the learning process rather than to be a passive recipient of knowledge.

The traditional approach used the teaching methods which included the textbook, the audio-lingual method and the grammar-translation method. It should be pointed out that some of these methods, such as the grammar-translation method, were specifically designed to be used in the teaching of classical languages. Mahope (1998:8) has also noted that the grammar-translation method was forced upon the African languages without recognition of the uniqueness of their grammatical structure.

Moreover, the use of these methods, for example, the textbook method, was too traditional in the sense that in many cases teachers used the textbooks continuously, uncritically and slavishly. This over-reliance on textbooks, combined with rote-learning, resulted in learners memorising passages from these textbooks without any idea of the meaning of those passages. After memorisation had taken place, the learner was expected to reproduce the learned information raw during the examination. This regurgitation of information in examinations brings the next important feature of this traditional approach to teaching the languages, the formal examinations.

The educational system and the African languages syllabi were examination-driven. The mode of assessment in the traditional approach was exclusively the graded examinations. In fact, the form of assessment practices privileged the summative assessment approach. The implementation of the OBE approach, however, heralds the use of a variety of assessment strategies with emphasis on continuous assessment (often abbreviated to CASS) (Phalanndwa 2002:35).

The African languages syllabi, specifically, prior to the OBE approach, focused on the classroom activities while learners were seen as passive recipients of the information given to them. In fact, the mind of the learners was regarded as blank, and teachers were to filter through all the information to their learners. The learners had little or no control over their own learning process.

It is crucial for the purposes of this section to understand that one of the striking features of the previous syllabus was that above all else it emphasised content and over-relied on facts. The syllabus was set in such a way that teachers were tied to cover the content which was placed into rigid time-frames. In order to achieve this, the content was defined by class periods, and periodic tests.

From the preceding discussion, it is quite clear that the two approaches, namely, the traditional teaching method and the OBE approach, differ from each other. In elaborating these differences the points emphasised include the curriculum design and

the methods of teaching these African languages. The section further explicates the difference between the forms of evaluation used by both the traditional and the OBE approach.

2.5.3 Language, Literacy and Communication

According to the new model of education in South Africa, knowledge has been integrated into eight learning areas (groups of related knowledge, understanding, skills, values, and attitudes). These learning areas are: Language, Literacy and Communication; Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Science; Human and Social Sciences (HSS); Natural Sciences (NS); Technology (TECH); Arts and Culture (A & C); Economic and Management Sciences (EMS); and Life Orientation (LO).

2.5.3.1 The rationale for the learning of Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC)

In each learning area there are learning outcomes that each learner should achieve. These outcomes are based on the rationale for that learning area. The rationale for the eight learning areas is found in the document of the Department of Education (DoE 1997b: 22-238). The rationale for the learning area of Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC) is intrinsic to human development and central to lifelong learning, as the new model advocates (Pretorius 1998:30).

It is interesting to note that this learning area, of all the learning areas, is the foundation of, supports, and underlies the rest of the learning areas, since language is the medium through which all teaching, learning and assessment takes place. Therefore, the rationale for the language (including sign language and alternative and augmentative methods of communication) learning area is to make meaning and negotiate meaning and understanding. Another rationale is the access to education, information and literacy. Furthermore; it is to think, express thoughts and emotions logically, critically and creatively. Learners should be able to respond with empathy to the thoughts and

emotions of others as well as to interact and participate socially, politically, economically, culturally, and spiritually.

Moreover, the rationale is to understand the relationship between language and power, influence relationships through that understanding and develop and reflect critically on values and attitudes. It is the rationale for the language to communicate in different contexts by using a range of registers and language varieties. The last rationale is to use standard forms of language where appropriate.

The policy document further highlights the advancement of multilingualism as a major resource that will afford learners the opportunity to develop and value their home language, culture and literacy. Learners should value other languages, cultures and literacy in a multi-cultural country and in international contexts. Lastly, they need a shared understanding of a common South African culture.

LLC, within a policy that encourages additive multilingualism, can lead to extreme mastery of one's culture, which will influence the filter with which the learner perceives all other learning areas and all of life.

2.5.3.2 Specific outcomes for the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area

There are seven specific outcomes developed for the Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC) learning area. These outcomes are in relation to the Constitution of the RSA. The specific outcomes for the LLC learning area Language, Literacy and Communication, are that learners should be able to make and negotiate meaning and understanding. They must show critical awareness of language usage and respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural, and social values in texts. The use of information from a variety of sources and situations is also important. Learners should know and apply language structures and conventions and context. Learners should be able to use language for learning and apply appropriate communication strategies for specific purposes and situations.

Teachers, and for the purpose of this study specifically, African languages teachers, should be acquainted with all the above specific outcomes for effective teaching and learning of these African languages to take place. The use of any information which can promote effective teaching and learning in the teaching of African languages is imperative. Learners should be made to understand the importance of learning African languages by achieving the relevant specific outcomes as specified in their syllabus.

2.6 SUMMARY

The discussion in this chapter shows that the emphasis of African language teaching in South Africa has shifted from the traditional approach which was teacher-centred and content-driven to an outcomes-based approach which is learner-centred and outcomes-driven.

This chapter also addresses some of the reasons for the paradigm shift in the education system in South Africa. Furthermore, the relationship between OBE, Curriculum 2005, the Revised National Curriculum Statement and the National Curriculum Statement was elucidated. The history of OBE was traced to the conclusion that the four educational approaches, namely, educational objectives movement, competency-based education, mastery learning, and criterion-referenced assessment, together form the theoretical foundation of OBE. This historical background serves to highlight the fact that the curriculum debate is not unique to South Africa. The three different approaches to the OBE system were discussed: the traditional, transitional and transformational approaches. The chapter also discussed the rationale and the specific outcomes of the Language, Literacy and Communication learning area.

The chapter then concluded by looking at the comparison between the traditional teaching methods and the OBE approach to the teaching of African languages. More importantly, it was highlighted that the two approaches differ in terms of curriculum design, assessment and methods of teaching these African languages. It is hoped that these kinds of insights as presented in this chapter will inform teachers, curriculum

designers and the Department of Education during their process of reviewing this approach.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a detailed discussion of the research methodology that was followed to pursue the objectives of the study. The first part of the chapter deals with the nature of the study and its paradigm. This is followed by a comprehensive outline of the design of the study. The chapter concludes by discussing ethical considerations for the study.

3.2 THE NATURE OF THE STUDY AND ITS PARADIGM

The study was aimed at investigating how teachers of African languages apply OBE principles in their teaching of senior phase school learners. In order to achieve this aim the study followed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is defined by Holloway (1997:1) as “a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live”. This approach was selected because it allows for an exploration of the behaviour, perspectives and experiences of the people studied, as pointed out by Holloway (1997:1). This approach gave the present researcher an opportunity to interact with individuals or groups whose experiences the researcher wanted to understand.

In its nature the qualitative research approach is interrelated with the interpretive research paradigm. The concept “interpretative” is used interchangeably by other authors with phenomenology (Mouton and Marais 1990:19). The term “interpretative” refers to the fact that the aim of such research is not to explain human behaviour in terms of universally valid laws or generalizations. Rather, it seeks to understand and interpret the meanings and intentions that underlie everyday human action (Mouton 1988:1 and Hysamen 1994:17-18). In this study, this paradigm was used to attempt to

understand the meaning of events and interactions of curriculum supervisors and teachers in their training workshops and African languages classrooms respectively.

The techniques mainly used by interpretative paradigms are both in-depth interviews and participant observations. These techniques require that the researcher spend much time in direct personal contact with those being studied in their natural settings. There is a long connection between these techniques of data collection and phenomenological theory. The belief of this paradigm is that if you want to understand the way people think about their world you need to get close to them, to hear them talk and observe them in their day-to-day lives (Bogdan and Biklen 2007:35). In fact, the researcher gathered large quantities of detailed qualitative data to acquire an in-depth understanding of how the participants create meaning in everyday life.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The concept “research design” refers to the planned structure of an investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions (McMillan and Schumacher 1993:31; Hysamen, 1994:10; and De Vos *et al* 2005:389). A design entails an outline and discussion of the procedure that was used for conducting a study, which includes answers to the questions when, from whom, and under what conditions the data were obtained. In fact, the design indicates how the research was set up, what happened to the participants and what methods of data collection were used.

The following questions were raised to guide the research design:

- i. To what extent are teachers knowledgeable about the OBE approach?
- ii. How do teachers of African languages in the senior phase apply OBE principles in classroom teaching and learning?

- iii. What problems are experienced with the current OBE teaching and learning methods used in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of the Limpopo Province?
- iv. What intervention programmes by the Department of Education are in place to monitor and promote the use of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages at senior phase in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of the Limpopo Province?
- v. What could be recommended for the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase?

What followed was the design of the study in pursuit of the answers to the formulated research questions.

3.3.1 Sampling and Sampling Procedures

Sampling was important because the total population was too large and the scope of the problem too wide. It, therefore, became necessary to decide on how to reduce the scope of the investigation. In order to understand the phenomenon, a small sample was needed. In other words, generalisability was less important than the collection of data and the understanding of the ideas of the people chosen for the sample, as recommended by Holloway (1997:142).

In order to select participants for the current study, purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling (also known as judgemental sampling) is one of the types of non-probability sampling methods in which every person does not have an equal opportunity to be part of the sample. In purposive sampling the researcher uses his/her own judgement about the individuals to be sampled for the purpose of the study (Wagenaar and Babbie 1992:231; McNeil 1995:39).

In this study, the researcher decided purposively to use two areas out of a possible five, Vhembe District and one area in the Mopani District, on the basis of their typicality. Grinnell (1988:253) indicates that “a primary assumption in purposive sampling is that by selecting persons who are ‘typical’ with regard to our study’s variables, any errors of judgement in selection will tend to counterbalance one another”. Furthermore, the researcher chose purposive sampling because it allowed the researcher to select participants that the researcher deemed to be informed about the topic under investigation. In purposive sampling researchers purposely seek typical and divergent data (De Vos 2002:335). It should also be noted that the manner in which purposive sampling was used in this study was not fixed in advance but was an ongoing process guided by emerging ideas.

The researcher preferred to conduct this study in these districts because of a number of factors such as: the selected areas in these districts were part of the now disbanded Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda homelands. He himself was born and bred in the Vhembe District in the former Gazankulu homeland, and studied at a tertiary institution in the former Lebowa homeland. He is currently working in the former Venda homeland. The researcher is thus familiar with the three African languages and cultures of the inhabitants of the districts.

Other areas in these districts were purposively left out, firstly, because they were too far away from the researcher’s areas of operation. Secondly, they were well-represented by the areas that were selected. Lastly, they were also under the same district control as the chosen areas. The researcher therefore felt that the information gathered from the two sampled areas would not be significantly different from that of the areas purposively left out.

The study was set out to investigate the teaching of three African languages, namely, Sesotho sa Leboa, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. These languages are predominantly spoken and taught in the Sekgosese, Thohoyandou and Malamulele areas respectively. Map 2 in Appendix B shows the research site for this study.

This study was only conducted in ten secondary schools. The ten secondary schools were selected from three circuit offices, namely, Sekgosesese, Thohoyandou and Malamulele. In order to choose these circuit offices purposive sampling was used. The selected circuit offices had both urban and rural schools in which the African languages under investigation were taught as first languages. The ten selected schools were selected purposively considering accessibility as a key factor. A sample size of 17 teachers from the 10 secondary schools was used. The researcher arrived at this number of participants by requesting two African language teachers in each selected school. The total number was 20 but only 17 teachers were available to take part in this study. In selecting schools which participated in this study, a systematic sampling procedure was used. The total number of schools from which the selection was made was 90. The number (10) was selected and then every tenth school was selected to participate in this study. However, for the tenth school the researcher selected the one which was very close to his home which was not selected while using the systematic sampling.

The following table reveals the statistics of the number of circuits, secondary schools and the number of sampled schools in the selected areas of the Vhembe and Mopani Districts

Table 5: Statistics of the numbers of circuits and secondary schools

AREA	<u>CIRCUITS</u>	<u>SECONDARY SCHOOLS</u>	<u>SAMPLE</u>
1. Malamulele	3	19	3
2. Sekgosesese	5	42	3
3.Thohoyandou	5	29	4
TOTAL	13	90	10

Table 5 shows the number of area offices, circuit offices and schools from which samples were drawn. From the ten randomly sampled schools, three schools were from an urban area and the remaining seven were from rural areas. A list of areas and their respective schools was provided by the regional managers. The sample size was as

follows: seventeen teachers as elaborated in the previous paragraph, two curriculum supervisors and one curriculum developer. The total sample size for this study was twenty.

3.3.2 Participants Selected

The participants included in this study were curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors and teachers.

- i. **Curriculum developers:** These were government officials responsible for developing syllabi. The officials were either attached to government offices or experts from higher educational institutions requested specifically to develop syllabi in line with the demands of the social and economic policies of the country.
- ii. **Curriculum supervisors:** These were former lecturers of colleges of education. These lecturers were still attached to those former colleges because they could not be redeployed to either circuit offices or schools. Their responsibility was to conduct workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers aimed at “training” them to understand the theory behind the OBE approach and the application of its principles in the teaching of African languages. In this study, these curriculum supervisors were observed during training workshops for teachers, and were later interviewed.
- iii. **Teachers:** These were people entrusted with the day-to-day responsibilities of facilitating learning in classrooms. Teachers of African languages in the selected languages (i.e. Sesotho sa Leboa, Xitsonga and Tshivenda) senior phase, namely, Grades eight and nine, were observed and later interviewed.

3.3.3 Gaining Entry

In order to proceed with this study, the researcher first sought permission from the relevant authorities, such as the Head of the Department of Education in the Limpopo Province, the research office of the Department, the district office, circuit offices and school principals through a letter (see Appendix C). Furthermore, permission was sought from the Head of the Department to conduct interviews with curriculum developers and curriculum supervisors.

The researcher was granted permission by the Head of the Department through a letter, which was used as proof to the participants that this was a genuine educational study (see Appendix C). Permission was also sought from the Vhembe and Mopani District managers.

After authorisation was granted by the district managers, further permission was sought from the school principals two weeks before the researcher's intended visit. Permission to conduct the research was obtained either in writing or verbally from all the school principals. The researcher then made the necessary appointments with the participants through their school principals regarding suitable days and times for a visit.

Letters delineating the purpose of the study, the importance of the participants' contributions, as well as the significance of the study, were given to the participants. The researcher collected the data personally, rather than using what Cresswell (1994:162) calls "some inanimate mechanism".

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

In this study, data were collected from both primary (people) and secondary (printed) sources. The purpose of using more than one method was not only to avoid bias but also to achieve more balanced results. It was the view of the researcher that one method would not yield the desired results.

In the qualitative approach three broad techniques of data collection- observation, interviewing and documentary analysis are usually used. As already stated in Chapter One, the methods used in this study involved classroom observation and interviewing techniques. A secondary method, documentary analysis, was also utilized. These techniques were used in such a way that they best addressed and answered the stated research questions.

It should, furthermore, be noted that data in this study were collected in a real life situation. Curriculum developers were interviewed, and then curriculum supervisors and teachers were observed and later interviewed in their natural settings. Bogdan and Biklen (2007:45) support this approach by indicating that "...teachers and their students define the real world together as they interact each day in their classrooms". The data gathering procedures employed and the rationale for their choice in this study are hereunder briefly discussed.

3.4.1 Classroom Observations

All scientific studies begin with observation and end with observation in order to confirm the final validity of the observed behaviour. The observation technique is regarded as the primary way of collecting research data. Borg and Gall (1983) point the following out as characteristics of an observational case study:

- i. There is a particular place in the organisation.
- ii. There is a specific group of people.
- iii. Some activity by the group is evident.

The conditions in which the current study was conducted share the characteristics mentioned by Borg and Gall (1983). The particular places in which this study was conducted were classrooms of African languages involving teachers and Grades 8 and 9 senior phase learners, and teacher training workshops. Teaching and learning cannot be separated from each other because they are interdependent. African languages

teachers, their learners and curriculum supervisors were thus the specific group of people whose actions were observed and analysed.

The study employed participant and non-participant observation techniques. In non-participant observation, the researcher does not participate in the event/phenomenon she/he is observing. The researcher would be “on the outside looking in and does not intentionally interact with, or affect, the object of the observation” (Guy 1981:169).

Conversely, participant observation is a special form of observation in which researchers immerse themselves in the setting so that they can hear, see and experience the reality as participants do (Burns and Grove 1993:429; Wagenaar and Babbie 1992:289-290). Here the researcher “actually becomes part of, a participant in, the situation to be observed” (Guy 1981:169).

The observation technique was used to collect data from the concerned senior phase classes of African languages. In order to achieve this teachers whose classes formed part of the observation were approached in order to obtain their consent. Those who consented provided their time tables to allow the researcher to identify dates for visits, which were concealed from the teachers to ensure that the teachers did not prepare themselves specifically for the observation. In that way the plans of the teacher on which lesson to teach and the teaching method used were not obstructed.

The teachers were only informed upon arrival, which was timed to allow for arrangement for the actual observation. In the classrooms the observer was introduced as a learner teacher intending to acquire experience in the OBE approach and specifically in the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. This made the learners free to participate in the learning process without feeling intimidated.

During classroom observations, specific attention was paid to the application of the following OBE principles:

- i. The learner-centred approach
- ii. Teacher facilitation
- iii. Integration of knowledge

The researcher's role as a non-participant observer was to take short notes on how each lesson progressed and to listen to the subject matter and observe the activities of both learners and teachers. Observations took place from 17 January to 31 May 2007. Out of the ten sampled schools only six schools were observed. Several attempts were made to secure appointments with the other four schools without success. The authorities or teachers in those four schools gave excuses for the observation not to be conducted.

Participant observation was used during the teacher training workshops. In fact, the researcher participated in all the activities the teachers participated in, that is, do the exercises given by the curriculum supervisors and participated in discussions teachers had to engage in during the workshops. This helped in maximising observational efficacy, minimising the researcher's bias and allowed verification of the data.

After realising that there were cluster school sessions aimed at improving the capacity of teachers in the OBE approach, it was deemed necessary to observe them. The cluster school meeting sessions were observed, using the participatory technique (See above) in a similar way to the training workshops. Only two meetings for cluster schools were attended. Observations of cluster schools meetings took place in March and April 2007.

Curriculum supervisors were also observed. These were curriculum specialists responsible for assisting teachers in the province on different Learning Areas. Only curriculum supervisors responsible for home languages under investigation were observed. Their responsibility was to conduct staff development programmes as well as in-service training of teachers. They were expected to have hands-on experience on the provincial and national needs in education. Since they were "trainers" of teachers, their

input was very important for this study. Curriculum supervisors were observed when conducting their training workshops with teachers. The researcher made appointments for this purpose. Two training workshops were observed. Observations for curriculum supervisors took place in February and March 2007.

Despite the merits of the observation method, it has some limitations. The presence of the researcher in their classrooms is likely to have made concerned parties (teachers, learners and curriculum supervisors) behave differently from how they usually behave in the performance of their daily practice. Consequently, it was difficult for the researcher to make accurate observations.

3.4.2 Conducting the Interviews

In addition to observations, another data collection method was required to answer the research questions of the current study. This was achieved through interviews. An interview schedule containing open-ended (unstructured) questions was used for data collection. The use of this technique enabled the researcher to have a direct verbal interaction with the participants. Furthermore, and most importantly, it allowed for greater depth of information from the participants. A copy of the interview schedule is presented in Appendix A.

This method enabled the researcher to get closer to the participants in order to obtain reliable information relevant to the topic under study. Mahlangu (1987:87) shares this view when he avers that "...by this method the researcher in education establishes a confidential relationship and is able, as by no other method, to obtain information ..."

Practically, data collection consisted of face-to-face interviewing of curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors, and individual teachers; and focus group interviews with teachers. In support of the sentiments of Van Dalen (1979:160), the use of the unstructured interview schedule in this study enabled the researcher to penetrate behind initial answers, follow up unexpected clues, redirect the inquiry into more

fruitful channels on the basis of emerging data, and modify categories to provide for a more meaningful analysis of data.

Interviews were conducted with seventeen individual teachers from the senior phases in the selected ten secondary schools, that is, one or two teachers per school, as already indicated. It needs to be mentioned that interviews were conducted with teachers in the four schools which did not honour the observation appointment. The background and profile of the teachers under investigation are given in this section. In compiling a balanced sample of teachers, gender, grades taught, and schools and districts where the teachers were, were considered. In this study the majority (eleven) of the teachers were male whereas there were six females. Eight out of the seventeen teachers were grade 9 teachers while nine were grade eight teachers. Seventeen teachers from ten schools participated in this study. Seven schools were from rural areas while three schools were from urban areas. Seven schools were in Vhembe District while three were in Mopani District.

Appointments for the interviews with those teachers were made mainly through their school principals. All interviews were arranged and conducted at the convenience of the interviewees, that is, during school hours. Interviews were conducted between 17 January and 31 May 2007.

The discussions were enjoyable for the participants as the environment was non-threatening. They shared their views and ideas about the topic under investigation. The timing of the interviews was good because it was conducted a day after finalizing the observations. The interviews were conducted with selected teachers from different sampled schools that showed much interest in this study.

Interviews with the provincial curriculum supervisors were conducted after appointments had been made with them. Two curriculum supervisors were interviewed. In addition, an individual interview with one provincial curriculum developer was conducted. The main

objective for interviewing these stakeholders was to obtain information regarding the OBE principles as outlined in the education policy documents.

In total, twenty participants were interviewed in this study. The interviews took one and a half to two hours to complete. It was assumed that the information gathered in this study would represent those of the majority of provincial curriculum developers, provincial curriculum supervisors and teachers in the whole Province. The views of the stakeholders who participated in the interview protocols on the topic under study are presented and analysed in the next chapter.

3.4.3 Document Analysis

Most educational research studies such as this one require the analysis of documentary evidence. Document analyses in this study involve secondary sources that were used to supplement information obtained through observations and interviews. Although document analysis may involve the analysis of non-written sources such as videos, slides, films, in this study, only limited sources were analysed.

In document analysis, we distinguish between unsolicited and solicited documents. The former refers to documents that are produced without research in mind, while the latter refers to documents that are produced at the request of the researcher (Mouton 1988:18). In this study the documents consulted were unsolicited as the researcher only sought existing documents used by the participants.

In analysing documents for this study, the researcher was guided by Patton's (1990) work. According to Patton (1990:10), documentary analysis in qualitative research includes "...quotations, or entire passages from organizational, clinical, or program records; memoranda and correspondences; official publications and reports; personal diaries..." Document analysis in this study related to the new Curriculum 2005, and in particular, the application of OBE principles to language teaching. The key participants were requested to submit all documents related to the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase.

The researcher's intention was to establish the extent to which such documents were consistent with what teachers did in their classrooms. The teacher's daily preparations, the content of the syllabus, the work schedule and other classroom materials were analysed. The analysis of these documents, together with the analysis of emerging themes and sub-themes, contributed to a rich description of this study. The present researcher regarded those documents as most relevant and appropriate for this study.

Patton (1990:233) is of the opinion that document analysis in a research study serves two purposes, namely:

- i. They are a basic source of information about programme decisions and background, or activities and processes; and
- ii. They may give the evaluator ideas about important questions to pursue through more direct observation and interviewing.

3.4.4 Rationale for the Choice of Techniques used in the Current Study

The rationale for choosing observations and interviews as data collection techniques was because the researcher was interested in the relationship between the views and practice. For the classroom observations the researcher got an opportunity to see the curriculum supervisors giving lectures during teachers' workshops and the teachers in action. This then helped the researcher to describe their actions and activity.

Furthermore, the rationale for using interviews was because Sherman and Webb (1995:05) argue that "qualitative researchers want those who are studied to speak for themselves". It was the view of the researcher that when this method was employed, the participants would be allowed to air their views about the topic under investigation.

3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The researcher in this study had to ensure the validity of the research instruments before embarking on the process of data collection. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:290), the most important question addressing the notion of validity in qualitative research is “how can an inquirer persuade his or her audience that the research findings of a study are worth paying attention to?” In this study, the researcher was convinced that several factors contributed to the integrity and validity of the instruments. The first related to the educational background of the researcher in both language and educational fields. The researcher spent several years teaching in this area and, therefore, was familiar with the policies and approaches over the years regarding the teaching of African languages, both at secondary school and tertiary institutions.

Another means of establishing validity in the data collection of this study was the triangulation of methods and of sources. The concept triangulation was originally coined by Denzin (1989) to refer to the use of multiple, independent methods of obtaining data in a single investigation in order to arrive at the same research findings. Studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method than studies that use variety of methods and techniques. In this study the combinations of interviewing, observation and document analysis were used with a view to balance out their shortcomings. In fact, the strengths of one research method compensated for the weaknesses of another method. Multiple sources, in the form of curriculum supervisors, a curriculum developer, and teachers as individuals and in focus groups, were utilised as another form of triangulation.

In this study, the following advantages of triangulation as discussed by Jick (1983:145-147) were considered:

- It allows researchers to be more confident of their results.
- It may help to uncover the deviant or off-quadrant dimension of a phenomenon.

- The use of multi-methods can lead to a synthesis or integration of theories.
- Triangulation may serve as the critical test, by virtue of its comprehensiveness, of competing theories.

In this study the researcher used multiple methods of data collection because he felt that no single technique could be trusted to provide comprehensive information needed for this study. By combining the three methods used in this study the researcher was able to increase both the validity and the reliability of the findings. Different methods were engaged with the aim of looking for common themes that appeared in the data gleaned from both methods.

Furthermore, to increase the reliability in this study the researcher presented the research data to three fellow doctoral students from the Universities of South Africa, Limpopo and Pretoria respectively, who gave their inputs. Discussions with colleagues and other researchers also took place. Furthermore, a paper was presented in the MER Mathivha Centre for African languages, Arts and Culture Summer Seminar. The comments and suggestions of the discussions were then used to refine the instrument especially in cases where there was an indication of non-alignment between the study's objective and the items of the interview's protocol.

Lastly, reliability was ensured by going back to some of the participants involved in this study to check the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations and conclusions.

3.6. PILOT STUDY

In this research a pilot study was conducted. The interview schedule was pre-tested for validity and reliability using a small sample of participants not included in the study's main sample as recommended by De Vos et al (2002:337). The pre-testing of the interview protocol was done to enable assessment of how the participants reacted to the draft interview scheduled. The researcher wanted to find out whether the

participants understood and accepted the questions; whether they interpreted the questions as intended; whether they could answer the questions meaningfully; and whether response categories were adequate. This pilot study was then used to finalise the structure and content of the interview protocol.

The pilot study was informally conducted with three teachers teaching African languages under investigation, one curriculum supervisor and one curriculum developer. All those participants were asked to comment on how the interview protocol could be improved. The protocol, therefore, went through multiple revisions until it complied with the standards required by the promoter and the University of South Africa.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In a study of this nature the researcher must ensure that the rights, needs, values, and interests of participants are protected and this should be done by taking the ethical aspects into consideration (Creswell 1994:165). Notter (1974:25) points out:

In recent years considerable concern has been expressed about the protection of the rights of the individuals used as subjects of research. Factors involved in such protection are: informed consent on the part of the subject, confidentiality of the data collected, and protection of the individual from harm.

In addition to ensuring compliance with the above protection measures mentioned by Notter above, this research also took into consideration other factors, such as persuasion, sponsorship, benefits, and harm to the participants.

During the study, informed consent and cooperation were obtained from all participants. Before the process of data collection, the objectives of this study were clearly articulated

verbally and in writing to ensure that the participants agreed to participate without being deceived and without any form of constraint (Burns and Grove 1993:104; Creswell 1994:165).

In order to ensure that the participants fully comprehend the nature of this research, the researcher built into the research scheme a time lag between the request for participation and decision time (Cohen et al 2000:51). It was thoroughly explained beforehand that there were no risks or dangers involved as a consequence of their participation in this study. The participants were further informed that the information they provided would in no way reveal their identity (Babbie 1990:342). Therefore, the participants supplied information in an anonymous manner as the protocol was structured in such a way that the researcher could not identify participants' biographical information (Cohen et al 2000:61). In this study, anonymity was also maintained. The participants were assured of the ethical aspect of anonymity in the covering letters and by verbal communication (De Vos 2002:67). Furthermore, they were also assured that the names of their schools or centres were not to be revealed, and that the information given was not to be connected with any school or centre.

In this study, the participants were assured that all the information given would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and would be solely used for purposes of this study. This information, however, would be made available to the researcher's promoter. The participants were also informed that should they be interested, the study's findings would be made available to them, upon request.

The participants were not persuaded to participate in this study. They did so out of their own free will. Furthermore, the participants were told that they had the right to end their participation at any time without the need to provide a reason. This was in accordance with sound research ethics (Bailey 1987:409).

The decision to undertake this study emanated from the problem that the researcher discovered, as stated in Chapter 1 and in 3.1 above. Sponsorships thus had no

influence or input in this regard. The loyalty of the researcher would only be to the participants.

The participants were informed that participation in this study would benefit them because they could understand better how they applied and how best they could apply OBE principles in their teaching of African languages. It was also stated that the information they contributed could be of use to the Department of Education because some steps could then be taken to improve the support services. It was also explained that participation in this study would not financially benefit the participants, their schools or centres.

The participants were furthermore assured that participation in this study would not harm them in any way either in a physical and/or emotional manner. Moreover, the participants were informed that if they chose to participate in this study they would be observed and required to answer interview questions.

3.8 LIMITATIONS IN DATA COLLECTING

Generally, research has its problems and in this study some of those problems surfaced. The extent to which this study reflected reality could not be fully determined. Some of the problems encountered in this study are discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

3.8.1 Problems relating to observations

The problem encountered with observations was to gain entry into the training workshops for the curriculum supervisors. Although permission was granted by the Head of the Department to observe curriculum supervisors when conducting their training workshops with teachers, some did not want to be observed. Furthermore, although appointments were always made in advance to observe the teachers, some of them gave excuses at the last minute when observations were to take place. According to Harley et al (1999:163):

Classroom research, always problematic in terms of access, has a particular dynamics in post-apartheid South Africa. Past political struggles in some of the 'ex-Departments' has (sic) left an inheritance of access to classrooms being suspect or downright illegitimate.

In this study both curriculum supervisors and teachers observed interpreted the presence of the researcher during their teaching as being meant to criticize the way they taught. The researcher was a stranger in the relationship between the curriculum supervisors and teachers during the training workshops, and teachers and learners in their classrooms. The presence of a stranger, therefore, may have led to a change in actions and/or behaviour of the observed parties. This is called the Hawthorne Effect – a normal phenomenon in the social sciences which, however, does not adversely affect observation and phenomena. In some cases, the teachers did not feel free to participate during their training workshops because of the presence of the observer/researcher. This discomfort was apparent for the learners as well during classroom visits. Some curriculum supervisors and teachers felt at ease with a stranger at their classrooms to observe them.

It should be noted that out of the ten sampled schools, only six were observed. The four which were not observed were visited several times without success. Since observations were to take place before the interviews, the teachers in those schools gave various reasons for the impossibility to be observed. They suggested that they should be interviewed first and later be observed. When the time for observations arrived, they gave other excuses. It was then felt that what was observed in the six schools would suffice for the purpose of this study.

The researcher also accepts that observation of only one lesson per teacher does not give an accurate picture of what goes on in that classroom. The application of the principles of OBE, for instance, would be expected to take place throughout the year.

The nature of the lesson which was observed, and the period during which the lesson was observed (for example, an introduction of the topic, a continuation of the lesson, or a revision of the lesson) would make a difference on how the principles of the OBE approach were applied.

3.8.2 Problems Relating to Interviews

The researcher encountered some problems in the process of conducting the interviews scheduled. Some participants were not fully prepared to answer interview questions although appointments were made and confirmed in advance. This became clear when some of the participants expected the interviewer to assist them in answering some of the interview questions. Furthermore, some of the participants responded differently when the same questions were asked differently.

Another problem encountered was the limited time available for this study. All the interview protocols for teachers were conducted during school hours. There was always a constraint on time because the participants were to make final preparations for their lessons and attending classes at the same time. It was not possible to interview some of the participants whose schedules would make them unavailable until later after the targeted dates for the interview protocol.

Although the purpose of the interviews was stated before the commencement of each interview, some of the participants expected to receive monetary rewards in return for their participation in the interviewing process. With all these problems encountered during the interviews protocol, the researcher could not claim to have captured all the nuances about the phenomenon studied in one or two sessions with the participants. The researcher understood that in qualitative research, researchers strive for depth rather than large numbers of participants.

3.8.3 Problems relating to the researcher

As a university lecturer, the researcher was in a difficult situation when observing the participants since they suspected that the researcher was an agent of the Department

of Education sent to spy whether the participants were applying OBE principles in their teaching or not.

The researcher had to explain his position clearly and reassure the participants that the information gathered would be used only for research purposes. The researcher had to further explain that the findings and recommendations of this study would be referred to the Provincial department of Education.

3.8.4 Controlling Problems Relating to Observations and Responding to Interviews

In spite of all the problems encountered during this study, the researcher managed to obtain a commitment of cooperation from all the participants involved in the observation and interviewing process of this study such that the process may be regarded as successful. To address research problems relating to the interviews' protocol, explanations were made to clear up misunderstandings. The researcher took great care not to influence the participants' views. In analysing the data collected during the interviews, focus was on the message conveyed rather than grammatical accuracy or the communicative competence of the participants.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

After completion of the interviews, a full transcription into texts was made from notes collected. This was done immediately after the interviews that were conducted on a particular day, ensuring that the researcher would not forget the conversation with the participants. Full transcription of the data into texts allowed the researcher to identify areas that needed clarity through return visits. Each interview was then numbered in accordance with the sequence in which the interviews were conducted.

Punch (1998) and Brink (1997) define data analysis as the process that entails categorising, ordering, manipulating, and summarising the data and describing them in meaningful terms. In most instances, data analysis in qualitative research is done

descriptively by means of words. In the current study qualitative techniques of data analysis described by Miles and Huberman (1994:7-56), Parker (1995), Holloway (1997:152), and Van Mannen (1990) were used. Below is a synthesis of the qualitative data techniques applied in the current study.

In this study, the data-matrix was used to analyse information derived from interviews. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:104), the data-matrix is a method of analysing data qualitatively by making use of transposing rows and columns to enable the researcher to follow responses of a specific individual across all conditions. All the texts of the interviews were read through several times in order to acquire an in-depth understanding. This was followed by developing codes or main themes of the information. Codes were tags or labels, which assigned units of meaning to information compiled during the study. Codes were usually attached to parts of texts of varying size. They might be words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, and might be connected or unconnected to a specific setting (Miles and Huberman 1994:56).

In this study codes of the key issues that were under investigation were created to solicit, for example, teachers' application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. Arranging sentences into the matching codes or main themes was achieved by highlighting them in a particular colour. A secondary analysis consisted of arranging the sentences falling into one code into themes. Themes were segments of texts with similar meanings within codes or main themes. A matrix, consisting of codes and themes, was constructed to allow a comprehensive interpretation of the data. The interpreted information was then reported in a form of a narration. Statements explaining each theme were extracted from the texts of the interviews to substantiate the interpretation.

3.10 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on research methods used in the collection of data for this study. The nature of this study was reviewed and a conclusion reached that it dictated the use

of qualitative research paradigm. Research design where sampling and sampling procedures, participants selected and gaining entry were discussed. Data collection techniques were also discussed which included observations, interviews and document analysis. The way in which these techniques were used to collect the research data for this study was elucidated. Trustworthiness of data and ethical considerations was also discussed. In addition, the chapter highlighted that the method of data analysis to be used in the study would be thematic content analysis. In the next chapter data collected for this study are presented and analysed.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present and analyse the data collected from both primary and secondary sources. The data presented, therefore, represent the opinions of the participants and the researcher's observation and reactions to descriptions of what participants said about the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. The data were collected through observation, interview techniques and document analysis. The interpretive paradigm was used as a guide in sorting and interpreting the collected data in this study. As the participants were divided into three categories, namely, curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors and teachers, the responses of the groups are presented separately.

While this investigation was mainly about teaching, the role of both curriculum developers and curriculum supervisors was imperative to contribute to our understanding of the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages by teachers. The first section of this chapter presents the data collected through observations and in-depth interviews while the second section presents an analysis of the data.

The collected data were grouped into main themes and related categories which were interconnected to the research questions of this study. In this data presentation and analysis, some of the comments and statements by the participants are quoted verbatim to illustrate and emphasize the themes and categories.

4.2 DATA PRESENTATION

The researcher in this study was investigating how teachers in the senior phase apply OBE principles in their teaching of African languages, namely, Sesotho sa Leboa, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. The three OBE principles investigated were the learner-centred approach, teachers' facilitation and integration of knowledge.

Data presented in this section are divided according to the three groups of participants referred to in 4.1 above, starting with curriculum developers, followed by curriculum supervisors, and then by teachers. To honour the confidentiality agreement, participants were identified by pseudonyms.

4.2.1 Curriculum developers

The reason for involving these stakeholders in this study was to determine their role in managing the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. The researcher expected the curriculum developers to give answers showing their involvement in the process of developing the new Curriculum. The responses gathered from interview protocols were adequate to draw meaningful conclusions. Based on these findings the researcher attempted to highlight the implications these findings had for the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase.

The following questions were asked during the interview protocols with the curriculum developer:

- (i) What is your level of understanding/interpretation of the new Curriculum?
- (ii) What is the rationale for developing the new Curriculum?
- (iii) What is your expectation of the application of the OBE approach in African languages?
- (iv) Discuss the suitability of the OBE approach in our schools.
- (v) Discuss the available resources for the implementation of OBE in schools.

- (vi) How were the stakeholders, specifically teachers, consulted during the design of the OBE curriculum?

An analysis of the transcripts of the curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors' and teachers' observations and interviews indicated some commonalities and differences. This group (curriculum developers) of participants was involved in the development of the new curriculum. Only one participant was interviewed in this group. In this study, the pseudonym for this curriculum developer is Mr Lekganyane. Mr Lekganyane had been in the education department for more than 15 years. Hereunder follow Mr Lekganyane's responses in accordance with the themes that emerged from the interviews.

4. 2.1.1 Understanding of the new Curriculum

Successful curriculum development could only be done by curriculum developers whose level of understanding and interpretation of the new Curriculum was high. When asked about his understanding of the new Curriculum, Mr Lekganyane said:

You know from my career path that I have spent my lifetime in this Department of Education. I think I have a very good understanding and interpretation of the different Curricula. OBE approach is no exception. Therefore, being one of the experts involved in the development of this new Curriculum was not a mistake.

He furthermore commented that his understanding of the new Curriculum was not only attributed to his experience, but was aided by many OBE materials he had read before and after the introduction of this new approach. He said:

This was the beginning of 1997 when I was first exposed to different OBE materials. I started reading them and attending workshops until I got

an understanding of this new Curriculum. My interpretation of the whole Curriculum is also of high standard.

To Mr Lekganyane, experience and wide reading of relevant OBE materials solidified his understanding of the new Curriculum. He stressed the importance of understanding the new Curriculum as a curriculum developer when he stated:

It is important for a curriculum developer to be knowledgeable about the new approach. Without this understanding how can he or she develop the relevant Curriculum to be applied in schools? I think that is very important.

Mr Lekganyane's statement helped to illustrate that, the understanding of the new curriculum by curriculum developers in general had been considered before involvement of any curriculum developer in this new curriculum.

4.2.1.2 Rationale for developing the new Curriculum

In responding to this question, Mr Lekganyane's justification for the development of the new Curriculum was that the government was responding to the global demands and the new challenge of economic, social and political reconstruction ushered in by a democratic government here in South Africa. He indicated:

The rationale for developing the new Curriculum is to try to be in line with some developed countries in the world. You know we cannot stand aloof as a country while education all over is changing for the better.

The preceding account indicates some of the routes South Africa is currently following in its educational transformation to this new Curriculum, which is built on principles of equity, redress, non-discrimination, and democracy. The preceding quotation shows that according to Mr Lekganyane, the rationale for developing the new Curriculum was to keep up with developments in the world.

Mr Lekganyane furthermore mentioned the new political situation in South Africa as the rationale for developing the new Curriculum. He alluded:

I must tell you that the rationale for this new Curriculum is because of the change of the government. The shift from the apartheid ideology to democracy motivated the national Department of Education to initiate the development of the new Curriculum.

To Mr Lekganyane, political influences played a pivotal role in the development of the new Curriculum. Mr Lekganyane held the view that the introduction of the new curriculum represented the country's new ideology which came about with the removal of the apartheid government from power, and the installation of the new government.

4.2.1.3 Expectation of the application of OBE

The response given by Mr Lekganyane on the question of the expectation from the application of the OBE approach in African languages was that the manner in which the Curriculum was developed would easily allow the application of this approach. He said:

I foresee no difficulties in the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. In developing this new Curriculum, we had both the teacher and the learner in mind. I therefore expect

the smooth application of OBE approach in African languages.

Mr Lekganyane believed that the Curriculum as developed would easily be applied in the teaching of African languages. In fact, all the facts of crucial importance to enable teachers to apply a Curriculum innovation such as the OBE approach were considered when developing this new Curriculum. He reported:

Sometimes it is difficult to put theory into practice. I can assure you that in this new Curriculum I do not expect any failure of the application in African languages. Bearing in mind that this approach has been used successfully in other countries, I expect its success in the teaching of African languages.

This quotation illustrated that Mr Lekganyane expected no stumbling blocks in the application of OBE approach in the teaching of African languages.

4.2.1.4 Suitability of OBE

When asked about the suitability of the OBE approach in the South African education system in general, and the teaching of African languages in particular, he initially avoided discussing the issue but later mentioned that this country was changing for the better, like any other developing country in the world. He said:

This OBE approach is very suitable to our education. South Africans should understand that things all over the world are changing. Education is no exception. I see no reason why I should say this new approach is not suitable because the manner in which learners learn is more career orientated unlike in the old approach.

Drawing from his experience and exposure of working in different sections in the education department, Mr Lekganyane had confidence that the OBE approach was suitable and it would work because it was part of the agenda of the non-discriminatory education system. He reported:

As an employee in this department for so many years, I have noticed that the old education system was not preparing some of the communities in the right direction but to serve their masters. On this note I want to reiterate that this new approach and its principles are suitable.

The preceding quotation illustrates the point that the curriculum developer (Mr Lekganyane), viewed the OBE approach as suitable in South Africa because it redresses the legacy of apartheid in the education sector. Mr Lekganyane further pointed out that it was up to the implementers to see to it that this system would work. He talked passionately about the new approach and how its principles could be applied in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase.

4. 2.1.5 Resources

Mr Lekganyane was of the opinion that there were a few serious problems regarding the lack of resources. He maintained that the problem the Department of Education should address was a lack of resources such as print based material, for example, textbooks, which should include fiction and non-fiction texts. Here reference was made to both prescribed reading books and textbooks which should be used for reference, investigation, assignments, and projects. These resources were to be kept in the libraries which, in any way, did not hinder the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. Regarding resources, Mr Lekganyane contended:

People just do not understand, they think that this idea of learners sitting in groups will need them to

have a big space and a lot of tables. This is not true because the very same group can as well go outside to work there and still achieve the learning objectives. Therefore, I wouldn't say that infrastructure can make us not to achieve the required outcomes.

Mr Lekganyane's explanation provided insight on how some of the resources should be utilized. Furthermore, he was concerned with the imbalances regarding the distribution of some of the resources provided by the Department of Education. According to him, this problem persisted. He mentioned, for example, that some schools in urban areas were supplied with adequate resources such as electronic resources which included computers, television sets, radios, and overhead projectors whereas schools in remote areas were left poorly-resourced. To illustrate the complexity of the distribution of resources he pointed out:

I have discovered that resources are not equally distributed among all the schools in this province. There are certain schools which are well-resourced while others are under-resourced. The reasons for such are not known to me because it is under another section of our department. One director once said that certain schools in rural areas were not given resources because they were unable to utilize them.

To a large extent, Mr Lekganyane acknowledged the role the Department of Education and other Non-Governmental Organizations played regarding resources. He emphasized the commitment of the Department of Education in ensuring that all schools in the Province were provided with relevant learning and teaching resources. He was also of the opinion that some of the resources should be provided by both the teachers

and the learners themselves. He argued that teachers and learners had to play an important role, especially in preparing the learning resources thus:

Teachers should not wait and fold their hands for the Department to provide all resources. They have to do something. In the OBE approach, some of the learning materials should be provided by the learners.

The point emphasized by Mr Lekganyane was that there should be a good working relationship between the Department of Education, schools and the communities to provide the scarce resources.

4.2.1.6 Stakeholder involvement

When asked about the involvement of teachers in the planning process of this new curriculum, Mr Lekganyane stated:

There was no way in which the government could have left out this important stakeholder in its own curriculum planning. Teachers were invited and participated in the whole process. There were different teachers representing different Learning Areas, African languages included.

According to Mr Lekganyane, therefore, different stakeholders, teachers included, were informed about the curriculum changes and were also involved in the planning process. Mr Lekganyane explained the manner in which teachers were invited by saying:

We invited all stakeholders in education before we embarked on the process of curriculum change. Teachers were invited through their teachers'

Unions. All teachers were represented in the whole process. Only those teachers who do not belong to Unions were not invited.

Although the preceding quotation sheds some light on how teachers were involved in the planning process, there was no evidence of proper consultation with the majority of the teachers as evidenced by the chaotic manner in which they applied the principles of the new approach.

4.2.2 Curriculum supervisors

Curriculum supervisors are Learning Area specialists who are sometimes referred to as subject advisors or education specialists. They conducted training workshops for the teachers on the new educational approach. The reason for observing and asking them questions in this study was that they offered support services to the teachers in the form of guidance and workshops. Another role of the curriculum supervisors was to inform heads of departments and teachers of African languages about the latest curriculum developments.

The researcher expected these stakeholders to give answers on how they trained teachers so that teachers could apply OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. Two curriculum supervisors were observed and interviewed in this study. Different themes and categories were identified and are presented hereunder. It needs to be pointed out that some of the themes and categories overlap.

The following questions were asked during the interview protocols with the curriculum supervisors:

- (i) To what extent are you knowledgeable about the OBE approach?
- (ii) Describe the organisation of the training workshops.
- (iii) How does the training of curriculum supervisors take place?
- (iv) How do you ensure that the training you give to African language

teachers is being implemented?

- (v) Describe the effectiveness of workshops in facilitating OBE implementation.
- (vi) What constraints do you encounter during the training workshops?

4.2.2.1 Knowledge on the OBE approach

This question was asked to establish the criteria used to employ them as curriculum supervisors or trainers in the training workshops. Furthermore, they were asked if they themselves were applying OBE principles when training teachers. This was done to determine the extent of their knowledge on the OBE approach.

In response to this question, both Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloji indicated that they were employed as curriculum supervisors by virtue of being former lecturers in former colleges of education. As far as their knowledge of the OBE approach was concerned, Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloji held different views regarding the knowledge they had about the OBE approach. Mr Baloyi felt that he had adequate knowledge required to train the teachers. This is what he reported:

I don't think I have problems with this new approach. I have worked at high school and in the college of education for so many years. I have also read many materials on OBE approach. Personally I think I am knowledgeable. I have trained many teachers since the introduction of this approach in 1998. Some of the trainees indicated that they were doing well out there because of the knowledge I imparted to them (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007).

In the quotation above Mr Baloyi demonstrated his confidence in the manner in which he trained African languages teachers in the OBE approach. However, Mrs Moloi is of the following opinion:

The knowledge I have on this approach did not enable me for the past years to fully answer all language problems raised by teachers. The only thing teachers need do to improve their knowledge is to attend workshops and cluster school meetings (Mrs Moloi, personal interview, March 2007).

Mrs Moloi's position regarding knowledge of the OBE approach differed from that of Mr Baloyi. In her response she indicated that she did not understand the OBE approach fully, but she was trying her best to respond to questions raised by teachers. This was what she had to say regarding her knowledge:

You see this new approach is problematic to some of us who received our teacher training a long time ago. I only read materials supplied by the Department with no one to guide me. To be more direct to your question, I would like to say that my knowledge on the new approach is inadequate (Mrs Moloi, personal interview, March 2007).

The preceding statement illustrates how Mrs Moloi felt about the OBE approach. She blames the Department of Education for her lack of knowledge on this new approach and her training a while ago. The following excerpt illustrates this point:

The problem of my lack of knowledge in this approach can be attributed to the Department for

selecting few individuals to attend the training workshops for two weeks. I was not part of the curriculum supervisors selected to attend. Therefore, I study on my own, which is difficult (Mrs Moloji, personal interview, March 2007).

Mrs Moloji's inadequate knowledge of OBE was confirmed during the training when she could not respond to many questions which she did not anticipate from the teachers. On failing to respond to some of the questions, she reported:

The fact that I am not knowledgeable is not a secret to some teachers because I also told them that this approach is also new to me. I told them because they were asking a lot of things which were also complicated to me (Mrs Moloji, personal interview, March 2007).

The fact that some curriculum supervisors training teachers are not knowledgeable was also evident from the responses by some of the teachers. The point emphasized by both Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloji in responding to this theme was that further training was necessary to equip them with more knowledge of the OBE approach and its principles.

4.2.2.2 Organization of workshops

The Department of Education realized that there was a need for teachers to attend workshops, in order for them to understand the approaches and methods used in applying OBE principles in the teaching of African languages, because they did not know them. Circulars were distributed from the District level via the circuits to the respective schools. Curriculum supervisors received circulars from coordinators. Teachers did not attend the workshops at the same time as they were divided into groups according to Learning Areas. The following was mentioned by Mrs Moloji concerning the programme for workshops:

If we take all the educators for a workshop, learners will remain with no one and that means that the learning process will stop. Besides that, we also cannot be able to teach them all at the same time because we cannot accommodate them all at the same time. Transport will also be a dilemma, and so on (Mrs Moloji, personal interview, March 2007).

The training session was specifically for five days and there was no extended period for the workshops. The manner in which the training sessions were conducted was explained by Mr Baloyi as follows:

Firstly, we all gather at one place for the Generic session. The session is about the background or the purpose. During this session, the general introduction of the Outcomes Based Education starting from 1994 is made. Reasons for the new approach of teaching are given. The discussion of the four aims and ten values which are found in all the learning areas are discussed. The critical and developmental outcomes are also discussed (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007).

Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloji were in agreement on the whole issue of workshop organization. The purpose of the training workshops was stated by Mrs Moloji as follows:

The new approach encourages uniformity. That is the reason why during these training workshops we teach them in groups, and we also let them do certain activities as groups, so that they are also

able to teach learners the same thing. The reason for these training workshops is to assist teachers to apply the principles of this new approach in all their teachings (Mrs Moloji, personal interview, March 2007).

Mrs Moloji then explained that it was imperative for the training workshops to be conducted and that teachers should master the principles of this new approach because they were the agents of change. The position stated by Mrs Moloji was also emphasized by Mr Baloyi who strongly agreed that teachers were the real implementers of the system. Therefore, the timing and the duration of the workshops should be looked at by the Department of Education.

4.2.2.3 Training of curriculum supervisors

Curriculum supervisors were trained through the old system of education, like all other teachers who were interviewed in this study. There was, therefore, a need for the retraining of those curriculum supervisors in order for them to acquire the knowledge required when training teachers during workshops. Mr Baloyi mentioned the following about the training of curriculum supervisors:

I attended two training sessions which were organized by the National Department of Education. These trainings were aimed at training us as supervisors to enable us to train teachers. However, these trainings were too general in the sense that they were not meant specifically for African language supervisors (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007).

When interviewed, Mr Baloyi indicated that the training he received was in the form of workshops. During those workshops, all the necessary skills and abilities that they were

supposed to have been dealt with. Mr Baloyi stressed the following concerning the workshops:

I attended a workshop at a national level for two weeks; it was a workshop on facilitation skills. In this workshop several aspects pertaining to OBE approach were discussed. The manner in which the OBE principles should be applied was discussed. I must also tell you that not all curriculum supervisors attended those workshops, I was just fortunate to be selected (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007)

The point highlighted about selecting certain individuals to attend the training workshops for curriculum supervisors was also raised by Mrs Moloi:

I personally did not attend a single training workshop at national level. I rely on second hand information provided by those who attended the two weeks training workshop. Furthermore, the Department of Education provides us with some reading documents related to this new approach. To me this information is not enough to enable me to pass it on to the teachers (Mrs Moloi, personal interview, March 2007).

Instances of some curriculum supervisors not having attended a single OBE workshop were also echoed by some of the teachers who were interviewed for this study. By virtue of their posts as former college of education lecturers, Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloi

were forced to train teachers. Mr Baloyi further indicated that it was sad when a curriculum supervisor without the necessary skills was supposed to conduct a workshop because he or she may not know what to say to the teachers.

4.2.2.4 Monitoring after training workshop

In response to the question on monitoring after the training workshops, Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloji indicated that they, together with other stakeholders such as school principals, deputy principals and heads of departments, were to monitor the effective application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. Monitoring of the application of OBE principles was to be done by making formal and informal classroom visits to assist teachers with their work. Concerning school visits, Mrs Moloji mentioned the following:

After the training workshops, we make sure that we visit schools to see whether trained teachers were doing what they have been taught or not. For instance, we look at their work schedule and lesson plan. This is done in a friendly manner because the aim is to give support to them. We do not get into classroom for this specific task as educators may say they are being inspected (Mrs Moloji, personal interview, March 2007).

The point that Mrs Moloji raised above was similar to the view held by Mr Baloyi who stated that they were supposed to visit the schools to see whether teachers were doing exactly what they were trained on. The problem, however, was that there were not many curriculum supervisors and they did not have readily available transport to go to some of the areas (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007).

Another system which was indicated to be used to monitor the application of the OBE approach was the informal discussions with teachers, and attendance by curriculum

supervisors of their cluster school meetings. Speaking of his experiences in assisting teachers after the training workshops, Mr Baloyi stated:

We generally visit teachers at their respective schools. During these visits we hold informal discussions and attend their cluster school meetings to assist them where they lack knowledge. We always try to support them and if there is a need we also supply them with reading materials (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007).

Both Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloi agreed on the advantages of monitoring teachers on the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. They also emphasized the importance of visiting teachers in their cluster school meetings for monitoring purposes.

4.2.2.5 Constraints during workshops

Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloi agreed that there were numerous constraints in the training workshops. They both indicated that there were shortages of both human and financial resources to make their training workshops more effective. The problem of human resources was illustrated by Mr Baloyi who put it as follows:

There are only two people for the whole Vhembe District who train Xitsonga teachers and there is no way we can cope because educators who need our attention are too many. The department is aware of this problem and the promise is that more curriculum supervisors will be employed soon (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007).

According to Mr Baloyi, another constraint of those training workshops was that there were some teachers who still had negative attitudes towards the new system of education and it was difficult to deal with them. He put it this way:

There are some of the teachers who are resistant to change. They attend workshops just to be away from their schools and to disrupt the smooth running of these workshops. You know for sure that some of our schools are still behind when it comes to learning and teaching resources (Mr Baloyi, personal interview, March 2007).

The challenge posed by the lack of resources to be used in the workshops was also highlighted by Mrs Moloi in the following excerpt:

Resources are a serious constraint I face in the training workshops. We do not have enough classrooms and teaching and learning materials. Some of the teachers were attending today's workshop standing as you have noticed. Some of the teachers who came late did not get learning packages because we did not have enough (Mrs Moloi, personal interview, March 2007).

On this theme, Mr Baloyi and Mrs Moloi agreed that they were faced with a number of problems which needed urgent attention. As a result, there was a feeling among the participants that as much as they were trying their best to train teachers under abnormal situations, the Department should speed up the process of service delivery in so far as all the necessary resources used in the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages, are concerned.

4.2.3 Teachers

4.2.3.1 Observation schedules

In the previous chapter it was stated that six teachers from six schools were observed. This section presents the data from the observation scheduled. In these observation schedules special attention was paid to the three OBE principles only, namely, learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge. In this section these principles are briefly defined. Furthermore, an explanation of what the researcher was looking for in the classrooms which were observed is also given. Finally, a description of what each of the six teachers did is presented.

(i) Definition of learner-centred approach

The concept “learner-centred approach” is also sometimes referred to by other authors as “child-centred” or “pupil-centred approach”. The learner-centred approach is a specific teaching approach in which the learner is placed in the centre of all learning, and all things are seen only in relation to the learner. This is an approach in which everything has to be in harmony with the learner’s real interests, needs and learning patterns.

In this approach the main focus is on engaging the learner as opposed to the teacher-centred approach, where the focus is on the teacher. This is an approach which focuses on the learner’s needs, what and how they are learning and conditions that contribute to their learning. For the purpose of this study, a learner-centred approach refers to the consideration of the learner as the most important component of the teaching and learning situation, in so much that his/her interests and needs must be put at the centre of all the necessary resources in a classroom.

(ii) Definition of teacher facilitation

Teacher facilitation is an OBE principle which means that the teacher is no longer the source of all the information to be learnt by the learners. Teachers as facilitators must adapt to a new way of teaching by managing more open-ended discovery by learners.

This means shifting their roles from presenters of factual knowledge to a facilitator who provides resources, monitors progress and encourages learners to apply their knowledge to solve a problem. Accordingly, a teacher's role as a facilitator of knowledge is to guide and assist learners as they take on more responsibility for their learning.

The teacher's facilitating role should be planning, guiding and monitoring since he/she understands the learners' development. The teacher is a facilitator in the learning process through helping learners to develop individual thinking and problem solving potentials. Teacher facilitation enables learning by creating conditions that will cater for varying abilities. In this study, the concept "teacher facilitation" means a professional person who facilitates learning.

(iii) Definition of integration of knowledge

The concept "integration of knowledge" means that learners can bring knowledge to their learning from beyond the classroom, such as from the environment, their interests and beliefs, and this knowledge should be integrated with their lessons. In fact, integration of knowledge refers to the fact that the connections between the classroom work, the surrounding communities, and the world beyond the community are clearly established.

Furthermore, this principle refers to learning which engages learners in creating their own knowledge and understanding by connecting new learning with their prior knowledge and experience. The integration of knowledge should be within the learning area, as well as across the learning areas. Moreover, integration of knowledge should be within and across grades since this is crucial for achieving applied competence as set by the NQF. Applied competence aims at integrating practical, foundational and reflective competences.

Integration of knowledge furthermore refers to consideration of the learners' existing understanding of the reality to be enriched by allowing the learners' experiences to surface during the teaching-learning activities. For integration of knowledge to be

achieved, learning activities should be arranged in such a way that learning is meaningful and linked to the world of the learner.

In this study the researcher was looking for the following in the classrooms that were observed:

- Learners being given opportunity to be active participants during the teaching and learning process;
- Learners being given a chance to voice their opinions, to question, to comment, to construct answers, to argue and to have inputs during the teaching and learning situation;
- Classroom activities with features such as peer teaching, small group work and team work.
- A teacher facilitator who is a resource person and a manager of the learning process;
- A teacher facilitator who creates a classroom climate that is conducive to active participative learning by the learners;
- A teacher facilitator who engages the learners in reflective and critical thinking about the content being taught;
- Structuring of the teaching-learning activities with sensitivity to the abilities, interests and needs of the learners;
- Integration of the learning outcomes;
- Integrating the themes and the content of the lesson with the real-life situation of the learners; and
- Integrating the prior knowledge of the learners with the new core knowledge.

In the following paragraphs an illustration of what each of the six teachers did in the classroom is presented.

Lesson 1

Ms Kganakga is a Grade 8 Sesotho sa Leboa teacher in a rural school. The number of learners observed in this classroom was 64. The lesson she presented was on

synonyms. The specific lesson outcomes for this lesson were that at the end of the lesson, a learner would be able to read and communicate in written or spoken language varying the words used by, for instance, using Sesotho sa Leboa synonyms in a wide range of situations. This lesson was a continuation of a lesson from the previous week.

The teacher introduced the lesson by asking the learners to describe what they understood by the concept “synonyms” in Sesotho sa Leboa. Learners (chorus) responded by saying that synonyms are words or phrase which have the same meaning.

The teacher then defined the concept “synonym” by writing it on the chalk-board and told the class that it is a word that means the same, or almost the same, as another word in the same language, either in all of its uses or in a specific context. The teacher stated all the facts of the lesson and illustrated her points with examples for about 25 minutes. The role of the learners during these 25 minutes of the lesson presentation was to listen and take extensive notes.

The following were some of the examples given by the teacher during the lesson presentation. A synonym from English, namely, “environment” and “surroundings” was given. She furthermore gave examples of two synonyms from Sesotho sa Leboa, namely, “lesilu” and “tlaela” (fool); “kgarebe” and “mosetsana” (girl).

After giving these examples, the teacher told the learners to ask questions related to the lesson presented. One learner asked the teacher to elaborate further what synonyms entails. The teacher explained in details what synonymy is all about. The learners were then asked to give their own examples of synonyms to show their understanding of the lesson. Examples such as “ngwako” and “ntlo” (house); “mogolo” and “molala” (neck) were given by the learners.

The teacher concluded the lesson by giving the learners homework on synonyms.

Lesson 2

Mr Nevhutali is a Grade 9 Tshivenda teacher in a semi-rural school. In this classroom, the researcher observed that it had 72 learners. The lesson he presented was in phonetics, namely, vowels in Tshivenda. The specific outcome of this lesson was that at the end of the lesson, a learner would be able to correctly describe the articulation of vowels in Tshivenda using phonetic terms. The researcher figured out that this lesson had been taught before.

The teacher introduced the lesson by singing a song. The teacher asked the learners to sing the song after him. After singing the song, the teacher told the class that the day's lesson was going to be on phonetics. The learners were asked to give aspects which they knew in phonetics. One learner responded by saying "vowels and consonants". The teacher then went straight on to explain what a vowel is.

The learners were asked to give all the vowels they knew in Tshivenda. In a chorus, the learners responded to the question by saying "a, e, i, o, u". The teacher explained that there are three traditional vowels in Tshivenda. The learners were asked to mention these traditional vowels but they did not respond to the question. The teacher mentioned "a, u, i" as the three traditional vowels in Tshivenda. The teacher explained for 15 minutes why these vowels are called traditional vowels.

One learner asked the teacher to explain how the two vowels "o" and "e" were formed. The teacher told the class that the two vowels are formed through vowel coalescence. The teacher explained for about 10 minutes that "u + a = o" and "i + a = e".

The teacher furthermore explained that there are semivowels which constitute a category of consonants whose articulation involves neither blockage nor constriction of air from the lungs. The teacher gave the two semivowels in Tshivenda, namely, "y" and "w". The teacher concluded the lesson by giving a summary of what vowels are all about, and gave the learners classwork to write. In the classwork, the learners were asked to draw a vowel chart and to put all the vowels in their positions.

Lesson 3

Mrs Makhalanjalo is a Grade 9 Sesotho sa Leboa teacher in a rural school. The number of learners observed in this classroom was 80. The lesson she presented was on tones in Sesotho sa Leboa. The specific lesson outcomes for this lesson were that at the end of the lesson, a learner should be able to read words written the same way but using different tones. A learner should be able to write the same words and mark them with different tone symbols. This was a new topic that had not been taught before.

The teacher introduced the lesson by telling the class that the day's lesson was going to be on tones in Sesotho sa Leboa. The teacher stated all the facts about tones in Sesotho sa Leboa with examples from outside the lesson and even the school. The teacher told the class that there are high tones which are produced by a relatively high frequency of vibration of the vocal cords and is marked by a symbol (/) and low tones which are produced by a relatively low frequency of vibration of the vocal cords, which is marked by a symbol (\). The teacher explained that these symbols are placed on top of each vowel in a word.

The teacher explained everything about tones for about 30 minutes. The learners did not speak throughout this lesson. All the examples were supplied by the teacher. The teacher gave the following examples of a tone in Sesotho sa Leboa, "nóká" for a high tone meaning waist and "nòkà" for a low tone meaning river. Another example given was "mógóló" for a high tone meaning neck and "mògòlò" for a low tone meaning salary.

The learners were not asked questions to get the new information about tones but facts were given. The teacher concluded the lesson by giving the learners written homework on tones.

Lesson 4

Mr Maluleke is a Grade 9 Xitsonga teacher in a semi-rural school. The classroom comprised of 84 learners. The lesson he presented was on word components in Xitsonga. The specific lesson outcomes for this lesson were that at the end of the

lesson, a learner should be able to listen for information on how words are formed in Xitsonga. At the end of the lesson, a learner should be able to write different words using the word components in Xitsonga. This was a new topic that had not been taught before.

The teacher introduced the lesson by drawing learning support materials such as building sand, cement, bricks, roof tiles, and all other building materials on the chalk board. The teacher explained to the learners that when they build a house they need all the listed building materials. The teacher then told the learners that the day's lesson was going to be "word components".

The teacher told the class that the components of a word are prefixes, roots, a stem, and suffixes. The teacher stated all the facts about the components of a word and how each of these components was interrelated. All the examples were supplied by the teacher. The example: "Mufana" (boy) was given. From this example, the teacher explained that "mu-" is a prefix; "-fana" is a stem; "-FAN-" is a root and "-a" is a suffix. The teacher gave detailed information about the components of a word for about 30 minutes and supplied numerous examples.

Questions were not asked to the learners to get new information but facts were given to them. The learners did not speak throughout this lesson. The learners' listened to the teacher and took extensive notes written on the chalk-board. The teacher concluded the lesson by summarising what he had presented.

Lesson 5

Mr Bilankulu is a Grade 8 Xitsonga teacher in an urban school. The number of learners in this classroom was 78. The lesson he presented was on phonemes. The specific lesson outcomes for this lesson were that at the end of the lesson, a learner would be able to write different words and identify phonemes from these words. This was a new topic that had not been taught before.

The teacher started the lesson by explaining the concept “phonemes” to the learners. The teacher explained that a phoneme is a sound that distinguishes one word from another. The teacher further explained all the facts about phonemes for about 25 minutes. The teacher gave the following examples to illustrate his explanation of phonemes: “famba” (go) and “femba” (examine); “sula” (remove), and “suka” (move) and indicated that /a/ and /e/ and /l/ and /k/ are the phonemes in the examples respectively.

The learners were asked to give more examples of phonemes but did not respond to the teacher’s request. Later, one learner asked the teacher to clarify to him how to get phonemes in minimal pairs. The teacher repeated what he had explained before but in a simple way. The same learner who had asked for clarity gave examples such as “veka” (place) and “teka” (take); “suma” (report) and “sula” (remove); and /v/ and /t/ and /l/ and /m/ were identified as phonemes respectively in the given examples.

The learners were not asked questions to get new information about Xitsonga phonemes but facts were given to them. The learners did not speak throughout this lesson except for one learner. The learners took notes. The teacher concluded the lesson by giving a summary and classwork on phonemes in Xitsonga.

Lesson 6

Mr Netshifefe is a Grade 8 Tshivenda teacher in a rural school. The researcher observed that the classroom consisted of 64 learners. The lesson he presented was on Tshivenda idiomatic expressions and sayings. The specific lesson outcome for this lesson was that at the end of the lesson, a learner should be able to read for information and respond critically to the adopted Biblical idiomatic expressions and sayings in Tshivenda. This lesson was a continuation of a lesson from the previous week.

The teacher started the lesson by making a revision and reminding the learners of the previous week’s lesson which was on Tshivenda idioms. The teacher explained what he meant by idiomatic expressions and sayings which are originally from the Tshivenda

language. The teacher told the class that the day's lesson was going to be on idiomatic expressions and sayings adopted in the Tshivenda language from a Biblical point of view.

The teacher explained the facts about idiomatic expressions and sayings in Tshivenda for about 30 minutes with examples. Among others, the teacher gave the following examples “u vha Tomasi matenda nga u vhona” (believing by seeing like Thomas), “u vha Fara” (to be hard hearted like Pharoah). After giving these examples, the learners were asked to give more examples. The learners did not respond to the teacher's request. Later, one learner gave a wrong example of an idiomatic expression.

The teacher told the learners to ask questions or clarification on the lesson presented. The learners did not ask questions or seek clarity on the lesson. The learners did not speak throughout this lesson but took down notes.

The lesson was concluded by giving a summary of what the lesson was all about and learners were given an assignment on idiomatic expressions and sayings in Tshivenda.

4.2.3.2 Interview schedule

In this study, teachers were the key stakeholders in the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in Grades 8 and 9. In which the principles investigated included the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge. In order for these principles to be effectively applied in the teaching of African languages, the teachers were expected to be well-versed with the knowledge and skills of their application. The questions asked to the teachers were to establish how they were applying these principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase of the secondary school. Answers expected from those teachers were those that would explain the manner in which they applied the principles in the teaching of those languages.

This section presents the data gathered from the interview protocols conducted. In this study, seventeen teachers teaching African languages from ten secondary schools participated in the interview protocols. Six of the teachers who were observed and interviewed had attended a five-day workshop while the other six had attended a two-day workshop. Five teachers had not attended a single workshop.

The following questions were asked during the interview protocols with the teachers:

- (i) To what extent are you knowledgeable about the OBE approach?
- (ii) Comment on the manner in which you apply OBE principles in your African language classroom teaching.
- (iii) What has your experience of applying OBE principles in the classrooms been like?
- (iv) Talk about the highlights and challenges of applying OBE principles.
- (v) What aspects of African language are difficult to teach using the OBE approach?
- (vi) How can you enhance the levels of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages?
- (vii) How relevant are the principles of OBE in the teaching of African languages?

4.2.3.2.1 Knowledge about OBE approach

The question on the knowledge of the OBE approach was asked because the researcher wanted to determine the extent of knowledge teachers had on this new approach which would enable them to apply the investigated OBE principles specifically in the teaching of African languages. The understanding of these principles of OBE is very crucial in this study. In fact, the understanding and application of these principles or lack of forms the basis of this study.

The question also sought to establish where these teachers got their knowledge of the OBE approach since their professional training was in the traditional approach.

(i) Workshops attended

By attending training workshops teachers expected to get specific information related to the application of the OBE approach in the teaching of African languages. Reference is made here to language aspects and how these principles could be applied in teaching those aspects. Thirteen of the teachers who participated in this study felt that the workshops attended were not sufficient. Teachers were trained for four or three years in their initial training institutions using the traditional approach and they were only exposed to the new approach in a workshop of only five days as Mr Kekani reported:

I attended a workshop for five days and I am not knowledgeable because of that five days. I think I needed more time to be orientated in this new approach because it is too complicated (Mr Kekani, personal interview, April 2007).

Like Mr Kekani, Mrs Makhalanjalo argued that the training received from the workshop was not ideal. In fact, Mrs Makhalanjalo added that practically the little knowledge gained in the training workshop could not be applied in the classroom situation. She challenged the idea of workshops and proposed her own approach by stating:

These workshops are just waste of time because we go there and come back empty-handed. There is nothing new I learnt during those five days of the workshop. I think what the government should do is to allow teachers to go back to tertiary institutions for a year (Mrs Makhalanjalo, personal interview, February 2007).

This sentiment was shared by other teachers who indicated that the OBE training in the five-day block period was inadequate and basic. Mr Zithalala and Ms Bilankulu also raised the issue of follow-up. Ms Bilankulu reported:

This training workshop was without any follow-ups. What I realised in the training workshop I attended is that the intention was to tell us that we are obliged to change to the new approach. To me this activity is hardly effective (Ms Bilankulu, personal interview, February 2007).

A lack of knowledge was also exacerbated by some curriculum supervisors who were training teachers during training workshops. Mr Maluleke's views on curriculum supervisors were as follows:

You know the problem lies with the curriculum supervisors. In the workshop I attended, the facilitators themselves were confused. In fact, these facilitators did not have knowledge and skills to disseminate the information (Mr Maluleke, personal interview, March 2007).

It seems that a common feeling amongst the teachers who were interviewed was that the training period did not prepare them adequately for the actual classroom situations. Furthermore, some curriculum supervisors who trained them were not knowledgeable about this approach.

Eleven teachers indicated that they were not knowledgeable about the new approach, hence their application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase was inadequate. There were, however, three teachers, namely, Mrs Kganakga, Mr Nevhutali and Mr Mabaso who indicated that they had a good knowledge

and understanding of the OBE approach in general and were well-versed with the application of its principles in the teaching of African languages. According to Mrs Kganakga, her knowledge of the OBE approach came as a result of the training she attended for five days and several cluster school meetings. This was how she responded on the theme on knowledge:

The knowledge I got during the workshop and cluster school meetings helped me a lot to be more knowledgeable about this OBE approach. I also read many OBE books and other related materials to add on the gained knowledge (Mrs Kganakga, personal interview, February 2007).

The point illustrated above shows that some African languages teachers benefited from the workshops and cluster meetings organised by both the Department of Education and the respective schools within a particular circuit. Mr Mabaso indicated that he got his knowledge of the OBE approach from different sources and he was knowledgeable and confident to apply its principles in the teaching of African languages. He stated:

I think I am knowledgeable about this new approach in teaching. I first got my knowledge from the two days workshop I attended. Later on I attended another training workshop for five days. The information I got from those workshops was enough for me to change from the old approach to the new one (Mr Mabaso, personal interview, May 2007).

(ii) NPDE programmes

NPDE is an acronym for National Professional Diploma in Education. This diploma was designed specifically for those teachers who are under-qualified, such as those with a two-year teacher qualification from their training institutions. Teachers who are teaching African languages in the senior phase who attended this programme felt that there was sufficient information on the OBE approach, and in particular on the teaching of languages, African languages included. Mr David Prince, Mr Makumbila and Ms Bilankulu were among the teachers who responded that they got their knowledge of the OBE approach by attending the NPDE programme, as Mr David Prince reported:

I was forced by the Department to upgrade my teaching certificate because it was no longer relevant. When I first attended the NPDE classroom, I was confused but now I am knowledgeable about this approach (Mr David Prince, personal interview, April 2007).

The same sentiment was expressed by Ms Bilankulu and Mr Makumbila who indicated that they were knowledgeable about the new approach. Mr Makumbila pointed out that he had some knowledge of the OBE approach which he got from the NPDE programme and by attending the cluster school meetings:

Although I cannot claim to be an expert in this OBE approach, but what I know is that I have got knowledge about it. The only problem left with me is to apply this knowledge in my daily teachings. The fact that I am not applying it now is that I am not very sure on how to apply this knowledge (Mr Makumbila, personal interview, May 2007).

The data presented above indicate that although some teachers claimed to have acquired their knowledge of the OBE approach through the NPDE programme, not all of them utilised that knowledge in their teaching of African languages.

(iii) Cluster school meetings

This category was also highlighted in the data presentation of curriculum supervisors. Teachers within the same circuit were encouraged to form clusters where they would meet and share experiences about the OBE approach in general and in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase in particular. Teachers who better understood the new approach were selected to be mentors during the cluster meetings. Mr Nevhutali and Mrs Kganakga mentioned that they had acquired their knowledge of OBE in cluster school meetings. Mr Nevhutali explained this as follows:

I enhanced my knowledge of OBE in cluster school meetings which we held twice per month. What we did in those meetings was to discuss language aspects which were complicated and draw a work schedule (Mr Nevhutali, personal interview, February 2007).

Mrs Kganakga also shared this sentiment when she observed that cluster school meetings helped her to be knowledgeable about this OBE approach. She was blank when she started to attend those meetings, but at the time of the interview she was knowledgeable. In those meetings she always asked when she noticed something she did not understand (Mrs Kganakga, personal interview, May 2007).

Although Mrs Kganakga and Mr Nevhutali agreed that cluster school meetings were one way to assist teachers to gain more knowledge about the new approach, Mr Zithalala pointed out that there was no remarkable progress in those cluster school meetings. On cluster school meetings, Mr Zithalala reported:

I have attended cluster school meetings several times, but I have gained nothing from those meetings. The problem with these meetings is that we are all by ourselves and how can a blind man lead another blind man? (Mr Zithalala, personal interview, March 2007).

Mr Netshifefe blamed the Department of Education for not sending curriculum supervisors to assist or observe in those cluster school meetings. Curriculum supervisors who were supposed to come and observe or assist the teachers did not come even when invited. The point that Mr Netshifefe made was similar to the view held by Mr Koketso, who argued:

The Department of Education has relaxed its muscles in making sure that cluster school meetings are taken seriously by both curriculum supervisors and teachers (Mr Koketso, personal interview, April 2007).

The argument for the importance of attending cluster school meetings was also advanced by other African language teachers, such as Mr Maluleke and Mr Chauke. They contended that the manner in which these meetings were conducted should be improved so that teachers should realise the importance of attending them.

Coupled with cluster school meetings, the six teachers who understood the application of the OBE principles, indicated the importance of formal and informal African languages classroom visits. According to these teachers, the stakeholders to be involved in these visits were curriculum supervisors, school principals, deputy principals and heads of departments of African languages.

These teachers felt that the purpose of these visits should be to monitor the teachers in their work, by checking whether they were applying OBE principles such as a

learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge. Mrs Kganakga reported that she was not afraid to be visited by anybody in her classrooms. Her understanding was that, curriculum supervisors who trained her during the training workshop should come and make follow-ups, to check if the theory they taught her was being applied in the real classroom situation.

In summary, six teachers were in agreement that they were knowledgeable about the application of the abovementioned OBE principles in their teaching of African languages. Their knowledge was obtained either from workshops, the NPDE programme, life-long learning or cluster school meetings. On the other hand, eleven teachers indicated that they were not knowledgeable about OBE. Eleven teachers indicated that there was a need for more workshops and cluster school meetings where specialists in both the OBE approach and language should be invited to train them.

4.2.3.2.2 Application of OBE principles in the classroom

This question was the cornerstone of this study. In this question the teachers were asked how they were applying OBE principles such as a learner-centred approach, the teacher as a facilitator and the integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. Asked whether she was applying some or all of the mentioned OBE principles in her teaching, Mrs Kganakga reported:

In my teaching I apply these OBE principles, specifically the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and I also try to integrate some of the language aspects which are closely related. I apply the knowledge learnt from the workshops and make sure that my learners achieve the intended outcomes (Mrs Kganakga, personal interview, February 2007).

The point that Mrs Kganakga made was similar to the view held by Mr Zithalala who said he was applying some of the OBE principles in his teaching. He felt confident and empowered to apply OBE principles such as the teacher as a facilitator, the integration of knowledge and the transfer of the knowledge acquired into the classroom practice. Mr Zithalala stated:

In almost all my lesson presentations I make sure I apply some of the OBE principles. The teaching-learning strategies I design are in line with the OBE approach and they help learners achieve the prescribed learning outcomes (Mr Zithalala, personal interview, March 2007).

Mr David Prince believed that applying the OBE principles in his teaching was not something new because he had been doing it since he came back from the OBE teacher training workshop. The following excerpt illustrates what he reported:

I started applying learner-centred, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge from day one after attending the workshop. I have the glimpse of how all my lessons should be presented and how to engage my learners in their learning activities (Mr David Prince, personal interview, April 2007).

Ms Makhelunganise's position was different from that expressed by Mrs Kganakga, Mr Zithalala and Mr David Prince on the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. Ms Makhelunganise reported that her understanding was that change in teaching practice could not happen overnight, but was a process. According to her, she tried but failed to apply the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, the teacher as the facilitator of knowledge and the

application of knowledge learnt in the OBE teacher training workshop and cluster school meetings into her language teaching. She alluded:

I don't apply the OBE principles in my teaching because I don't want to confuse my learners since this approach also confuses me. I comfortably make use of my experience in all my teaching (Ms Makhelunganise, personal interview, January 2007).

The difficulties of applying the OBE principles mentioned were also raised by Mr Maluleke who indicated that his failure was due to the lack of sufficient knowledge of the new approach to teaching. He illustrated it as follows:

I cannot apply the learner-centred approach, integration of knowledge and be a facilitator of learning because I do not have the know-how to do it in my teaching of this African language (Mr Maluleke, personal interview, March 2007).

The argument for the poor application of OBE principles because of the lack of knowledge was also advanced by Ms Bilankulu and Mr Koketso. They contended that they had little knowledge of and information about the OBE approach and how to apply its principles in the teaching of African languages. Ms Bilankulu was of the following opinion:

I think I cannot take a risk to apply something which I am not even sure of. In fact I once tried to facilitate my teaching, apply the knowledge I got from the OBE training workshop, and integrate some of the language aspects in my teachings. All these did not work out because of my little

knowledge to this approach (Ms Bilankulu, personal interview, February 2007).

In addition to the lack of OBE knowledge as illustrated, Mrs Makhalanjalo indicated that she did not apply the learner-centred approach or play the role of facilitator in her teaching of an African language because of the overcrowding of learners in her classroom. Mrs Makhalanjalo noted:

The two principles, namely, learner-centredness and teacher facilitation cannot be applied in my language classroom. You might have noticed that the number of learners in a classroom is abnormal. Therefore, I find it very difficult to apply OBE principles in my teaching of the African language. (Mrs Makhalanjalo, personal interview, February 2007).

The point that Mrs Makhalanjalo made was similar to the view held by Mr Makumbila, who maintained that the overcrowding of learners in his classroom was making it difficult if not impossible for him to facilitate his teaching and he ended up using the lecturing method. On the principle of integration of knowledge, he indicated that he had little knowledge to apply effectively in his teachings. The poor quality or lack of application of the investigated OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase was also advanced by Mr Netshifefe, Mr Nemavhungu and Mr Zithalala. Mr Netshifefe mentioned:

Our classrooms are fairly big, but because of the numbers of learners they appear overcrowded. There is no space for the desk of the teacher because of lack of space. Obviously, in such a situation my teachings are more teacher-centred.

In fact, I cannot group learners into small groups
(Mr Netshifefe, personal interview, April 2007).

The problem of poor application of OBE principles as alluded by Mr Netshifefe was also stated by fourteen other teachers. The response given by Mr Nemavhungu on the question of how he was applying the OBE principles in his teaching of the African language was that he did not apply any of the three principles because he lacked confidence to do so. Mr Nemavhungu reported:

I am not certain about whether what I am doing is OBE related or not. My experience in the teaching field does not allow me to do things which I am not sure of doing correctly. (Mr Nemavhungu, personal interview, April 2007).

Five teachers mentioned that it was difficult if not impossible for them to apply the OBE principles such as teacher facilitation, integration of knowledge and learner centred approach in their teaching of African languages because of the problem of learning support materials. Mr Mashamba alluded:

I am having it very tough to apply the OBE principles you asked me. My failure is due to the lack of learning support materials which according] to me facilitate the process of learning and encompass more than just text-books (Mr Mashamba, personal interview, April 2007)

The point raised by Mr Mashamba about his failure to apply the OBE principles to his teaching due to the shortage of learning support materials was also pointed out by Mr Zonke who said that although learning support materials cannot replace the teacher,

successful learning in his African language classrooms depends on these materials (Mr Zonke, personal interview, May 2007).

4.2.3.2.3 Problems encountered

With reference to the questions asked on the problems encountered in the application of the OBE principles, namely, the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase of the secondary school, twelve teachers mentioned the physical and electronic resources. According to these teachers, the availability of these resources determines whether the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages succeeds or not.

(i) Electronic resources

With regard to electronic resources as a problem encountered, eight teachers felt that their schools were not given electronic resources such as television sets and radios. In these resources, some of the educational programmes could help them to easily apply the OBE principles such as integration of knowledge and the teacher as a facilitator of knowledge in the teaching of African languages. Mrs Neluvhalalani stated:

The Department of Education is not providing us with the modern electronic resources which could be used in the demonstration of some of the African languages aspects. For example, in SABC television there is English literature programme. The approach used in the teaching of this language is the same for African languages (Mrs Neluvhalalani, personal interview, February 2007).

The above view was supported by Mr Chauke who reported:

Electronic resources are important and in this school there is only one radio which is used by the school principal and Grade 12 learners. Lack of television and shortage of radios affect the success rate and productivity in the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages (Mr Chauke, personal interview, April 2007).

According to these teachers, lack of these electronic resources was hindering their application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. The teacher as a facilitator and the integration of knowledge as some of the principles of the OBE approach were to be easily applied when using these electronic resources.

(ii) Physical resources

Twelve teachers reported that the OBE principles investigated in this study could be applied more effectively if enough physical resources such as classrooms were available in their schools. The reason they needed enough classrooms was so they could apply the OBE principles, because, according to Mr Chauke, they could not do so when the classrooms were overcrowded with learners (Interview April 2007).

The preceding views are similar to the one expressed by Mr Mashamba who mentioned that one of the problems encountered in the application of the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach and the teacher as a facilitator was the overcrowdedness of classrooms. Responding on the difficulties of teaching in an overcrowded classroom, Mr Mashamba contends:

It is difficult if not impossible to apply OBE principles such as learner-centred approach because our classrooms have large numbers of learners and discussions are sometimes less effective because I may not involve every learner. In teaching such classes I end up becoming the presenter of factual knowledge (Mr Mashamba, personal interview, April 2007)

These views as stated by Mr Mashamba, were shared by three other teachers, namely Mr Netshifefe, Ms Makhelunganise and Mr Makumbila. They all emphasised the fact that the success and effectiveness of the application of the investigated OBE principles depended on the number of learners in the classroom, which to them was a problem.

(iii) Lack of support

Ten teachers reported that they were not applying the OBE principles under investigation in this study because there was no one to monitor and give support to them. The problem they encountered was the lack of support from their workshop facilitators/trainers, learning area head of department and the school principal. Mr Netshifefe stated the issue of support as another problem encountered in the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. Mr Netshifefe said:

I do not need curriculum supervisors to teach my classes on my behalf. What I am saying is that they must come and give me some form of support and motivation. The fact that no one seems to care about what I am doing in my classes makes me to teach the way I think is correct, which might not be in line with the new

approach (Mr Netshifefe, personal interview, April 2007).

Mr Makumbila, like Mr Netshifefe, emphasised that the problem he encountered in his teaching using the OBE principles was the lack of support from other stakeholders. According to him, stakeholders such as curriculum supervisors would be an important motivating factor for him because they could contribute immensely towards the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. In support of Mr Netshifefe, Mr Makumbila reported:

On that question of the problems encountered what I would like to say is that it is a reality that the implementation of the OBE principles has a number of problems such as the lack of support. I know I am employed to teach and since the training workshop was for a short period, at least support from those trainers is needed (Mr Makumbila, personal interview, May 2007).

All schools that were visited lacked electronic resources such as television sets and radios. Furthermore, there was a problem of the lack of physical resources such as classrooms. The teachers also indicated the lack of support from other stakeholders. They felt that somebody who is more knowledgeable should always be there to help when they were encountering problems.

4.2.3.2.4 Government intervention programmes

The question was asked to find out what role the government through the Department of Education was playing to see to it that the application of the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages was successful. The Department of Education is

responsible for interventions such as giving learning support materials and seminars and conferences.

(i) Learning support materials

Eleven teachers responded that it should be the responsibility of the Department of Education to supply teaching-learning support materials for them to effectively and efficiently apply the OBE principles in their teachings of African languages. However, they felt that they did not have access to teaching-learning support materials with relative ease. The learning support materials supplied to them did not benefit them in their daily lesson presentations. Mr Chauke illustrated it as follows:

The Department of Education has intervention programmes in place such as the supply of learning support materials. The problems in those materials are that they are few and obviously not all of us have access to them (Mr Chauke, personal interview, May 2007).

When asked about the government intervention programmes which should be used to empower teachers in the application of the investigated OBE principles in the teaching of African languages, Mr Mashamba alluded that:

The government has an intervention programme to supply learning support materials to teachers. This intervention programme is not effective to me because the reading materials which they promised us during the training workshop are not forthcoming (Mr Mashamba, personal interview, April 2007).

Contrary to what the eleven teachers indicated about the government intervention programme not being effective, six teachers felt that teaching-learning support materials supplied by the Department of Education were relevant to empower them for their application of the OBE principles in their teaching of African languages. Mrs Kganakga reported:

The programme the Department of Education is doing to assist us is good. I see the relevance of the learning support materials to all my African languages classroom teaching (Mrs Kganakga, personal interview, February 2007).

The preceding views were supported by Mr David Prince who stated:

The reading materials given to us help me to ease my problems of applying the OBE principles. With these materials I am more confident that I can apply all the OBE principles in all my teaching (Mr David Prince, personal interview, April 2007).

Another government intervention programme to assist teachers in their application of the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge which teachers mentioned were the provided seminars and conferences.

(ii) Seminars and conference

As a way of government intervention, all the teachers indicated that the Department of Education through the curriculum supervisors was encouraging them to organise and attend seminars and conferences after their training workshop. Ms Makhelunganise said:

The government has an intervening programme in place in the form of seminars and conferences where we (teachers) come together and discuss how to apply the OBE principles in our teaching (Ms Makhelunganise, personal interview, January 2007).

Mr Nemavhungu shared the same sentiment:

I know that the government has seminars and conferences aimed to complement what I have been taught in the training workshop. The Department of Education officials are supposed to monitor the smooth running of these seminars and conferences (Mr Nemavhungu, personal interview, January 2007).

4.2.3.2.5 Relevance of the OBE approach

In responding to the theme about the relevance of the new approach in the South African education system and, in particular, the application of the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages, some teachers held the view that the new approach was relevant, given the global changes in education. However, some strongly disagreed with the introduction of the new approach. Mrs Kganakga and Mr Mabaso asserted that the new approach was relevant and its principles should be applied in the teaching of African languages. Mrs Kganakga explained this as follows:

Although change is painful, teachers must accept that the new democracy brought with it a good education system. In my view, at first I thought OBE approach was a waste of time and

resources, but now I see its relevance in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase (Mrs Kganakga, personal interview, February 2007).

Mr Mabaso was of the opinion that this approach was very relevant in his African language classrooms. The problems which hindered its effective application could be attended to with ease by the Department of Education (Mr Mabaso, personal interview, May 2007).

Although six teachers held the view that the OBE approach and its principles was relevant in the teaching of African languages, eleven teachers claimed that the approach was too complex and irrelevant to a developing country such as South Africa. In fact, the point raised by these teachers was that they were ill-qualified to apply the approach's principles in their teachings of African languages. Mr Chauke said:

I always prefer to change with time and change for the better. Changing from the former education system to OBE approach is chaos. It is chaos because it is not relevant for our situation. We are very poor with very limited resources to apply this approach, in particular, principles such as the learner-centred approach and teacher facilitation to the teaching of African languages in the senior phase (Mr Chauke, personal interview, May 2007).

Like Mr Chauke, who saw the introduction of OBE approach as irrelevant, Messrs Nemavhungu, Zithalala and Ms Makhelunganise were also of the opinion that the OBE approach had failed in other countries and thus it was not the right approach in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. Mr Zithalala briefly alluded to this thus:

I see little relevance of this approach to the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. You see our school is situated in a remote area where there are so many things which make me say the approach is irrelevant to our situation. Our learners are being taught under the trees and no training workshops received by some of us (Mr Zithalala, personal interview, March 2007).

In summarising the data presentation on the relevance of the OBE approach and its principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase, eleven teachers felt the new approach as having “lowered” the standard of education in general; and for the purpose of this study, the teaching of African languages in particular.

4.2.3.2.6 Enhancement of OBE approach

In responding to the question on the enhancement of the OBE approach, all the teachers indicated that there were a number of factors to be considered in enhancing the level of the application of the OBE principles, namely, the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages.

The need for the enhancement of applying the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages was illustrated in the following remarks by Ms Makhelunganise who strongly believed that the Department of Education should play a leading role in such an enhancement process:

The DoE should supply schools with relevant physical and electronic resources. Furthermore, they should improve the teacher training workshops, [with regards to] the duration and skilled trainers (Makhelunganise, personal interview, January 2007).

The idea of enhancement was also asserted by Mr Mashamba, as shown in the following statement:

The point I want to make concerning the enhancement of OBE approach in the teaching of African languages is that the Department of Education should reconsider the issue of in-service training workshops and cluster school meetings. In fact, the quality of this approach rests upon the shoulders of well-trained teachers. The knowledge needed for this approach should be added by means of proper training (Mr Mashamba, personal interview, April 2007).

The preceding remark was also supported by other teachers, for example, Mrs Makhalanjalo, Messrs Kekani, Nemavhungu and Mabaso. Mr Nemavhungu averred:

In my view, the level of OBE approach in the teaching of African languages can be enhanced by employing language specialists in this approach who should train curriculum supervisors and monitor its application (Mr Nemavhungu, personal interview, January 2007).

The enhancement of the OBE approach in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase was requiring a number of things which the Department of Education needed to do. All the teachers reiterated the fact that they were committed to apply the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages once all the problems they had encountered were solved. In fact, the OBE approach would be enhanced and the teachers would be empowered to apply its principles effectively in their teaching of African languages.

4.3 SUMMARY

This section has given the responses of the participants as collected by the researcher during his fieldwork. Of particular significance to this study, this section presented the data from a curriculum developer, curriculum supervisors and teachers. The data from the observation and the interview schedules were presented. In the following section an analysis and discussions of the presented data are given.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this section is to analyse and discuss the data presented in the previous section. Data analysis is the researcher's attempts to simplify the complexity of participants' account of what happened during the observations and interviews. In this study, data analysis attempted to give a rich insight and foster understanding on how teachers applied the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. Data obtained from the three sets of stakeholders are hereunder analysed and discussed.

4.4.1 Analysis of the observations schedule

In this study the observation schedule was used to gather information about teaching and learning of African languages, namely, Sesotho sa Leboa, Tshivenda and Xitsonga, and presented a picture of the classroom situation. It was important to look closely at teaching and learning in classroom practice in order to observe the notion of a paradigm shift. Although one lesson for each teacher was presented in the previous section, four visits each to Grade 8 and 9 African languages classes in the six secondary schools that agreed to be observed were made.

It needs to be pointed out that the longer the researcher stayed in these classrooms, the more authentic the data became. This was evidenced by the fact that the teachers' initial tendency to teach in a way that was meant to satisfy the researcher changed as

the teachers got used to the researcher's presence. Later the teachers became more relaxed and that was when relevant information for this study was collected. As highlighted in Chapter three, the researcher was interested in observing classroom activities, specifically the application of the OBE principles, namely, learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge. Therefore, the paragraphs that follow give a detailed analysis and discussions of the investigated principles in this study.

4.4.1.1 The learner-centred approach

The data presented in the previous section showed that two teachers allowed their learners to be active participants in their own learning while the teachers took the role of facilitation for the effective application of the learner-centred approach principles in the teaching of African languages. The observation made on this principle was that out of the six observed teachers, only two applied the learner-centred approach in their teaching. The other four assigned the learners the role of passive recipients of knowledge. In fact, the learners were sitting passively and listening to their teachers who were in authority. The learners were sitting for the whole duration of the lesson without asking questions even about things they did not understand. Theirs was to take notes while the teacher was teaching.

Mainly, the classroom activities were created in such a way that the climate was not conducive to allow the learners to be active in their learning. The reason why the learners were taking no control over the purposes for which they learn their language and the ways they learn it could be that they were not used to asking questions and they were not encouraged to do so. The researcher furthermore observed that there were between 12 and 15 learners per group in cases where the teacher decided to group them. This was mainly used as an excuse by the teachers to apply the learner-centred approach in their teaching. By this they meant that they could not group learners as they should because of large numbers of learners in a classroom. The researcher, however, observed that two teachers did manage to apply the learner-centred approach, despite the large sizes.

In some instances where the learner-centred approach was claimed to be employed, the researcher was struck by the fact that the learners were not monitored while in their groups as was evidenced by disagreements that took place between members of the same group during feedback. In certain instances the teachers claimed to be applying the learner-centred approach principle in their teaching because they had grouped their learners. In fact, their understanding of the learner-centred approach principle was to group learners in which learners were not allowed to be autonomous and creative in their learning process. Whatever the reasons were given for not applying this principle in their teaching of African languages, the researcher realised that their implementation was inappropriate to the OBE approach.

4.4.1.2 Teacher facilitation

The analysis made in this OBE principle is that the researcher observed that the teaching in four out of the six lessons observed during this study, was teacher-centred. The four teachers were at the forefront and dominated the teaching activities. In fact, the teacher's role as the subject expert was not that of the facilitator of knowledge as expected in the OBE classrooms, but was largely that of the provider of factual knowledge and they were regarded as the source of all the information the learners were to learn.

It needs to be emphasised that much time of the lessons observed was devoted to teacher-talk, giving no time for the learners to ask questions or share their ideas on the topic of the lesson under discussion. These findings are interesting because they seem to corroborate what Phalanndwa (2002:77) claims:

Many of the educators in the region still employed the lecture method in which there is a lot of teacher-talk while students only sit and listen without even taking notes at times. They found it difficult to adjust to a mode of less teacher-talk and more student-talk, which is needed in group work.

The researcher furthermore observed that in many cases the new language content was delivered by means of the telling and textbook methods. Although there is nothing wrong in using these methods in the teaching of African languages, however, the manner in which they were used by the teachers observed in this study, gave them the role of presenters of factual knowledge while the learners were assigned the passive role. Due to the learners' passiveness in their own learning, the learners were deprived of adequate opportunities to realise their full potential (National Department of Education, 1997a:30).

4.4.1.3 Integration of knowledge

From the data presented on this principle, it could be argued that there was no integration of knowledge. The knowledge and skills the teachers were teaching were not integrated within the learning area as well as across the learning areas. The researcher furthermore observed that the teachers in their teaching did not reflect real-life context of language. In fact, the learners' experiences of their language were not integrated with the knowledge taught. The application of this principle was further observed to be not applied because the teachers did not accept the views of the learners' understanding of the reality to the classrooms and assist them to reconcile their existing knowledge with the new information.

Furthermore, the researcher observed that the learners' existing knowledge was replaced and not enriched by allowing the learners' experiences to surface during the teaching-learning activities. The researcher is of the view that this knowledge is important to provide the learners with a cognitive structure to make sense of the new learning. Further, the teachers observed did not apply this integration principle in their day-to-day teaching but were teaching in the manner commonly used before the introduction of the OBE approach. The point to be emphasised here is that the researcher observed that teachers presented the content of the lesson in isolation from other related language aspects. Furthermore, the lessons observed focused on isolated facts and there was no integration of introduction, theme of the content, as well as the conclusion of the lesson.

Although it cannot be disputed that the pre-OBE manner of teaching these African languages was not bad, however, in order to be in line with the changes taking place here in South Africa, teachers are obliged to apply the OBE principles in all their teaching.

4.4.2 Analysis and discussion of the interviews schedule

The data analysis and discussions made in this section include themes as presented by all stakeholder groups. The researcher realized that much of the information presented by different stakeholder groups conflicted and it needed to be understood when analysed together. In the following paragraphs an analysis of the research questions and their categories presented in the previous section are discussed. The inter-relatedness of themes and categories is evident in the course of the analysis. Below is the table for the summary of research questions and categories identified:

Table 6: Summary of questions and categories identified

Questions	Categories
1. Knowledge about OBE	(i) Curriculum developer's knowledge of OBE approach (ii) Curriculum supervisors' knowledge of OBE approach (iii) Teachers' knowledge of OBE approach (iv) Duration of teacher training workshop (v) Non-commitment to OBE approach
2. Application of OBE principles	(i) Lack of application strategies (ii) Failure to interpret policy documents (iii) Resistance to change
3. Problems encountered with OBE application	(i) Electronic resources (ii) Physical resources (iii) Lack of support (iv) Training workshops
4. Government intervention programmes	(i) Learning support materials (ii) Seminars and conferences

4.4.2.1 Knowledge about OBE approach

In this question, five categories were identified which were the curriculum developer's knowledge of OBE, curriculum supervisors' knowledge of OBE, teachers' knowledge of OBE, duration of teacher training workshop, and non-commitment to OBE. The analysis of the data as presented on this question concerned all the stakeholders who participated during this study. These stakeholders are the direct implementers of the new curriculum and their knowledge and skills are imperative for this new approach to be a success.

(i) Curriculum developer's knowledge of OBE

The data presented about the knowledge of the OBE approach and its principles by the curriculum developer indicated that he was knowledgeable about this new approach. The researcher in this study found that the manner in which the curriculum developer answered questions showed that he was indeed knowledgeable about this OBE approach and its principles. However, it should be indicated that the knowledge which was asked was general knowledge about the OBE approach. In fact, its application, which was the main reason for undertaking this study was not questioned since this stakeholder was not involved in the implementation but in the development/planning process. A major challenge faced by the developer was to have a thorough knowledge of this approach so that when planning was taking place he should understand the manner in which the theory could be transferred into practice.

The researcher is of the opinion that since this stakeholder was well-versed with the theory of this approach he could obviously easily transfer that theory into practice. The fact that he had attended many workshops and read different materials for this approach could make him apply its principles such as learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages.

(ii) Curriculum supervisors' knowledge of OBE

In this category, teachers' suspicions were that curriculum supervisors who trained them during the teacher training workshops were not knowledgeable about this new approach and the application of its principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge. Besides the teachers' suspicion, Mrs Moloji, a curriculum supervisor, also confirmed that she was not knowledgeable about this new approach in general and how the principles under investigation in this study could be applied in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase in particular. The observation about some curriculum supervisors' lack of knowledge, as made by teachers, corroborated the observation made by the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005 (2005:56) which pointed out that:

District officials who conducted the training were criticized for not understanding the terminology themselves and for using the teaching methodologies that were not in line with Outcomes-Based Education. Too many of those who do the training have been out of the classroom for too long.

The present researcher also noticed a lack of knowledge amongst some curriculum supervisors during the teacher training workshops observations conducted during this study. This was evident when the curriculum supervisors with little knowledge of this approach and the application of its principles such as the learner centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages, could not answer some of the questions asked by their trainees.

The lack of knowledge of the OBE approach was further evident when the researcher observed during the workshops that the approach used in training sessions was mostly lecturing which rendered the training process trainer-centred rather than learner-

centred. Obviously, teachers were likely to apply the approach they got from their training institution, which in this case was the teacher-centred approach.

Furthermore, the lack of knowledge by the trainers was also commented on by Mr Nevhutali, who said that “the facilitators themselves were confused and did not have knowledge and skills to disseminate the information”. Therefore, the point to be emphasised is that the lack of the knowledge of the OBE approach by the curriculum supervisors who were the trainers of the teachers was obviously transferred to the latter.

(iii) Teachers’ knowledge of OBE

Based on the responses of the conducted interviews and observations of the teachers who participated during this study, it was clear that not all the teachers at senior phase were knowledgeable about the OBE approach in general, and for the purpose of this investigation, the application of its principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. In contrast to the findings of the interviews and observations made in this study that some teachers were knowledgeable because they attended the teacher training workshops and cluster school meetings, Prinsloo (1999:66) found that the problem of a lack of knowledge amongst some teachers was still continuing even after attending teacher training workshops:

Advocacy programmes conducted by Departmental officials for very large impersonal groups did not have the desired impact. In fact, the majority of educators felt more focused and educationally abandoned after attending such programmes and then being expected to cope alone.

The above contention may explain the observations made during this investigation that eleven of the teachers could indeed not apply the investigated OBE principles in their teaching of these African languages. Obviously, if these teachers were not knowledgeable they would not apply the OBE principles in their teaching of African languages. The researcher's observations were that there were teachers who did not see the significance of having knowledge of the OBE approach. This implied that when these teachers underwent the teacher training workshops and attended cluster school meetings they did not recognize and appreciate the importance of the training and discussions. With regard to the teachers' lack of knowledge, Williamson (2000:160) states that "evidence indicates that while there has been a paradigm shift in teaching and learning, teachers have a very puerile understanding of the doctrines of C2005/OBE, leading to very little transfer of learning in the classroom".

The findings on a lack of knowledge of the OBE approach and the application of its principles by the teachers teaching African languages in this study differ from the findings by Saib (2004:81) who found that "educators rated their understanding of OBE and Curriculum 2005 from good to excellent. Two of the educators had visited Denmark where OBE is implemented and indicated that they had a good understanding of OBE and Curriculum 2005." The researcher's understanding for the reason why the teachers in the areas where Saib did her research were knowledgeable was because the teacher training and exposure, or orientation to the OBE approach and its principles, was adequate.

(iv) Duration of training workshops

As far as all the teachers who participated in this study were concerned, the OBE teacher training workshops in the five-day block period were inadequate and too basic. Teachers were of the view that one could not expect them after they had received three or four years of training from their initial training institutions to change to a new approach in a workshop of two or five days. What's more, after the 2-5 days teacher training workshops they received for OBE application, it was difficult if not impossible for

them to translate the little theory they got into their African languages classrooms practice.

This notion of non-transferability of what was learnt at the teacher training workshops into African languages classroom practice due to the short duration of the training was further corroborated by the Review Committee on C2005 (2000:62) that the duration of the teacher training was too short and the quality of the trainers inadequate. Judging from the responses there was general agreement that the teacher training workshops period did not prepare the teachers adequately for the actual classroom situation. In fact, knowledge “gained” in these teacher training workshops did not serve the intended purpose. In a related study conducted in Kwazulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, Jansen (in Jansen and Christie 1999:208) found that “all the teachers in the study regarded the OBE training in the five-day block period as inadequate”.

The analysis made on this state of affairs showed that both curriculum supervisors and the teachers had insufficient knowledge of the OBE approach to enable them to apply its principles such as the learner centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. The lack of knowledge of the application of the OBE principles due to the short duration of the teacher training workshops was also evidenced during the workshops and African languages classroom teachings by curriculum supervisors and teachers respectively. In such cases the researcher found that both the curriculum supervisors and the teachers did not apply the OBE principles, namely, the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge.

It could further be indicated that the teachers’ knowledge of the approach is important for their application of its principles to be effective. The lack of such knowledge due to the short duration of teacher training workshops as evidenced in this study creates problems when it comes to African languages classroom practice. This is why, during observation and interviews, the teachers indicated that they were unable to transfer the “knowledge” obtained in their teacher training workshops to the learners.

While this researcher acknowledges that the period of training teachers and probably curriculum developers was very short, this researcher does not accept this as the explanation for the teachers' inability to transfer knowledge of their subject areas to the learners. The argument that since teachers had been trained for three or four years at the teacher training colleges of education or universities in methods and principles which, according to the teachers were irrelevant to the OBE approach, they could not be expected to switch to a new approach after being workshopped for five days only has some merit. This is because applying an approach and principles involves an outlook and sometimes an ideology which may take long to change if ever. On the other hand, being unable to apply principles one was workshopped on for five days may not be the result of a short period of training, but might point to other problems, such as non-mastery of the subject, and of pedagogy principles during the initial training. The latter explanation is more persuasive when one considers that in this study some of the teachers who were observed did apply some of the OBE principles in their teaching despite the short period of training in the new approach.

(v) Non-commitment to OBE approach

The researcher in this study reached the conclusion that some teachers were not committed to this new curriculum. The teachers' non-commitment to making the required curricular changes was evident from the fact that they did not bother to read policy documents on how to apply the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase of the secondary school. The importance of these policy documents was ignored hence teachers failed to perform their application of the OBE principles as expected. Furthermore, there was evidence in this study that teachers ignored the teacher training workshops and cluster school meetings. In fact, some teachers who attended the teacher training workshops and cluster school meetings did not even pay attention to the trainers during the training sessions.

Non-commitment to the OBE approach was also evident from the teachers' disregard of learning support materials. Some of the teachers who had an advantage of having some of the learning materials could not effectively make use of those materials. Obviously, teachers who ignored sources such as policy documents, curriculum supervisors and learning support materials would not get the knowledge to apply the OBE principles in their teaching of the African languages.

Related to the questionable knowledge of the OBE approach by both curriculum supervisors and teachers is the application of the OBE principles in the African languages classroom situation. The question on application of OBE principles is analysed below.

4.4.2.2 Application of OBE principles

The researcher believes that the success of the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages is dependent on how it is understood by the teachers. In fact, in order for the teachers to apply OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge, they have to understand what these principles entail. Following the analysis, presented in 4.4.2.1 above, that not all curriculum supervisors and the teachers observed and interviewed in this study had enough knowledge of the OBE approach, the researcher has also found that some curriculum supervisors were not applying the OBE principles in their teacher training workshop sessions with the teachers offering African languages in the senior phase. In fact, they still trained teachers using the teacher-centred approach and there was no integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages. Therefore, their "application" of the OBE approach and its principles was poor and not effective. It therefore could not be transferred by the trainees to their African languages classroom situations. This notion of non-transferability of knowledge was also noted by the Review Committee on C2005 (2000:62). From this question the following categories emerged.

(i) Lack of application strategies

The manner in which these African languages were taught as observed in this study shows that the teachers had little or no knowledge on how the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge were to be applied in their African languages classrooms. Four out of the six lesson presentations observed in this study were dominated by the teacher-centred approach in which the teacher became the transmitter and the source of all the knowledge.

The honest answers given by eleven teachers during the interviews in this study were that they were not applying the OBE principles in their teaching of African languages in the senior phase classrooms. Quite clearly, the majority of those who gave those answers were observed to use the teacher-centred approach and no integration of the knowledge within the learning area, as well as in other learning areas with related content with these African languages. In cases where these teachers wanted to try, it was also clear that they did not have the adequate knowledge, skills and strategies to apply the investigated principles in their teaching. However, in some cases, those teachers who had said they did not understand OBE because they had not been properly prepared in it, when they were observed in class it was found that they actually applied these principles in their classroom teaching.

It needs to be mentioned that although eleven of the teachers lacked application skills and strategies, a few (six) of these teachers showed a great willingness to apply the OBE principles where it was practically possible, such as teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in their teaching of African languages. In fact, they were able to adopt, for example, an integrative approach in their teaching of these African languages. In this approach (integrative approach), different aspects of language teaching such as oral communication, reading, literature study, and language study were observed to be treated as an integrated whole. In fact, aspects of language teaching were not treated in isolation. It should be noted that some of these six teachers

who claimed to have some strategies and skills of applying these principles were observed not to, even though there were opportunities to do so.

Furthermore, two of the six teachers who claimed to be knowledgeable/applying the OBE principles were doing that by merely grouping learners into small groups which they failed to manage and/or effectively facilitate. Obviously their failure was attributed to their lack of knowledge of application strategies of the OBE approach. During learners' discussions some teachers were observed to be offering no guidance to their learners. In some of the classrooms observed, after group discussions learners were not given time to present their feedback. The teacher dominated the entire lesson where rote learning was the order of the day. This was an indication that teachers had not incorporated the OBE principles of moving the focus to the learner, and teacher as facilitator instead of dictating from the front.

(ii) Failure to interpret policy documents

The purpose of writing the policy documents on the application of OBE principles documents and give them to teachers should help them to identify the strengths and weaknesses of these documents. The analysis with regard to the interpretation of policy document showed that teachers had limited knowledge regarding OBE policies. They acknowledged that the Department of Education was passing on information, materials and documents on OBE but complained that the amount of work they were expected to deal with was too much. As a result it was observed that they did not have sufficient time to study these documents thoroughly. Those who bothered to read them failed to interpret these policy documents correctly. Their failure was evident from their poor or non- application of the principles of this approach in their teaching.

Obviously, this was impacting negatively on the implementation of those policies. Some teachers were of the view that understanding the policies was reserved for managers such as the principal, deputy principal, heads of departments, and the departmental officials. The researcher, however, is of the view that teachers should make time

available to study these policies for effective application of OBE principles to take place. Their professional accountability which alludes to the fact that teachers should be accountable to their profession first and standards should not be compromised.

(iii) Resistance to change

The conclusion to be made on this aspect is that although the Department of Education had seemingly done its best to see to it that conditions for the application of OBE principles in general, and for the purpose of this study, in the teaching of African languages were conducive, there appeared to be great resistance to change on the part of the majority of the teachers. This was quite evident to the researcher during both observations and interviews when teachers pointed out that they were not applying the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge although they had attended the teacher training workshops. These analyses are interesting because they seem to corroborate Bishop (1986) has revealed that resistance to change seems universal.

Eight teachers mentioned that they were too old to change the approach they had been using for more than twenty years. The researcher's assumption was that to these teachers the new approach seemingly is not better than what it had replaced. This is a challenge which the Department of Education has to face because it would serve no purpose if teachers are not implementing the new approach in their African languages classrooms.

It should be indicated that since this OBE approach is an education system approved by the present government, teachers' perceptions need to be changed so that they are encouraged to engage themselves in lifelong learning, attending African language seminars, conferences, workshops, and cluster school meetings in order to equip them with the relevant knowledge of this new approach. Obviously, the knowledge to be gained from all the said situations would help them to change their negative attitudes

towards this approach and they would then apply the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase.

The above analysis serves to answer the main research question of this study. The lack of application strategies, failure to interpret the policy documents and resistance to change were the major categories of this main theme of this research. One must bear in mind that teachers' professional training, which used a completely different approach, was used as an explanation by the teachers for their failure to apply OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in their African languages classrooms. In fact, teachers were still teaching in the same manner as before the introduction of the OBE approach. Teachers mainly used the lecture method in which there is mainly teacher-talk while learners sit and listen without even taking notes at times. Although teachers found it difficult to adjust to a mode of less teacher-talk and more learner talk, which is needed in the OBE approach, learning did take place in these African languages classrooms. However, the researcher is of the view that although the pre-OBE approach which is generally used by the teachers is not all bad, teachers need to be able to change when new approaches and methods are found to be more effective, and to keep up with developments in their profession and in their learning areas.

4.4.2.3 Problems encountered with OBE approach

The four categories identified under this question are analysed. These are electronic resources, physical resources, lack of support, and training workshops.

(i) Electronic resources

One of the impediments to effective OBE application, according to thirteen of the participants, was the problem of electronic resources such as televisions and radios. There are differing views on the lack of relevant resources for the OBE approach. Data presented by the curriculum developer indicated that there was no problem of resources in general, which could affect the classroom application of the investigated OBE

principles in the teaching of African languages. The curriculum developer, however, made mention of the shortage of both electronic and human resources. On human resources, he mentioned the shortage of curriculum supervisors and indicated that the Department of Education was attending to this problem. The researcher also noticed the shortage of these curriculum supervisors during the fieldwork of this study.

Curriculum supervisors agreed that there were resource challenges which were hindering their effective application of OBE principles in their teacher training workshops. Print based, human and electronic resources were amongst those mentioned as seriously lacking. According to the curriculum supervisors, the absence of such resources contributed to poor delivery of OBE knowledge to their trainees. The crucial point which the researcher noticed was the fact that in the whole of the Vhembe and Mopani Districts there were only five curriculum supervisors for Sesotho sa Leboa, three for Tshivenda and two for Xitsonga. Obviously, one could not have expected the ten specialists to conduct the teacher training workshops, attend cluster school meetings and visit all the schools under their jurisdiction.

The application of OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages was found to be difficult-if not impossible because the majority (thirteen) of the teachers seemed more concerned about the lack of resources for this new approach than anything else.

The present researcher, however, believes that teachers had access to radios and these could be used in class. Moreover, most homes had television sets or people watch television from neighbours' and relatives' houses. Learners could therefore, be made to listen to their language in these forms. Old people who still use the correct form of the language were the oral repositories teachers and learners might then use for refinement of the African languages usage.

(ii) Physical resources

Overcrowded classrooms were stated by all the teachers who participated in this study as a problem encountered in the application of the OBE principles, particularly the learner-centred approach and the teacher facilitation in the teaching of African languages. The researcher also observed during visits to the classrooms in this study that classes were indeed overcrowded. The teachers indicated that they were unable to group learners in small groups because the number of learners in a single classroom ranged from 55-84. Obviously, large classrooms are not conducive to quality teaching and to the application of the learner-centred approach. While this could be seen as a barrier, there was equally a need to remember the objectives of OBE in South Africa which are the same as those in Spady's OBE enumerated as being to:

- (a) equip learners with knowledge, skills and values that will enable them to fulfil their roles in life successfully.
- (b) create a conducive learning environment that encourages achieving outcomes.

The researcher is of the view that although it was almost impossible for all the schools visited to create the ideal learning environment, it needs to be stated that even the overcrowded classrooms should not be blamed for everything. Ideally, classes should be small, whether one was using an outcomes-based approach or not. If classes were big, then forming small groups would be impossible. Overcrowded classes, however, are not an impediment to learners' "to communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes". Furthermore, overcrowded classes do not prevent a teacher from teaching learners to "collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information" (Van der Horst and McDonald 2003:18). Moreover, in an overcrowded classroom, "learners would listen actively, empathetically and critically to a wide range of oral texts, summarise, record and respond to them" (Senior Phase grade 7-9 Learning Outcomes in RNCS).

Many teachers identified lack of resources, as shown in the data presentation section above, as one of the factors that negatively affected their application of the investigated OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. The researcher, however, disagrees with such an approach because, with or without resources mentioned as hindrances, OBE principles in the teaching of African languages can still be applied, even if on a limited scale. Moreover, the researcher noticed that the teachers did not understand how they could link the identified resources to the OBE approach in the teaching of African languages.

The perception of teachers about the resources needed in general showed that their understanding of the new approach was very limited. Teachers thought that the OBE approach could not be applied until the teaching conditions were ideal or perfect. This, according to the present researcher, illustrates their limited understanding of OBE and its principles in the teaching of African languages. The OBE approach, in fact, encourages (and depends on) creativity in the classroom. It allows teachers a fair degree of freedom and latitude in choosing and making teaching material. Furthermore, the researcher noticed that in some cases the problems were not mainly with the lack of resources, but with how those resources were being managed.

(iii) Lack of support

The category on the lack of support as reported in the data presentation was stated by both curriculum supervisors as well as the teachers as a major problem for the ineffective application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. Data presented in the preceding section clearly indicated that curriculum supervisors were the ones to monitor and give support to the teachers in their application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. There seemed to be problems in monitoring the application of the new approach in general, African languages being no exception. This analysis was confirmed by the comments by Abbey Ngoepe, an education analyst at the University of Limpopo, when he commented on the high failure rate in the Grade 12 2006 results in the Limpopo Province:

The chances are that the results would be a little low because we do not have people who are monitoring the implementation of the Curriculum in our schools (Sowetan 28 December 2006:5).

The assertion made in the above quotation is in full cognisance of the fact that the first group of Grade 12's to write the OBE examinations were the 2008 matriculations. Data further indicated that curriculum supervisors also attended cluster school meetings and paid school visits when invited for monitoring purposes. It was, however, evident that what they stated did not correspond with what the teachers said in response to this question. In fact, all the teachers interviewed in this study indicated that there was no support or monitoring systems in place.

Teachers were told during the teacher training workshops that they should form cluster schools to discuss issues of importance in the OBE approach and the application of its principles in their teaching. An indication was also made that curriculum supervisors would time and again attend the cluster school meetings to monitor and give support to the teachers. However, practically these visits did not take place. The Review Committee on Curriculum 2005 (2000:62) states that there is no ongoing follow-up support and development after teachers have received orientation training workshop.

An analysis made regarding the problem of a lack of support in this study confirms what Masenya (1991:126) found in his study. He noted the problem around monitoring by indicating that scholars in African languages and other Learning Areas were concerned about the lack of constant monitoring in their Learning Areas. Curriculum supervisors in the Learning Area African languages have the important role of setting, maintaining, reviewing, and evaluating teachers' application of OBE principles in the teaching of the African languages. Obviously, without monitoring and support from other stakeholders there would be setbacks in applying OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase.

An observation made during this study also revealed that there was a lack of support of teachers' application of this new approach in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. Reference is made here to the fact that curriculum supervisors who were supposed to monitor and support these cluster school meetings did not attend the meetings. The researcher attended two cluster school meetings, one for Sesotho sa Leboa teachers and the other one for Tshivenda teachers. In these meetings it was announced that the curriculum supervisors had been invited, but the curriculum supervisors did not attend. Moreover, all the teachers suggested that monitoring and support by curriculum supervisors be done together with school support monitoring which was found to be lacking. In fact, African language classroom visits with the aim of supporting teachers by school principals or deputy principals or heads of departments were not taking place.

As an after-thought, teachers indicated that there was no teamwork and collaboration among schools in the same circuit and curriculum supervisors who should support and monitor the teachers' application of OBE principles in their teaching of African languages. It was evident, from the foregoing analysis on the supporting and monitoring of teachers' application of OBE principles that the lack of such an important aspect impacted negatively on the teaching of these African languages. The view propounded here is that the lack of supporting systems left teachers to either "sink or swim".

(iv) Training-workshops

For the teachers to be effective and efficient in their daily teachings there should be an in-service training which is related to the concept "training-workshop". These are regarded as those education and training activities engaged in by primary and secondary school teachers following their initial professional certification, and intended mainly or exclusively to improve their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes in order that they might educate children more effectively.

There is an important lesson to learn from this quotation. On the one hand, curriculum supervisors needed to be trained through the OBE approach in order for them to effectively train African languages teachers. On the other hand, teachers also needed some training in order to apply OBE principles in their teaching of African languages in the senior phase.

There are many problems and difficulties experienced in the process of teacher training through the OBE approach (Review Committee on C2005 2000:19). Questions about training-workshops were asked to both curriculum supervisors and teachers. Curriculum supervisors were asked about the workshops they had attended and those they had conducted and/or facilitated. Not all curriculum supervisors attended training workshops.

The researcher was surprised to note that while there were very few curriculum supervisors in the Vhembe and Mopani District to start with, not all were required to attend, and thus not all of them attended the training workshops. Surprisingly, all curriculum supervisors were expected to train teachers. It is this researcher's considered view that curriculum supervisors who did not attend training workshops would be found wanting in so far as training teachers was concerned.

The problem encountered by some curriculum supervisors in the training workshops they conducted was that some of the workshops were not effective because some teachers were not ready to accept change. Gray (1985:61) makes the following observation, to this end:

No amount of training is likely to succeed unless the person feels committed or motivated to put it into practice and also unless the person ultimately sees professional growth as his own responsibility.

There were problems with regard to time allocation for training workshops (three or five days) and the long distances travelled (about 50 kilometers or more) to the training

workshop centres. The researcher also observed that, as a result of the long distances travelled, teachers arrived late for the workshops while others were already tired by the time they reached the centres.

In the training workshops teachers expected the curriculum supervisors to train them on matters specifically related to the content of African languages. In fact, teachers' expectations were that curriculum supervisors would teach or demonstrate how OBE principles could be applied in the teaching of all language aspects. Instead, the first two days were devoted to the generic aspects where teachers of different Learning Areas were grouped in one venue and briefed on the new approach in general.

During the last three days teachers were then separated according to their specific Learning Areas. This was where teachers were taught how to draw a work schedule and briefly discussed the importance of the six language learning outcomes. Teachers were not trained on how the OBE approach principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge could be applied in teaching the African languages content.

(v) Confusion about OBE

The last problem is that of the confusion surrounding OBE. There seems to be confusion amongst teachers as to whether OBE is a curriculum, a teaching approach, a philosophy, or even subject content. It became evident during this study that teachers did not understand OBE, such that those who declared they did not understand the approach and were therefore not using it were observed using it. Those who claimed to know the approach and to be using it were actually not. Teachers did not realise that OBE was an approach to teaching and did not replace the subject content. Teachers also did not realise that they could develop and produce their own reading material instead of waiting for the Department of Education to supply them with ready-made teaching material.

In summary, it is important to mention that because of all these problems as analysed in this question, thirteen teachers who were observed and interviewed in this study were still employing the lecture method in which teachers talk while learners sit, listen and take notes. Because of the constraints reported by the teachers in their application of the OBE principles, it became like the blind (teachers) leading the blind (learners) in the whole process of curriculum innovation. This scenario clearly shows the limited role teachers had played in the application of the investigated OBE principles in the teaching of African languages.

The following section analyses the role played by the Department of Education as a way to ease the problems of the application of the OBE principles.

4.4.2.4 Government intervention programmes

The government knew before the introduction of the OBE approach that teachers were not trained through this new approach in their training colleges or universities, hence intervention programmes to orientate these teachers were introduced. The role to be played by these programmes was to see to it that OBE would be effectively implemented. The implementation of this approach was to be supported in order for it to succeed. In this question, the categories identified are analysed in the following paragraphs.

(i) Learning support materials

As a way of government intervention, the Department of Education had organised learning support materials which were to be used in support of the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. While it was a sound principle for the department to organise these learning support materials, it also becomes a futile exercise when these learning materials do not achieve their intended goals.

The conclusion to be made in this study concerning the intervention programme with regard to learning support materials is that teachers indicated that some of these

materials were difficult to understand and poorly prepared. This then led to ineffectiveness of these learning support materials. In some cases the researcher observed that these learning support materials were so insufficient that it could not be sufficient for all the teachers.

The researcher further observed that the distribution of these learning support materials was not fair. In fact, the unrealistic timing of the supply of these learning support materials at schools in rural areas was questionable. The learning materials at some schools were supplied in the middle of the year. Obviously, this was inconveniencing because teachers were already in the middle or about to finish their syllabus. This scenario further complicates and compounds the negative attitudes teachers had on this new approach and the application of its principles in the teaching of African languages. Furthermore, what this study established as far as learning support materials were concerned was that teachers had little knowledge and skills to use these learning support materials.

On the other hand, the researcher is of the view that teachers should not always wait for the Department of Education to supply them with learning support materials, but they can do that for themselves or request their learners to supply them. Because the researcher sees these learning support materials as a valuable component in the effective application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages, there is a necessity to make easy access to these materials in order to improve the standard of teaching.

(ii) Seminars and conferences

It ought to be pointed out that the government, through the Department of Education, after training the teachers through workshops, had set out a programme for seminars and conferences in which teachers meet and discuss language related issues. Accordingly, in some of these seminars and conferences, curriculum supervisors are supposed to attend in order to aid teachers in making the logical application of OBE

principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. The argument here is that with these seminars and conferences the Department of Education could have had enough time to deal with the constraints that teachers pointed out they were experiencing.

The landscape drawn by the observations and interviews held in this study, however points to the need of more visits by curriculum supervisors to these seminars and conferences if the application of OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge were to be realistic. Although curriculum supervisors are supportive during the teacher training workshops, it was surprising to notice that this support was not extended to teachers' seminars and conferences. This resulted in a scenario which left some teachers not attending these seminars and conferences. Moreover, it seems the whole issue of seminars and conferences was an exercise in futility to afford teachers with no knowledge of OBE approach an opportunity to run the seminars and conferences taking place without monitoring by curriculum supervisors.

Coupled with seminars and conferences the government intervention programme in the form of principals and heads of subject departments was also necessary. The two stakeholders, as the immediate supervisors of the teachers, were supposed to have played a role in assisting teachers with the strategies of applying OBE principles in their teaching. Surprisingly, it was observed in this study that principals in particular did not involve themselves in the implementation and the monitoring process of this approach.

4.5. SUMMARY

This Chapter has given the responses of the three stakeholder groups of participants in the form of curriculum developer, curriculum supervisors and teachers as collected during fieldwork. The presented data were further analyzed and discussed to help answer the questions of this study. From the data presented and the analysis made, the study's findings showed that although the teachers of African languages were willing to

apply OBE principles in the teaching of African languages, they evidently lacked the knowledge and skills to do it in a systematic manner. This lack of knowledge and skills could be attributed to the teachers' poor training by curriculum supervisors as shown in the analysis, and the very short time that had been assigned to teaching. Furthermore, the poor attendance of training workshops and non-reading of the OBE policies are also the problem.

According to both curriculum supervisors and teachers, the numerous constraints experienced in their training sessions and classrooms respectively made it difficult for them to apply the OBE approach in the teaching of African languages. However, the researcher's view is that with or without some of the things indicated as barriers, the OBE approach could be applied in the teaching of African languages. From the data analysis and discussions made above, this study has achieved its objectives and has sufficiently answered its research questions as stated in Chapter one of the thesis. In view of the above data analysis, the researcher found it imperative to recommend what teachers could do in the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. These recommendations are explicated in the next chapter and help to answer the last research question of this study.

The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this study was to investigate the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. In Chapter four data presentation and analysis were made from three groups of participants during observations and interview protocols. The conclusions and recommendations that are deliberated on in this chapter stem from the preceding chapters. In this Chapter the findings of all the three groups are collated in order to make recommendations for this study.

The aim of this Chapter is to give a brief overview of the study. This Chapter provides a summary, findings and makes recommendations and is organised in different sections. The first section is the introduction which gives a summary of the Chapter. It is followed by the summary of the study. In the third section the findings of the study are discussed. Thereafter, the recommendations for further studies are given. In another section the researcher discusses the implications of this study. The researcher's own reflections and limitations of the study are discussed in the last two sections.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages has been discussed in different sections of the preceding chapters. Although the researchers in the literature reviewed were not investigating the applications of the OBE approach in the teaching of African languages per se, they have, however, found related results such as those arrived at in this study. Examples hereof include Phalanndwa (2002) and Jansen (1999). To this end, the applicability of the results of this study should not be

limited to the two districts investigated in the Limpopo Province, but could also be useful and even applicable to other provinces of South Africa.

This study provided a deeper understanding of the application of the OBE approach in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. It gave voice to different ideas of the three important stakeholders selected in this study, namely, curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors and teachers in the application of the OBE approach in the teaching of African languages.

The application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages was investigated from the point where teachers received their training workshops. The knowledge acquired in those training workshops was found to be inadequate to make the teachers effective in their classroom teaching. This made the majority of teachers to resort to pre-OBE approaches and methods of teaching these African languages. During fieldwork most of the teachers highlighted some of the harsh conditions under which they work, which make the application of these OBE principles difficult or almost impossible. Despite all the constraints pointed out, the teachers still felt that the approach had several strengths that were beneficial for the new democratic South Africa.

5.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In this section, the major findings of this study are discussed in relation to the research questions stated in Chapters one and four.

The researcher aimed to answer the following research questions:

- To what extent are African language teachers knowledgeable about the OBE approach?
- How do teachers of African languages in the senior phase apply OBE principles in classroom teaching and learning?

- What problems are experienced with the current OBE teaching and learning methods used in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of the Limpopo Province?
- What intervention programmes by the Department of Education are in place to monitor and promote the use of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages in the senior phase in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts of Limpopo Province?
- What could be recommended for the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase?

The findings are presented using the following sub-headings:

5.3.1 Question 1: Knowledge about OBE approach

It has been established in this thesis that teachers had little, or lacked knowledge and skills of the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, teacher facilitation and integration of knowledge to enable them to effectively apply these principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. This lack of knowledge sometimes translated into confusion about curriculum, teaching approach and subject content. Teachers could not identify from their initial teacher training and their day to day practice what was in line with the OBE approach. This lack of knowledge and skills could be attributed to the poor training received in workshops. In fact, curriculum supervisors who trained these teachers also had little knowledge of the OBE approach and they did not use the principles of OBE in their own methodologies of training their trainees.

Furthermore, it was found that the training received by teachers for OBE application had a maximum duration of five days, which was too short to equip these teachers with appropriate knowledge and skills. Coupled with what has been said, the findings of this

study reveal that the lack of knowledge is also caused by non-commitment on the part of the teachers.

5.3.2 Question 2: Application of OBE principles

The finding which is related to the lack of knowledge is the application of the OBE principles by teachers which was the main research question for this study. The study findings indicated that the teachers teaching African languages in the senior phase were not applying OBE principles in their teachings. The fact that they did not get proper training/knowledge in the teacher training workshops attended was given as an explanation for their failure to apply OBE principles in their classrooms. It emerged from this study that the teachers were struggling and found it difficult to adjust to the mode required by the new Curriculum. Their failure to interpret OBE policy documents was found to be a contributing factor to their lack of application strategies of OBE.

Furthermore, this study found that there was resistance by teachers to change to the new approach. As a way to ease their application of the problem caused by the OBE principles, it was evident from the data analysis in this study that teachers ended up teaching their learners in the manner in which they used to teach before the introduction of the OBE approach. They were still employing the lecture method in which there is mainly teacher-talk while the learners sit and listen. This researcher concedes that in cases where the teacher was teaching new information the teacher had to take centre-stage because he/she had to focus on presenting the facts, and make sure the learners understood the content of the lesson. The researcher also accepts that the situation sometimes demands that the actual content of the lesson takes centre-stage and the teacher's voice dominates the teaching-learning situation, while sometimes what the learners had to say or experience may be more important in the lesson. However, this study has found that the latter was not taken into consideration by the majority of the teachers.

In some cases during the interviews some teachers had said they did not understand OBE because they had not been properly prepared in it, but when the same teachers

were observed in class it was found that they actually applied these principles in their classroom teaching. On the other hand, some teachers claimed that they were always applying OBE principles in their teaching but were observed not to do so, even though there were opportunities for doing it. This is an indication that these teachers had little knowledge of what OBE is all about. Although the teachers found it difficult to adjust to a mode of less teacher-talk and more learner-talk, which is needed in the OBE approach, learning did take place.

5.3.3 Question 3: Problems encountered

In this study, most of the teachers indicated a number of problems which made it difficult if not impossible for them to apply the OBE principles in their teaching of the African languages under investigation. This study found that there were problems with both electronic and physical resources. The lack of electronic resources such as radio and televisions were used by the teachers as another explanation for their failure to apply the OBE principles such as the integration of knowledge.

The problem of overcrowded classrooms was singled out as a problem for the application of the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach and teacher facilitation. Almost all the classrooms observed had no adequate space for movement. In all the observed lessons the number of learners in a single classroom ranged from 55-84. Because of the over crowded classrooms only one kind of grouping was possible, that was, facing the teacher. This kind of classroom seating arrangement was only useful for the lecturing method which is teacher-centred.

The lack of support from other stakeholders was stated as one of the problems encountered. There was no support from stakeholders such as the curriculum supervisors, who were the teachers' trainers at the training workshops. This study found that there were four curriculum supervisors for Sesotho sa Leboa, three for Tshivenda and two for Xitsonga in the whole of Vhembe and Mopani Districts. It should, therefore, be pointed out that curriculum supervisors, principals and heads of language departments were not fulfilling this important role by providing individual support and

assistance to African language teachers in their application of the OBE principles in the senior phase.

Another problem encountered was the training workshops which the teachers attended with the aim of being orientated in the OBE approach. This study found that there were problems with the curriculum supervisors who trained these teachers. These curriculum supervisors had too little knowledge of the OBE approach to be able to transfer it to their trainees. Furthermore, the study established that these training workshops were poorly organised in terms of venues, learning support materials and the timing which inconvenienced the teachers.

5.3.4 Question 4: Government interventions to monitor and promote the use of OBE principles

The research findings of this study have pointed out that the initiative for Curriculum change has been dominated by a top-down strategy. After the new Curriculum was developed by the national Department of Education, it was left to the teachers whose participation in the planning process was minimal, to implement it. This study found that the government, in particular, the Department of Education's intervention was to supply learning support materials and organise seminars and conferences.

It was furthermore found in this study that the Department of Education intended to intervene by sending curriculum supervisors to monitor teachers' application of the OBE principles in their teaching of African languages. However, this study found that the monitoring of the teachers by curriculum supervisors was not effective since there were few of them to be able to visit all the schools under their jurisdiction.

There were conflicting accounts about the learning support materials provided by the government as a way of intervening to ease the application of the OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. The teachers argued that the Department of Education was not providing them with the necessary resources, particularly in the rural areas.

The findings in this study have furthermore show that there is a low usage of some of these limited learning support materials by the teachers. In some cases the teachers did not have the necessary skills and time to develop the learning support materials for their own classroom use. Moreover, this study established that those teachers' seminars and conferences whose aim was to further assist the teachers with the application of the OBE principles were poorly organised and attended by few teachers.

5.3.5 Question 5: Recommendations

The data presented and analysed, and the findings made in this study have yielded a number of recommendations for improving the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase. A number of problem areas that need attention and improvement have been identified. Consequently the following recommendations are made:

5.3.5.1 To the Province

After the findings of this study we would like to recommend the following to the Provincial Limpopo Department of Education. The training of teachers was important for the successful application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages since this approach was relatively new to teachers. Extensive evidence points to the need for the Department of Education to add more curriculum supervisors in training workshops as lack of monitoring is negatively impacting on the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. It is, therefore, recommended that for effective application of OBE principles to take place, the province should provide adequate knowledgeable curriculum staff to do extensive training of both curriculum supervisors.

5.3.5.2 To the District support staff

It is thus recommended that the training of teachers in new skills, insights and qualities be prioritised, especially because OBE is a new approach whose challenges teachers are yet to adjust to. It is recommended that the District office on behalf of the Provincial Department of Education should see to it that teachers be given opportunities to update

their knowledge and skills through ongoing professional development and in-service training.

5.3.5.3 To the Curriculum Supervisors

These are mainly former lecturers from the defunct colleges of Education who were charged with the responsibility of training and monitoring the teachers in the application of OBE principles in their daily teachings. After the findings in this study, it is recommended that they begin by being work-shopped for several months (at least 6 to 12 month) before they facilitate educator's courses.

5.3.5.4 To the School

It is recommended that schools be provided with sufficient infrastructure that allows easy access to resources such as material resources for both teachers and learners. Schools should also establish school-based OBE application teams.

5.3.5.5 To the teachers

According to existing literature on how to re-train people (for the purpose of this study, teachers) who had initially been trained in the same field, it is recommended that their training be longer though it might be less than their initial training. This is the reason why training is regarded as a process, not an event, and cannot, therefore, be limited to a day or even a five-day workshop.

By and large, the limited research on the application of OBE principles in African languages that is currently available suggests that a wide range of further research is urgently needed in this area of inquiry. One area that became an obvious field for urgent research, as this present study unfolded, is the need for both curriculum supervisors and teachers in-service training and how to monitor the application of the OBE approach in general, and its application in the different classrooms and different geographical areas.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted only in selected schools in the Vhembe and Mopani Districts. The sample represented only two quarters of the districts in the Department of Education of the Limpopo Province. What's more, the researcher did not get responses from some of the targeted schools because some of the teachers did not cooperate, especially when it came to making observations. This may have affected the results of this investigation. The researcher is of the opinion that a bigger sample could have enhanced the validity of the study's generalisations across the Province and South Africa as a whole.

Another limitation is that teachers could not be observed over a period of time to establish whether and how they applied the OBE principles in their classrooms. Analysis and conclusions have therefore been done on the basis of the one lesson observed for each teacher. Ideally each teacher would be observed for some time to establish which approaches were used by the teacher intentionally and otherwise.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study managed to answer all the questions stated in chapter one of this thesis. The main problem investigated in this study was the application of the OBE principles such as the learner-centred approach, the teacher facilitation and the integration of knowledge in the teaching of African languages, namely, Sesotho sa Leboa, Tshivenda and Xitsonga, in the secondary schools of the Limpopo Province of South Africa.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This protocol will be used for an interview that is estimated to last between one and two hours.

The protocol will be administered to curriculum developers, curriculum supervisors and teachers in one session. A follow up session will be scheduled if necessary. The interview will probe the said stakeholders on the development and application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages. Questions will focus on the following:

- Participants' understanding of the concept OBE
- Support given by the government to effectively implement the OBE approach.
- The application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages.

Here is the basic protocol for the interviews:

Please note that due to the open-ended questions the interview format and the precise wording may differ with each interview.

Curriculum Developers

- (i) What is your level of understanding/interpretation of the new Curriculum?
- (ii) What is the rationale for developing the new Curriculum?
- (iii) What is your expectation of the application of OBE approach in African languages?
- (iv) Discuss the sustainability of the OBE approach in schools
- (v) Discuss the available of resources for the implementation of OBE in schools
- (vi) How were the stakeholders, specifically teachers, consulted during the design of the OBE curriculum?

Curriculum supervisors

- (i) To what extent are you knowledgeable about the OBE approach?
- (ii) Describe the organisation of the training workshops.
- (iii) How does the training of curriculum supervisors take place?
- (iv) How do you ensure that the training you give to African language teachers is being implemented?
- (v) Describe the effectiveness of workshops in facilitating OBE implementation.
- (vi) What constraints do you encounter during the training workshops?

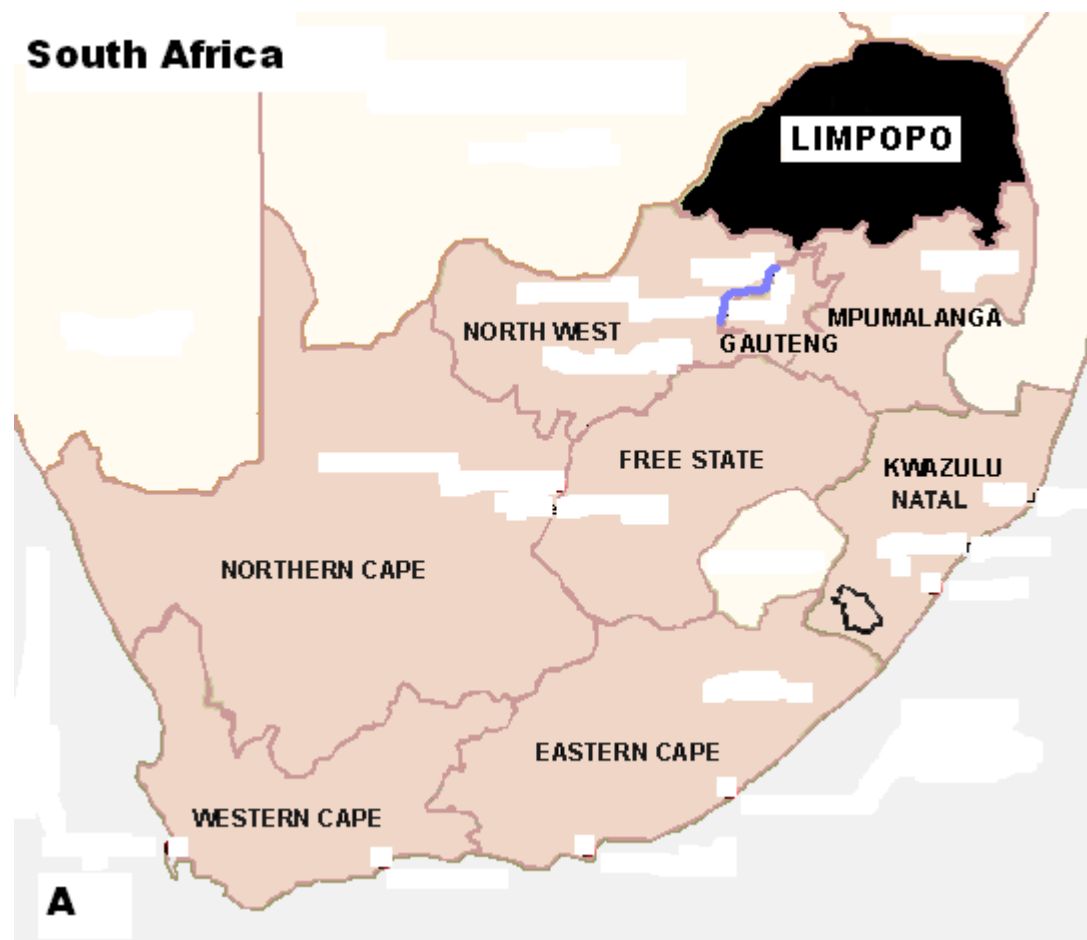
Teachers

- (i) To what extent are you knowledgeable about the OBE approach?
- (ii) Comment on the manner in which you apply OBE principles in your African language classroom teaching.
- (iii) What has your experience of applying OBE principles in the classrooms been like?
- (iv) Talk about the highlights and challenges of applying OBE principles.
- (v) What aspects of African languages are difficult to teach using the OBE approach?
- (vi) How can you enhance the levels of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages?
- (vii) How relevant are the principle of OBE in the teaching of African languages?

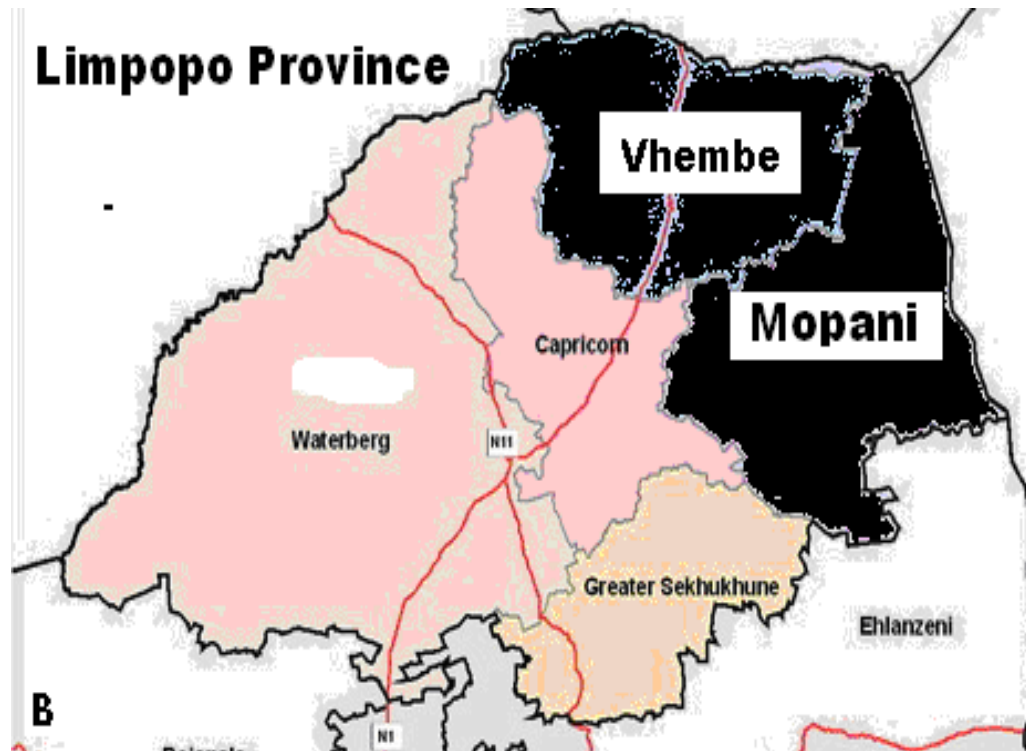
Thank you for your time

APPENDIX B

MAP: 1



MAP: 2



APPENDIX C

Table: Data-matrix

Questions	Categories
1. Knowledge about OBE	(i) Curriculum developer's knowledge of OBE approach (ii) Curriculum supervisors' knowledge of OBE approach (iii) Teachers' knowledge of OBE approach (iv) Duration of teacher training workshop (v) Non-commitment to OBE approach
2. Application of OBE principles	(i) Lack of application strategies (ii) Failure to interpret policy documents (iii) Resistance to change
3. Problems encountered with OBE application	(i) Electronic resources (ii) Physical resources (iii) Lack of support (iv) Training workshops
4. Government intervention programmes	(i) Learning support materials (ii) Seminars and conferences

APPENDIX D

P.O. Box 48
SASELAMANI
0928
22 September 2006

The Head of Department
Limpopo Provincial Government
Department of Education
Private Bag X9489
Polokwane
0700

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO OBSERVE AND CONDUCT INTERVIEWS PROTOCOL

I am a doctoral research student at the University of South Africa in the subject Didactics, Department of Education. The title of my study reads: **The application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase**. The purpose of this study is to investigate if the principles of the new approach (OBE) in the teaching and learning in South Africa are applied in the teaching of African languages of the Province. I believe this study will present an excellent opportunity for the participants to be involved in and to reflect on the application of OBE approach in general, and OBE principles in particular.

I would like to request your permission to interview three Curriculum Developers on the above topic. Furthermore, I would also like to observe and interview three Curriculum Supervisors and twenty senior phase teachers (African languages teachers) in the Vhembe District. The times for observation and interview protocols will be at times that will be mutually agreeable to the participants and me.

Data to be provided through these processes will be strictly confidential and will be used exclusively for my doctoral studies at the University of South Africa.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours faithfully

.....
Babane M.T. (Mr) Tel: (015) 9628152
Fax: (015) 9624749 Cell: 0827575277
Email: babane@univen.ac.za

APPENDIX E

LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Corner 113 Biccard \$
24 Excelsior Street
Private Bag X9489
PIETERSBURG
0700
Tel: 015-290 7600
Fax: 015-297 6920
015-297 4220
015-290 4494

Enquiries : Mokoka M.B
Telephone : 015 290 7918
Fax : 015 297 2690
Reference : 2/5/6/1

Babane M.T
P.O. Box 48
Saselamani
0928

Dear student

Request for permission to conduct research

1. Your letter of request bears reference
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request for permission to conduct research at twenty schools in Vhembe District and at departmental offices is approved. The title of the research is "The application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase"
3. The following conditions should be observed:
 - 3.1. The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

- 3.2. Arrangements should be made with both the Circuit Office and the schools concerning the conduct of the study. Care should be taken not to disrupt the academic programme at the schools.
- 3.3. The study should be conducted during the first three terms of the calendar year as schools would be preparing themselves for the final end of year examinations during the fourth term.
- 3.4. The research is conducted in line with ethics in research. In particular, the principle of voluntary participation in this research should be respected.
- 3.5. You share with the Department, the final product of your study upon completion of the research assignment.
- 3.6. Your Department is expected to produce the accompanying letter at schools/offices where you will be conducting your research, as evidence that permission for this activity has been granted.
- 3.7. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

.....
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

.....
DATE

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HEAD OFFICE
LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**

Corner 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street
Private Bag X9489
PIETERSBURG 0700
Tel: 015-290 7600 Fax: 015-297 6920
015-297 4220 015-290 4494

Enquiries: Mokoka M.B
Telephone: 015 290 7918

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Sir/Madam

The bearer, Babane M.T., has been given permission by Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE) to conduct research at schools in Vhembe District and at departmental offices. The title of the research is "The application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase". The research component targeting schools will be conducted during the first three weeks of the calendar year.

The Department requests departmental officials, learners, managers and educators to cooperate with the researcher when research activities are conducted.

It is envisaged that the research report will assist LDoE in many ways.

Thank you

.....
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

.....
DATE

Department of Education
University of South Africa
P.O. BOX 392 UNISA
0003

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Mr M.T. Babane is a registered doctoral student at Unisa, under my supervision. His topic is: THE APPLICATION OF OBE PRINCIPLES IN THE TEACHING OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN THE SENIOR PHASE. Conducting research for this study requires Mr Babane to visit schools to collect data. Collecting data will require talking to relevant stakeholders individually and as groups (interviews and focus groups), and being there sometimes to watch practitioners implement the policy (observation). The researcher may also have to do some document analysis.

I hereby request that Mr Babane be allowed access to the selected schools for the purposes of conducting research. He knows about research ethics and the need for ensuring confidentiality, and will, therefore, ensure these principles are complied with, and that his research causes no harm to any participants.

Mr Babane's study should benefit not only him, but educators of the senior phase who are grappling with implementation of OBE and those who are confident in applying OBE principles but need affirmation and confirmation they are on the right track, as well as (benefit) education officials who are interested in finding out how the OBE principles are actually being applied in classrooms.

Sincerely,

Prof T.V Mda
Mr Babane's DEd supervisor

APPENDIX F

Letter of invitation

Dear Curriculum Developer / Supervisors / Teachers

I am a doctoral student at the University of South Africa's Department of Education, doing research in the subject didactics. My study is titled: **The application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages in the senior phase**. I believe this project will present an excellent opportunity for you to reflect on the application of the OBE approach in general, and OBE principles in particular.

I would like to request your permission to allow me to interview you on the above topic. Interviews will be scheduled at times that are mutually agreeable to you and me. The scheduled interview will last between one to two hours.

The identity of the participants will be concealed throughout the research. Data to be provided through this process will be strictly confidential and will be used exclusively as part of the completion of a doctoral study at the University of South Africa. Should you have any questions regarding this project, please feel free to contact the persons listed below:

Maurice Thembhani Babane (Researcher)
University of Venda
Private Bag X55050
THOHOYANDOU
0950

Tel: (015) 9628152 Fax: (015) 9624749
Cell 0827575277 Email: babane@univen.ac.za

Prof. T.V. Mda (Promoter)
University of South Africa
P.O. BOX 392
UNISA

0003
Tel: (012) 429 4810
Fax: (012) 429 4909 / 4919
Email: mdatv@unisa.ac.za

I thank you in advance for your kind cooperation in this matter.

Yours faithfully
Babane M.T. (Mr)

APPENDIX G

CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Title of the research project: **THE APPLICATION OF OBE PRINCIPLES IN THE TEACHING OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN THE SENIOR PHASE**

RESEARCHER: BABANE M.T.

PURPOSE

OBE is a new approach to teaching and learning introduced in South Africa after the democratic elections of 1994. The purpose of this study is to investigate if the principles of this approach are being applied in the teaching of African languages, since the correct application thereof can help improve the support services the government is rendering in schools.

BENEFITS

Participants will not be paid for their involvement in this study. Teachers participating in this study will be empowered to reflect on their understanding and application of OBE principles in the teaching and learning of African languages. The study will benefit curriculum developers in that it will enable them to determine whether the theoretical knowledge they have can be put into practice. Curriculum supervisors will benefit from participating in this study as it will alert them on which skills are to be improved in the “training” of the teachers.

PROCEDURE

Those who choose to participate in this study will be asked to sit for an interview. The interview will take between one and two hours. The researcher will also sit and observe some of the participants' lessons in the classroom.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality for participating in this study will be maintained. Participants' privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowed by law. Their personal identity will not be made explicit in any written report that is submitted for publication. If interested, the transcripts of the interviews and the findings of this research will be made available to participants, upon request.

To ensure accuracy of data the researcher requests to audio tape the interviews. After the transcription of audiotapes has taken place, the researcher will keep the tapes in a safe place.

.....
SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

.....
DATE

Participant's statement

I have read the purpose and condition of the research and hereby agree to voluntarily participate in this study on the application of OBE principles in the teaching of African languages undertaken by Mr MT Babane.

I understand that the information I provide will be treated with confidentiality. I also understand that I can withdraw from participating in the study without any penalties or repercussions to my department / centre / school or myself.

I understand that feedback will be given to my department / centre / school in the form of a report emanating from the results of the completed research.

.....

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

.....

DATE