

CONSTRUCTING FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNING: A  
Content and Thematic Analysis of CAPS

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## **Declaration**

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## **Abstract**

Only 9.6% of the South African population speaks English as a home language, but the majority of learners experience English as the language of learning and teaching for all subjects. Surprisingly low pass rates for school-leavers and poor results on international literacy assessments are attributed to learners' limited English fluency. As the language policy implemented to develop English first additional language, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) document is used by teachers as a model for best practices in the classroom for improving second language fluency. This study investigates whether CAPS, as a model for best practice, demonstrates an understanding of second language acquisition theory, whether this understanding is clearly communicated through its language use, and whether it represents an effective model for language use and practical implementation in the classroom. Using AtlasTi, a linguistic analysis (by means of content and thematic analysis) was conducted. These analyses aimed to identify the main second language learning and teaching strategies in CAPS, and dominant themes evident through the language use in CAPS respectively. Overall, the results reveal the document to contain predominantly audiolingual and communicative approaches to second language acquisition. The analysis shows that the language in CAPS does not construct a clear idea of these approaches, nor does it model the best practice for implementing them.

## **Opsomming**

Slegs 9,6% van die Suid-Afrikaanse bevolking praat Engels as huistaal, maar die meerderheid van hierdie leerders ervaar Engels as die taal van leer en onderrig vir alle vakke. Die uiters lae slaagsyfers vir skoolverlaters en swak uitslae op grond van assesserings vir internasionale geletterdheid word toegeskryf aan studente se beperkte vlotheid in Engels. Die Kurrikulum en Assesserings Beleidsverklarings (KABV) dokument dien as 'n model van beste praktyke vir die ontwikkeling van tweede taal vlotheid in die klaskamer. Die doel van hierdie studie is om te ondersoek of KABV, as 'n model vir beste praktyk toepassing, 'n begrip demonstreer van die teorie rondom tweedetaalverwerwing. Die studie ondersoek ook of hierdie begrip duidelik gekommunikeer word deur die taalgebruik in die dokument, en of dit 'n effektiewe model vir taalgebruik en praktiese implementering in die klaskamer is. Met behulp van AtlasTi het hierdie studie 'n taalkundige ontleding gedoen (deur middel van inhoudelike en tematiese analise). Hierdie ontledings is onderskeidelik daarop gemik om die belangrikste tweedetaalleer- en onderrigstrategieë in KABV, en dominante temas wat deur die taalgebruik in die KABV dokument gebruik is te identifiseer. . In die geheel gesien, het die resultate aan die lig gebring dat die dokument oorwegend klank- en kommunikatiewe benaderings tot die aanleer van tweedetaal bevat. Die analise wys ook dat die taal gebruik in die taal in KABV nie 'n duidelike idee van hierdie benaderings bevat nie, en bied dit nie 'n model van beste praktyk toepassing aan nie.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

CAPS – Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference

DA – Discourse Analysis

EFAL – English First Additional Language

FET – Further Education and Training

HL – Home Language

L1 – First Language

L2 – Second Language

LoLT – Language of Learning and Teaching

MI – Multiple Intelligences

MoI – Medium of Instruction

SAILs – South African Indigenous Languages

SLA – Second Language Acquisition

SLLT – Second Language Learning and Teaching

TPR – Total Physical Response

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## 1. Introduction

The South African Department of Education (DoBE, 2013:2) states that “studies so far have proved that English, which is the language of learning and teaching in the majority of schools in our country, is a barrier for learning and thus of learner attainment.” Indeed, with only 9.6% of the South African population speaking English as a home language (Stats SA:24), South African learners are largely second language learners. With the implementation of the new curriculum in 2012, accompanying policy documents and instructional materials were introduced to “transform the curriculum bequeathed to us by apartheid” (CAPS, 2011: foreword) by providing insight into overcoming barriers to learning, such as English second language development. Chapter one discusses the rationale behind the study, paving the way for the research question and sub-questions to be outlined. Next, there is a broad overview of chapters two and three, highlighting the segue from these theoretical review sections into the methodology of the study. Chapter one then concludes by alluding to the results of the study.

### 1.1 Problem Statement

In detailing how to overcome barriers to learning, the 2012 curriculum’s policy documents and instructional materials have effectively become the models for best practice. In the second language learning and teaching context (SLLT), these models of best practice should demonstrate an understanding of second language acquisition (SLA) theory as well as methods of its application, because a cohesive connection is needed between theory and practice to effectively tackle barriers to English SLLT. These models of best practice, too, as the examples to follow, should *use* language in a way that exemplifies how to teach a language. If the supporting documents do not, effectively, ‘practise what they preach’ (if they are poor examples), they may pose a hindrance in developing a relevant and suitable model for overcoming obstacles to learning in SLLT. By analysing how language is used in instructional materials (policy documents) to present specific content and themes, their underlying approaches to SLLT can be determined and their efficacy as models of best practice in the South African context can be considered.

The primary policy document for second language education in South Africa is the curriculum and assessment policy statements (CAPS) for English first additional language (EFAL) in the foundation phase. This study aims to investigate how second language learning and teaching is linguistically framed in CAPS, based on an analysis of the way in which language communicates an understanding of SLA theories and how language constructs a model for

SLLT theory in practice. Determining the linguistic framing of CAPS' approach to SLA and its value as a model for best practice reveals the document's role in elucidating language policy and informing practices to address barriers to learning in the SLLT classroom.

Foundation phase is the focus for this study since English is initially introduced as a first additional language here. It should also be noted that the foundation phase lacks current research regarding the CAPS curriculum since senior and further education and training (FET) phases have been prioritised (Grussendorf et. al, 2014, Kokela, 2017, and Kobo, 2013). There is some research on the content of CAPS for subjects such as Music (Malan, 2015), Life Skills (Dixon et al, 2018) and Mandarin Chinese as a second additional language (de Man, 2017), but not for English as a second language. Where studies have been conducted for the foundation phase, these mostly relate to teachers' perspectives on the effectiveness of CAPS as a support guideline for SLLT (du Plessis & Marais, 2015, Isaacs & Waghid, 2015, and Lenyai, 2011). There have been no studies that analyse the language in CAPS, which is the primary manner through which information about its approach is communicated to those who use it as a guide for best practice in the classroom.

## **1.2 Research Question**

This study intends to answer the following research question: how is second language learning and teaching linguistically framed in CAPS? The following sub-questions will be answered as components of the main research question:

- What second language acquisition theories are linguistically framed within CAPS?
- How illustrative is the language in CAPS in constructing an understanding of these identified theories?
- How illustrative is the language in CAPS in modelling these identified theories?

## **1.3 Chapter Outline**

### **1.3.1. Theoretical View**

To provide a contextual background to the research, the first component of the literature review will detail the role of language policies and the position of English in South African education. The second component of the literature review, chapter three, will detail the core principles and strategies of varied approaches to SLA. The literature has been separated into

these two sections so as to provide an in-depth understanding of each theoretical field, and to gain an understanding of their interdependency in informing the analysis of CAPS.

### **i. Contextualising Language Policy**

To begin, chapter two outlines the nature and scope of language policy, detailing its pivotal function in society. It then contextualises language policy and practice in South Africa by providing a historical overview of the changes in and influences over language-in-education, arriving at a discussion of the current representation of language policy through instructional materials. Next, being crucial to the current support for second language policy and instructional materials, this chapter examines attitudes towards the position of English as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT). As part of this discussion, there is an overview of the historical issues that led to the preference for English as the LoLT, as well as a prediction of its persisting choice as the language of upward mobility, economic liberation and political advantage. Given this predicted trend, this chapter iterates the need for research to be geared towards identifying possible reasons for the barriers hindering English acquisition. By understanding what causes these barriers, effective solutions can be suggested to improve English fluency across South Africa's majority second language speaking population. It is also shown in this chapter that this research needs to be directed at foundation phase, since this is where English is first introduced as a first additional language (a second language). Since the successful ability to express ideas and engage in any subject area depends on the mastery that a learner has over the language of instruction, it is imperative that some measure of fluency in English (and an understanding of how best to achieve this) occurs before other subjects are studied in English. Reviewing the ways in which language policy serves as a tool to helping develop English fluency (particularly at foundation phase), chapter two reinforces how important it is for policy to be informed by a solid understanding of language learning theory. This means that understanding the theories of SLLT – being able to recognise them – is essential, and so links to the next section of the literature study: a review of SLLT methods.

### **ii. Second Language Learning and Teaching**

In this second component of the literature review, a comparative base of components is established from which to analyse SLLT theories: how they view language processing, learning and acquisition, the relationship between the first and second languages, key strategies and techniques, the context for language learning and agents responsible for

building that context. The chapter lead-in explains how understanding these aspects of any theory is important because in SLA, they are intrinsically linked:

... techniques carry out a method which is consistent with an approach. An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning... Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach... A technique is implementational – that which actually takes place in a classroom... Techniques must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well.

(Anthony in Richards and Rodgers, 2001:19)

Next, using these components, there is a brief overview of historical approaches (grammar-translation, direct, natural, total physical response and multiple intelligences), and then a more detailed focus on more current ones: audiolingual, communicative and post-structural. The sections on strategies and techniques within each approach are of significant importance for the document analysis, since they form the base from which a content analysis is conducted to search for an understanding of SLLT in CAPS. As part of recognising SLLT theory in a language policy document (specifically foundational language learning theory), this chapter provides an outline of strategies and techniques to construct a young learner environment. Having gleaned insight into SLLT theories in this section of the literature not only provides the reference framework for investigating how SLA theories are linguistically framed in CAPS, but also serves to further solidify an awareness of the link between SLLT theory and practice, particularly because SLLT theory informs practice.

### **1.3.2. Methodology**

Chapter four then outlines the methodology of the CAPS document analysis. Firstly, the research design is laid out: drawing from Burch and Heinrich's (2016) discussion around the value offered by both quantitative and qualitative data, content analysis and thematic analysis are explained as the most suitable frameworks for this study. Drawing too from the value of existing models for curriculum evaluation (Taba, 1962; Stake, 1967; Tyler, 2013; Stufflebeam and Zhang, 2017), this chapter isolates categories as a feature common to all models. This motivates for categorising the SLLT strategies and techniques explicated in the literature review, so as to be able to recognise them (as well as the underlying ideas relating them) in CAPS. Secondly, this chapter explains how AtlasTi is used for categorising each SLLT strategy and technique, and explains Clarke and Braun's (2006) framework as the selected tool to identify common themes presented in CAPS. Lastly, this chapter details how context,

interpretation, scope and ethical considerations direct the analysis, clarifying from what perspective the document analysis was conducted.

### **1.3.3. Document Analysis**

In chapter five, the methodology is given in great detail for both the content analysis and the thematic analysis. The results for each section of the analysis are presented following the explanation of their processes, so as to emphasise how the chosen tools and methods produced a suitable structure for conducting the analysis and for presenting the results.

#### **i. Content Analysis**

Using AtlasTi, a content analysis of CAPS is conducted. By allocating codes to specific mentions of SLLT strategies and techniques, a dominant SLA approach is revealed to be linguistically framed within CAPS. The thesis presents specific data results in relation to each approach identified, giving examples to elucidate how codes are assigned to utterances in relation to the strategies and techniques drawn from the literature review. Aside from the dominant SLA approach, some additional methods are identified, and the effect of this amalgamated SLLT theory framing is discussed as a conclusion of the content analysis.

#### **ii. Thematic Analysis**

Using Clarke and Braun's (2006) framework, a thematic analysis of CAPS occurs. After combing CAPS to identify interesting utterances, eight dominant themes arise from the data. These themes are analysed syntactically and semantically to identify the ideas or assumptions underlying them. As part of describing the procedures of the thematic analysis, this section of chapter five provides an example of the steps that are followed to analyse the utterances associated with each theme. On analysing each theme, it is observed that they can broadly be classified according to three main topics. A very detailed discussion of each topic ensues, drawing on examples from CAPS to clarify the themes in relation to the literature of SLLT. Each topic concludes by presenting answers for the research question and sub-questions.

### **1.3.4. Conclusion**

The final chapter of the thesis presents the key findings from the content and thematic analysis of CAPS, presenting some interesting insights into how CAPS fails to linguistically frame an appropriate and effective SLA theory for South African SLLT, and suggesting that remediations centre around linguistic considerations in curriculum development for SLLT.

## 2. Contextualising Language Policy in South Africa

Spolsky (2004:39) identifies the field of language policy as concerned with “the explicit policies and plans resulting from language-management or planning activities that attempt to modify the practices and ideologies of a community.” However, language policy as a link to change is, in fact, “far more complex and messier” (Ricento, 2014:1) than this static approach suggests. According to Ricento (2014), language policies – the doctrines of language use in society – do not only inform change, but profoundly affect the underpinnings of a society. Inequality can be propagated when hierarchical status is awarded to a language or variety over others, advancing those with mastery in that language and limiting access to resources for those with none. Favouritism of a particular linguistic group can cause marginalisation of others, increasing discrimination against ‘minority-status’ individuals and further segregating them from mainstream society. This in turn affects cultural pride and perceptions of the self and other, radically altering self-identity in relation to others. This brief overview of Ricento’s (ibid.) dynamic approach to language policy by no means aims to simplify the relationship between language policy and societal change. Rather, it aims to underscore its effect on the political, economic and sociological pillars that uphold societal ideologies and their practices.

As a foundation from which to build these pillars, education is where some of the most radical transformations have occurred to influence beliefs and practices in society. This means that language-in-education policies, specifically, come to “turn language ideology into practice through the educational system” (Shohamy, 2006:77). According to Spolsky (2004:39), numerous civil and ethnic riots across the globe have been initiated around official language-in-education policies, some of the most notable of which concerned the choice of language as the medium of instruction in schools. The South African context illustrates this too, according to South African History Online (SAHO, 2017), with protests around the language of instruction during apartheid signalling the necessity for changes to the country’s entire political, economic and sociocultural structure. More recently, the Fallist<sup>1</sup> movements again highlighted language as a crucial component for “educational activism” (Ahmed, 2019:18). One of the long-term goals of the #RhodesMustFall mission statement stresses the need for a curriculum that “centres Africa... By this we mean treating African discourses as the point of departure – through addressing not only content, but languages and methodologies of education and learning...” (RMF, 2015:8). Language and the policies that inform their role in

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<sup>1</sup> “The #FeesMustFall movement, which erupted in a nation-wide protest for free education and a national shutdown of universities, was a result of the growing dissatisfaction among young South Africans with empty promises of freedom, and a commitment to take up the challenges of this generation.” (Lishivha, 2019).

society remain instrumental in decolonising literature and reforming the curriculum in South African education (Ahmed 2019; Mbembe 2019).

To understand the implications of this change on South Africa's language environment, this chapter begins with a brief historical overview of major changes regarding the role of language-in-education. This provides context around the important role that language policy has come to play in South African education. Next, this chapter discusses the support that instructional materials offer for language policy implementation. Understanding how they enforce practices in the classroom reinforces the study's motivations for analysing the CAPS document. As another crucial element for harmony between policy and practice, this chapter also reviews perspectives on English in education. Understanding how English came to be the preferred (and thus dominant) LoLT gives insight into its predicted permanence in South African education, despite over 90 per cent of learners being second language speakers of English (Stats SA, 2012). Given this situation – and considering the function that policy serves in advancing equality – this chapter reviews how language policy remains relevant by aligning its goals with researched approaches to second language learning and teaching (SLLT). The earlier these goals and approaches align in the education cycle, the better the chance of language policy success, so this chapter briefly details the need to review policy of primary phases in SLLT education and motivates the choice to analyse the foundation phase section of CAPS. Holistically, this chapter emphasises the importance of language policy for successful SLLT and how language policy is implemented through instructional materials. The link between policy and practice stresses the need for instructional materials like CAPS for EFAL foundation phase to be informed by SLLT theory, so that they can serve as models for best practice in the classroom.

## **2.1. Language Policy and Practice in South African Education**

### **2.1.1. Historically Speaking**

To appreciate South Africa's current position concerning SLLT, a brief historical overview (sans the intricacies of causal events) summarises how English came to be the principal language in education. British imperialism began in South Africa in the early 1800s, introducing the English language as a tool of colonisation. At this time, the imposed lingua franca for economic concerns, legislation, Christian religion, and education, access to resources and services was strictly reserved for speakers of English (SAHO, 2017). When British rule expanded to claim land from the Xhosa, racial and ethnic discrimination began,

spurred on by the marginalising of African languages in official environments and, accordingly, suppression of indigenous cultures within both official and social environments (Coffi, 2017). Having settled in the Cape of Good Hope between 1652 and 1795, the Dutch considered themselves as “natives” of Africa (Mesthrie, 2002:17). They resisted the control exerted by the British, causing them to migrate through African land and clash violently with local inhabitants over “land seizure[s] and labour coercion” (SAHO, 2017). Tensions over territory, mineral resources and political dominance escalated between the Afrikaners (Dutch descendants) and British, culminating in the Second Anglo-Boer War from 1899 to 1902. After signing a peace treaty with the Afrikaners, the British Empire united its Southern African colonies and later declared Afrikaans as the second national language of the Union of South Africa (Mesthrie, 2002). According to Coffi (2017), the inconceivable casualties inflicted on Black South Africans by the Great Trek, as well as by ‘the ally’ and ‘the enemy’ during the Anglo-Boer War, demonstrated an obvious disregard for the value of Black lives. Coupled with implementing Afrikaans as an official language over other majority-spoken African languages, both the British and the Afrikaners propagated racial and linguistic discrimination against Black South Africans. White Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, while still under British rule, were given privileges and voting rights as representatives of the ruling authority, resulting in continued support for British ideologies that repressed Black South Africans. This was further intensified by a rise in Afrikaner nationalism during the Second World War (SAHO, 2017). In 1948, the National Party came into power, legalising racial segregation in South Africa. Numerous appalling atrocities were committed during this regime; pivotal to this study were those affecting language-in-education, such as the 1953 Bantu Education Act.

The 1953 Bantu Education Act separated Black South Africans into under-serviced educational facilities. Ill-equipped amenities, restricted times of attendance, underqualified teachers, poor quality instructional materials, and a syllabus designed to produce lower-order thinking; these factors contributed to limiting Black learners’ educational progress, ensuring they were only equipped to fulfil positions as manual “labourers” in South African society (Coffi, 2017:19). As Mesthrie (2002:18) explains, apartheid aimed to “create a permanent underclass of black people by placing rigid controls over syllabi and the media of instruction. Equally cynically, it enforced the closure of mission schools which offered quality education (albeit in small numbers) to black people, often on non-racial lines.”

Mesthrie mentions two aspects here that became pivotal issues for language's role in education. The first aspect is that the medium of instruction (MoI) had significant bearing on repression. Mother-tongue education was enforced for the first eight years of learners' education, and thereafter all subjects were to be taught in Afrikaans (Mesthrie 2002; Plüddemann 2015). Having no basis of mother-tongue understanding of Afrikaans, learners' understanding of content (and so their ability to use it to succeed in education and career) was deliberately impaired. Afrikaans MoI and Black suppression became synonymous concepts, and in 1976, the Soweto uprising against Afrikaans as the MoI became a catalyst for apartheid's downfall.

The second aspect is that the existence of pre-apartheid religious schooling had long-lasting effects on attitudes towards English in education. In these schools, teaching and learning had been conducted in English, owing to the reaches of religious missions during British rule. When these schools were closed, there remained graduates of English education who promoted what Alexander (2003:10) terms the "anglophile orientation" that caused the English language to be associated with mobility (Heugh, 1993). This chapter will later explore how the persistence of the 'anglophile orientation' affects current practices in English SLLT education in South Africa.

This brief historical overview alludes to language's function as a tool for colonisation, repression and liberation in South Africa: a function which directly impacts attitudes and practices towards language education. Through strict controls around language policy in education, both the British and Afrikaner regimes limited Black learners' opportunities for growth and development. Aiming for emancipation from this oppression, language policy in education became a key focus for the newly elected democratic government in 1994.

### **2.1.2. Language-in-Education Policies**

In 1997, the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) published the Language in Education Policy (LiEP), which aimed to redress past discriminations in South African education through the implementation of an 'additive bi/multilingual' programme. Its preamble states that

the inherited language-in-education policy in South Africa has been fraught with tensions, contradictions and sensitivities, and underpinned by racial and linguistic discrimination. A

number of these discriminatory policies have affected either the access of the learners to the education system or their success within it.

(DoBE, 1997:1)

Improved ‘access’ to education might be interpreted to mean physical access (improved school amenities, extended times of attendance, better qualified teachers, better quality instructional materials) or linguistic access (ensuring learners can understand what they are taught). This ambiguous introduction to what was supposed to be a specific guideline for linguistic freedom in education created “loopholes for complicity and lack of implementation of the policy” (Nyaga, 2013:45). Further seen in one of LiEP’s more ‘specific’ aims, the policy intended

to support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication.

(DoBE, 1997:2)

Yet, the policy offered no further insight as to how this aim would be achieved practically in the classroom. In fact, as Bamgbose (2003:54-5) highlights, the policy included a deliberate escape clause to assure its relevance only where and when “practicability” allowed (DoBE, 1997:3). The LiEP afforded learners and parents some choice in terms of their MoI – renamed the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) – provided that this choice was one of the now 11 official languages. It also became compulsory for all learners to study at least two languages as subjects after grade 3 provided that one of them was the LoLT and the other an official language (DoBE 1997; Plüddemann 2015; Coffi 2017). Aside from stating that “all language subjects shall receive equitable time and resource allocation” (DoBE, 1997:2), there was no outline as to how and when all official languages would be supported with the necessary resources like funding, teachers, equipment, facilities and instructional materials (Tshotsho, 2013; Potterton, 2008) to become fully implementable and ‘practicable’.

Moving beyond aims (broad goals) for equitable access to education through language, the DoBE recognised the demand and need for multilingual objectives in policy with measurable outcomes for the syllabi that advise practices of policy. Between 1997 and 2005, the curriculum followed Outcomes Based Education (OBE), aiming to align teaching methods and instructional materials with critical outcomes for learning and teaching. Rice (2010) notes that the curriculum’s short-lived popularity in international arenas like Australia and Hong

Kong was mainly due to the multiple interpretations of its workings; very specific outcomes for learners meant the need for a very specific method to achieve those outcomes, yet OBE strictly directed the use of mixed methods. In addition, it became infamous for focusing on the product of knowledge rather than applying that knowledge to different problems (ibid.). A largely unwelcomed change in the South African context, this new curriculum introduced an intense administrative workload that meant teachers spent less time teaching and more time collating portfolios of evidence (Potterton, 2008). De Wet (2002) notes that access to the new curriculum policy was not available to teachers with technological constraints, and according to Barkhuizen and Gough (1996) and Tshotsho (2013), of the few who did manage to access the policy document, many had inadequate mother-tongue proficiency in English to interpret the document's purpose (due to the language legacy of the apartheid regime). In addition, there was little to no explanation or training given during in-service teacher training on the practical ways to implement the new methods required by the curriculum. Teachers ended up delivering ineffective lessons with no way to test understanding of content, and no way to measure improvement in core language skills (Potterton 2008; Pudi 2006).

According to du Plessis and Marais (2015:2), the DoBE implemented CAPS in 2012 in an effort to streamline effective professional support. Importantly, as du Plessis and Marais (ibid.), Mensah (2014) and Kokela (2017) noted, CAPS is a revised and improved derivative of previous policy aimed at promoting equal access to education through multilingualism. CAPS revisited preceding policy in an effort to address major concerns regarding teachers' encumbering workloads, learners' underperformance, multiple interpretations of policy, and challenges with practical implementation of multilingual practices.

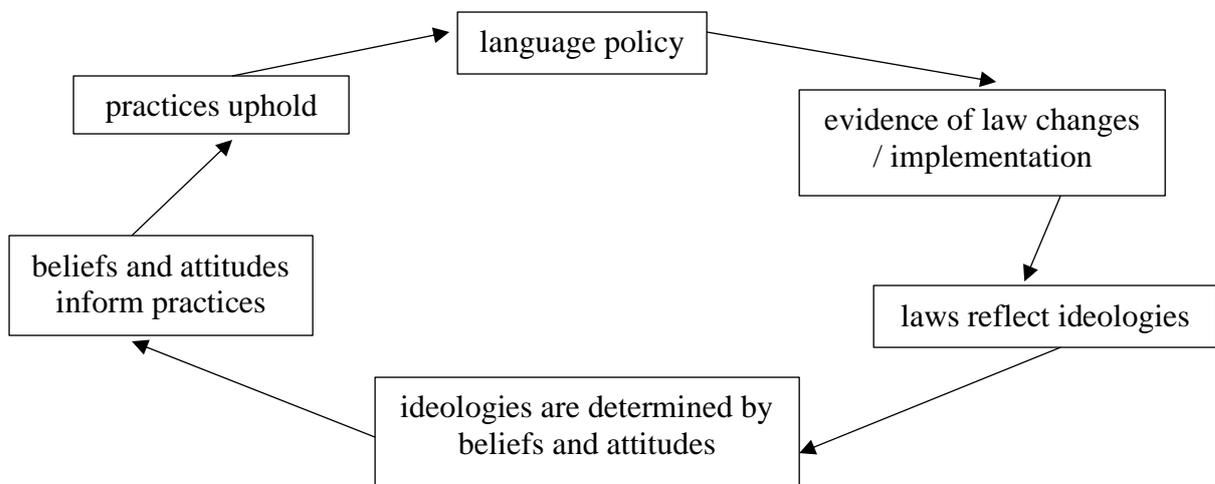
There are two crucial points in relation to the general aims mentioned here that are important for this study. Firstly, that there exist multiple interpretations of policy. Divergences between the intended purpose of a policy and its perceived role by teachers must be discussed in more detail, since the link between intention and interpretation is made with language. This highlights how language use can lead to varied interpretations of policy documents; and it is for this reason that the study analyses the language of the CAPS document.

Secondly, that there are challenges with practical implementation. Nyaga (2013:45-47) and Plüddemann (2015) explain that challenges in South Africa's multilingual education arise due to teachers and learners speaking different mother-tongue languages and dialects in the classroom, a lack of fully scholastic lexicons for subject teaching, as well as limited or no

materials and resources for learning and teaching. So, there needs to be a discussion of how researched methods can provide practical tools to overcome these challenges. This motivates for the subsequent chapter to elaborate on why and how theory should inform policy.

### 2.1.3. The Importance of Policy and Instructional Materials

Language policy contributes greatly in addressing issues associated with diversity and equality, as seen with the historical changes in South Africa's education system. According to Spolsky (2004:4), published policies effectively offer the data to track a country's changes to and implementation of language laws, as well as the collective perceptions and attitudes towards the role of language in society. Importantly, these beliefs and attitudes have real-world implications because they determine the language choices made and practices applied by society, which in turn uphold the various ideologies encapsulated by language policies.



**Figure 1. Influence of Language Policy: A Visual Summary**

The cyclical relationship between policy and the practices it informs means that language policy serves a crucial function in societal development. As a pillar of societal development, youth, then, is where language policy begins its important function. Notably, since youths cannot legally make decisions around the policies that affect them, policy focus is directed towards the decision-makers for the youth: parents and guardians, or schools and governing bodies. Language policy is a guideline for parents or guardians, who, as Harmer (2007) notes, may become potential barriers to development if they offer a lack of support for language learning, or have negative attitudes towards it. A lack of support may come from their own limited understanding of language's importance (as the tool through which all education is accessed), or because significant others "think that maths or reading are what count, and clearly show they are more concerned with those subjects than with the students' success in

English,” (Harmer, 2007:57). Negative attitudes towards language learning may be caused by their own prejudices and past experiences (Alexander 2003; Barkhuizen and Gough 2006), which now influence their aspirations for their children’s development. In the instances where those responsible for a child’s development feel unable to make decisions, or feel as if their decisions are biased, then language-in-education policies are all the more crucial in informing them how to achieve success in education through language choices.

In support of parents or guardians’ choices around language-in-education, or where there are no significant others, schools and teachers rely on policy too. As Spolsky mentions, language-in-education policies empower schools to “take over from the family the task of ... developing the language competence of young people” (Spolsky 2004:46). As elected representatives of schools, governing bodies have the responsibility to implement national and provincial laws that promote multilingual competence in education (Plüddemann. 2015:190), as directed by the LiEP’s (1997) assertion that governing bodies

must stipulate how the school will promote multilingualism through using more than one language of learning and teaching, and/or by offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects, and/or applying special immersion or language maintenance programmes, or through other means approved by the head of the provincial education department

(DoBE, 1997:3)

Thus, language-in-education policies reciprocally *guide* the decision-making process around languages’ role in schools, and they serve as the *evidence* of those decisions. Aside from providing a framework and becoming a framework for schools’ governing bodies, teachers themselves greatly rely on language policies, because they communicate the practical “back-to-basics” programmes that direct teaching practices in the classroom (Kokela, 2017:91), introduced by overviews of selected pedagogies and ideas for activities and lesson adaptation. They also support teachers in overcoming challenges, by suggesting techniques to manage multilingual learners (Mensah, 2014:120) and share materials between big classes. A qualitative study conducted by Pudi (2006) revealed that there is a misconception that CAPS is a language-in-education policy that offers the aforementioned benefits for teachers. Pudi (ibid.) and du Plessis and Marais (2015) note the document was designed to advocate the need for a change in education, and provide guidelines on curriculum (*what* to teach), not methods (*how* to teach), but that teachers did not necessarily understand or use it for this purpose. One possible reason for this may be because of the myriad of language-in-education policies (without clear indication of their progression, overlaps and divergences) listed here by Heugh:

[the] language in education policy (DoE 1997a) and three iterations of new curriculum and assessment policy between 1997 and 2012: Curriculum 2005 (DoE 1997b), the Revised National Curriculum Statement (DoE, 2002), and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2011a).

(Heugh, 2013:216)

As discovered when conducting research for this literature review, it is difficult to identify a common understanding and agreement on the relationships between and function of South Africa's education policies. Whatever the reason for the misunderstandings around what CAPS aims to do and what it actually does, one thing becomes clear: the importance of policy in language education *cannot* be overstated. It serves almost all key stakeholders in education, and if there is confusion surrounding the role of a language policy in education, then there is little chance that it contributes to ensuring success in education. Given the enormous power that language policy plays in education, authorities are entrusted with the power and responsibility to design and implement policies that supports parents, guardians, governing bodies and teachers and this support is most accessible is through instructional materials.

Instructional materials, or “teaching and learning materials” as termed by the DoBE (2014:1), are any policy documents, training guidelines, teaching materials, workbooks, study guides, readers or assessments that teacher and learners use respectively to teach and acquire knowledge. As Richards and Rodgers (2001:30) note, “instructional materials within a method or instructional system will reflect decisions concerning the primary goal of [those] materials.” Instructional materials also serve a vital function in the language learning environment as language models for teachers (Chamot, 2007), especially for those whose mother tongue is not the one they are teaching (Ezenwa, 2018). This means that these materials are vitally important in enforcing policy by communicating syllabus outcomes and examples of best practice in achieving those outcomes. Aside from *enforcing* policy, instructional materials also *inform* policy. In serving another vital function, Shohamy (2006:94) outlines how language tests can be used as tools to “manipulate[e] language behaviors”, and how the outcomes of these tests are often used as evidence to promote amendments to language policies. Moreover, Meyer (2007) discusses how content of instructional materials (activity types, cultural references, organisation etc.) is trialled in classrooms to determine validity, and these results contribute to broader policy decisions. To ensure instructional materials are useful for language learning participants, the materials should be founded on an approach that aligns with the needs of those users, and understanding those needs means acknowledging their beliefs and attitudes towards language learning.

#### **2.1.4. The Position of English in South African Education**

Barkhuizen and Gough (1996) emphasise that post-apartheid language-in-education policies were drafted with the aim of:

1. redressing past linguistic imbalances and encouraging educational multilingualism (The latter is seen as specifically promoting the educational use of African languages at all levels of education against the continued dominance of English and Afrikaans.); and
2. ensuring linguistic freedom of choice for learners in terms of language as subject and language of learning in the context of gaining democratic access to broader society.

(Barkhuizen and Gough, 1996:457)

There are two key concepts mentioned here that need to be distinguished: language as a subject and language for learning and teaching (LoLT). The differentiation relates to the CAPS mandate to promote multilingualism. In the first version of CAPS, learners were required to learn in their home language – LoLT – for the foundation years of schooling (grades 1 to 3), and study at least one other language – language as subject (DoBE 1997; Taylor and Coetzee 2013; Plüddemann 2015; Coffi 2017). Notably, this additional language was not restricted to the LoLT to be used from grade 4; it merely needed to be recognised as one of the Constitution's 11 official languages. From grade 4 onwards, learners (or rather, their responsible guardians), could choose which LoLT to adopt for their subsequent years of schooling, and had to study that LoLT as a subject in conjunction with a first additional language (second language) as a subject.

As an adjustment to the policy on multilingualism in education, a revision was made to CAPS in 2002, prescribing that all schools introduce English as a subject from Grade 1 (DOBE, 2011). This means that all learners are now exposed to English learning from the first grade (Taylor and Coetzee, 2013:3). While there is still no restriction on the choice of LoLT for grade 4 and beyond, the universal introduction of English in foundation phase education has made it a pragmatic and popular choice (to be discussed further below) for English to be selected as the LoLT for most learners. This means that the majority of learners are now learning in English and studying English as subject, thereby risking the loss of their cultural heritage (Plüddemann, 2015:191) by not studying, or studying in, their home language. In an attempt to mitigate the erosion of African languages, the Incremental Implementation of African Languages draft policy of 2013 introduced an indigenous African language as a second additional language subject for these learners. The CAPS curriculum promotes

multilingualism through foundational mother-tongue education, now termed home language education (HLE), with the understanding that initial introduction to learning in one's home language promotes development of essential cognitive learning skills (DoBE, 1997). Beukes (2015:122) notes that “[a]ccording to the latest census by Statistics SA, i.e. Census 2011, the majority of South Africans speak an African language as their first or home language... [but] the great majority (65%) learnt through the medium of English”. This evidences that the majority of learners are learning in English as their second language. The disparity between home language and the preference not to use it to learn, despite the DoBE's support to do so, signifies that language *policy* itself is not the hindrance in developing HLE. Perhaps, then, it is rather how *language* itself develops education.

Around the concept of language, Ruiz (1984:17) claims that society is no longer only concerned with preserving its unique cultural identity or “sentimental attachment” to a language through that language. Instead, it is concerned with the value that language (as a commodity) may provide in accessing information and enhancing the progression of that society (Ruiz 1984; Heugh 1993; Heller 2010). The attitude towards language as a ‘tool’ is particularly profound in the South African context because of the ramifications of apartheid's Bantu Education Act. During apartheid, language served as a tool to limit Black learners academic and career opportunities. Formative schooling was conducted in learners' home languages, which meant that the majority of Black learners were required to learn in one of the South African indigenous languages (SAILs). Given the impeded academic advancement of Black learners during this time, South Africa's first introduction to mother-tongue education became synonymous with oppression, meaning SAILs had effectively been ‘devalued’ (Heugh, 1993; Alexander 2003). Alexander (2003) explains that the result of this currently affects attitudes towards SAILs and HLE with what he coins as

“Static Maintenance Syndrome, which is an attitude of the mind... which manifests itself as a sense of resignation about the perceived and imputed powerlessness of the local or indigenous languages of Africa. Most of the people are willing to maintain their primary languages in family, community and religious contexts but they do not believe that these languages have the capacity to develop into languages of power.

(Alexander, 2003:9)

In opposition to apartheid's HLE and Afrikaans as the main LoLT, English came to represent liberation towards academic advancement and upward mobility in both local and global job markets. Since the successful ability to express ideas and engage with understanding in any

subject area depends on the mastery that a student has over the language of instruction (White, 2008), parents advocated for their children to master English as the language of instruction at the “onset of primal education” (Heugh, 1993:2). Studies by Mncube 2007, Ngidi 2007, Taylor and Coetzee 2013, Heugh 2013 and Coffi 2017 have shown the belief in English as the key to education and its benefits to be a prevailing belief amongst learners, parents and teachers alike.

Coupled with prejudices around indigenous languages as LoLTs, there was a perceived lack of on-the-ground engagement between government and key stakeholders during the introductory phase of the new curriculum. Parents, guardians, and teachers were often excluded from discussions that clarified the policy’s aims for equitable access to education through HLE. They were often unable to attend governing body meetings because of transport difficulties, or couldn’t complete surveys and the like due to their limited proficiency in English (Heugh 1993; de Wet 2002; Mncube 2007; Coffi 2017). This meant that there was a limited understanding of what policy was trying to achieve, and this was furthered by what the public perceived as a veiled attempt to disguise apartheid principles under new terms. As Heugh (2013) notes,

although the term “mother tongue” was replaced in the new education policy documentation by the term “home language”, the residual stigma of apartheid mother-tongue education led to a misunderstanding that a policy that advanced the use of the home language as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) alongside English was too close to policy of the previous regime.

(Heugh, 2013:219)

Yet another barrier preventing support for indigenous HLE in foundation schooling surrounded the availability of resources at the time of CAPS’ implementation. The apartheid government had invested heavily in the development of Afrikaans and English materials, and had actively destroyed any African language materials (Taylor and Coetzee 2013 and Coffi 2017). To then invest already sparse funding in developing instructional materials and academic vocabulary would be questionable, not to mention the time it would take for these materials to be widely available (de Wet, 2002). How would learners continue to learn in the interim? This made the choice to study English as the first additional language (second language) seemingly pragmatic. Its entrenched use at institutional levels in South Africa (trade, industry and higher education) meant that the resources and structures already existed locally to facilitate immediate and effective implementation in South African schools.

Having reviewed the historical issues and practical challenges that lead to the choice of English as the LoLT, the situation is unlikely to be altered for the foreseeable future. Crushingly, Taylor and Coetzee (2013:3) report that in literacy performance rates on “international assessments of educational achievement... [across] 1995, 1999, 2003 and 2011 have consistently demonstrated that South Africa's performance is amongst the lowest of all participating countries.” Reports like this (and the low percentage pass rate for school-leavers) is a continual reminder that current methods for developing student literacy (which in turn provide access to education at large) are not sufficient. The majority of learners are learning all their subjects in a language (English) where they have limited foundational literacy, meaning solutions for functional English acquisition in foundation years are crucial. This reiterates the need for acquisition to be driven through current language policy in education.

## **2.2. Remaining Relevant: Theory and Timelines**

Language-in-education policy must serve the public with a directed and practical attempt to redress issues of diversity and equality, specifically by providing equitable linguistic access to education. It should reflect researched paradigms of language learning and teaching that are relevant to South African society's needs and demands, because “where policy is placed before fact-finding and valuation there will be difficulty in the implementation of policy” (Heugh, 1993:7). In the case of English language learning, researching how different SLLT approaches are made evident *through* instructional materials means the link between theory and practice is solidified. It is for this reason that this study aims to investigate how language is used in CAPS for EFAL (an instructional material) to linguistically frame SLLT theory. If there is alignment between language policy goals and researched approaches to SLLT, then practices in the classroom will be targetted too. Notably, the earlier that this alignment occurs in the education cycle, the better the chance of language policy success (Tshotsho, 2013:42), which is why this study analyses the *foundation phase* of the CAPS document.

## **2.3. Concluding the Language Policy Context**

South Africa's language-in-education policies have been shown as a major influence on society's ideologies and practices in diversity and equality. The CAPS document (as a guideline for curriculum outcomes and a model for best practice) represents the explicit policy of language-management for English SLLT in South Africa. As representatives of language policy, instructional materials like CAPS for EFAL foundation phase need to demonstrate a researched approach to SLLT, clearly communicating specific methods and techniques that

must be practised to support the functions of language policy. By investing research into evidenced classroom practices for successful SLLT, government can show its recognition of the power that community buy-in has over enforcing language policy and its practices. Highlighting the link between language policy and its practices paves the way for the following chapter, which discusses second language acquisition (SLA) theory and how to identify methods and techniques associated with various SLA approaches. Recognising how SLLT theory is linguistically framed within a curriculum means understanding its ability to give public access to education. This makes an analysis of CAPS all the more significant in the South African context.

### 3. Second Language Learning and Teaching

This chapter begins by outlining key components to consider when reviewing SLLT methods. Owing to the insight they offer into SLA perspectives, these factors can be scrutinised based on a series of questions:

1. How is language processing recognised – in essence, how is language stored?
2. How are ‘learning’ and ‘acquisition’ defined, and so what relationship is revealed between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2)?
3. What learning and teaching strategies are associated with L2 development? And what are the techniques that activate them?
4. What role does the L1 play in L2 learning, and how is this determined by the language learning context?
5. Who is responsible for L2 development?

When reviewing different SLA approaches, it is vital to answer these questions for each of them, and thus provide a comparative understanding of their shared and divergent underpinnings. Comparing approaches by answering these questions serves for later reference in recognising techniques and methods in application, consequently revealing the SLA perspective associated with those techniques and methods. Once these ‘review’ components have been delineated, this chapter then gives a brief history of methods to provide contextual understanding of the development of mainstream SLLT methodology. Next, drawing from the exploratory questions listed above, this chapter discusses the cognitive and communicative approaches to SLLT at length. The understanding of these approaches in particular is central to the thesis as a whole, since, in many ways, they complement and build on each other (Thaine, 2015) to form the foundations for student-centred, communicative and inclusive approaches to education. These are the core values highlighted in the general aims of the South African curriculum (CAPS 2011:4-5), and as such, they are the most relevant methods to understand and recognise when analysing language use in CAPS. Following these analyses, this chapter reviews post-structuralism as an evolving approach to SLLT, reiterating why instructional materials should be regularly revised. Additionally, key principles in young learner SLLT are reviewed so that the specificities around child L2 development can be identified and associated with various techniques, strategies and ultimately, SLA approaches. This section also highlights the importance of researched SLLT strategies in *developing* L2 acquisition for young learners. In addition, it further solidifies an awareness of the link between SLLT theory and practice, particularly because SLLT theory informs practice.

### 3.1. Considerations for Understanding Methods

Ellis (1985:54) broadly refers to SLA as a field of study within applied linguistics that concentrates on the ways in which people learn a second language. There are many different paradigms within SLA, each with their merits and flaws. As indicated in the previous chapter, reliable and effective language policies are based on sound theoretical underpinnings – the paradigms of SLA. To understand a paradigm, we must consider the components that reflect its values: language, second language, acquisition, learning, teaching and context. Some of these components are selected based on the desire for a comparative base. Others are selected based on criteria provided by Richards and Rodgers (2001:24), in that a method – the design of an approach – can be understood by examining “(c) the types of learning tasks and teaching activities the method advocates; (d) the roles of learners; (e) the roles of teachers; and (f) the role of instructional materials.”

Beginning with the first component, Loewen (2015:3) defines language as “a system of form-meaning mappings that is used for communication.” This means structures (linguistic units) that we use in speaking and writing to convey thoughts and knowledge, to perpetuate action, or to influence behaviour. Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary (Merriam-Webster, 2019) defines a second language as “[one] that is learned in addition to the language a person first learned as a young child.” If a language is defined by its communicative purpose, then a second language (L2) is recognised as an additional system that a speaker learns after their primary language (L1), which is often used in the speaker’s environment for functional purposes (such as studying, performing daily conveniences, and interacting with government or financial agencies). When reviewing the selected SLLT methods in this chapter, this concept of ‘language’ will be investigated, including the way in which language functions (how it works). For each approach then, a brief overview will be given of how language processing is said to occur. This is done by first discussing how language is stored in the brain. Knowing how an SLA approach views language storage is vital in determining the various strategies (and techniques used to activate those strategies) applied through a method.

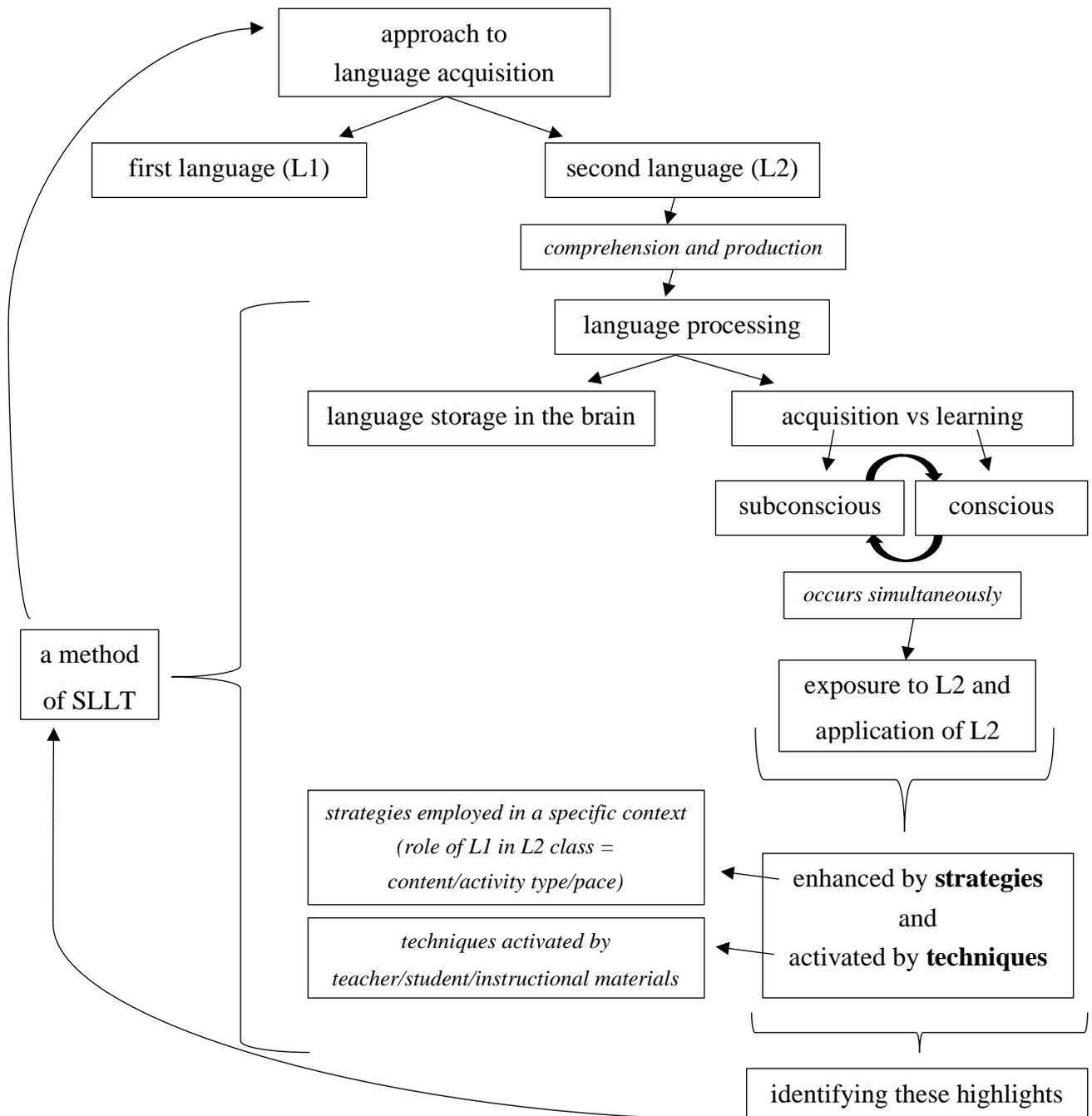
As a second component of language processing, two important terms of SLA must be explored: ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’. Krashen (1981:1) notes that the term ‘acquisition’ implies a level of unconscious absorption of the language structures, much like that of a speaker’s first language, and requires “meaningful interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but

with the messages they are conveying and understanding.” So, he views ‘acquisition’ as a speaker’s subconscious ability to use a language in a communicative situation. As a separate process, Krashen (1981:2) states that ‘learning’ is our more “formal knowledge of the second language, our conscious learning” of the rules of form and function of that language. However, more recent research into the field of SLA combines these two processes, showing them to be co-dependent. Ellis (in Loewen, 2015:7) notes that “usage-based accounts of L2 learning suggest that learners unconsciously register linguistic patterns in the input, and these patterns are strengthened when learners encounter multiple examples in the input”, highlighting that speakers subconsciously absorb language structures when they are repeatedly exposed to the L2. According to Loewen (2015:3), speakers, by extension, learn to use a language (acquire it) while they are studying its rules formally, which means that he recognises ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’ as interchangeable terms; knowledge of learning and application of that knowledge must take place within *both*. Examining whether a perspective views ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’ as similar or dissimilar provides insight into its principles of the similarities or differences between L1 and L2 language development. If these terms are used synonymously, then the strategies for L1 and L2 language development are considered the same. If these terms are differentiated, the strategies for L1 and L2 development are different. This certainly impacts the way in which teaching materials are designed to support a particular method. Thus, for each SLA perspective discussed, the terms ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’ will reveal whether the L2 is believed to be learned in the same way as, or in a different way to, the L1.

The third component of language processing to consider when reviewing an approach to SLA is how the L2 is learned through various strategies; namely the “special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension... [Including] how [these] strategies are learned and may become automatic, and why they influence learning in a positive manner” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990:1-2). O’Malley and Chamot (1990:3) explain that the literature on learning strategies has concentrated on verifying the presence of identifiable and describable strategies which positively affect learning, and it is these which support varying SLLT methods. Examples of these strategies are important to review since “[a] theory of second language acquisition, to be successful, must be able to describe how knowledge about language is stored in memory and how the *process* of second language acquisition ultimately results in automatic language comprehension and production” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990:1, emphasis added). So, it is from this understanding that each SLLT method will be reviewed,

highlighting what processes (strategies) may be involved in comprehension and production of the L2, as well as the various techniques that may be employed to activate those strategies.

As a main strategy common to all perspectives, the next component to review is the use of the L1 in L2 learning. This is vital, since how the L1 is used or not used in the L2 classroom determines what, how and when L2 structures are taught. The ‘what’ equates to content focus, the ‘how’ to activity types (to activate strategies and techniques) and the ‘when’ to pace. All these aspects make up the ‘context’ of language learning – the conditions in which learning exists – that affects the learning processes associated with different SLLT methods. Richards and Rodgers (2001:22) state that when we investigate the core aspects of a learning theory, we should ask ourselves: “What are the conditions that need to be met in order for these learning processes to be activated?” The final component, then, is to closely examine who is responsible for activating the various learning strategies that promote L2 acquisition. Loewen (2015:2) views ‘teaching’ as crucial in promoting L2 comprehension and production, imploring that the scope of second language studies incorporates views from instructed second language acquisition (ISLA). Loewen (ibid.) identifies this as the field that “investigates L2 learning or acquisition that occurs as a result of teaching; ... [And] a defining feature of L2 instruction is that there is an attempt by teachers, or instructional materials, to guide and facilitate the process of L2 acquisition.” O’Malley and Chamot (1990:7) report that learning tasks improved dramatically when learners were trained to use specific strategies for L2 learning. Training can be when a teacher overtly explains a strategy (for example: *Skim reading means you read a text quickly, just to get the general idea.*), distributes instructional materials with a specific set of written sequenced directives (for example: *First read the question, then read the text quickly to find the answer*), or verbally sets up an activity in such a way that a learner is forced to perform the task in a specific order (for example: *I want you to first read the question, then read the text, and afterwards answer the question*). Essentially, when reviewing SLLT theories, we should consider not only the way in which learning strategies contribute to L2 learning, but also the way in which interventions (teaching, using instructional materials or adapting tasks) enhance acquisition by activating learning strategies. Thus, we should also study the role of those involved in activating the strategies involved in L2 comprehension and production. The figure below provides a visual overview of the interlinks between an approach, methods, strategies and techniques, and demonstrates how these elements should be reviewed consecutively to recognise SLLT methods in policy documents.



**Figure 2. Process for Understanding and Recognising SLLT methods: A Visual Summary**

In summary, there are five factors to consider when informing different SLLT perspectives:

- language storage
- ‘learning’ compared to ‘acquisition’ (the link between L1 and L2)
- processes involved in learning and/or acquisition (strategies and techniques)
- role of L1 in L2 learning (determined by context)
- the agents responsible for learning and/or acquisition

An overview of SLLT methods will now be provided, with a more detailed focus on three in relation to the above-listed elements. This forms the basis for identifying which SLLT method and correlating SLA perspective is supported through the language in CAPS.

## **3.2. A History of Methods**

### **3.2.1. Grammar-Translation Method**

One of the dominant SLLT methods developed in the 1840s by Barnas Sears (1844) was the grammar-translation method. During this period, L2 learning was seen merely as an intellectual activity that could be developed through strict academic study and retained through memorisation. Notably, it was this belief that led to severe criticism of the method, since it does not support any informed theory – SLA approach – of SLLT (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:7). All languages were believed to contain underlying structures, and theorists believed any language could be learned by studying the structures of an L2 in comparison to those of one's L1; broadly speaking, through comparative translation. This method did not aim for what we now consider the 'acquisition' of a language (the ability to use it spontaneously and fluently), since the method prized the L1 as the source of all knowledge, with the L2 merely as the product of a mental exercise. The learner would never acquire native L2 fluency (meaning mastery of all skills) since this method emphasised a focus on reading and writing skills, with heavy reliance on understanding grammar applied in texts. Since this method was concerned with translation, Richards and Rogers (2001:6) note that strategies typically associated with this method were rote learning of grammar rules, memorising vocabulary lists and studying dictionary definitions of vocabulary. The L1 was used to explain grammar and draw comparisons between L1 and L2 structures, so L2 development was restricted to a classroom environment that focused on developing general mental skills through translation activities. These were completed as repetitively and frequently as the teacher saw fit. This method placed teachers at the centre of language learning, since they deductively provided all models, rules and knowledge of the L2. Instructional materials generally provided large volumes of content (rules and vocabulary) to be memorised and strictly applied to translation activities, and were centralised around literary texts that removed any opportunity for engagement by the learners. Instructional materials, then, worked in conjunction with teachers to eliminate errors, enforce accuracy and assign learners the role of passive receivers of L2 knowledge.

### 3.2.2. Direct / Natural Method

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in response to the inadequacies of the grammar-translation method, theorists of L2 learning became concerned with fluency akin to that of the L1, and observation of how the L1 was acquired formed the origins of a new SLLT method: Maximilian Berlitz's (1888) Berlitz method, better known as the direct method. Here, language was believed to be acquired (used fluently) through question-and-answer-type production of the language, essentially aiming for learner output. The direct method asserted that vocabulary could be taught by conveying meaning through mime (demonstrating action) and using real objects and pictures. Learners would be directed to inductively assume the L2 rules after exposure to language modelling from the teacher, and they would learn to speak it by answering the teacher's questions. Below is a list of direct method techniques:

- Never translate: demonstrate
- Never explain: act
- Never make a speech: ask questions
- Never imitate mistakes: correct
- Never speak with single words: use sentences
- Never speak too much: make students speak much
- Never use the book: use your lesson plan
- Never jump around: follow your plan
- Never go too fast: keep the pace of the student
- Never speak too slowly: speak normally
- Never speak too quickly: speak naturally
- Never speak too loudly: speak naturally
- Never be impatient: take it easy

(Titone, 1968:100-101)

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:12-14), with the direct method, only the L2 could be used in the learning environment; consequently, all teachers were required to be native or near-native L2 speakers. This meant that classroom-introduced language structures were based on more authentic situations from beyond the classroom, and L2 learning became more topically relevant to learners' everyday lives. To encourage output, question and answer tasks between the teacher and learner forced learners to be explicit about their discovery of L2 grammar. Patterned sequences of speech between the teacher and learner were gradually lengthened or substituted with new language structures. Learners were directed to interact through simulated dialogue activities. Since accurate output was the focus, the teacher played

the central role in developing learners' accuracy, meaning materials were put aside in favour of error correction from the model of fluency that the teacher represented. In addition, the teacher controlled the pace of learning, for despite the technique to 'keep the pace of the student', the teacher had the ultimate say as to whether learners had adequately mastered a structure and was thus solely responsible for directing their L2 progress.

In response to the reality that not all L2 teachers were native L2 speakers, and that this method required teachers to use valuable class time to discover and develop effective eliciting techniques that were as yet unsupported by "rigorous applied linguistic theory" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:13), theorists shifted their focus from teacher to learner. This led to the development of a method that is often associated synonymously with the direct method: The natural method. In the 1870s, instead of focusing on output alone, Lambert Sauveur (1879) promoted the use of increased L2 input as a way of modelling the L2, and thus reducing stress during L2 output. This method still encouraged inductive learning of rules (and supported all the aforementioned techniques), but through more exposure to repeated input the learner became more confident to self-correct, leading to positive intrinsic motivation and enhanced learning. The direct and natural methods derive from a nativist perspective of SLA, where exposure to language models and scaffolded trial-and-error practice allow learners to assume the innate patterns underlying that language (Chomsky, 1986) and thus develop L2 competency.

### **3.2.3. Total Physical Response**

A relatively popular but short-lived method which contributed to the defining foundations of subsequent, more student-centred and communicative SLLT methods was total physical response (TPR). This method derived from a combination of a structural or cognitive approach to SLLT (language as an interrelated system of components) with a natural approach (language as an inherent ability, like other biological processes). In 1977, James Asher proposed a method that "addresses both the process and the condition aspects of learning. It is derived from the belief that child language learning is based on motor activity – on coordinating language with action – and that this should form the basis of adult foreign language teaching" (Asher cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001:23). Here we see the support for equivalence between L1 and L2 acquisition: that spoken language items are not learned solely from a mental skill, but rather as an accompaniment to non-verbal forms of languages: gestures and physical movement. Asher claimed that "stress [is] an affective filter [that]

intervenes between the act of learning and what is to be learned; [so] the lower the stress, the greater the learning” (Asher cited in Richards and Rodgers 2001:74). To reduce stress, this method supported the use of the L2 in class, with learners receiving input (teacher instructions) that required a physical response, playing games, and repeatedly coordinating verbal models with matching physical actions. These task types created a fun and positive class environment that lowered anxiety and made L2 learning memorable.

Teachers were the ‘directors’ of language learning, while learners were the ‘performers’, emphasising a generally teacher-centred methodology. Language content favoured receptive skills before productive ones, focusing on grammar and lexis whose meaning could be inductively assumed through kinaesthetic tasks. Asher (1977:42) sets a framework for the pace of teaching as “12 to 36 new lexical items [per hour,] depending upon the size of the group and the stage of training.” Asher claimed no specific aim to accredit this method to any one SLA approach, which meant the method was deprioritised as one for long-term, comprehensive or complex language teaching. However, the task types (and their set up techniques) promoted by this method infiltrated subsequent teaching methods because many theorists noted the value in ‘comprehensible input’ and limiting stress in ensuring effective language acquisition.

#### **3.2.4. Multiple Intelligences**

As a departure from the natural approach to SLLT, the importance of ‘learners as unique individuals’ gained popularity in the early 1990s. This led to the expansion of a different philosophy of SLLT, and while not a ‘stand-alone’ method, this view contributed heavily to the emergence of communicative language teaching principles. In 1993, Howard Gardner proposed a theory of multiple intelligences (MI), where the idea that measuring intellectual ability against only one understanding of ‘intelligence’ was seen as exclusionist, and limiting to learning success. Gardner (in Richards and Rodgers, 2001:115) notes that his “view of intelligence is culture-free and avoids the conceptual narrowness usually associated with traditional models of intelligence.” Instead of a singular concept of ‘intelligence’, Gardner (1993) proposed nine different types of intelligence, summarised as:

1. Musical intelligence: the ability to play instruments and produce or compose music
2. Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence: the ability to control and co-ordinate bodily movements to express emotion, play games or create things

3. Logical-mathematical intelligence: the ability to think rationally and problem-solve by making deductions based on observation
4. Linguistic intelligence: the ability to understand, manipulate and produce language, often in creative ways that clearly communicate ideas and thoughts
5. Spatial intelligence: the ability to form mental representations that aid in navigation, fine-detail noticing and understanding of dimensional relationships
6. Interpersonal intelligence: the ability to distinguish subtle differences in people's intentions and desires, leading to the skill of working well with others
7. Intrapersonal intelligence: the ability to be self-aware: understand one's own internal workings (emotions, thoughts) and their correlation to external behaviours
8. Naturalist intelligence: the ability to recognise differences in nature and organise according to patterns
9. Existential intelligence: the ability to frame and ponder fundamental questions of existence

In terms of SLLT, the MI model directed teachers to recognise these different intelligences, and plan and execute tailored classroom activities that encompassed visual, spatial, kinaesthetic, and audio skills as a manner of engaging and supporting different learner types. Richards and Rodgers (2001:116) note that Gardner's theory was based on evidenced "clues [that] an intelligence [has] a distinct developmental and a distinct evolutionary history; that is, within individuals there is a similar sequence of development of an intelligence beginning in early childhood and continuing into maturity." Here we see the departure from purely innatist or natural approaches to SLA, where language is presumed an inherent ability of humankind, to a more structural focus which investigates the link between language as a mental process, and the processing unit itself: the brain.

### **3.3. Audiolingual Method**

As a proponent of structural ideals, the audiolingual method was derived from a cognitive perspective (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Pienemann, 1998; Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Loewen, 2015), whereby language is seen as a complex cognitive skill learned in the same way that we store other procedural information (knowledge learned by performing a task of some kind), as opposed to descriptive or factual information (knowledge of the theory behind the task). In other words, the cognitive perspective focuses on how language is stored in the brain through the performance of language tasks, and how this storage procedure influences and is influenced by the mental processes (the strategies) people select and apply when performing tasks.

### **3.3.1. Language Storage**

From a cognitive perspective of L2 learning, Anderson (in O'Malley and Chamot, 1990:20) classifies stored knowledge into two categories, namely 'declarative knowledge' and 'procedural knowledge'. The former relates to the definitions and rules of a language active in working (short-term) memory, being converted into long-term memory (to eventually become schemas); the latter refers to the application of these definitions and rules through production systems. These interrelated processes – their co-operation to store L2 learning in the brain – led to the development of various SLLT methods. The most prominent was what came to be known as the audiolingual method, developed by Charles Fry in 1945. It derived from a structuralist view that human behaviour, including language, was developed through a sequenced progression from stimulus, to response, to reinforcement (Skinner in Richards and Rodgers, 2001:56). This progression is best detailed by John Anderson's 1983 model of learning (in O'Malley and Chamot, 1990:25), which postulates that knowledge about a language can be transferred from declarative to procedural by moving through a series of controlled stages.

The first stage, the cognitive stage, is when a language structure is presented through instruction, demonstration, inductive exploration or self-study techniques (stimulus). Once the learner has had time to practise the language structure, say through repetition drills or practise with an activity, stage two occurs. This is the associative stage, where the learner receives some kind of feedback (response) about the practice attempt, either from the teacher, a peer or self-evaluation, and is able to eliminate errors related to that language structure. Lastly, the autonomous stage occurs, where after much repeated use (habit formation through reinforcement), the learner has effectively systematised their use of the language structure. The question is, though, just how 'systematised' will the L2 knowledge become? Will a learner permanently commit knowledge to memory to become a fluent user of the L2? To answer, this, we must investigate the cognitive perspective of 'learning' versus 'acquisition' and how the L1 and L2 are 'learned' or 'acquired'.

### **3.3.2. L1 versus L2 and 'Learning' versus 'Acquisition'**

O'Malley and Chamot (1990:33) highlight that automisation of the L1 occurs through conscious hypothesis testing of the underlying language rules, and automisation of the L2 occurs through repeated exposure and repetition to lead the learner to assume the underlying language rules (again, hypothesis testing). Here is the first marker that the learning processes

involved for L1 and L2 acquisition are seen as synonymous. The second marker is that cognitivism views all language learning as a cognitive skill acquired and stored through task performance (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Pienemann, 1998; Richards and Rodgers, 2001; and Loewen, 2015), meaning that the strategies selected during L2 learning and the language's converted storage in the brain, are inextricably linked. This denotes that learning and acquiring of the L2 occur simultaneously; a learner will become proficient in the L2 with reinforced practise of selected amounts of language. Loewen (2015:9) states that "Pienemann's Processability Theory (1998, 2007) maintains that the cognitive processing of language occurs relatively automatically and unconsciously. Input is processed in specific ways, with processing at the initial stages of learning limited to small chunks of language and developing to larger units, such as noun phrases and clauses." Importantly, initiating the mental processes needed to convert language to memory requires attention, which Schmidt (in Ellis, 1997:55) defines as a learner's conscious and intended focus during the L2 learning process. So, the cognitive perspective views L1 and L2 learning as a conscious process (awareness of a learning experience) with the inevitable acquisition of the language from repeated engagement with that experience. In cognitivism, L2 development occurs from a set lesson structure that consciously activates L2 learning processes.

### 3.3.3. Cognitive Strategies for Learning and Teaching

Within a typical lesson structure following an audiolingual approach to L2 learning and teaching, various strategies can be activated to assist in the learning process. According to O'Malley et al. (in O'Malley and Chamot, 1990:44) learning strategies are recognised as cognitive skills, and can be grouped according to three main categories: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and social affective strategies. Metacognitive strategies are those that learners use when they are conscious of their learning process - they are aware of which strategies they are using, and can adjust them to improve their rate of learning. Cognitive strategies are those where learners use language to help them understand and remember new language structures. Social affective strategies are those used when interacting with other speakers. Below is a table outlining various strategies for L2 development within each category, as well as the techniques (specific language structures) that can activate them:

<i>Cognitive skills</i>	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Techniques for activation</i>
Metacognitive strategies	Selective attention	Oral instructions that direct focus to specific learning tasks, such as <b>planning to listen for key words or phrases.</b>
	Monitoring	Paying attention to a specific task whilst it is happening by consciously selecting and correcting language structures.

	Evaluation	Providing feedback on a task once it's been completed and consciously assessing the success of the task.
Cognitive strategies	Rehearsal	Verbally repeating language structures through drills (individual or choral) with accompanying motor movements (gestures).
	Organization	Grouping, classifying or ranking language structures according to commonality or order of use.
	Inferencing	Guessing or predicting meaning of language structures using information given or using missing information.
	Summarising	Occasionally reviewing or summing up information to aid retention.
	Deducing	Identifying patterns in language structures, or comparing L1 to L2 structures, to help hypothesise rules of the language structure.
	Imagery	Coordinating the use of visual images and gestures (as well as real objects) alongside language structures.
	Transfer	Using existing chunks of language with substitutions of new language structures.
	Elaboration	Linking ideas contained in new information, or integrating new ideas with known language structures.
Social/affective strategies	Cooperation	Working with peers to practise dialogues or repeat oral models of language structures.
	Questioning for clarification	Asking questions to receive feedback or reassurance, or elicit a response or further explanation about language structures.
	Self-talk	Providing positive praise that a learning activity will be successful, or to reduce anxiety about a task.

**Table 1. Classification of Strategies** adapted from O'Malley and Chamot (1990:46)

The techniques listed here support strategies associated with the audiolingual method and its cognitive approach to SLLT. Used in isolation however, they may be applicable to other perspectives. So, the context in which these techniques are used – the learning and teaching environment created by those who participate in the learning process – must be examined too.

### 3.3.4. Cognitive Context

From a cognitive perspective, in order to repeatedly recreate the conditions needed for L2 learning, the learning experience needs to take place in a specialised language learning environment (the classroom), with the habitual application of learning strategies (a small range of task types), with repeated oral language use by the teacher, the student or instructional materials, to reinforce L2 learning. Richards and Rodgers (2001:56) note that for the audiolingual perspective, “the structure is what is important and unique about a language, [so] early practice should focus on mastery of phonological and grammatical structures rather than on mastery of vocabulary.” The audiolingual method focuses on the spoken context of the L2; any tasks around grammatical, lexical, read or written aspects of language are derived from an oral model. Since emphasis is placed on these oral models, L2 language use is strictly

applied over the use of any L1 in the L2 classroom. Specifically linked to L2 content focus in cognitivism, Manfred Pienemann's processability theory (1998) claims that learners can only acquire certain language structures at a time when they are ready to acquire it and that some structures need to be learnt as foundations for more complex structures. While no specific framework is outlined by this paradigm, any materials that align with this perspective should provide an outline of the order and time allocated for learning and teaching language structures in a scaffolded way.

### **3.3.5. Agents of Activation**

Richards and Rodgers (2001:62-63) detail the role that the teacher, student and instructional materials play in the cognitive L2 learning environment. The teacher is seen as the primary source of knowledge and stimulus, playing the role of model in the L2 learning environment. The learners are passive receivers of this knowledge, and act as muted reactors to the stimulus. They have little authentic engagement with the stimulus and language learning process, except where they are expected to identify patterns and hypothesis rules of language structures (which are then confirmed or corrected by the teacher). Instructional materials mostly serve the teacher as a guide for what needs to be taught when, and how it should be done. Where learners receive materials, they act as instructional manuals for completing tasks. With these types of materials, there is little to no freedom to vary lesson themes, interaction patterns, or engagement with the content, even though pseudo-involvement is encouraged by offering teachers the opportunity to substitute language structures related to learners' interests. In short, audiolingual instructional materials are largely teacher-centred and lead the learner to develop an oral capability of an L2, but this cannot be applied to a context beyond the classroom.

### **3.4. Communicative Language Teaching**

Loewen (2019:11) notes that pre-communicative "theory and research are concerned with form-focused instruction that can help learners develop knowledge of grammar that they can use fluently and accurately." Since a strictly cognitive approach to SLLT prizes accurate form and linguistic proficiency as the driving mechanisms behind L2 acquisition, one of the biggest criticisms surrounding this is that not enough emphasis is placed on the functional meaning essential to language fluency – that is, how to use the L2 for normal communication, beyond predictable and scriptable simulated situations. Indeed, Widdowson (in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:117) observes that "the problem is that students, and especially students in

developing countries, who have received several years of formal English teaching, frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language, and to understand its use, in normal communication, whether in the spoken or written mode.” In the 1960s, there emerged an SLA approach that acknowledged the cognitive processes involved in language learning and acquisition, and used this understanding to consider more effective ways to teach functional language structures. Arising from the need for genuine communicative applications of language structures, proponents of an interactionist perspective to SLLT (Halliday, 1970; Harmer, 1983; Hymes, 1972; Thornbury, 1997) endorsed communicative language teaching (CLT), where communication was both the goal of the learning process, as well as the method of achieving this goal. In discussion of this perspective, considerations on how language is processed and views of ‘learning’ versus ‘acquisition’ are reviewed from a holistic perspective. Strategies and key performers, however, are accredited to the most popular CLT methodology.

### **3.4.1. Language Processing**

CLT concerns itself less with the physiological processes involved with and responsible for structural language learning, and rather “address[es] the conditions needed to promote second language learning” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:166). As Widdowson (cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:118) poignantly highlights, “we do not communicate by composing sentences, but by using sentences to make statements of different kinds, to describe, to record, to classify and so on, or to ask questions, make requests, give orders.” Hymes (cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:14-15) states that L2 development depends heavily on the conditions surrounding linguistic performance and linguistic competence. He defines ‘performance’ as the actual use of the language, implying that using the language (speaking, reading, writing and listening) through interactive activities is what contributes to its development, improvement and storage in long-term memory. For Hymes, ‘competence’ means not only “the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language use which the speaker-listener processes” (ibid.) – as per Chomsky’s innatist views – but also the choices the speaker-listener makes regarding the situations of language use. Since these situations are infinite in nature, learners need to discern how best to apply their mastery of L2 structural knowledge during a particular situation as and when it arises. To enhance linguistic competence, then, four factors of language use must be considered, which Hymes lists as:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally *possible*;
2. Whether (and to what degree) something is *feasible* in virtue of the means of implementation available;
3. Whether (and to what degree) something is *appropriate* (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually *performed*, and what its doing entails.

(Hymes cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:19, original emphasis)

Possibility relates to whether a structure is grammatically correct; feasibility refers to the reasonable logic of a structure; appropriacy relates to the accepted use of the structure in a particular communicative situation; performance refers to whether or not the structure is likely to actually be produced and understood, with some responsive action in return. In essence, a learner can develop linguistic competence and enhance performance through both conscious and subconscious consideration of these factors. Conscious consideration happens when the learner is first introduced to the language structure and is aware of the learning process (perhaps the teacher asks if the structure just learned is suitable to talk to a friend, or a principal – testing appropriacy), while subconscious consideration will happen automatically after repeated practise of ‘thinking’ whether the language structure is grammatically accurate, easily recallable, contextually suitable and socially accepted as understandable.

### 3.4.2. L1 versus L2 and ‘Learning’ versus ‘Acquisition’

Building on the idea that language develops from performance and competence, functional theorists equate the purpose of the L2 to that of the L1. In any language environment (English, Spanish, isiZulu etc.), people learn and use a language in order to convey thoughts and knowledge, to perpetuate action, or to influence behaviour. Halliday lists seven language functions that drive child language (L1) acquisition, which pertain equally to L2 development:

1. the instrumental function: using language to get things
2. the regulatory function: using language to control the behavior of others
3. the interactional function: using language to create interaction with others
4. the personal function: using language to express personal feelings and meanings
5. the heuristic function: using language to learn and to discover
6. the imaginative function: using language to create a world of the imagination
7. the representational function: using language to communicate information

(Halliday, 1975:11-17)

It is the need or desire for these functions that propels communication (requiring active use of the L1 and/or L2), and in so doing, a speaker inevitably becomes proficient in the L1 or L2. Hymes (1972:281) outlines that in CLT, a person who acquires in communicative competence in the L1 or L2 “acquires both knowledge and ability for language use.” As with cognitive views of SLLT, interactionists view the processes of ‘learning’ an L2 and ‘acquiring’ it as interdependent, self-perpetuating and activated by specific techniques.

### **3.4.3. Communicative Strategies for Learning and Teaching**

An overlap between SLLT techniques and the paradigms they embody is not uncommon in SLA research, since theorists adapt their ideals in accordance with changing schools of thought. Departing from his innatist background, Krashen (1981) was influenced by Asher’s views and transitioned to support interactionism, listing five hypotheses that formed key CLT principles:

**The affective filter hypothesis:** L2 development occurs most rapidly and effectively when learners are emotionally supported to overcome potential learning barriers and motivated to learn through positive reinforcement. This requires an understanding of how to create a positive learning environment for the learner.

**The natural order hypothesis:** L2 language structures are learned and acquired in a scaffolded and predictable way, depending on what is most useful and relevant to the learner’s environment. This requires an understanding of the systematised order of language structures, as well as recognising which are relevant and necessary to the learner.

**The input hypothesis:** L2 development occurs when learners receive comprehensible input. This means that to enhance L2 development, instructional language and materials should be appropriately graded (to suit the learner’s level of understanding) and clearly outline task goals so that learners know what is expected of them.

**The acquisition-learning hypothesis:** ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’ are seen as interconnected processes. Previously discussed as a key component of communicative language processing, to fully understand and apply language structures, L2 learners need both conscious and subconscious awareness of their learning processes. In addition, they need formal instruction that generates genuine interactions with other L2 speakers. To meet these needs, there should

be an understanding of how to vary the interactions (with materials and people) within a CLT lesson.

**The monitor hypothesis:** L2 development occurs due to self-correction of errors and planned output (linked to Hymes' factors for consideration cited in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:19). Here it is important to consider question types, since by asking different types of questions, teachers can help learners develop awareness and skills to plan language production and also self-correct.

While many SLLT methods exist in support of communicative paradigms to SLA, there are a select few that specifically provide techniques to support Krashen's interactionist hypotheses. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) are methodologies that outline techniques and lesson frameworks for teachers to use to activate communicative learning and enhance development of all language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). As contributors towards TESOL and CELTA, Harmer (1983, 2006 and 2007) and Ur (1997 and 2013) outlined teaching strategies that supported Krashen's hypotheses, thereby fostering genuine communication in the L2 classroom: create a positive learning environment, personalise content, set clear goals, vary interaction patterns, and ask varied question types. Each strategy and its accompanying techniques will now be detailed.

The Mental Health Foundation defines stress as the "response to pressures from a situation or life event. What contributes to stress can vary hugely from person to person and differs according to our social and economic circumstances, [and] the environment we live in." Since stress can be created or aggravated by social contexts, it became a prime consideration when outlining communicative SLLT principles. Ur (1997:274-283) highlights motivation as a key influencer in overcoming stress in learning, claiming that the teacher plays a vital role in assessing and supporting the learner's reasons for studying as a means of counteracting stress. According to Ur (*ibid.*) and Harmer (1983:51-54), whether the learner is extrinsically motivated – to impress someone, to become part of a new speech community, to pass an exam, to get a better job – or intrinsically motivated – to learn for the sake of learning – a positive learning environment is developed through the same language-activated techniques:

- Acknowledge the learner's contributions (whether correct or incorrect) by nodding, smiling or explicitly praising

- Make the learner aware of success and failure through grades, comments and feedback
- Offer incentives or prizes for success
- Do not penalise failure; make the learner aware that failure is part of the learning process, and provide specific direction for improvement
- Set specific, achievable outcomes for tasks and lessons
- Set up a variety of tasks that engage all learning types and create interest in the lesson
- Set up friendly group competition to create a fun, stress-free environment
- Offer support in helping the learner overcome any barriers to learning

Personalising content is an essential strategy in CLT, since Ur (1997:281) notes that “learners are more likely to be interested in tasks that have to do with themselves; their own or each other’s opinions, tastes, experiences, suggestions.” Teachers can personalise the lesson context to serve the interests and needs of their learners in various ways: start the lesson by talking about what learners did over the weekend to introduce the idea of past tenses; engage learners in a follow-on discussion about a reading comprehension to express their opinions on the topic of the text; or teach young learners about narratives as a writing genre in preparation for their upcoming class test. Personalising the lesson according to the learners’ interests (popular TV shows, hobbies, etc.) draws their attention and allows them to recognise the purpose of the language lesson. Derived from Gardner’s (1993) theory of multiple intelligences, teachers should not only select and adapt lesson content to suit the learners’ backgrounds and interests, but also include tasks that cater for a blend of learning styles. Brewster and Ellis (2008) suggest a multitude of language activities for the eight intelligences, and although not an exhaustive list, it provides a general idea of the task variety possible and expected in a CLT lesson:

- Linguistic: word games, crosswords, storytelling, role plays
- Logical/mathematical: word puzzles, number puzzles, classifying, ranking
- Spatial: mind mapping, drawing, shape puzzles, diagrams
- Musical: songs, chants, rhymes, composing lyrics
- Bodily-kinaesthetic: total physical response, dancing, physical activities, crafts
- Interpersonal: dialogues, interviews, group work, peer teaching
- Intrapersonal: diary entries, creative writing, goal setting, projects
- Naturalist: classifying, sorting, nature projects, identifying patterns

From a communicative perspective, setting clear goals is essential to L2 development. This occurs with long-term goals (skills enhancement over a period of time) and short-term goals (task achievement in each lesson). Identifying learners' long-term goals begins with an initial assessment, to determine the learner's current skill level, motivation, learning barriers and interests. To best support learner attainment, a suggested technique is to create a tailored progress chart where the learner and teacher list short-term goals ('how tos') that can be autonomously revised by the learner in relation to long-term goals (Wits Language School, 2019). Long-term goals are vital, but "when English seems to be more difficult than the student had anticipated, the long-term goals can begin to behave like mirages in a desert, appearing and disappearing at random" (Harmer, 2007:53).

As a result, TESOL focuses on instructional set up of tasks, ensuring that learners are aware of the expected outcomes of an activity (what short-term goals need to be achieved). For example: *together, decide who is the healthiest man in the picture* – the goal is to negotiate one answer; *in your groups, talk about what we do to keep us healthy* – the goal here is to just share opinions. To make task set up clear and concise, teachers should use language structure and vocabulary appropriate to the level of the learner, known as 'grading' (Wits Language School, 2019). For instance: *Say 'yes' if you agree* is suitable for elementary language learners, whereas *State 'yes' if you are in agreement* is more suitable for intermediate language learners. In addition to grading, the teacher should always confirm the learners' understanding of a task by "asking a student to explain the activity after the teacher has given the instruction or by getting someone to show the other people in the class how the exercise works." (Harmer, 2006:4)

In order to be aware of their learning processes, as well as engage in meaningful communication with other L2 speakers, learners should be exposed to a variety of interactions through a lesson. Ur (1997:102) identifies various interaction patterns that should be utilised in the CLT class: one-to-one interaction between the teacher and learner, individual learner work (engaging with the content of instructional materials), collaborative pair work, small units of group work, choral responses to the teacher, and whole-class interaction through discussions or mingling. Harmer (2006:21) details the important language functions activated by group and pair work: cooperation, negotiation, independent learning and fostered responsibility. Similarly, 'solowork' is important in allowing learners to process tasks and evaluate their L2 development.

Asking varied question types is an essential strategy to promote functional communication. Using questions, teachers can elicit ideas from learners (*What word means I have the ability to do it?*) or check their understanding (*If I can swim, does that mean I have the skills to swim?*) of the concepts of a word, grammatical structure or functional phrase. Questions mean learners engage genuinely by sharing ideas and opinions, and providing information for questions asked. Using both simple yes/no questions and complex information questions encourages learners to develop a deeper understanding of the L2 as well as a conscious recognition of their learning process. In addition, question-and-answer techniques serve as input and output models for establishing meaning. Wingate (1998:14) states that “with enough exposure to good models... most errors are self-correcting”. So, heightened awareness of one’s language knowledge and the ability to learn, coupled with exposure to functional models, learners will plan their language output more carefully, and also develop the skills to self-correct any errors made.

As seen with the audiolingual strategies reviewed earlier in the literature review, when the communicative strategies are explained in isolation, they may be applicable to other perspectives. Consequently, the context in which these communicative techniques are used must be examined to distinguish structuralist methods from communicative ones.

#### **3.4.4. Communicative Context**

Different schools of thought have arisen around how much of the L2 should be used and for what purposes. Howatt classifies two versions of CLT:

There is, in a sense, a ‘strong’ version of the communicative approach and a ‘weak’ version. The weak version which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten years, stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching... The ‘strong’ version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. If the former could be described as ‘learning to use’ English, the latter entails ‘using English to learn it.’

(Howatt, 1984:279)

The weak version of CLT aims to use the L2 in conjunction with the L1; typically, the presentation of a language structure is given in the L1 while practice activities are conducted in the L2. The strong version of CLT (which we will later see as the foundation for post-methods approaches to SLLT) uses the L2 for both presentation and practice, strictly prohibiting L1 use. Different versions aside, CLT lesson content centres around learner-relevant communicative functions, since learners are more likely to succeed in recalling a language act when they know when and why they will use it. Widdowson (in Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:119) suggests that in designing a syllabus “we might consider ordering such acts according to the manner in which they normally combine to form larger communicative units.” This would also serve as a useful framework to teach at a pace suitable for L2 development. CLT syllabi, therefore, consider learner levels, meaning language capabilities typically mastered in a certain sequence.

Cambridge ESOL’s (2011) Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), for instance, outlines suggested ‘descriptors’ of levels. Below is a table of recently revised levels for young (foundation phase) learners:

Level	Skill	Task	Action
Pre A1 Starters	Listening	Match names outside a picture with the people that are inside a picture.	Draw lines.
		Answer questions about a child or animal.	Write names or numbers.
		Choose the picture with the correct information.	Tick boxes.
		Choose an object in a picture and a correct colour.	Colour object in a picture.
	Reading and writing	Decide if pictures match the words next to them.	Put ticks or crosses.
		Decide if a picture matches sentences about it.	Write yes or no.
		Use given letters to name objects in pictures.	Spell words.
		Choose correct words to fill in gaps in a short text.	Copy words.
		Answer questions about a picture story.	Write words or numbers.
	Speaking	Find things in a big picture. Choose correct object cards and understand prepositions.	Point to objects. Place object card.
		Give short answers to questions about a big picture.	Name objects, colours and say numbers.
		Give short answers to questions about objects.	Name objects, colours and say numbers.
Answer questions about you.		Give short answers.	
A1 Movers	Listening	Match names outside a picture with the people that are inside a picture.	Draw lines.
		Answer questions about a place, trip, party etc.	Write words and numbers.
		Match people or objects in one set with pictures of objects in another set.	Write letters in boxes.
		Choose the picture with the correct information.	Tick boxes.

		Choose the right parts of a picture and understand colouring and writing instructions.	Colour parts of a picture. Write something.	
	Reading and Writing	Match pictures/words with describing sentences.	Copy words.	
		Choose the right answer to questions.	Circle a letter.	
		Choose correct pictures/words to fill gaps in a short story and the correct title for the story.	Copy words and tick a box.	
		Choose the right words to fill gaps in a short text.	Copy words.	
		Find words in a story to complete sentences.	Write one, two or three words.	
		Complete sentences, answer questions and write sentences about a picture.	Write words and sentences.	
	Speaking	Find differences between two pictures (objects, colours, numbers, positions etc.)	Say what is different.	
		Talk about pictures that tell a story.	Say short sentences.	
		Choose a picture that is different from three others.	Say how it is different.	
		Answer questions about you.	Give short answers.	
	A2 Flyers	Listening	Match names outside a picture with the people that are inside a picture.	Draw lines.
			Answer questions about a place, trip, party etc.	Write words and numbers.
			Match people or objects in one set with pictures of objects in another set.	Write letters in boxes.
Choose the picture with the correct information.			Tick boxes.	
Choose the right parts of a picture and understand colouring and writing instructions.			Colour parts of a picture. Write something.	
Reading and Writing		Match words with describing sentences.	Copy words.	
		Choose the correct missing parts of a conversation.	Write a letter.	
		Choose correct words to fill gaps in a short story and the correct title for the story.	Copy words and tick a box.	
		Choose the right words to fill gaps in a short text.	Copy words.	
		Find words in a story to complete sentences.	Write one, two, three or four words.	
		Think of words to complete a diary or message text.	Write words.	
		Write a short story based on three pictures.	Write sentences.	
Speaking		Find differences between two pictures (objects, colours, numbers, positions etc.)	Say what is different.	
		Ask for and give information about two similar situations.	Ask and answer questions.	
		Talk about pictures that tell a story.	Say sentences.	
		Answer questions about you.	Give short answers.	

**Table 2. Foundation Phase Descriptors** adapted from Cambridge Assessment English (2018:2-4)

Proponents of interactionist perspectives of SLLT believe that “social life has affected not merely outward performance, but inner competence itself” (Brumfit and Johnson, 1979:10), meaning that socially-oriented task-based learning is effective in developing both linguistic

performance and linguistic competence. As a result, CLT activities tend to be discussions, role plays, games, dialogues, and problem-solving tasks; all of which require student-centred simultaneous use of all language skills (speaking, reading, writing and listening). Remembering the importance of varying interaction patterns, a typical lesson requires learners to change their groupings frequently. Beyond the need for diverse social interaction, though, activities must be clearly geared towards a specific *outcome*. This is supported by Diane Larsen-Freeman's chaos and complexity theory (1997), which highlights language learning as a dynamic and adaptive process that happens when there is a *need* for communication; it is a purpose-driven process. Effective acquisition can only happen through genuine communicative tasks between speakers, with delineated goals. These aims should outline the language structures to be used, the time allocated to the task, the expected result, as well as the measure for success. This means that the responsibility for task set-up lies largely with teachers and instructional materials.

#### **3.4.5. Agents of Activation**

According to Lantolf & Thorne (2007), Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory suggests that learning is a process mediated by the social environment, where expert language users assist in supporting new language users to understand and use the language in a way that is meaningful in their particular society. In CLT, then, the teacher (as the expert) is responsible for enabling learner-independence. Teachers must give clear directions (allocating groupings, specifying expectations, assigning time limits and outlining goals) that allow learners to know exactly what to do and how to do it. The teacher is then designated as classroom manager, and the learners themselves become accountable for the direction of their own language use and learning. Importantly, Ortega (2013) argues that there is a 'complementary role' for interactionist teaching because it provides a space where learners can receive help from their fellow learners as well as the teacher. Here, we see that the learners play a vital role in continued instruction (in this context meaning 'teaching and learning' rather than 'setting up' activities), and this means that any materials used by the learners for a particular activity should serve as supportive tools in their efforts to self-direct their learning. Typically, instructional materials will offer key information in the goal of the task, but do not explicitly instruct learners 'how to get there'. As Harmer (2006:9) summarises, learners have to use their understanding and knowledge of the L2 to "take charge of their learning".

### 3.5. Post-Structuralism

CLT was seen as largely prescriptive in how to go about teaching language structures as individual items with variable meanings that enable functional communication. Building on the foundations laid by interactionist perspectives of SLLT, the subsequent ‘post-methods’ era highlighted the need for more descriptive recognition of communicative phenomenology – studying how unique communication is affected and directed by variable and ever-changing contextual factors (Merriam-Webster, 2019) – since language is used circumstantially within diverse social environments. Larsen-Freeman’s (1997) chaos and complexity theory propelled SLA beyond pure interactionism, where language was seen as the result of a need for communication (as discussed earlier in this chapter). Language was proposed to be a “complex, non-linear system... consist[ing] of a large number of autonomous but interrelated elements... [whose] behaviour... as a whole includes characteristics that cannot be predicted from the properties of its individual parts.” (Larsen-Freeman, 1997:142). The process of acquiring a language, then, is complex and fluid, and may alter depending on the time and place of the language learning environment.

Advancing from this understanding, Schieffelin and Ochs (1986), Norton (1995 and 1997), Van Lier (2004) and Thornbury (2017) highlight that the post-structuralist view of SLLT emphasises a shift from “learning *about* the language to learning to communicate *in* the language” (Lindsay and Knight, 2006:23), since language is both a *product* of a particular society and a *process* that moulds that same society. Language is a dynamic, ever-evolving and interdependent system that shapes the way a group of people think, and it qualifies the way those people use it to express their thoughts. The manner that they use language (and how that manner changes) must be matched by the teaching approach in order to remain relevant. Learners’ and teachers’ intrinsic and extrinsic knowledge of language form and function, as well as how to acquire it (the methods), is admittedly vital to L2 development. However, this knowledge cannot always be predictably applied due to the complex nature of language. The language user must, therefore, be malleable to the when, where and with whom the communication occurs, because “associations reside in the listener rather than in the sentence being communicated.” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990:23). Essentially, poststructuralism appeals for an approach to SLA that caters for many associated interpretations of ‘traditionally assigned’ meanings in both spoken and written discourse. The post-methods era responds to two facets of this need: by representing a holistic approach to SLA that is literally ‘beyond’ methods, and by addressing individuation.

Schieffelin and Ochs' (1986) theory of language socialisation served as the introductory approach to SLLT by individuation, where language's primary purpose was seen as introducing social norms and creating social identity within a speech community. In criticism of this approach, Głókwka notes that,

although second language socialization shares many principles of the first language socialization (e.g., both first and second language socialization may take place at home, school, and workplace), the former is more complex, as it deals with learners who have already acquired a system of linguistic and social rules. What is more, participants of second/foreign language socialization might not experience the same degree of acceptance or accommodation within the target community as their first language counterparts. For example, they might face resistance on the part of the new group for ideological or practical reasons; or second language learners might not be willing to become members of the target language group.

(Głókwka, 2015:245)

So, whereas cognitivism encouraged teachers to consider the physiological factors that affect L2 development (fatigue influencing attention, for instance), and interactionism encouraged awareness of social factors (lack of interest influencing motivation, for example), post-structuralism encourages scrutiny of the broader cultural and political climate affecting each distinctive individual involved in SLLT. Each instance of SLLT requires special consideration to determine the optimum conditions for learning, and this includes being able to respond to those instances as and when they occur. The reason for this is because "the learner's grammar is constantly reorganized as a result of exposure to incoming data" (Thornbury, 2017:48), meaning that L2 development depends on feedback (from the teacher, from peers) during the live and differential circumstance under which communication occurs. Norton's theory of social identity (1995 and 1997) explained that being recognised by others as an individual within a particular context allows the learner to develop a particular social identity, and receiving feedback from others further construct this identity. Głókwka (2015:247-248) claims that this means the L2 serves as "a medium of social relations" within a new cultural or ideological group. The issue with this approach lay in the isolated reliance of others to create the ideal environment for language learning, while poststructuralism claimed the need for interconnected systems to further a learner's progress in the L2 setting. Thus, Van Lier's (1997) ecological perspective afforded a valuable contribution to the post-methods approach: provide an environment where the learner is "immersed in the sociocultural environment full of meanings" (Głókwka, 2015:249), so that they can see and apply language as an adaptable

and interrelated tool for creating meaning, developing identity and creating social communities.

As Głókwia (2015:251) claims, “no adequate alternative research methodology has been fully developed to address the assumptions of the chaos/complexity theory.” Indeed, the premise of the post-methods era relies on an approach to SLLT that is *past* a method. Richards and Rodgers (2001:247-249), however, propose consideration of holistic strategies to embody a post-structuralist approach to language teaching:

- Be flexible: cater for and celebrate learner and teacher individuality, needs and style in the teaching and learning process.
- Consider the cultural, political, economic, institutional, and classroom contexts in which the learning takes place: this determines the required awareness and sensitivity for what, when and how to teach.
- Appreciate the issues around language policy and planning: being aware of the interconnected systems that develop, test and designate learning objectives can allay frustrations, and allow opportunity for participation and change.
- Understand that researches in SLLT and the methods informed from this research are fallible and fickle: “researchers who study language learning are themselves usually reluctant to dispense prescriptions for teaching based on the results of their research, because they know that current knowledge is tentative, partial, and changing.” (ibid.)
- Realise that consistent application of theory is not always possible or measurable: change in attitudes, beliefs and circumstances in the SLLT context is inevitable.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:250), it is the teachers’ and learners’ own experiences, assessments and willingness to adapt these strategies that can create the most conducive environment for SLLT to create meaning, develop identity and create social communities. While defining the way in which these strategies are modified and applied with specific techniques would be contradictory to the post-structural paradigm, an open-ended practice like ‘reflection’ is useful in becoming aware of how and why our own prejudices, bias, procedures and ambitions affect L2 development. Morgan (2007:959) states that “reflexive techniques can vary, from introspection (e.g., personal narratives) to more empirical-analytical techniques,” which means strategies and instructional materials that promote the use of reflection in one form or another (pre, during and post lesson) indicate a post-structural approach towards SLLT. Importantly, post-structuralism highlights, too, how

regular reflection on instructional materials themselves can bring to light any prejudices, bias and procedures associated with a particular SLA approach, and its influence on L2 development.

### **3.6. Young Learners in SLLT Theory**

This section broadly explores the key principles surrounding child SLLT theory, highlighting the specific processes and techniques that are commonly associated with supporting young learner development. In identifying these techniques, we can link instructional materials to the application of researched SLA approaches of SLLT theory. Concerning the processes of young learner SLA, the starting point is that of nature versus nurture. Asher and Garcia (Krashen, Scarcella and Long, 1982:4) state that “in language acquisition, the implication is that children have a biological predisposition for language learning which is perhaps related to brain plasticity or imprinting.” The cognitivist idea that language is a natural (innate) human capability is supported by Skinner’s (1957) theory of imitation as well as Chomsky’s (1986) idea of a universal grammar made possible through the language acquisition device. The initial hypotheses surrounding the Critical Period (CP) for language acquisition formulated that after puberty, due to reduced growth of the biological components responsible for language learning, language acquisition is dramatically slowed or, in fact, near impossible.

However, biology alone cannot be accountable for language acquisition, since many theorists (Asher and Garcia, 1969; Seliger, Krashen and Ladefoged, 1975; Bard and Sachs, 1977) have cited that L2 attainment is possible beyond the years of puberty, and sometimes well into the years of adulthood. This leads to the nurture component of language learning, where factors in the learners’ environment (where, how, why and from whom they learn) must be acknowledged as contributors to the process. The interactionist perspective here, then, links to both social interactions as well as interactions with one’s learning environment.

#### **3.6.1. The Young Learner Environment**

Harmer (2006:10) notes that “the greatest difference between adults and younger ages is that the former come to lessons with a long history of learning experience.” Here, any previous associations with and fears of L2 learning, as well as heightened awareness of the expectations, learning barriers and levels of motivation affecting them, may influence their L2 development. Young learners do not have this quagmire of knowledge to interfere with their current learning situation, meaning the agents involved in learning (the teacher, the

instructional materials and the learners themselves) have the opportunity to drive L2 progress with a fresh introduction to learning; creating a positive association to learning, accepting both success and failure as a regular part of language learning, and varied ways or means of learning an L2. In contrast, the lack of experience means that the agents involved in learning also become responsible for enhancing the general knowledge that young learners need to learn a new language. Lesson for young learners, then, should cater for teaching not only the lexical and grammatical structures of a language, but also the cultural aspects associated with the way those structures are used.

Theorists hypothesise that the artificial classroom environment in which L2 learning takes place can negatively affect authentic exposure to and use of the L2, particularly for children who need a tangible reason to engage their shorter attention spans. Krashen, Scarcella and Long (1982:21) acknowledge that “some children's failure to learn a language well under unnatural and restricted circumstances may say less about their general ability to acquire languages than it does about our difficulty in providing the proper conditions for learning.” SLLT materials that show researched understanding of the needs of children in learning should detail how to make the environment attractive, personalised and authentic to the learners – i.e. how to incorporate tools and visual aids that relate to the learners’ L2 needs. Examples here could include real objects or pictures of things that learners will engage with L2 beyond the classroom (toys, groceries, stationery, household items, animals, places) as well as materials that they have produced themselves in the language learning environment (posters, pictures, projects).

### **3.6.2. Young Learner Strategies**

When we consider how the learning environment plays a vital role in L2 development for young learners, it’s important to consider not just the physical space where this takes place, but also the mental factors that affect learning. We have seen from the audiolingual and communicative sections of this literature review that understanding adult SLA learning processes provides valuable insight into the ways these processes can be supported through language-supported techniques. The same value can be gained from assessing the mental processes involved in young learning. Asher and Garcia’s 1969 data from their paper titled *The Optimal age to learn a foreign language* suggests that,

although the probability of pronunciation fidelity is with the younger child, some other children – a small group to be sure – can also achieve an excellent pronunciation, which implies that biology does not completely determined the phenomenon... It may be that *two different types of learning are operating*. Pronunciation may be a learning based on copying, while listening comprehension may be learning rules and principles.

(Krashen, Scarcella and Long, 1982:11-12, researcher’s emphasis)

Here we see that as with adults, children learn best when there is a combination of subconscious reception of input with repeated imitation (copying) as well as conscious awareness around their learning processes (learning rules). This means that lessons geared towards young learners should incorporate periods of focused learning – presentations of language and learning strategies – as well as periods of automatic (unfocused) application – practice through activities and games. Striking a balance between these types of learning creates the optimal circumstances for strategy-activation, since “learning strategies [are] said to be the primary influence on the rate and level of second language acquisition for children” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990:11). The strategies for L2 development include: TPR, scaffolding, routine and repetition, varied tasks types and interaction patterns, as well as positive reinforcement. Since the first strategy listed (TPR) has been discussed in detail, we progress to the next strategy: scaffolding.

Scaffolding is a method of supporting and guiding learners to eventually become independent and conscious language users. Lindsay and Knight (2006:4) suggest that tasks be selected and set up in such a way that they encourage learners to “think about what they are doing”; they must consider their current language knowledge and capabilities (and how they may assist in completing the task at hand) as well as assess when they have achieved the goal of the task. Wood identifies various language structures teachers can use to activate scaffolding:

Attend to what is relevant	Suggesting
	Praising the significant
	Providing focusing activities
Adopt useful strategies	Encouraging rehearsal
	Being explicit about organisation
Remember the whole task and goals	Reminding
	Modelling
	Providing part-whole activities

**Table 3. Techniques for Scaffolding** adapted from Wood (1998)

For young learners in particular, routines and repetition are of vital importance in creating conscious awareness of the learning process. Krashen (1981:83) clarifies the distinction between ‘prefabricated routines’ as “memorized whole utterances or phrases” and ‘prefabricated patterns’ as “partly ‘creative’ and partly memorized wholes” where learners can complete ‘gaps’ in phrases or sentences with new items. These may be termed together as ‘language routines’, where in a typical L2 lesson the teacher models the ‘prefabricated routines’ and learners apply their knowledge by producing ‘prefabricated patterns’. These language routines offer great benefit when repeated in every lesson, since repetition in this way creates a level of what Harmer (2006:5) terms as ‘predictable safety’. He claims that “students tend to like a certain amount of predictability: they appreciate a safe structure which they can rely on. And too much chopping and changing ... can be destabilising. Good teachers find a balance between predictable safety and unexpected variety.” Predictable safety can be created not just through repeated language routines but also through classroom routines (starting each class with a greeting and fun warm up activity, writing up daily goals before beginning the lesson, taking a stretch break after intensive individual work, switching groupings at the same point in each lesson etc.). While these classroom routines are in themselves not specifically language- orientated, they serve as tools within a language lesson to enhance learner focus and reduce anxiety. Instructional materials used by the teacher or by the young learners themselves should make provision for routines and repetition as a strategy for effective L2 acquisition.

As Harmer (ibid.) notes, unexpected variety is an essential strategy to couple with routine because varying tasks types and visual aids enables a teacher to support principles of MI and maintain learners’ attention. Ur (2013) suggests multiple techniques for teachers to support this strategy: Firstly, find topics around known and surprising information to peak learners’ interests. These should not always be related directly to the learners’ current knowledge base, since they need exposure to new content to grasp new language structures and vocabulary. Secondly, select tasks requiring different timespans of concentration throughout lessons; some as short as five minutes and others (depending on the age of the learner) as long as twenty. Thirdly (as discussed at length in the CLT section), choose tasks that involve different skills, visual tools and teaching aids. Ideally, instructional materials geared at young learners will offer this level of variety; if not, they should be adapted to do so.

Along with all these considerations, a strategy that is most noticeable in learning success for young learners compared to adults is explicit and continuous positive reinforcement. The

teacher should commend learners not just for correct responses (*Yes, well done, that's right!*) but also for their participation (*Thank you for helping!*). This can be done individually (teacher to learner) but also collectively (in front of the class) to build self-esteem and a positive learning environment. In addition to verbal remarks, Harmer (2006) and Ur (2013) encourage praise through body language, facial gestures and written commentary on tasks or reports.

### **3.7. Concluding Second Language Learning and Teaching**

This chapter first provided definitions of a language and a second language as the comparative base from which to compare methods, and then reviewed how varied definitions of 'learning' and 'acquisition' reveal different theoretical principles about language processing. Recognising different principles of language processing was shown to be the determiner for learning and teaching strategies. The idea that strategies contribute to L2 comprehension and production was clarified, emphasising that they can be recognised by the techniques used to activate them. It was highlighted that identifying strategies serves as evidence of views towards language processing, and thus the underlying SLA approach. Next, the context of language learning was discussed as a supporting mechanism for all SLLT methods, where context was defined as the role of the L1 in L2 development, the content covered in lessons, the activities used to activate learning and teaching strategies, and the pace at which learning occurs. The role of the teacher, learner and instructional materials in setting the context was discussed, since variations here too reflect different SLLT methods. Having outlined the important factors to consider when reviewing different SLLT methods, the chapter then provided a brief overview of historically mainstream SLLT methods. The methods of grammar-translation, direct, TPR and MI were shown to be progressively connected to the foundations of concerns for more student-centred and communicative SLLT methods. Next, cognitive and communicative approaches to SLLT were reviewed as the leading ones for inclusive education. For each approach, a view of language processing was explored, detailing what strategies and techniques are associated with each method. To engage these strategies, the chapter reflected on what L2 learning context needs to be created, how and by whom. A review of post-structuralism motivated for regular revision of instructional materials in the SLLT environment, and lastly, the criteria to tailor this environment for young learners was specified, detailing what research-supported techniques might look like and how these would reflect a particular SLA approach.

In summary, this literature review provided an understanding of varied perspectives of SLA, as well as how to recognise them through the methods, strategies and techniques that embody them. In recognising this embodiment, the relationship between theory and practice was explored. Understanding the key values of an SLLT approach (its theory) through its various methods (practice), means a link can be drawn between various strategies and techniques (language use) and a specific SLLT approach. It is from this analysis of language use that this thesis aims to determine the underlying SLLT principles of CAPS foundation phase materials.

## **4. Methodology**

This chapter discusses the research methodology of the study. First, the need for a mixed-methods approach is explained, highlighting what contributions quantitative and qualitative data supply in answering the research question. The chapter then briefly discusses models of traditional curriculum evaluation, which serve as a departure point for this study's document analysis. They are shown to be too restrictive for assessing language policy content and themes, which clarifies the need for a different framework to conduct a content and thematic analysis of CAPS. Next, then, this chapter explains the choice of a specialised tool, AtlasTi, for these purposes, as well as Clarke and Braun's (2006) framework for thematic analysis. Lastly, this chapter discusses limitations to be aware of when digesting the document analysis.

### **4.1. Research Design**

The study utilises a mixed-methods design since, according to Burch and Heinrich (2016:5), this design allows for "the strengths of each and provide[s] a wider and richer range of ways to understand complex phenomena around a variety of problems and outcomes." The content analysis of CAPS produces quantitative data through category-coded number of mentions, while the thematic analysis of CAPS produces qualitative data through identified recurring themes and a detailed exploration of their implications for SLLT. The use of this mixed-methods design allows for an investigation not only into the numeric data drawn from the CAPS analysis, but also an investigation into the social interactions with the document and thus its overall impact in the education environment. Consequently, this mixed-methods approach allows for an analysis of how a static context (a document) affects the dynamic context of interpretation (how it is used in the real world).

Traditional models for curriculum evaluation aim to examine objectives, content organisation, experiences from activities, and changes brought about as a result of policy implementation. Since this study, too, investigates these aspects as laid out in CAPS, the framework of its design is drawn from varied models for curriculum evaluation. Taba's model (Taba, 1962) focuses on the organisation of content, selection of learning experiences and activities, as well as the decisions around how and when to evaluate learners. Stake's countenance model (Stake, 1967) studies the context around the design and implementation of a curriculum: the conditions existing before curriculum implementation, the experiences occurring at the time of implementation, and the changes as a result of implementation. Tyler's model (Tyler, 2013) focuses on how well the curriculum's goals or objectives are supported through the

activities or experiences provided for the learners, as well as how the outcomes and effectiveness of the curriculum are evaluated. The CIPP evaluation model (Stufflebeam and Zhang, 2017), which continues to form the foundations for other developing curriculum evaluation models, assesses a curriculum's worth and effectiveness of content, input, process and product. The division of a curriculum's content into recognisable *categories* such as activities, the context in which these activities take place, goals, and processes (techniques) form the basis from which the document analysis is conducted. When identifying strategies or techniques, as well as poignant themes for further analysis, each was divided and labelled according to category. While an understanding of these models offers insight into the processes of evaluation of a curriculum, this study is not assessing the syllabus itself (i.e. the subject content to cover, the methods of assessment, which textbooks are used etc.), but rather CAPS as a language policy document. The focus of this study is on the way in which language constructs an understanding of SLLT theory, and how it uses language to model the way in which this theory should be applied when teaching learners. Instead of pure curriculum evaluation, then, a linguistic one is more suitable for this study. In this regard, content and thematic analyses are applicable research methods for this study; they are concerned with the analysis of language and the meaning inferred and implied by its use in a particular context.

Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017:94) state that the objective of content analysis "is to systematically transform a large amount of text into a highly organised and concise summary of key results." In this study, a content analysis of CAPS was conducted at "the highest level of abstraction for reporting results" (ibid.), in other words, to assess how often strategies or techniques associated with SLLT approaches were mentioned. As reviewed in great detail in the literature review, these various techniques and strategies represent a particular SLLT theory. By categorising the strategies and techniques according to their method, and then examining how often they occur – frequency of mentions – the dominant SLA approach of CAPS (if one exists) can be pinpointed. The content analysis' top-down approach provides quantitative data from the document analysis, so to gain benefit of both quantitative and qualitative data collection, a bottom up approach is needed to provide the qualitative data from the document analysis: thematic analysis. Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3353) state that the "goal of a thematic analysis is to identify themes, i.e. patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue." In creating a framework from which to analyse the CAPS document, a thematic analysis then, is complimentary to content analysis, because it allows for inductive exploration of common themes within the document (without presupposing which ideas

related to SLLT theory may arise). Notably, these themes need to be analysed for what Clarke and Braun (2006:84) term “semantic themes” (surface level meanings) and “latent themes” (underlying ideas or assumptions), meaning the thematic data in CAPS must be analysed by means of a syntactic description (identifying what language structures are being used and for what function) as well as the broader implications of those language structures within the context in which the document is used.

## **4.2. Analytical Tools**

AtlasTi is computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. Used in its traditional sense, it provides the researcher with a platform to qualitatively analyse unstructured or semi-structured data by identifying themes or patterns to reveal overarching trends within data sets (Radivojevic, 2018). Themes are coded by the researcher, and at every instance where these themes appear, the researcher tags the code to that data. The researcher can then add commentary to those parts of the data and explore the context surrounding the theme. In this study, however, before identifying the patterned or repetitive themes found within CAPS, the content analysis was conducted as a way of becoming holistically familiar with the data (the text). In the same way that codes are allocated to themes, codes were applied to strategies or techniques, but not only as they occurred in the data – rather as grouped according to pre-determined categories. Details of these categories and the process of allocation are provided in the document analysis that follows. As stated, using AtlasTi for the content analysis provided preliminary insight into the document, but it also gave a structure by which to present the results. Identifying the numerical counts of strategies and techniques alone in CAPS alone is not enough to understand the context in which they are set. Analysing CAPS for recurring or prevalent themes provides insight into the depth and accuracy of CAPS’ communicated understanding of SLA approaches, as well as the model it provides for best practice in the SLLT classroom. Importantly, analysing the *way* in which these themes are created or presented – through language – is central to this study, since language is the primary instrument for informing language practice in the classroom. Subsequently, AtlasTi was again used, now in the traditional sense, where codes were allocated to selected chunks of language as common themes unfolded during the thematic analysis. A more detailed outline of this process follows in the document analysis chapter too. Alongside the use of AtlasTi as the tool for document analysis, this study followed Clarke and Braun’s (2006) six phases for conducting and presenting findings from a document analysis:

- Step 1: Become familiar with the data
- Step 2: Generate initial codes
- Step 3: Search for themes
- Step 4: Review themes
- Step 5: Define themes
- Step 6: Write-up

(Clarke and Braun, 2006)

### 4.3. Limitations of the Study

Potential concerns for this study exist around the context in which it is conducted, the multitude of interpretations of CAPS' function, the scope of the analysis, and ethical considerations. The parameters of these factors were considered before undertaking the analysis, since they direct the 'what' and 'how' of the evaluation. Thus, they are included here to make the researcher's perspective clear before presenting the document analysis.

Firstly, objectively defining context when analysing the language use of a particular text is near impossible, since any aspect of context may be the factor that influences a change in meaning, and it is often impossible to pinpoint which exact one (since they exist simultaneously). However, the release time and location of CAPS is finite (2011, on the DoBE website) and it includes a specific focus in its very title, which sets CAPS for EFAL foundation phase firmly within a specific context: second language learning and teaching.

Secondly, as noted in the literature review, divergences exist between the intended purpose of a policy and its perceived role by teachers, since the link between intention and interpretation is made with language, and language is not used in isolation (there is always a contextual purpose for accessing a text). This purpose (*why* a reader accesses CAPS at a particular point in time) may influence how a reader *perceives* the information of that text. The approach adopted in this study when analysing the SLLT content and themes in CAPS is the one that CAPS was shown to serve in the literature review: a singular policy document that demonstrates an understanding of SLA theory and serves as a model for best practice in the classroom (an example of how to use English to teach English as a second language).

Thirdly, the scope of this study is isolated to only one specific document, even though the introduction to CAPS explains that teachers should also refer to the DoBE's 2010 *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning* as an auxiliary instructional material. This document was

not included in this study because it only addresses one aspect of SLLT methodology (overcoming language barriers), which is included in CAPS anyway, and also because of the aforementioned perspective that teachers access CAPS as the singular ‘parent’ instructional guideline for SLLT.

Lastly, there are no ethical concerns for this study since CAPS for EFAL foundation phase is freely accessible in the public domain, and no people were affected in the document analysis.

## 5. Document Analysis

### 5.1. Content Analysis

On first reading of the text, general notes were made regarding the overarching SLA approaches that exist within CAPS. These were discovered to be the audiolingual approach and the communicative approach. Identifying these limited the necessity to code every single strategy listed in the literature review for all methods reviewed (for instance the direct method, TPR or MI). Once these two main theories had been identified, the strategies and techniques of each were extracted from the literature review and condensed into table form, and allocated a code for use in the content analysis. The main strategies were listed to provide a link to the overall theory, and then each technique that activates each particular strategy was listed alongside them. For instance:

<i>SLLT Theory</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Techniques that Activate Strategy</i>	<i>Code</i>
↓	↓	↓	↓
<i>Audiolingual</i>	Selective attention	Oral instructions that direct focus to specific learning tasks, such as planning to listen for key words or phrases	A1

**Figure 3. Example of Coding Allocation Process**

All of the audiolingual strategies were categorised with ‘A’ while all of the communicative strategies were categorised with ‘C’; this was done simply for ease of reference when transferring data from the AtlasTi program to this thesis document. The audiolingual strategies were then allocated numbers from 1 to 11 in relation to the amount of strategies quantified by O’Malley and Chamot (1990:46). The communicative strategies were allocated numbers from 1 to 5 in relation to the amount of strategies characterised by Krashen (1982), Ur (1997 and 2013) and Harmer (1983, 2006 and 2007). The researcher then read the data for a second time, identifying and coding techniques as categorised in Table 4:

<b>SLLT Theory</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Techniques</b>	<b>Code</b>
<i>Audiolingual</i>	Selective attention	Oral instructions that direct focus to specific learning tasks, such as planning to listen for key words or phrases	A1
	Monitoring	Paying attention to a specific task whilst it is happening by consciously selecting and correcting language structures	A2
	Evaluation	Providing feedback on a task once it’s been completed and consciously assessing the success	A3

		of the task	
	Rehearsal	Verbally repeating language structures through drills (individual or choral) with accompanying motor movements (gestures)	A4
	Organisation	Grouping, classifying or ranking language structures according to commonality or order of use	A5
	Inferencing	Guessing or predicting meaning of language structures using information given or using missing information	A6
	Summarising	Occasionally reviewing or summing up information to aid retention	A7
	Deducing	Identifying patterns in language structures, or comparing L1 to L2 structures, to help hypothesise rules of the language structure	A8
	Imagery	Coordinating the use of visual images and gestures (as well as real objects) alongside language structures	A9
	Transfer	Using existing chunks of language with substitutions of new language structures	A10
	Elaboration	Linking ideas contained in new information, or integrating new ideas with known language structures	A11
<i>Communicative</i>	Create a positive learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge the learner's contributions (whether correct or incorrect) by nodding, smiling or explicitly praising</li> <li>• Make the learner aware of success and failure through grades, comments and feedback</li> <li>• Offer incentives or prizes for success</li> <li>• Do not penalise failure; make the learner aware that failure is part of the learning process, and provide specific direction for improvement</li> <li>• Set specific, achievable outcomes for tasks and lessons.</li> <li>• Set up a variety of tasks that engage all learning types and create interest in the lesson</li> <li>• Set up friendly group competition to create a fun, stress-free environment</li> <li>• Offer support in helping the learner overcome any barriers to learning</li> </ul>	C1
	Personalise content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select and adapt lesson content to suit the learners' backgrounds and interests.</li> <li>• Include tasks that cater for a blend of learning styles</li> </ul>	C2
	Set clear goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set long term goals that begin with an initial assessment to determine the learner's current skill level, motivation, learning barriers and interests</li> <li>• Create a tailored progress chart where the learner and teacher list short-term goals and can revise these goals</li> </ul>	C3

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make task instructions and expected outcomes of activity clear using graded language</li> <li>• Confirm the learners' understanding of a task</li> </ul>	
	Vary interaction patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up different groupings in a lesson: teacher-to-learner, solo work, pair work, small groups, choral responses, whole-class interaction</li> </ul>	C4
	Ask varied question types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliciting questions</li> <li>• Concept checking questions</li> <li>• Simple yes/no questions</li> <li>• Complex information questions</li> </ul>	C5

**Table 4. Coding Allocation for Audiolingual and Communicative Approaches**

The techniques identified were drawn from clauses, phrases or sentences in CAPS provided in its introductory paragraphs, tables, listed criteria, lesson outlines with exemplified instructions or task set up, skills descriptions and glossaries. The techniques in CAPS were automatically coded if they matched the terminology verbatim from Table 4's classification, as well as manually if the same *idea* of the technique was evident. Both of these processes were necessary since there was no guarantee that CAPS referenced techniques in the exact same way as in Table 4. So, manually searching for the same meaning meant the data set was much larger and could provide a much more insightful view into the linguistic framing of SLLT in CAPS. For instance, CAPS (2011:10, emphasis added) states that in grade 1 "learners need to be exposed to lots of oral language in the form of stories and classroom instructions. *Listening to stories being told* is an excellent way..." This segment was coded A1, for while it did not explicitly mention the strategy 'selective attention' (say, "ensure learners' *selective attention* is activated") the strategy's technique of "direct[ing] focus to specific learning tasks" applies because listening to stories *is* directing focus to a specific learning task. While carefully allocating codes to the audiolingual and communicative techniques in CAPS, the researcher identified some that were specifically relevant to young learner theories, as well as the grammar-translation and natural methods. There were not many mentions related to these theories, but since the research question investigates which SLLT theories are evident in CAPS, it was then necessary to code these strategies too. A third reading of the data ensued using the following code allocations:

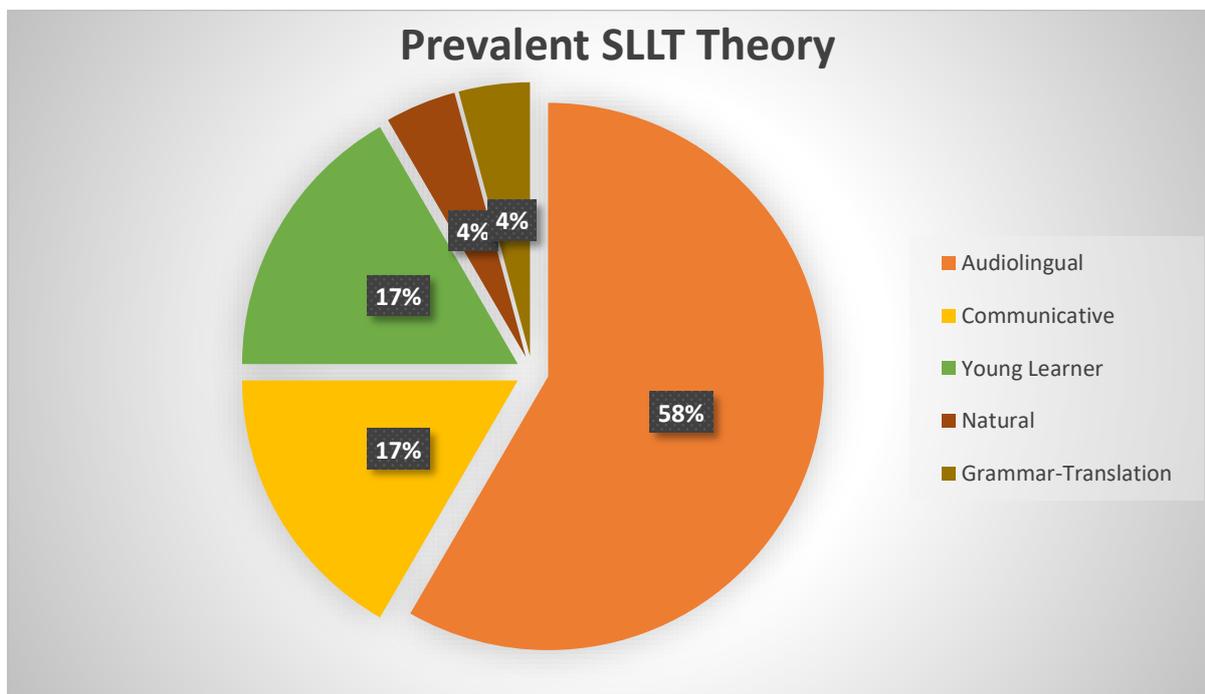
SLLT Theory	Strategies	Techniques	Code
<i>Grammar-Translation</i>	Translate	Use the L1 to explain the L2	G1
	Repeat	Copy exactly what the teacher says	G2
	Memorise	Study vocabulary lists	G3

	Define	Use a dictionary to understand in the L1	G4
<i>Natural</i>	Exposure to natural use	Passively expose learners to the language in a way it is naturally used, adding demonstrations and actions, correcting errors, asking questions, using full sentences, expecting a response, being patient, speaking at a natural pace	N1
<i>Young Learner</i>	TPR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combining language with gestures and physical movement</li> </ul>	Y1
	Scaffolding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggesting</li> <li>Praising the significant</li> <li>Providing focusing activities</li> <li>Encouraging rehearsal</li> <li>Being explicit about organisation</li> <li>Reminding</li> <li>Modelling</li> <li>Providing part-whole activities</li> </ul>	Y2
	Routine and repetition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prefabricated classroom</li> <li>Prefabricated language patterns</li> </ul>	Y3
	Varied task types with visual aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setting up task types that cater for multiple intelligences</li> <li>Setting up tasks with varied visual aids to engage interest</li> <li>Setting up tasks with varied focus times</li> </ul>	Y4
	Positive reinforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge correct responses and participation</li> <li>Praise learners with verbal cues, body language and written text</li> </ul>	Y5

**Table 5. Coding Allocation for Subsidiary Theories**

In total, the entire CAPS document was read three times to attain the data for the content analysis; accordingly, the number of mentions for each theory was then calculated and transferred into the thesis document. The findings of the content analysis are presented as follows:

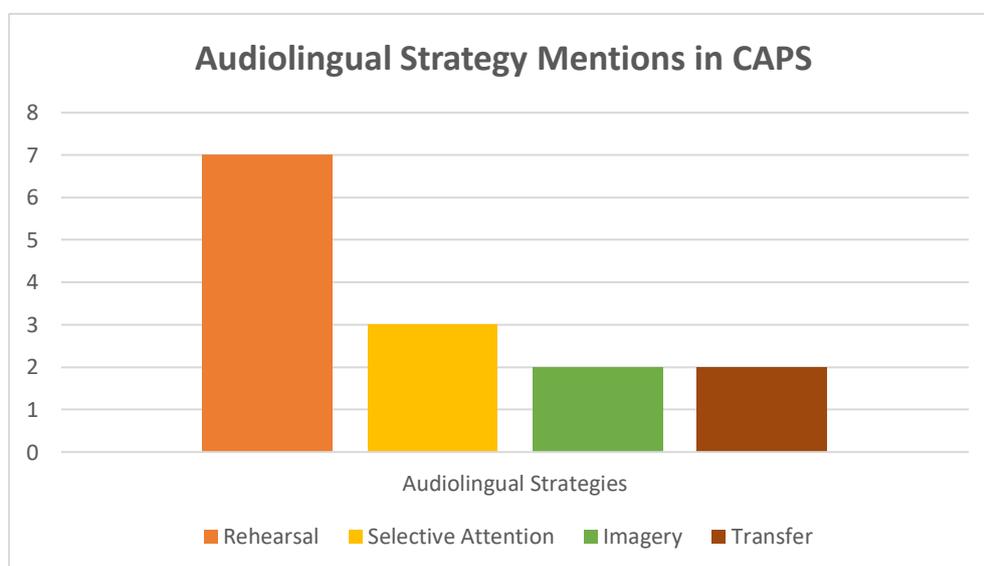
- Audiolingual theory of SLLT: 14 mentions
- Communicative theory of SLLT: 4 mentions
- Young learner theory of SLLT: 4 mentions
- Natural theory of SLLT: 1 mention
- Grammar-translation theory of SLLT: 1 mention



**Figure 4. Prevalent SLLT Theory: Visual Overview**

The four main strategies identified for the 14 mentions of the audiolingual approach, listed in order from highest numeric occurrence to lowest numeric occurrence, are as follows:

- A4 - Rehearsal: 7 mentions
- A1 - Selective attention: 3 mentions
- A9 - Imagery: 2 mentions
- A10 - Transfer: 2 mentions



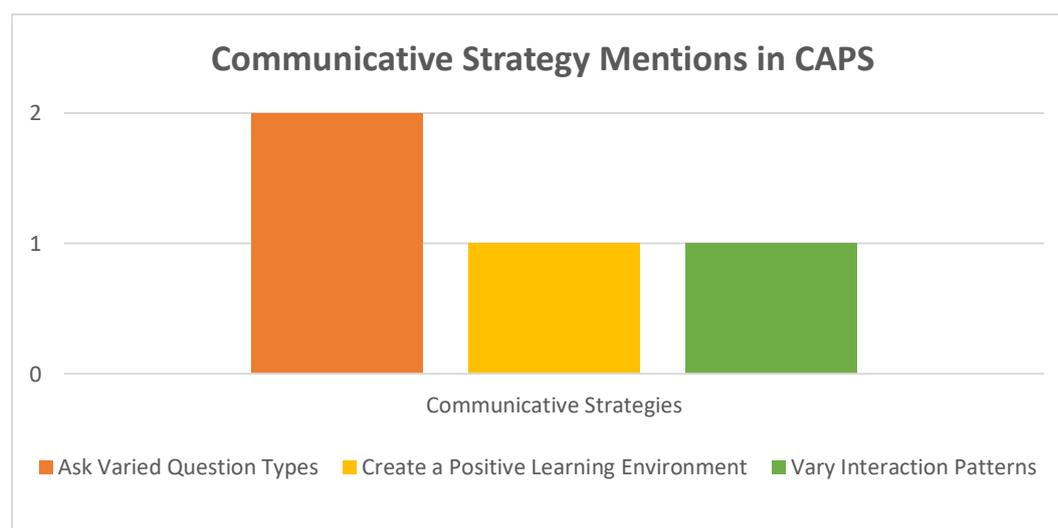
**Figure 5. Audiolingual Strategy Mentions: Visual Overview**

Examples of coded allocations for audiolingual segments of data include:

- Rehearsal: “tell the story several times”; “recycle vocabulary and language structures.” In each of these examples, the techniques refer to verbally repeating language structures.
- Selective attention: “listening to stories (or non-fiction texts) read by the teacher.” Here, the technique directs learners’ focus to a specific learning task.
- Imagery: “use gestures, pictures and real objects.” In this example, the technique refers to use of visual images and gestures, as well as real objects.
- Transfer: “learners write using sentence frames such as ‘I like \_\_\_\_./I don’t like \_\_\_\_.’” The technique referenced here uses blank spaces to indicate where substitutions of new language structures can be placed.

The four main strategies identified for the 4 mentions of the communicative approach, listed in order from highest numeric occurrence to lowest numeric occurrence, are as follows:

- C5 - Ask varied question types: 2 mentions
- C1 - Create a positive learning environment: 1 mention
- C4 - Vary interaction patterns: 1 mention



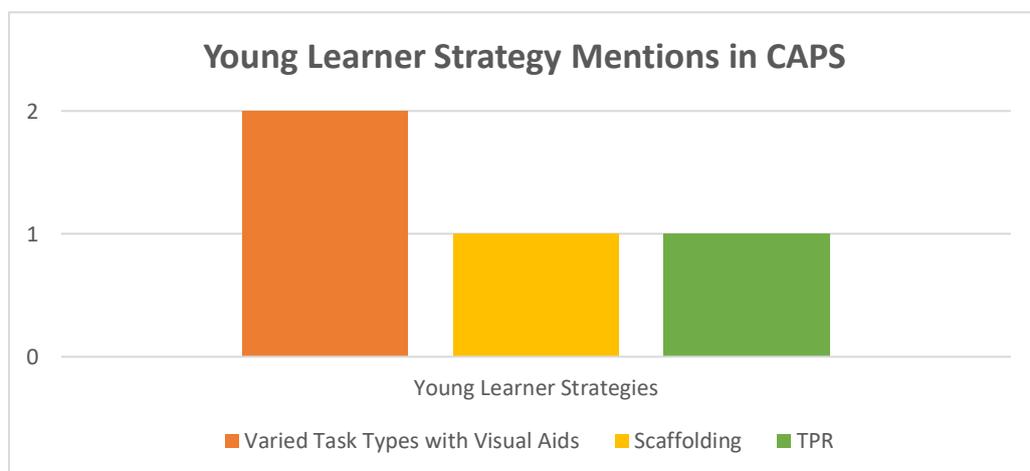
**Figure 6. Communicative Strategy Mentions: Visual Overview**

Examples of coded allocations for communicative segments of data include:

- Ask varied question types: “The teacher should begin with simple questions, e.g. ‘Who ....?’ (e.g. Who ate the porridge?) and ‘Where ....?’ (e.g. Where did Goldilocks go to sleep?). Gradually, as learners get used to question forms and develop the language necessary to answer them, more complex questions can be asked.” Here, CAPS is listing a blended use of simple yes/no questions as well as complex information questions.
- Create a positive learning environment: “the teacher to give learners individual attention in order to develop their comprehension and word attack skills in their additional language.” In this example, the technique refers to offering the student support in overcoming any barriers to learning, such as the lack of comprehension or insufficient vocabulary.
- Vary interaction patterns: “The teacher works with each group once a week for 15 minutes while the other groups are involved in Paired or Independent Reading.” The technique referenced here includes using different student groupings within a lesson stage, namely teacher-to-learner, solo work and pair work.

The three main strategies identified for young learner theory, listed in order from highest numeric occurrence to lowest numeric occurrence, are as follows:

- Y4 - Varied Task Types with Visual Aids: 2 mentions
- Y2 - Scaffolding: 1 mention
- Y1 - TPR: 1 mention



**Figure 7. Young Learner Strategy Mentions: Visual Overview**

Examples of coded allocations for young learner segments of data include:

- Varied Task Types with Visual Aids: “They should make sure that they have the necessary Big Books/posters, rhymes, songs, games and real objects for the theme they have chosen.” The technique referenced here is using varied visual aids to engage interest.
- Scaffolding: “learners’ emergent spoken language needs to be scaffolded (i.e. modelled and supported).” Here, CAPS uses terms verbatim as per Table 5 for the name of the strategy and a technique that activates this strategy.
- TPR: “giving simple instructions that they respond to physically... known as Total Physical Response.” In this instance, CAPS again uses terminology verbatim as per Table 5, and it is preceded with an explanation to combine language with physical movement.

The single mentions identified for the natural method and the grammar-translation method are coded (respectively) for the following segments:

- N1 – Expose to natural use: “In Grade 1, vocabulary and grammar are learned incidentally through exposure to the spoken language.” Here, the data segment refers to passively exposing learners to the natural spoken use of language. This segment also notes that language is unconsciously acquired, which is a core principle of the natural method.
- G1 - Translation: “the teacher can start labelling objects in the classroom in both the Home Language and English.” This example highlights the technique of using the L1 to explain the L2 (in this case, providing vocabulary translation). Notably, with this technique, the teacher is centralised as the active language user in the classroom instead of the learners, which reiterates a key principle in grammar-translation methodology.

The quantitative data from the content analysis reveals CAPS’ majority audiolingual approach to SLLT. Considering that there are eleven identified audiolingual strategies for developing the L2, the use of four means that CAPS introduces only 36% of this SLLT theory. A worryingly limited number of techniques supporting young learner theories are presented too – just 3 from a possible 16, meaning just over 18% of the theory is evidenced across the 96 page document. These weak results reveal an insufficient grounding in SLA theory for a document that is primarily used to communicate theory. If the theory is represented so poorly, it may be an indicator that its function in informing accompanying practices in the classroom may be weak too. Additionally, the presence of multiple approaches (communicative, natural and grammar-translation) serves to further weaken a singular cohesive approach to SLA. Some of these theories are in direct opposition to each other, for instance the communicative

approach and the grammar-translation approach (different centralised agents in activating strategies, different activity types focused on different functional uses of English). Presenting contrasting theories in parallel causes a barrier to learning and teaching since conflicting strategies nullify each other. Investigating the language content of CAPS, thus, reveals a restricted ability to communicate a clear understanding of SLLT theory. The next phase of the language analysis investigates if a stronger ability exists in CAPS to model the theory in practice; in other words, if the language of CAPS communicates how to implement theory.

## 5.2. Thematic Analysis

In relation to Clarke and Braun's (2006) framework for conducting a thematic analysis, the first step of becoming familiar with the data was completed within the content analysis. As with the content analysis, the themes identified were drawn from lexis, clauses, phrases or sentences within CAPS. On the fourth reading of CAPS, the initial generalised code 'DA' was manually generated in AtlasTi if an interesting factor was identified relating to SLLT theory or practical implementation thereof. For instance, CAPS (2011:4, emphasis added) states that the "curriculum aims to ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives." This segment was coded as DA, for it indicted an interesting contradiction in that CAPS' main aim (shown here) is to develop the L2 using communicative principles, but as evidenced in the content analysis, the overarching SLA approach present in CAPS is actually audiolingual. While combing CAPS for other such interesting occurrences, the researcher detected some recurring themes which meant the general DA code needed to be reviewed. As such, a fifth reading of the text occurred to manually modify the general DA code to more specific ones:

Thematic Code	Description
DA – Accountability	Shifting of responsibility for decisions from CAPS to others
DA – Assumption	An idea accepted as true without proof
DA – Authority	Reference to CAPS or other documents as the point of reference
DA – Communicative principles	Ideas related to communicative theory, but not a strategy
DA – Framework	Building a structure for language learning
DA – Goals	The curriculum's desired outcomes for learners
DA – Practical how to	Instructions for what to do and how to do it in the classroom
DA – Unclear	Ambiguous or unspecific language clouds meaning

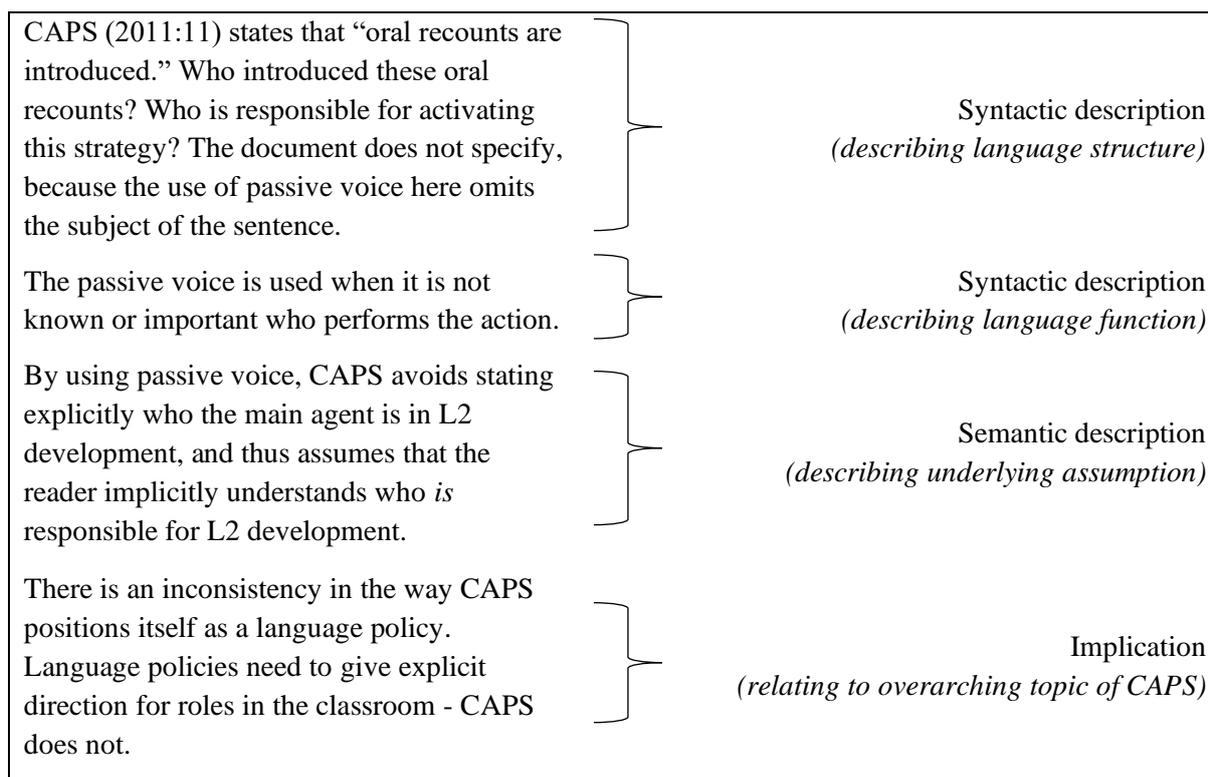
**Table 6. Thematic Code Allocations**

Some examples of utterances coded according to these themes include:

Thematic Code	Example
DA – Accountability	“Schools can choose whether to give relatively more or less”
DA – Assumption	“Learners should be familiar with the activity”
DA – Authority	“For further information on how to teach .... refer to”
DA – Communicative principles	“encouraging an active and critical approach to learning”
DA – Framework	“First Additional Language ... Grades 1-2 (Hours)... 2/3”
DA – Goals	“equal educational opportunities are provided”
DA – Practical how to	“Teachers themselves need to keep a record of the words”
DA – Unclear	“speaking slowly but naturally”

**Table 7. Thematic Coding Allocation Examples**

Once all of the themes had been identified, they needed to be differentiated according to any overarching topics, so as to be able to present the most significant findings from the data. To understand if there were any common ideas arising from the utterances, the context of each was analysed for surface level meaning (by way of syntactic description) and for the underlying ideas or assumptions implied by that language use. For example:



**Figure 8. Example of Syntactic and Semantic Description**

Each utterance was analysed in the same manner and from reviewing the implications of each in relation to the literature review, there arose three broad topics from the qualitative data: contradictions, imprecisions and impracticalities. To define each of the topics most prevalent in CAPS, and to be able to discuss what they reveal about the linguistic framing of SLLT theory in CAPS, the identified themes were grouped as follows:

<b>Contradictions</b>	<b>Imprecisions</b>	<b>Impracticalities</b>
Accountability	Assumption	Communicative principles
Authority	Goals	Framework
Communicative principles	Practical how to	Practical how to
Goals		Unclear

**Table 8. Theme Groupings**

As seen from Table 8, there is some overlap of themes across topics, meaning that some themes are explored in multiple sections below. After scripting the findings for each topic in detail, the study ends with a broad summary of results from the thematic and content analysis of CAPS for EFAL foundation phase.

### **5.2.1. Contradictions**

As seen from the content analysis, CAPS contains several mentions of the communicative approach to SLLT. The main communicative principles supported by this instructional material are that the L2 develops in a context where language has purpose-driven functions that are contextually-relevant, and from an environment providing graded and scaffolded learning and interaction. However, as will be detailed below, these principles are not consistently evident in creating a communicative context, which presents a contradiction of core values. Additionally, CAPS positions itself as a language policy by way of its authority as the single document to reference for SLLT, as well as the goals it has in improving SLLT education. However, it contradicts these aspects by shifting accountability away from itself. Each of the themes related to contradictions will now be presented in detail.

Section 1.3 of CAPS (2011:4, emphasis added), states that the curriculum aims to “ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are *meaningful to their own lives*. In this regard, the curriculum promotes knowledge in *local contexts*.” This statement highlights that the curriculum recognises Larsen-Freeman’s (1997) communicative SLLT principle (derived from chaos and complexity theory) where a need for meaning is addressed

through purposed communication. This aligns, too, with Halliday's (1975) perspective that language must serve an interactional function. Importantly, this statement also recognises that purposed communication must be relevant to the specific environment of the user, so that there is contextual-relevance to motivate student engagement (Ur, 1997). This idea of contextual relevance is mentioned again in section 2.7, where CAPS states that "themes should be very familiar to learners, preferably already taught in the Home Language, and offer lots of opportunities for teaching language in context" (CAPS, 2011:12). This statement supports Krashen's (1981) natural order hypothesis, where learners are recognised as learning best when they learn about aspects most suitable to their environment (a familiar place). A communicative principle recognised in section 1.3 c of CAPS is "an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths" (ibid.), meaning that learners are encouraged to develop what Harmer (2006:21) calls "independent learning and fostered responsibility" skills, where they can think for themselves and apply their language knowledge critically in new situations. Another communicative principle communicated by CAPS is the progression of "content and context of each grade... from simple to complex" (ibid). This again relates to Krashen's (1981) natural order hypothesis, emphasising that scaffolded learning of language structures should take place in a predictable way that is most useful to the learner. Section 1.3 d of CAPS highlights yet another communicative principle supported by Ur (1997) and Harmer (2006) - varying interaction patterns - where learners need to "work effectively as individuals and with others as members of a team". This way, they develop the aforementioned critical thinking skills, and build an environment with the need for genuinely interactive and purposed communication. Section 2.7. explains that "learning an additional language is much like learning a home language except that it happens later in children's lives" (CAPS, 2011:10). Here, a communicative principle is supported by equating L1 and L2 learning and acquisition, aligning with Hymes' (1972) view that linguistic performance and linguistic competence are processes of both the L1 and L2. The communicative aspect of grading language levels for L2 development is also evidenced by CAPS, necessitating for "a set of readers graded according to level of difficulty" (CAPS, 2011:13). Supporting Krashen's (1981) input hypothesis, L2 development is best supported by materials graded to suit the student's level of understanding, as is the case in graded readers.

By referencing these principles, CAPS frames its support of communicative SLLT theory. However, CAPS does not show a clear understanding of how to construct a communicative *context* in which to apply these principles. For instance, in section 2.7, CAPS refers to an

example of the type of context to use for oral recounts in the L2 class as “Elephants are large animals. They live in herds, etc.” (CAPS, 2011:11). Considering that communicative principles direct using contexts that are meaningful for learners’ lives (Krashen, 1981; Ur, 1997), this example does not provide meaningful engagement for typical everyday situations in learners’ lives (a more relatable example would relate to domestic animals, for instance). When suggesting lesson themes that set a meaningful context for learners’ lives, CAPS suggests choosing those that provide “opportunities for demonstration and use of things that are physically present in the classroom” (CAPS, 2011:12). While certainly more suitable than elephants, this restrictive context means that learners will have the vocabulary to talk about a classroom, but there will no meaningful extended use of the English language beyond a classroom situation.

Another instance where the communicative context is unclearly communicated is in section 2.8.1 when “the teacher can start labelling objects in the classroom in both the Home Language and English” (CAPS, 2011:12). This approves using the L1 in the L2 classroom, and also centralises the teacher as the primary task performer in the classroom, since the teacher is the one using the L2 to complete a task, not the learners. The promotion of using the L1 in the L2 classroom is reinforced in both sections 2.8.2 and 2.8.3 where teachers are advised to “ask questions in their home language.” Using the L1 in the L2 classroom and centralising the teacher as the most active agent in the classroom are, as Richards and Rodgers (2001) summarise, strategies that align with the grammar-translation approach to SLLT, rather than a communicative one. A contradiction to the communicative method is also seen in section 2.8.9, which concentrates on language structure and use: “In Grade 1, vocabulary and grammar are learned incidentally through exposure to the spoken language. In Grades 2 and 3, learners also acquire vocabulary and grammar through reading English” (CAPS, 2011:17). Based on this statement, explicit language instruction is not recognised as a contributor to L2 development. This aligns with the natural method, where Berlitz (1988) highlights how learners acquire language only through exposure rather than a combination of conscious and subconscious learning activities. By referencing the grammar-translation and natural methods, CAPS contradicts the communicative principles outlined elsewhere and thus reduces the reader’s certainty of its language learning context.

This uncertainty of which SLLT language learning environment CAPS supports is increased in the contradiction about instructions. According to Harmer (2007) and Wits Language School (2019), a central principle to the communicative SLLT context is that instructions

must be clear, and all tasks must work towards an outcome, so learners are familiar with expected outcomes and can set their goals by these outcomes. If CAPS is a model for best communicative practice, then it must model clear instructions and goals too. In section 2.8.3, CAPS instructs teachers to read texts used in class for group shared reading in advance and take notes of potentially challenging vocabulary and grammar structures, since this “may provide the teacher with a teaching focus” (CAPS, 2011:14). Problematically, there is no clear explanation as to how the teacher must record this information – should it be done mentally, or on paper? How many challenging items should be targeted? Additionally, there is no clarity on what the teacher must *do* with the information gathered: must the teacher pre-teach the challenging vocabulary or grammar structures before the learners read the text? Or must the teacher elicit the learners’ understanding of these concepts after the first reading? Without clear instructions or goals, CAPS is not constructing a communicative context through communicative principles.

Within a communicative context, to provide learners with clarity regarding the teacher’s expectations, the teacher should use language structures that are clear and concise (Wits Language School, 2019), and offering a cohesive functional purpose. CAPS, as a model for best practice, should be suggesting techniques that promote functional clarity; this is not the case. In section 2.8.3, CAPS lists various ‘techniques’ for prompting learners during their first reading of a text:

- What do you expect to read in this book?
- Does that make sense to you?
- Well done! You corrected yourself. That makes sense.
- What would sound right in this sentence?
- Look at the illustration.
- It could be but look at the first letter again.

(CAPS, 2011:14)

The first ‘technique’, for instance, is an open-ended present simple question eliciting a prediction about the immediate future. Notably, CAPS instructs the teacher to ask this question once that student has already started reading the book (so the predictive aspect cannot be fulfilled because the student has already been given past or current insight). The third ‘technique’, for instance, is a declarative statement combining praise and an observation about a completed past action. The mixture of language structures makes it very unclear about

what the expected outcome is between the teacher and student. This means that no functional and purposed communication can take place, further reducing the communicative context in CAPS. In terms of creating a clear and functional framework for creating a communicative SLLT context in class, the lack of unclear instructions here negatively affects the teacher's ability to use it as a guide. There is no instruction about when to use these techniques, in what order to use them, or how many to use in one interaction with a student. There is also no explanation as to why the teacher should prompt learners at this stage of the reading process - no common purpose is outlined - nor can the reader make any inference about the purpose of this stage in a lesson due to different functions of each of the language structures. The aim of providing a list of techniques is to support implementation of a particular theory, but here there is no clear theory supported by these techniques, and so the aim is contradicted.

Another area where contradictions occur is in how CAPS refers to itself and its function as a language policy. Section 1.1 (CAPS, 2011:3) CAPS identifies itself as the "single comprehensive" document to "improve implementation" (ibid). The word 'single' means "consisting of or having only one part" (Merriam Webster, 2019), denoting that no other documents need to be referred to because this document is sufficiently detailed as an instructional material. Claiming this means CAPS positions itself as a language policy, since as Spolsky (2004) notes, a language policy is a doctrine used to produce an 'enhancement' (a change) in language practices. CAPS' self-identification as a language policy is reiterated in section 1.2 where it is explicitly noted to represent "*a policy statement* for learning and teaching" (ibid, emphasis added). Ascribing the noun 'policy' to its designation means this document aims to "turn language ideology into practice" (Shohamy, 2006:77); in other words, it is a guideline for best practice. Additionally, section 1.3 d (ibid., emphasis added) states that this document "*aims to produce learners that are able to...*" In this clause, *aims to produce* implies taking accountability developing the skills that learners need through teaching, and since the concept of taking responsibility for teaching all languages is as one of the DoBE's main aims (1997), this centralises CAPS' position as a guide for achieving results – a language policy. Lastly, in section 2.8.3, CAPS introduces an example lesson plan with the title "Instructions for forming ability groups" (CAPS, 2011:14). An 'instruction' is "an outline or manual of technical procedure" (Merriam Webster, 2019), so CAPS emphasises its role in explaining how to best implement SLLT in class, and in so doing, CAPS identifies itself as a language policy. As a language policy, CAPS details several goals for serving the public. In section 1.3 c, for instance, CAPS aims to provide "education that is comparable in quality, breadth and depth to those of other countries." Here, CAPS aims to enhance the level of South

African education to be able to compete by “degrees of comparison” (Merriam Webster, 2019) with other countries. So, CAPS has a ‘commodity-like’ value in altering the status of education in South Africa. This means that CAPS, in support of Ruiz (1984), Heugh (1993) and Heller (2010), sees the value that language-in-education has and recognises its role is advancing this. Another function which pinpoints CAPS as a language policy is shown in section 1.3 c (CAPS, 2011:4), stating it aims to ensure that “educational imbalances of the past are redressed, and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of the population.” The use of the present tense auxiliary verb ‘be’ in “*are* redressed” and “*are* provided” (ibid.) highlights CAPS’ recognition of its current role as a document that can “profoundly affect the underpinnings of society” (Ricento, 2014). Recognising and using language as a tool to alter socioeconomic states further evidences CAPS’ position as a language policy. By *positioning* itself as a language policy for SLLT, CAPS’ introduction communicates to the public that it can be *used* as a language policy: a guideline for best practice in the L2 classroom.

However, in the very same introduction where CAPS identifies itself as a language policy and as serving the functions of a language policy, some contradictions are presented. After claiming that CAPS is the only document to refer to in order to understand and implement the SLLT syllabus (the policy to follow), section 1.3 e (CAPS, 2011:5, emphasis added) states that “to address barriers in the classroom, teachers should use various curriculum differentiation strategies *such as those included in the Department of Basic Education’s Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning* (2010).” Here CAPS suggests a document external to CAPS for teachers to learn how to overcome learning barriers and as such, contradicts its own claim to be the single comprehensive guideline for SLLT. This occurs again in section. 2.8.7 (CAPS, 2011:16) where CAPS refers to another external source for SLLT techniques, namely “the Department of Basic Education’s handbook, ‘Teaching Reading in the Early Grades’ (2008).” In claiming to be the policy to guide key stakeholders, CAPS presents contradictions too. In section 2.4, CAPS states that “schools can choose whether to give relatively more or less time to the Home and First Additional Languages depending on the needs of their learners” (CAPS, 2011:9). Here, ‘schools’ is the subject of the sentence, so CAPS nominates schools as the agents of action (the accountable decision makers). Section 2.7 states that the “selection and number of activities to be covered each day *will depend on* the teacher and the time she has available” (CAPS, 2011:12, emphasis added), meaning that reliance has been placed on the teacher (Merriam Webster, 2019) to make the decisions. Again, in section 2.7, there is emphasis that “themes are given as examples, but

these are merely suggestions; they are not to be seen as prescriptions” (ibid., original emphasis). This clause not only omits a responsible agent, but the emphasis indicates a strong command to avoid using CAPS as a guideline altogether. Further still, in section 2.8, CAPS notes that “writing is important because it forces learners to think about grammar and spelling” (CAPS, 2011:12). Notably, using ‘writing’ as the subject of this sentence means that CAPS has allocated the skill of writing, an inanimate process, as the responsible agent for enhancing L2 development. As Spolsky (2004) and Plüddemann. (2015) highlight, language-in-education policies are a source of guidance for parents, schools, teachers and governing bodies regarding practical programs, teaching practices, methods and ideas for implementation, as well as techniques for overcoming barriers to challenges in the L2 classroom. As a guide, then, CAPS should take responsibility for the decisions around what to teach, when to teach and how to teach. However, these examples above show that this is not the case. The shifting of accountability to external stakeholders, be they schools, teachers or inanimate language skills, means CAPS contradicts its earlier acceptance of its role and responsibilities as a guiding language policy.

The contradictions presented in CAPS are sizeable: it conveys communicative SLLT theory, but it also conveys grammar-translation and natural SLLT theory; it conveys an understanding of communicative principles but not an understanding of how to support this theory through practices; it outlines techniques like an instructional guide, but it’s not clear in instructing what to do; it positions itself as a language policy but it does not take accountability for its role or functions. By referencing communicative principles, CAPS could linguistically frame itself as supportive of communicative SLLT theory, but by also referencing other approaches it instead reveals a lack of strong theoretical underpinnings. By positioning itself as a language policy document, CAPS could serve its aim in providing equitable public access to education. However, by refuting its responsibilities, by not presenting a cohesive understanding of SLLT theory, CAPS falls short as a tool for best practice to overcome English SLLT barriers.

### **5.2.2. Imprecisions**

The accuracy of language in CAPS is essential in ensuring that it is an effective instructional material. According to Kokela (2017), an instructional material delivers a model that directs teaching in the classroom. Aside from a directive model, teachers also use instructional materials as support for overcoming challenges (Mensah, 2014) and as models for their own

language use in the classroom, since not all English teachers speak English as a mother tongue (Chamot, 2007; Ezenwa, 2018). As an instructional material, then, CAPS should use English in a way that clearly and unambiguously addresses these needs. To be clear and unambiguous, there should be no assumptions made about a reader's background knowledge or their understanding of SLLT jargon – every technical term should be well-defined to allow its readers to understand exactly what to do and how to do it. By analysing various utterances in CAPS, it is revealed that some assumptions are made about readers, and that ambiguity exists around the goals and practical steps to implement in the L2 classroom. Each of the themes related to imprecisions will now be presented in detail.

Beginning with imprecise language use, section 1.3 c of CAPS (2011:4) states that one of the general aims of CAPS is to “set high but achievable standards in all subjects”. A ‘standard’ is defined as “something set up and established by authority as a rule for the measure” (Merriam Webster, 2019), in this case, the value and quality of education. A ‘high’ standard is one that typically pushes the student to perform better than they believed possible, while an ‘achievable’ standard is one that is set at the student's recognised level of ability. The oxymoron of CAPS' aim causes ambiguity (will the standards be firmly challenging or easily manageable?) and also assumes that readers' understanding or measure of a high standard and an achievable standard are the same as CAPS. Drawing from the discussion on perspectives towards English (Mncube 2007; Ngidi 2007; Taylor and Coetzee 2013; Heugh 2013; Coffi 2017), individual and communal expectations, beliefs and attitudes towards language learning (and the standards thereof) are subjectively influenced. Thus, it is near impossible to assume a mutual understanding of the concept of a ‘high but achievable standard’ for SLLT, meaning this concept needs to be further clarified to help the reader understand what level CAPS expects its learners to meet.

Another instance of imprecise language use is found in section 2.2, where the understanding of ‘fluency’ (a central concern in L2 development) is not clearly evident in CAPS. CAPS (2011:8) says that “children come to school knowing their home language. They can speak it fluently, and already know several thousand words.” To be fluent in a language, that is, to have “the requisite words for talking about nearly any topic in detail...[and] recognize enough words in every utterance... [so as to] understand the unfamiliar ones from context”, the speaker must know around 10,000 words (Gibbons, 2019). By stating that learners know ‘several’ thousand words means they know “more than two [thousand] but fewer than many [thousand]” (Merriam Webster, 2019); a figure substantially beneath the required quantity to

be considered fluent by SLLT theory. In addition to this, CAPS states that children speak their home language “fluently, *and* already know several thousand words” (CAPS, 2011:8, emphasis added); this means CAPS is separating fluency from the amount of words known, since the coordinating conjunction ‘and’ serves to “form a link between clauses” (Parrott, 2010:302). This separation of fluency – mastery of all skills, according to Richards and Rodgers, 2001) – from word count indicates that what makes a speaker ‘fluent’ is not clearly understood, or clearly defined. Either way, CAPS leaves the term open to interpretation, meaning it assumes readers have the language capabilities to interpret what the measure of success is in L2 development.

CAPS’ indistinct division of language learning contexts makes further assumptions, now about the reader’s background knowledge. Section 2.3 states that

In schools where children will use their additional language, English, as the LoLT from Grade 4, it is important that a substantial amount of time is devoted to learning English in the Foundation Phase. However, in schools with the same LoLT throughout the grades, this is not the case. In these schools, many children who are learning English or Afrikaans as a Home Language do not speak these languages as their mother tongue, and as much time as possible should be devoted to this task.

(CAPS, 2011:9)

To understand that CAPS is distinguishing two different language learning contexts, the reader needs to refer to the second sentence first to understand the one context: learners are learning English as their HL (even though it is not necessarily their mother tongue) and using English as the LoLT in grades 1 to 3, and they will continue to use English as the LoLT from grade 4 onwards. So, this means the reader must infer the other context: learners are using another language as LoLT in grades 1 to 3 (say, their HL), and are only learning English as an L2, but they will then switch from using their HL as LoLT to using English as the LoLT from grade 4 onwards. It is important for the reader (the teacher) to recognise the two different language learning contexts because, as Larsen-Freeman (1997) notes, this will influence how much time is dedicated to English language learning. However, it is difficult to make this distinction because there is some crucial information missing in the first sentence: which language the learners are using as their LoLT in grades 1 to 3. The assumption here is that readers are familiar with the different language learning contexts and can ‘fill in’ the gaps.

Section 2.7 introduces an antithesis in terms of the procedures a teacher should follow in class when activating listening and speaking tasks. CAPS states that the teacher should focus on “speaking slowly but naturally” (CAPS, 2011:10). To instruct and model ‘slowly’ but ‘naturally’ (since native speakers don’t naturally speak slowly), makes the required pace for modelling and instructing in the L2 unclear, thus assuming the reader can judge for him/herself what the appropriate pace should be. This also contrasts with Titone’s (1968) naturalist perspective that the teacher should never speak slowly, as it can cause a barrier to understanding. Since CAPS frames its support for the natural method (as shown in the content analysis), this means CAPS is contrasting its own underlying SLLT theory. This statement shows how imprecise language causes confusion about the steps for practical execution, and also muddies the understanding of which SLLT theory informs CAPS and its practices.

Another aspect that is unclear in section 2.7. is the role of the teacher and student in L2 development: “As the children move through the grades, the teacher should *expect* children to speak more and their utterances *should* become longer” (CAPS, 2011:11, emphasis added). Here, the word ‘expect’ indicates that there is a strong likelihood of children speaking in L2 more, but there is no indication of who is responsible for this increase in speaking – is it the teacher’s job to provide learners with more opportunities to speak in class? Or is it the responsibility of the student themselves – foundation phase young learners, ranging from 6 to 9 years old – to speak more of their own volition in class? This ‘removal of role’ is further evidenced by the use of standard passive voice in these two clauses: “they also need to be introduced to more text types,” and “oral recounts are introduced” (CAPS, 2011:11). The choice of passive voice means “the agent is unknown or unspecified” (Parrott, 2010:331), meaning the agent (responsible for the action) is omitted or removed from the sentence to focus only on the result. As discussed by Loewen (2015) and O’Malley and Chamot (1990), a clearly designated role for the teacher in the L2 classroom is imperative to improving learners’ conscious awareness of strategies. By not specifically stating who is responsible for L2 development, learners will not become actively aware of these strategies. Additionally, there is an assumption made on behalf of CAPS that the reader implicitly understands who the responsible agents are, meaning CAPS is not using clear language to outline best practices.

More presumptions about its readers are evident from CAPS’ limited definitions for jargon specific to SLLT. CAPS lists ‘guided reading’ as an activity to enhance L2 reading skills, but does not explicitly explain how to execute its set up, nor what its purpose is. There is an assumption that teachers already know this method since it is “introduced in the Home

Language CAPS in Grade 1” (CAPS, 2011:8), so by extension, there is an assumption that all teachers teach both English HL and EFAL, and that teachers use the same methods for L1 and L2 reading skill development. This is further reinforced in section 2.8.3 where learners are expected to automatically apply L1 reading strategies to L2 reading after “they become confident about using [them] in the Home Language” (CAPS, 2011:14). While Hymes’ (1972) communicative principle recognises L1 and L2 *processes* as equivalent, this equivalency does not include the *strategies* for reading skills’ development, because different strategies exist for L2 development (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990). By not explicitly stating which strategies are used in the HL compared to the L2, CAPS is implying that L1 strategies are sufficient for L2 development. In an attempt to clarify the reading strategy in question, CAPS includes a glossary of terms. Here, guided reading is explained as “a classroom activity in which learners are taught in groups according to their reading ability. The teacher develops learners’ comprehension and fluency and teaches reading strategies” (CAPS, 2011:93). With no further clarification of purpose or methodology, CAPS assumes that teachers have sufficient background in SLT to understand and implement this task without practical step-by-step guidance. Section 2.7. explains the use of ‘shared reading’ as a way of developing young “learner’s emergent literacy” (CAPS, 2011:10). While there is some explanation about the concepts that learners are introduced to in this context, there is no explanation of how those contexts should be introduced (method), and there is no explanation of how to activate the reading sub-skills (techniques) that learners need to be able to comprehend these contexts. Again, the glossary provides little clarity on this, stating that shared reading is an activity

in which children share the reading of an enlarged text with the teacher. This is a lesson with the whole class. The text used is aimed at the top group in the class. Some children will be at a listening level, others will be beginning to engage in the reading and more will be engaging fully. The same text is used over several days. Each day a new focus is selected by the teacher. The text is used to introduce text features, phonics, grammar and reading skills in context.

(CAPS, 2011:95)

In fact, this entry in the glossary creates another antithesis for the reader. Using ‘shared’ as an adjective means an experience which is communal (doing it together), yet this description shows learners engaging with the experience in different ways. As with the assumption made for guided reading, the same is made for shared reading that agents “should be familiar with the activity of Shared Reading since they will also be doing it in their Home Language lessons” (CAPS, 2011:10).



noticeable quantity of imprecise language used in CAPS. Using jargon related to language education without clarifying its meaning intimates the assumption that the readers of CAPS understand the terminology and understand how to apply the concepts in practice. As Pudi's 2006 study showed, teachers access CAPS as a guide for what to do and how to do it because they lack the knowledge of SLLT theory and how to implement it in practice. Hence, the use of unclarified jargon may cause a barrier for teachers in understanding SLLT theory in practice.

Instructional materials are a guideline for parents or guardians, but if, as Harmer (2007) notes, they offer a lack of support for SLLT – that is, they are poor models for best practice in the classroom, or they do not demonstrate accurate language use – they may become potential barriers to development. This section demonstrates that CAPS does not use language in a way that exemplifies how to teach language, nor does it use language in a way that models clear and precise language. Its imprecisions are effectively causing a hindrance in developing a relevant and suitable model for SLLT in the L2 classroom.

### **5.2.3. Impracticalities**

In the literature, Richards and Rodger (2001), Shohamy (2006) and Meyer (2007) outline the important role instructional materials play in informing language policy as a whole. By creating a model for best practice which teachers can then trial in their classrooms, language policy in education can be refined to provide better L2 development. If, however, these materials do not effectively inform practice (if they do not provide a practical model to trial), then changes to language policy are not sufficiently evidenced. While CAPS does provide suggested techniques, a framework for time allocation and lesson plan procedures, these are either not effectively clarified through language, or they present some challenges to practical execution in the L2 classroom. Each of the themes related to impracticalities will now be presented in detail.

Section 2.7 states the “reason for using themes is to make it possible to constantly recycle vocabulary and language structures in meaningful contexts” (CAPS, 2011:12). The word ‘recycle’ implies using the same words and language structures repeatedly, which represents O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) audiolingual strategy of rehearsal for L2 development, but the use of themes to ‘provide meaningful contexts’ (context<sub>s</sub> – plural) is a communicative principle, as per Larsen-Freeman's (1997) and Halliday's (1975) purpose-driven principles.

The language use produces a contrast of SLA perspectives in this statement, meaning different strategies are used to implement them. Using contrasting strategies from two divergent approaches means implementation is ineffective. Additionally, a ‘theme’ is “content...subjects or topics” (Merriam Webster, 2019), and in order to effectively use English in a meaningful way, learners need to be exposed to as many different themes as possible to expand their vocabulary. CAPS’ statement makes the purpose of using themes unclear, since instead of using themes to expand learners’ vocabulary, it suggests using the same vocabulary and language structures repeatedly - this ultimately restricts the contexts that can be introduced (since all vocabulary has a finite amount of contextual meaning) and limits learners’ opportunities to expand their vocabulary. Since the underlying aims are conflicting here, it is not pragmatic to expect effective L2 development.

Another instance where learners’ L2 development is hindered by CAPS’ unrealistic practices is in section 2.8.9, which states that

Vocabulary targets are set for each grade and a list of high frequency words in English is provided in Section 3 of this document. *It is essential for learners to reach these targets if they are going to be capable of using English as the LoLT in Grade 4.”*

(CAPS, 2011:17, emphasis added)

Section 3 of CAPS lists 300 high frequency words, noting that “it is essential for students to reach *these* targets” (ibid.). The plural demonstrative emphasised here serves as an anaphoric reference to the list of 300 high frequency words, meaning the reader infers that knowing these mere 300 words will ensure learners’ success in using English as the LoLT in grade 4. As seen earlier with the imprecision of CAPS’ language, CAPS’ understanding of the term ‘fluency’ is not clear, and this statement shows further misunderstanding of not just what fluency is, but also how to achieve it. As a guide for how many words the teachers should be teaching pre-grade 4 to practically help learners achieve fluency, stating that knowing just a few hundred words is not sufficient for a student to become fluent in a second language. As noted earlier by Gibbons (2019), a student should know at least 10,000 words to be considered fluent. Additionally, to cope with studying complex subjects such as science and mathematics in this second language, as Richard and Rodgers (2001) state, they will also need mastery in all skills. By not informing how to achieve fluency at the required rate and within

the timeframe provided for foundation phase, CAPS is not allowing the opportunity for realistic testing of L2 fluency development in the L2 classroom.

To its credit, though, CAPS does state that the high frequency vocabulary lists “are included only as a guide. Teachers themselves need to keep a record of the words that their learners hear and read” (CAPS, 2011:87). Recognising that this document cannot feasibly provide teachers with a comprehensive list of all vocabulary to teach is realistic – any content related components are allocated to separate instructional materials, such as textbooks. However, the manner in which this vocabulary is identified and presented to the learners *is* the responsibility of CAPS, as the DoBE, (2014) states explicitly that instructional materials (such as CAPS) are any documents that the learners use to acquire knowledge. By CAPS stating that “[t]eachers themselves need to keep a record of the words that their learners hear and read” (CAPS, 2011:87), CAPS is again obscuring its connection to practicality. The syntax (word order) of this statement makes the learners the responsible agent for hearing and reading the words (CAPS did not say to keep a record of all the words that the teacher teaches the learners). This list of words that learners hear and read could be infinite, given that learners are exposed to English every day beyond the isolated classroom environment. Unless the teacher is coincidentally selecting lesson themes to elicit all of this vocabulary from all of the learners in a class, it is not practicable for the teacher to assess, and without being able to assess, the teacher cannot suggest changes to the materials that inform policy.

Assessing learners’ language competency is, in general, an area where CAPS is not practical. For instance, to assess a student’s reading competency, CAPS instructs the teacher to circulate from child to child and hear each “read a small section of the text aloud” (CAPS, 2011:14). What is being assessed in this instance is not the student’s reading ability (for this is an internal receptive process), but rather pronunciation and appropriate pacing. In other words, this method tests the student’s productive abilities. Additionally, putting the student ‘on the spot’ contrasts Asher’s (1977) TPR principle regarding the reduction of stress through a fun and positive class environment. In this instance, the student (and peers) will be acutely aware that s/he is being tested, and will mostly likely result in an inaccurate reflection of her/his language abilities. The type of tasks exemplified in CAPS to assess learners’ L2 skills do not correlate to SLLT understandings of how language skills are differentiated or activated through specific techniques, or how can these assessments can be made accurate by removing affective filters such as stress, meaning CAPS is not serving to inform best practices.

Another area where CAPS does not clearly inform practices is in section 2.8.8, which provides ideas for helping support L2 development by scaffolding learners' writing skills: “*With support*, learners are expected to write a simple set of instructions and a personal recount” (CAPS, 2011:16, emphasis added). How this support is carried out is not clarified, so while teachers are aware of the SLLT theory that learners need support, there is no practical step-by-step guide of techniques informing exactly what to do and how to do it.

An added instance where detailed techniques are not provided for teachers to practically develop L2 skills is in section 2.8.3. Related to guided shared reading, CAPS explains how teachers should select graded readers:

Choose a reader which you think the child will be *able to read*, but not one that it is too easy – there should be a few *challenges* for the reader. If the child is able to read it fluently, with appropriate expression, then this text is at his/her reading level. If the child struggles, choose an easier one until you find the right level.

(CAPS, 2011:14, emphasis added)

The understanding of this antithetical conundrum (selecting a book that is easy to read but also challenging) reiterates the earlier discussion around high but achievable standards: it depends on a subjective interpretation. There is no explanation about what makes a book easier to read for one student compared to another, for instance: sentence length, unusual punctuation or cultural idioms. There is no explanation about how a teacher can recognise aspects of language that may be challenging for one student compared to another, for instance: low frequency vocabulary, tenses or complex conditional sentences. Without providing a checklist from a researched SLLT methodology such as TESOL or CELTA of what makes a book easy or challenging, it is impractical to assume the teacher knows how to match the correct book to the student's holistic language level.

Expanding on how to improve L2 reading skills, section 2.8.2 advises teachers to “ask questions about the story” (CAPS, 2011:13), but does not specify what types of questions to ask and what purpose these questions should serve. Without clarifying how the reading sub-skill is activated through a specific question-type technique, as Krashen (1981) and Harmer (2006) note, teachers cannot activate the necessary strategies to develop L2 reading skills. Furthermore, to conclude the guidelines for implementing shared reading, CAPS advises using “the text to develop vocabulary, comprehension, decoding skills, understanding of text

structure, grammar and punctuation” (CAPS, 2011:13). Again, there is no clarity on what techniques the teacher should implement to develop these areas. Without specific techniques and procedures, CAPS does not inform SLLT practices in the L2 classroom.

To effectively inform practices in the L2 classroom, an instructional material should provide a framework for the teacher to reference. In section 2.8.3 CAPS outlines the steps (procedures) a teacher must follow to set up a group guided reading task. The use of imperative verb forms such as “*select* an appropriate text” and “*talk* about the pictures” (CAPS, 2011:14) means CAPS’ is providing a lesson outline with instructions for the teacher to follow. The ‘term requirements’ section of CAPS also outlines procedures such as weekly planning and daily activities for L2 foundation classes. For instance,

- Begins to develop an oral (listening and speaking) vocabulary using themes or topics such as ‘My Clothes’
- Responds to simple greetings and farewells, using phrases, for example, ‘Good morning.’ ‘How are you?’ ‘I’m fine’.
- Makes simple requests, for example, ‘May I go to the toilet?’

(CAPS, 2011:23)

These example procedures give teachers a framework for the content to teach (ideas for themes to use and the language functions to practise), as well as suggested contact times - for instance “one hour and 30 minutes per week” (ibid.) - but CAPS clearly states that “the *suggested* themes/topics are simply *suggestions*”, and that contact times are “*suggested*” (ibid., emphasis added). The repeated use of ‘suggestion’ mean that CAPS is reticent to provide a specific outline of exactly what structures to teach, how to teach them, and when to teach them. The effect of this is that CAPS leaves room for teachers to teach any structures they subjectively feel necessary for the learners, in any manner that suits them, at any given time they feel appropriate. This contrasts Pienemann’s processability theory (1998) which states learners need to learn some structures as foundations for more complex structures and that learners can only acquire certain language structures at a time when they are ready to acquire it. Without a specific timeframe (and also without a specific guideline teaching them how to accurately assess their learners L2 levels), teachers may inadvertently teach structures before learners are ready to acquire it. A limited structure also means that CAPS further distances itself from its function as a language policy because there is no unified structure being informed across all L2 classrooms and schools.

There is further room for varied interpretations and applications of an SLLT framework when CAPS discusses the structure of teaching times. Section 1.4.1 allocates a maximum and minimum amount of time for language learning in the foundation phase:

A maximum of 8 hours and a minimum of 7 hours are allocated for Home Language and a minimum of 2 hours and a maximum of 3 hours for Additional Language in Grades 1-2. In Grade 3 a maximum of 8 hours and a minimum of 7 hours are allocated for Home Language and a minimum of 3 hours and a maximum of 4 hours for First Additional Language.

(CAPS, 2011:6)

There is a large discrepancy between study times here – merely just over a quarter of that allocated for the HL is available for the L2. This indicates a prioritisation of HL learning in foundation phase. CAPS (2011:9) states that in “schools where children will use their additional language, English, as the LoLT from Grade 4, it is important that a substantial amount of time is devoted to learning English in the Foundation Phase.” This statement supports Beukes’ (2015) and White’s (2008) appeal for promoting of English language learning in foundation phase due to its role as the LoLT for the majority of learners from grade 4 onwards. Despite implementing English as a compulsory second language subject in 2002 *because* of this knowledge (and to prevent learners from being disadvantaged by the LoLT in further education), there has been little provision of ‘substantial’ (equitable) time for fluency to be attained that is equivalent to the HL. This is further evidenced by the reduced amount of time for listening and speaking in grades 2 and 3, even though these very same skills need to be given ‘focused attention’:

A substantial amount of time needs to be devoted to Listening and Speaking in Grade 1. This is reduced in Grades 2 and 3 when more reading and writing is introduced in the First Additional Language. Focused attention needs to be given to Listening and Speaking throughout the Foundation Phase.

(CAPS, 2011:11)

CAPS’ structure does not only allow for limited teaching time to engage with the L2 – it is also structured in such a way that it does not provide equal benefits for all L2 learners. This is because it allows teachers and schools to decide if learners should get one hour more or less of L2 exposure per week, as seen by the minimum and maximum time allocation quoted above, as well as section 2.4 (CAPS, 2011:9, emphasis added) stating that “*Schools can choose* whether to give relatively more or less time to the Home and First Additional

Languages depending on the needs of their learners.” This ‘optionality’ for engagement time is seen again in section 2.8.3:

Teachers who are using the maximum time for First Additional Language will be able to work with each small group once a week for 15 minutes. However, those who are using the minimum time for First Additional Language will not be able to do so.

(CAPS, 2011:14-15)

By not specifying a unanimous dedicated time for language learning and identical reading skills support, CAPS is effectively allowing occasion for teachers and schools to select their own structure according to their preferences and availability, which results in an inconsistent authority on the structure for L2 development across the country. In its introduction to reading skills, CAPS emphasised why supported reading is crucial for L2 development, yet this statement indicates that only some learners will be able to benefit from supported reading. In the literature, du Plessis and Marais (2015), Mensah (2014) and Kokela (2017) note that CAPS was implemented as a revised and improved derivative of previous policy, specifically aimed at promoting equal access to education. Yet from this section, it is clear that by not providing a clear and practical framework for all teachers to use, for all learners, CAPS 2011 continues to promote inequitable access to education.

Overall, CAPS does not provide an effective model for best practice regarding the implementation of communicative principles and goals, or a clear framework to follow. Pudi's (2006) study revealed that many teachers consider CAPS as the main language policy document to refer to for guidance on how to teach, how to overcome challenges with multilingual classes and how to manage restricted resources in big classrooms. This highlights a worrying discrepancy between the intended use for the CAPS document compared to what it is actually used for by teachers, as well as a lack of recognition by the DoBE that language policies have been used and are continuing to be used as guidelines or practical tools for teaching and learning. An instructional material such as CAPS is relied on for decisions around roles, structure (time allocation for subject and language structure teaching) and methods and ideas for implementation (lesson plans). By not providing these through clear and concise language, CAPS is not effectively informing theory-supported language practices. Without a clear guideline on how to implement and test practices, language policy cannot be revised and improved, and by not improving its approaches to SLLT, it becomes clear that, in fact, CAPS is not serving equal access to education through L2 education.

## 6. Conclusion

Chapter six presents conclusions drawn from the results of the study, and, accordingly, makes recommendations for language policy and practice in South African SLLT education.

### 6.1. Inferences

As the second language for 90.4% of South Africans (Stats SA:24), English language development has been of concern for the DoBE and its language policy documents since the end of the apartheid regime (DoBE, 1997). As the language policy for EFAL, CAPS was implemented in 2012 to address barriers preventing equal access to education through the English language. As the policy document for addressing barriers, CAPS has come to be seen as the model for best practice in the L2 classroom (Pudi, 2006; Mensah, 2014; Kokela, 2017). This study aimed to investigate whether CAPS, as a model for best practice, demonstrates an understanding of SLA theory, whether this understanding is clearly communicated through its language use, and whether it represents an effective model for language accuracy and practical implementation in the classroom. Overall, the results from the linguistic content analysis showed a weak number of mentions of SLA theory underlying CAPS, and the subsequent thematic investigation revealed the document to also be weak, if not detrimental, as a model for accurate language and best practices in the classroom.

The context of SLLT is not entirely clear. The content analysis reveals a majority mention of audiolingual strategies, but in its aims and introduction CAPS asserts to support a communicative approach to SLLT. Moreover, there is a disconnect in effectively creating an aligning context where communicative principles can be applied. The analysis reveals underlying contradictions to communicative principles, specifically relating to the mentions of other approaches and their accompanying techniques. By presenting audiolingual, communicative, natural and grammar-translation approaches to SLLT, CAPS presents conflicting strategies that nullify each other's efficacy in informing practices in the classroom. CAPS recognises itself as a language-in-education policy both by name and by its main aims. However, CAPS also relinquishes its responsibility as a language-in-education policy regarding accountability in decision making. By refuting its responsibilities, CAPS no longer represents a model for best practice to overcome barriers to student success in L2 development. The lack of alignment between a clear and strong approach to SLLT and language policy function means practices in the classroom are not targetted to effectively improve SLLT, since English teachers have no reference to a sound theoretical framework,

nor a solid understanding of its intended purpose. CAPS does not demonstrate an understanding of fluency, nor does it allocate sufficient and specific time to develop fluency in English. As a language policy, CAPS should demonstrate accurate evidenced SSLT theory (detailing how much exposure is needed to become fluent in English as a second language), and serve as a model for good practice (detailing how long to focus on English SLLT). However, while CAPS does declare theoretically what is required, this theory is unclearly expressed, and is not supported by a practical guideline to implement the theory. This means in this instance, CAPS does not serve the functions of a language policy. In terms of providing a practical guideline, the language use in CAPS produces a minimal framework for SLLT. Extending the issue of practicality beyond a basic framework, an analysis into language use regarding practices in the classroom reveals that CAPS is not adequately informing SLLT theory. Feasibility is not well considered, since examples of what to do and how to do it are often contradictory, impractical or insufficiently detailed for effective implementation. For CAPS to be considered an effective guideline it should produce a fully practical framework for SLLT by providing examples of lesson procedures and setting a structure for the L2 curriculum. Analysing language use reveals that these components are present in CAPS, so there is some type of basic conceptual outline for teachers to follow. However, this basic framework for procedures, language structures to teach and teaching times allows for multiple interpretations and implementation, and thus an inconsistent structure across the L2 curriculum.

CAPS makes assumptions about the readers' skills and background knowledge of SLLT in understanding the technical jargon of language learning. For CAPS to be accessible to all readers who use it as a guideline for SLLT, its language use should be unambiguous, and any SLLT terminology referenced should be clear and concise. Analysing the clarity of language in CAPS reveals that there are some presumptions made about readers' mastery in English language skills as well as their background knowledge of SLLT. Overall, CAPS does not adequately frame a clear understanding of SLA theories. While it communicates audiolingual and communicative theories, the language in CAPS does not construct a clear idea of these or model the best practice for implementing them. The DoBE, (2013:2) claimed that "studies so far have proved that English, which is the language of learning and teaching in the majority of schools in our country, is a barrier for learning and thus of learner attainment." This thesis argues that it is not only the English language itself that is a barrier to learner attainment. Additionally, a barrier to learner attainment is a language policy that does not effectively communicate SLLT theory or practices: CAPS.

## 6.2. Recommendations

Heugh (2013:220) states that “serious flaws in regard the interpretation of language learning theory continue to be evident in curriculum documentation emerging from the national DBE.” There is a great need for policymaking to be based on well-defined theoretical reference to SLLT principles, as well as unambiguous language to communicate practical steps for its implementation. More so, the instructional materials that are informed by the selected approach should also be clearly modelled, through accurate and specific language use, for teachers to use in improving their own language accuracy in the L2 class. SLLT frameworks should provide a step-by-step guide with specific timeframes to ensure equal L2 development focus in all schools. Once instructional materials have been refined to represent a clear model of SLLT theory and practices, they need to be implemented in phased roll-outs, to ensure all teachers have the opportunity to engage with curriculum specialists regarding documents’ functions and aims, and for curriculum developers to receive evidence-based feedback from its users (qualitatively from teachers, learners, other key stakeholders, as well as quantitatively from test results). This way, instructional materials can effectively inform revised language policy and practices too. “Expanding access to data and growing expectations and capacity for measuring program performance have coincided with increasing calls by the public for greater accountability for policy and program outcomes and responsiveness to stakeholder interests and needs” (Burch and Heinrich, 2016:1). This means that language policy and instructional materials, should be created under active consultation with the people most likely to use them: teachers.

For policy to be informed by theory, linguists specialising in SLLT should be included in language policymaking processes. These professionals are familiar with both theory and practice, especially if they work in the English foreign language teaching environment. They are also the most suitable candidates for consulting on suitable grading of language to communicate clear and concise ideas throughout policy documents. Additionally, on a daily basis, they utilise a specific framework for practically implementing SLLT (TESOL or CELA, for instance). In releasing new language policy guidelines, small training sessions conducted in-person with the teachers who use these materials should be conducted. Live training sessions enable teachers to ask questions and engage with the implementation process. It also affords curriculum developers an opportunity to gauge the language levels of the teachers using the policy documents they create. Lastly, feedback received from teachers during these sessions should be constructively considered when reviewing language policies.

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## 8. Appendix A – Ethical Clearance Exemption



### PROJECT EXEMPT FROM ETHICS CLEARANCE

24 April 2019

**Project number:** GENL-2019-9535

**Project title:** CONSTRUCTING FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNING: A thematic and discourse analysis of CAPS.

Dear Mrs Robyn Luizinho

Your application received on **23 April 2019** was reviewed by the REC: Humanities.

**You have confirmed in the proposal submitted for review that your project does not involve the participation of human participants or the use of their data. You also confirmed that you will collect data that is freely accessible in the public domain only.**

**The project is, therefore, exempt from ethics review and clearance. You may commence with research as set out in the submission to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities.**

If the research deviates from the application submitted for REC clearance, especially if there is an intention to involve human participants and/or the collection of data not in the public domain, the researcher must notify the DESC/FESC and REC of these changes well before data collection commences. In certain circumstances, a new application may be required for the project.

Please remember to use your project number (**GENL-2019-9535**) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)