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Linking English First Additional Language teaching and learning with outcomes-based education: what is really happening?

A B S T R A C T The re-birth of South Africa in 1994 brought about the realization of new educational policies. The Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) approach was introduced in 1998 to advance teaching and learning of various Learning Areas in schools in South Africa. This article addresses the implementation of Outcomes-based Education (OBE) to facilitate the learning and teaching of English as a First Additional Language (EFAL) in Grade eight. It focuses on township schools in the Lejweleputswa District in the Free State province, previously under the Department of Education and Training. The introduction of OBE in South Africa aims to initiate an era of meaningful teaching. With an OBE approach, teaching and learning activities have the aim of empowering learners to succeed in "real life" after completing school. One of the main aims of using a language, for example English, is to develop communicative competence in that language. English though, is the first language of only 8,2% of South African citizens (Statistics South Africa, 2001: 14). Most learners in South Africa need to enroll for EFAL. The manner in which OBE is implemented in Grade eight EFAL classrooms is vital to the academic success of these learners.

English as the language of learning, the acquisition of English as second (or even third) language, as well as OBE has been researched before. This study is unique in the way that it addresses the direct influence of the OBE approach on the teaching and learning process in Grade 8 EFAL classrooms.

Key words: English First Additional Language, EFAL classrooms, Outcomes-based Education

1. Introduction

Outcomes-based education (OBE) is an approach to teaching and learning that has as its aim the achievement of outcomes. In an OBE approach, outcomes represent a culminating demonstration which is the result of meaningful learning taking place in various contexts. The use of the OBE approach in English First Additional Language (EFAL) classrooms aims to

develop learners' competency and ability to use English in authentic situations, such as during formal and informal conversations. We agree with Kilfoil and Van der Walt (1997), who affirm that the OBE approach aims to promote the efficient use and assimilation of various teaching and learning strategies by educators and learners alike.

Educators and learners are involved more effectively when employing teaching and learning strategies such as discussion, direct instruction, group work, co-operative learning, problem solving, learner research and performance activities. It is important for EFAL educators to integrate some, if not all, of these strategies in their day-to-day teaching and learning. The language skills of writing, listening, reading and speaking are needed by EFAL learners in order to complete the task-based activities that form part of the OBE approach. Learners in Grade eight EFAL classrooms are to be given the opportunity to be actively involved in task-based activities such as debates, discussions and problem solving. Let us, however, start by looking at the education system and how EFAL fits into the framework.

2. Education in South Africa

Mothata, Lemmer, Mda and Pretorius (2000: x-xiii) correctly assert that the South African system of education has a foundation of the past and the present. The previous dispensation (before 1994) consisted of a tri-cameral parliament with each having its own education department (Whites, Coloureds and Indians). After the 1994 democratic general elections, the new government has restructured the education system to consist of national, provincial and local school levels.

Language has played a significant role in shaping the socio-political history of our country. Language has shaped-up nationalism and has maintained a struggle for and against inequality. We all know that prior to the new democracy, English and Afrikaans were the only official languages, as well as the only languages to be used as media of instruction in secondary schools. Currently the official languages total eleven, while English and Afrikaans are still the only media of instruction used in secondary schools. It is true, however, that English attains the national unity and is the lingua franca that links all other languages and cultures in South Africa. The successful acquisition of EFAL therefore becomes more important for all South African learners to enable them to function effectively in an ever more demanding society.

The Department of Education decided that the OBE approach was to be implemented in schools in 1998. This implementation commenced with Grade one in 1998, and was introduced to Grade eight in 2001. Curriculum changes also occurred during the mid-nineties (and are still occurring). Currently, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) provides for eight Learning Areas in the Senior Phase (Grade 7-9). These Learning Areas are: Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC); Human and Social Sciences (HSS); Technology (Tech); Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences (MLMMS); Natural Sciences (NS); Arts and Culture (AC); Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) and Life Orientation (LO). EFAL resorts under the Learning Area: Language, Literacy and Communication. It is also envisaged by the Constitution of South Africa that all learners should be fluent in at least two of the eleven official languages.

As part of the LLC Learning Area, learners have to enrol for their first language, as well as for a First Additional Language. In such instances one language (for example the home language, Sesotho) is offered as first language and the other (for example the additional language, English) as a First Additional Language.

3. The teaching and learning of English as First Additional Language

Leamnson (1999: 66) claims that learners verbalise thoughts via inventive language. Inventive language is when the EFAL educator aims to activate the language senses of the learners in order to enforce verbal thought. This will encourage learners to engage in activities that aim to improve their English language skills. Such activities help to convert "fuzzy associations" in the brain into firm verbalised ideas. When learners then participate in EFAL learning activities, they become actively involved in their own learning. They will, however, need the assistance of the educator to ensure that this involvement breeds academic success.

Educators have a crucial role to play in allowing learners to be more involved in their own learning. Killen (1998: vi) points out that teaching and learning strategies describe the ways in which educators apply skills, techniques and styles. In compliance with Killen, it is our belief that educators should aim to apply a variety of teaching strategies to allow learners to demonstrate the learning they have mastered. One such strategy is to engage learners collaboratively in pairs or groups, where the EFAL educator facilitates and guides the process while learners provide outputs such as dialogues, role-plays and games. It was evident from a previous study by one of the authors that such activities provide learners with opportunities to speak, listen, write and read (Schlebusch, 2000). For instance, grammar knowledge involves not only the learning of certain set rules, but also entails learning how to manipulate language devices well when conveying certain meanings. Thus, when EFAL learners engage in the activities mentioned, they not only learn the rules of English, but also get the opportunity to express themselves in English in the classroom situation.

Another strategy is the use of radio programmes to assist in the teaching of EFAL. Radio programmes such as talk shows on current topics and contemporary events that affect the community, provide opportunities for learners to provide language inputs and meaningful expressions in the EFAL classroom. Radio programmes may also prepare learners for authentic communication, as well as independent language enrichment in the environment outside the class situation.

The opinion put forward by Brooks (1995: 39) is that English becomes standardized in any environment due to the situation in which its users find themselves. English is currently used as the language of instruction in all of the township secondary schools under the former Department of Education and Training. It is therefore our opinion that a dual responsibility exists regarding the proper teaching and learning of EFAL in these schools: both educators and learners have to take the responsibility of developing the English language skills of learners by, amongst others, communicating in English. We believe that proper communication in English is a way of promoting intelligent, creative and lateral thinking in the EFAL classroom. If not, the inability of learners to use English effectively in the EFAL classroom will hamper their competency in communication and ultimately their academic performance in all other learning areas.

The majority of learners in township schools battle with EFAL communication related activities since they are not adequately proficient in English. The OBE approach advocates that EFAL educators need to change from an educator-centred approach to a learner-centred approach. This change affects the strategies of EFAL educators since they may be used to resort to their previously traditional teaching and learning strategies. Although educators have all received

training to implement the OBE approach, it is a well-known fact that many people embrace the natural phenomenon to be resistant to change. Kasambira (1997: 68-70) acknowledges this when stating that the strong persistence of chalk and talk teaching, where the educator does most of the talking and the learners merely listen, allows for very little classroom participation and active involvement by EFAL learners. This lack of active involvement in class activities by EFAL learners may have a negative effect on their acquisition of English as they are denied opportunities to express themselves in the language they are learning.

In EFAL communication, educators and learners should interact in a meaningful way. Van Schalkwyk (2001: 3) defines communication as a two-way process in which feedback takes place when a certain medium is in use. The medium creates understanding not only to educators (the encoders of inputs), but also and most importantly to learners (the decoders of outputs). In teaching and learning, a meaningful interaction that takes place between educators and learners brings about effective EFAL communication.

Effective communication, however, is dependent on what Cummins (1984) calls Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS allows learners the skills to speak and cope with pronunciation and vocabulary in order to be able to use English in everyday life. CALP, on the other hand, enables learners to become competent academic communicators who are capable of portraying various life skills such as the ability to be engaged in cognitively demanding and problem-solving tasks.

It is the ideal for learners in the EFAL classroom to attain a CALP level of English proficiency in order to experience academic success. Language competence at the BICS level does not equip a learner to perform cognitive operations with adequate proficiency. Cognitive aspects can be explained in terms of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. On the conversational proficiency (surface level), **knowledge** (something you previously encountered or learned and remembered), **comprehension** (grasp of basic meaning), and **application** (use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations), are involved. The deeper levels of cognitive/academic proficiency would involve **analysis** (when a whole is broken down into its parts), synthesis (putting elements into a coherent whole) and **evaluation** (judging the adequacy of ideas). EFAL educators should assist their learners to attain all the above-mentioned educational objectives, where the first three objectives relate to a possible BICS level and the last three to the CALP level of English proficiency. The OBE approach in the EFAL classroom allows for educators to be creative and involve learners in classroom activities, which may positively enhance the transition of Grade eight EFAL learners from BICS to CALP.

4. Acquiring EFAL: the challenge

EFAL acquisition emerges as a challenge to the vast majority of learners for whom English is not a first language. This problem manifests itself especially in the secondary schools previously under the Department of Education and Training as these learners receive their education in English, which is not their first language. According to Schlebusch (2000: 38), the problem is brought about by a lack of English proficiency of learners before entering the Senior Phase (Grade 7-9).

Educators may also not engage fully in the acclaimed OBE approach to teaching and learning. Resistance by many educators to change their approach to teaching has a negative influence on learners in the EFAL classroom.

In order to establish how the OBE approach manifests itself in Grade eight EFAL classrooms, the researchers have used the qualitative research design to capture relevant information for this particular study.

Five secondary schools, situated in the black township of Thabong in the Lejweleputswa District, Free State Province, were randomly selected for this research. Information was gathered by means of observation and semi-structured interviews. Observation is accurate watching and noting of phenomena as they occur in nature with regard to cause and effect, while interviews are used to discover the opinions and experiences of subjects. One of the researchers observed two Grade eight EFAL classrooms from each of these schools over a period of two weeks per school. The aim of the observation was to establish the manner in which the Grade eight educators facilitate teaching and learning of EFAL.

Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher the freedom to probe further into responses if deemed necessary. The Grade eight EFAL educators whose classrooms were observed were purposefully selected to participate in the interviews. Responses to interview questions were recorded by means of a voice-recorder, after seeking consent from the interviewees. In this way, the data-recording procedure used in the interviews would not interfere with the process of conducting the interviews (Wiersma, 2000: 187). Observation and interviews were conducted towards the end of the academic year to allow the subjects ample time to reflect on their teaching experiences during the year.

5. Analysis

In the tradition of Stake (1995: 71), who claims that "there is no particular moment when data analysis begins", data analysis was an ongoing process throughout this study. The observations were the initial source of data in this study. Observation notes, as well as the audiotapes of the educators' interviews were transcribed to ascertain emergent categories from the data. Observation data was analysed and the emergent classification categories emanating from the data were as follows:
- Approaches of educators;
- Classroom organization and management;
- The use of learning and teaching support material (LSM); and
- Assessment and reinforcement of performed tasks.

The interview data was analysed according to the categories emanating from the responses of the educators. The following findings are based on these respective categories.

6. Findings

The findings from the observations and interviews are reported on in this section. Findings from the observations of Grade eight EFAL classes will be described first, followed by the findings from the interviews with Grade eight EFAL educators.

6.1 Observation of Grade eight EFAL classes

• Approaches of educators:

At the beginning of each lesson and throughout most of the lesson presentations, most of the EFAL educators have mainly used the traditional way of teaching, which is the instructional method.

Most of the educators informed the learners beforehand what to expect in the lessons that were to be taught. Most of the learners automatically followed the instructions as set out by the educator. According to the researchers, such a trend may cause the educator to believe that all learners understand what was taught in the lesson. Learners have responded positively to most of the questions that were asked by the educators. In the majority of instances, learners responded by raising their hands in order to indicate that they know the answers. Learners who did not raise their hands were neither given a chance to try to respond, nor to ask for clarity on questions asked.

The learners were mostly told what to do, for instance when the learners had to perform certain writing tasks, the educators gave clues to learners on how to respond to the questions at hand.

Educators showed preference to the use of the instructional method as a teaching strategy in the lessons. Most of the EFAL educators seemed to have overlooked the important issue of learner involvement. Effective questioning in order to ascertain the level of understanding of learners was minimal.

• Classroom organization and management:

Learners were sitting in groups of six to eight. Most of the classrooms had furniture such as tables and chairs and only a few had the traditional double desks. The space between the tables and desks was not conducive for effective educator-learner interaction. The educators were struggling to move around freely in the classroom. A major stumbling block towards effective teaching and learning was the over-crowded classrooms.

The observed classrooms had between 40 and 60 learners each. The only space that allowed free movement was in front of the chalkboard. Proper educator-learner and learner-learner interaction, as is envisaged by the OBE approach, could not be executed.

• The use of learning and teaching support material (LSM):

Most of the educators consulted their textbooks on a regular basis during lessons. Although these educators did not read all the text from the textbooks, it seemed that they did not feel confident to put the textbook aside. Most of the educators did not use any other learning support material.

It was also evident to the researchers that textbooks were limited in supply in most of the EFAL classes. The learners had to share textbooks – in some cases up to four learners shared one textbook. The only books that all the learners had in their possession were writing books for class work and tests.

Learners were given little opportunity to write on the chalkboard, which is understandable given the class sizes. The chalkboard was mainly used as a support material to explain some of the aspects of the lessons.

In most of the schools, electrical connections were installed. However, no electrical support material was ever used by these educators. In almost all of the lessons observed, the only support materials used were textbooks and the chalkboard. It seemed to the researchers as if educators are not prepared to buy or even create their own LSM. This may be due to the possibility that they expect the Department of Education to supply them with all the material. This issue is raised again during the interviews with the educators.

• Assessment and reinforcement of performed tasks:

Tasks given to the learners were limited to copying questions and writing answers either from the textbooks or the chalkboard. Group discussions, and even frequent questioning by the learners rarely took place. Learners mostly completed the written work individually, either from the textbook or the chalkboard.

In some instances the time allowed for learners to execute given tasks was limited. Most of the educators seemed inclined to treat as much content as possible in a given time frame as to ensure that all the content was covered.

A concern for the researchers was that little time was allocated for corrections to be made on performed tasks. This may have a huge impact on the assessment scores that these EFAL learners will obtain in continuous and summative assessment.

Homework mostly involved writing tasks only. Creative thinking was not stimulated by the majority of educators, as many of the tasks required of learners to copy the work directly from the textbooks. In many instances homework followed on incomplete corrected and sometimes uncorrected written class work. In addition, learners were not given homework regularly after each task.

In cases where tasks are not properly corrected, this may result in a lack of proper knowledge to build on. Working from the known to the unknown becomes impossible, as content that is assumed to be known, is not. Learners may experience problems in attempting any new tasks.

Assessment was mostly done towards the end of the lessons. Learners were asked to read questions from the chalkboard or their class work books and had to respond verbally. Learners who appeared to know the answers indicated it as such by raising their hands. Most of the learners who responded to the questions had difficulty in expressing themselves in English. Constructing proper sentences seemed to be the major problem. Some learners also raised their hands only to keep quiet when they were asked to answer.

Activities such as dialogues, debates, discussion or drama and singing were very rarely observed. These type of activities are known to actively involve the learners and should form part of the OBE approach to teaching and learning in the EFAL classroom.

6.2 Interview responses of Grade eight EFAL educators

Each interview question is listed, followed by a descriptive report on the information gathered from subjects. We have also decided to include verbatim responses linked to the various responses per question.

• *What is your view regarding the English proficiency of the learners in your EFAL class?*

Most of the educators said that learners seem to understand English and are able to converse in it. They were of the opinion that the major problem the learners encountered was to express themselves properly in English in a formal learning environment like the classroom. The EFAL tasks that involved creative writing and creative thinking were a cause of concern, as most learners seemed to struggle with that aspect of the language.

It is the opinion of the researchers that these responses relate to the BICS and CALP level of English proficiency. Learners sometimes seem to be able to speak English in general conversations,

but when the deeper cognitive levels of English are needed to complete certain academic tasks, they experience problems.

The following response represents the majority of responses to this question:

"Most learners do experience problems with EFAL. They normally cannot say their sentences properly. They struggle to say what they are thinking. They want to speak English, but find it difficult".

• *Which methods/strategies and learning support material do you most often use when teaching EFAL?*

Most of the educators responded that they give preference to the use of the textbook and telling methods. They said that all the content is explained in the textbooks and therefore mistakes can be prevented. They felt that they should tell the learners about the content, because the learners need to get all the information.

A small number of the educators said that the introductory part of their lessons normally begins with reading and speaking activities. Learners did reading exercises from their class work books, textbooks and would then narrate what they have been reading. Comprehensive dialogue regarding the content, therefore, did not take place. Some of the educators preferred to start their lessons with reading a passage or what they referred to as "ice breakers", to tell the learners an interesting story to link up with the content to be dealt with. These educators said they preferred this way in order to discover the prior knowledge of learners before dwelling into the actual lesson.

Most of the educators said that there were no specific teaching strategies that they follow, because when learners read, they get a change to pronounce the words.

Some responses were:

"Yes, I prefer the use of a textbook. It is easy to use in order to involve most of the learners. Most of the learners follow the flow of the lesson easily when the textbooks direct the tasks".

"I trust the use of the telling method in order to keep the learners on track".

"Language depends on how you use it and for what purpose is it used. It is not a subject where a specific structure is followed. When doing reading tasks, each learner gets a chance of making verbal pronunciations of words".

• *Do you think that your current teaching methods are successful? Elaborate.*

Most of the educators were of the opinion that as long as the learners understand the questions in the textbook or on the chalkboard, they are fine. These educators seemed to think that their EFAL teaching methods are adequate. Some educators expressed the wish to find out more about strategies to help their learners. These educators said that their learners usually struggle with putting words into context when making sentences – that is, internalizing words and making meaning out of words.

Most of the educators appeared to be comfortable with the methods that they use and did not feel that they should alter anything. After probing, some educators conceded that they do not provide the learners with enough opportunities to express their ideas. It is our belief that,

without these opportunities, learners may have difficulty to think and reason on their own, without consulting textbooks and the chalkboard.

Responses were:

"Learners are induced to listening rather than doing the tasks themselves. They rely on my narrations and instructions on how to carry out tasks more than making interpretations out of what they have to do".

"Teaching reading is interesting. When learners have to read out of the textbooks and chalkboard, it becomes easy for me to check mistakes and pronunciation. The learners read individually or in groups. In instances where pronunciation of words becomes bad, I delay reading for a while and clarify the meaning of that specific word".

"I want to learn more about the new strategies that will help my learners."

• *How would you describe the learner involvement in your EFAL lessons?*

Most of the educators said that in certain tasks the learners copied tasks from hand-outs. Exercises in the forms of class work and homework were done from these hand-outs.

Some of the EFAL educators said that they preferred to involve the learners by making use of task-based activities such as writing comprehension, doing dialogues and a bit of debating. In comprehension exercises for example, the learners' understanding of meaning is assessed. Learners internalize words so that they can derive meaning out of what they say. This did not happen often though, because of time constraints.

Some responses from interviewees:

"I sometimes use dialogues and debates to treat tenses. Activities which advance the learners' use of words force individual creativity of sentences".

"I prefer to give learners writing tasks as part of enhancing creative skills. Learners also practice composition and letter writing".

• *In what ways do you provide learners with opportunities to apply new knowledge?*

Most of the respondents said that learners did written tasks, following specific instructions given to them by the educators. Sometimes learners responded to questions asked on the chalkboard. Educators seemed to believe that these opportunities were enough for their learners.

Some educators said that they allowed their learners to speak the new words or tenses they have learned. In that way they would apply the new knowledge. The researchers are not convinced that these opportunities are enough to facilitate EFAL properly.

Most educators were inclined to tell learners what to do rather than showing learners skills on how to apply new tasks. Learners were given tasks with specific instructions, and were therefore not allowed to provide their own thoughts, ideas and initiatives. We are of the opinion that learners need to be given time to apply their knowledge in order to reinforce their understanding.

Responses:

"Learners are instructed to complete the sentences with appropriate words".

"I usually ask the learners to read and answer questions based on the previous reading".

"I let my learners speak the new words or tenses, then they practice it".

- *How often do you use English outside the class with both learners and educators? Elaborate.*

Most of the EFAL educators indicated that they rarely use English outside the class. They did not see the necessity to speak English inside **and** outside the classroom. According to them, learners are used to speak to the educators in their mother tongue outside the classroom. One of the educators said that learners feel more comfortable in using their mother tongue in conversations with educators outside the classroom.

One educator said that in cases where English was spoken with learners outside the classroom, the conversation would deal with a topic that was raised in the classroom.

Some of the EFAL educators said that during conversations outside the classes, learners had problems with "the self" when speaking English. The learners did not feel confident enough to speak English outside the classroom. The educators said that the communities in the townships were not well conversed with the use of English, and therefore they are used to speaking to members of their community in the mother tongue.

From the responses it is clear that English is rarely spoken outside the EFAL classroom. The researchers feel that this may contribute to the lack of confidence in EFAL learners to meaningfully participate in EFAL classes.

Some responses:

"I usually interact into English conversations when treating language aspects originating in class. It is in rare instances such as during informal talking that I exchange words using English outside classes".

"When the learners ask a question using English, I reply in the same language".

- *What do you think can be done in order to make the teaching and learning of EFAL more effective?*

All the educators commented that they were aware of how to approach EFAL teaching and learning. Most of the educators said that they have used the traditional approach of textbooks and the instructional method since they started teaching. They felt comfortable with the ways they are accustomed to. After some probing these educators commented that they would be willing to employ more OBE oriented ideas, but that they feared that they may not complete the syllabus as it may take much more of their time.

Some educators indicated that they preferred strategies where learners were taught in groups to allow learners the opportunity to talk. The problem that they have encountered, though, was that they have no thorough understanding of using proper group-work strategies.

While most of the educators seemed to be worried about the lack of learning support material, they still preferred the use of textbooks instead of using learning support material, such as charts and transparencies. Some indicated that they were struggling with material when they had to integrate it with the knowledge that they presented to learners. They preferred to use ready-made materials such as textbooks rather than improvising and making their own teaching

and learning materials, since this was believed to be time consuming and expensive.

Some educators felt that the funds provided by the Department of Education for learning materials were not sufficient. This was the reason for not buying charts and transparencies to enhance their lessons. One educator mentioned that a requisition was made to obtain charts, but nothing came from it. They appeared somewhat afraid to make these comments, as if they were scared to criticise the Department of Education.

Some EFAL educators preferred the use of dictionaries. They instructed their learners to look for difficult words in the dictionaries. They would prefer it if every learner could have his/her own dictionary provided by the Department of Education, in order to enhance the understanding of English concepts.

Learning support material was a common factor that educators regarded as possibly helpful in their EFAL lessons.

Another problem mentioned by a small number of educators was that they often experienced electricity failures. The electrical equipment available in the classroom were thus rendered useless. The researchers are not convinced that this problem should prevent educators from using electrical equipment.

Responses were in the line of:

"I taught the way I do from the beginning. I am not sure whether there is a better way."

"I want to use group work, but I am not sure what they should do there."

"Learning support material makes teaching and learning meaningful. At the moment I use textbooks and dictionaries in order to bring a change in English teaching".

"We need to be provided with enough textbooks for every learner".

"There are number of days where I had to make requisition at the principal's office to buy charts".

"We have a lot of power failures in the township, so I do not use the electrical equipment".

- *What is your opinion on continuous training on OBE teaching strategies for EFAL educators?*

Most of the educators envisaged that the teaching and learning of EFAL would be a success only when all EFAL educators receive thorough in-service-training regarding OBE principles. They further expressed the wish that OBE training be delivered on a continuous basis to allow them to stay abreast of any changes regarding alternative approaches to teaching and learning.

All the EFAL educators felt that the OBE approach to teaching will be good and would bring about satisfactory results in EFAL. Some educators have unfortunately not received advanced OBE training on how to elevate the level of EFAL teaching and learning with relevant strategies, and they subsequently reverted back to the methods they know best.

A few educators lamented on the manner in which the learning facilitators have guided the OBE workshops they attended in the past. The information provided at these workshops was not disseminated in a comprehensible way. It appeared as if the learning facilitators were not passionate and had some uncertainty around OBE and its principles themselves.

Some responses were:

"Yes, it is vital that EFAL educators receive special OBE training as more learners experience difficulties in placing their expressions into context and I want to help them".

"Formal English usage is different from casual talking, it needs an individual to adhere to certain language principles. So, it is necessary that educators receive training in OBE".

Some educators said the following:

"The forty-hours workshop of OBE was not sufficient for a thorough training in new skills".

"The problem is worsened by the learning facilitators who are not clear and certain on their stands in promoting OBE".

7. Discussion of findings

It is clear from the research conducted that most EFAL educators are certain that education in South Africa has transformed and that the new curriculum and OBE have brought about a change in schools. However, the majority of educators who participated in this study are still using the traditional way of teaching, which is commonly known as the "talk and chalk" method.

They seem to engage in only one or two teaching methods, continuously applied throughout every lesson. This problem is enhanced by the fact that they do not possess a thorough knowledge of relevant teaching strategies for teaching EFAL, especially when working with large groups of learners.

Neither the EFAL educators not their learners are actively involved in the use of English outside the EFAL classroom. The general notion that states that one will learn English if one speaks English may have a positive impact on the effective participation of EFAL learners, both inside and outside the classroom.

Learners seem to be more fluent in informal English communication than during formal cognitive English communication. The aim of involving learners in co-operative group work, discussions, role-plays and other active learning activities is to ensure ample opportunities to enhance their cognitive English language skills (CALP).

8. Recommendations

We want to make the following recommendations:

• Pertinent to the efficient use of English, it is important that all EFAL teaching and learning be directed towards relevant teaching strategies. Every lesson should integrate a variety of communicative strategies. The more learners are involved in their own learning, the more successful they will become academically (most probably not only in the EFAL classroom, but also in the other Learning Areas where English is used as language of learning).

• Proper planning of lessons should be done **well in advance** to enable educators to facilitate sufficient communicative strategies. Educators should make use of all LSM at their disposal, such as textbooks, newspapers and magazines to plan the activities to be used. This will ask commitment from the educator, but it will culminate in success.

- EFAL educators should continuously update themselves with modern teaching strategies. Assessed courses, workshops and in-service training arranged by the Department of Education should be attended by all EFAL educators (and then with a positive frame of mind!).

- Educators in all Learning Areas remain language educators. Each and every educator should stress the use of English in all activities that are carried out by the learners for every Learning Area. Consultation between language and other educators should be encouraged on a regular basis.

- A co-operative learning environment should be emphasised in most of the activities. Communicative skills emerge when learners become actively involved in real and authentic situations. EFAL educators should actively promote co-operative learning and provide learners with interesting topics to enhance active learning.

- Effective EFAL teaching and learning ask for open and verbal communication mostly by the learners themselves. The individual learners need to create words themselves (outputs) and practise the use of these words. A platform where learners can openly express themselves in English needs to be a priority for EFAL educators. Encouraging learners to use English outside the EFAL classroom is essential.

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