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Research Article

English first additional language learning and teaching with digital resources

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ABSTRACT
This paper investigates the learning and teaching of English as a first additional Language (EFAL) using digital resources. It was a qualitative study conducted in a Grade 10 township classroom in the Western Cape, South Africa. Data were collected through observation of a traditional classroom, a computer laboratory and a media room. In addition, using semi-structured interviews, an EFAL teacher, the head of department for languages and the school principal, were interviewed. The research aimed to understand whether the pedagogical digital literacy practices and the use of digital resources enhance the learning of EFAL. In South Africa, English is the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) for the majority of learners that are non-English speakers. Through the lens of computer assisted language learning (CALL) theory and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), this article argues that the integration of technology helps teachers to deliver the EFAL content in a flexible and enhanced way. The findings reveal that teachers who teach in impoverished backgrounds and in other languages need to be equipped with digital literacy skills. These skills will address the challenges of literacy currently faced by the country. In conclusion, the amalgamation of an e-education policy with the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for the implementation of language digital teaching practices in basic and higher education, should be explored.

Keywords: digital resources, English first additional language, computer assisted language learning, technological pedagogical content knowledge, learning and teaching

Categories: • *Applied Computing* ∼ *Education, e-Learning*

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1 INTRODUCTION

The history of English learning in South Africa started after the Union Convention of 1909 where a decision was taken that English was to be used as the medium of instruction, currently known as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). These decisions made by British government for political and economic reasons had implications for African education (Ellis, 1997). In the modern 21st century, English is a global language (Desai, 2016, p. 343) and still remains the LoLT in many African classrooms. Learners find themselves struggling to

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understand English content-based subjects and are unable to explain simple problems in English (Deumert et al., 2005), resulting in a linguistic mismatch between home and school (Desai, 2016, p. 344). There is also a mismatch between learners who seem to be technologically advanced, compared to their teachers, who are highly esteemed language practitioners. As technologically advanced as they are, learners are still challenged in expressing their views, either in written or spoken formal English. They are rather comfortable in expressing their views in a digital language where formal English language acquisition is minimal. Therefore, a learner who does English as a first additional language (EFAL) remains linguistically disadvantaged during the school years and beyond, amidst the available technologies.

The above-mentioned linguistic histories hinder the success of many learners in South Africa. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have benefits for learning such as the use of online and offline integrated learning, quality education and even future business opportunities. There are numerous studies that have addressed the current challenge of English language learning at global, regional and national levels. Desai (2016, p. 343) argues that in South Africa, the learning and acquisition of English requires different approaches, depending on the learners' contexts.

In this research study, the teaching practices of the participant teacher were informed by the work of researchers such as Harris et al. (2009). They advocate that technology integration informs pedagogical practices and enhances the learning and teaching process. They acknowledge that the use of technology in the classroom continues to grow and recognise it as a new methodology that also promotes lifelong learning. Therefore, the focus in this study is on the dynamic ways in which learners learn EFAL, and where teachers bring in their invaluable language teaching skills. Language teaching requires high levels of innovation, creativity, collaboration and scaffolding. In this process, learners are expected to participate actively and engage in the learning process. However, it is not clear if language teachers are making progress in applying digital literacy strategies and competencies, because they are used to traditional ways of teaching (Guðmundsdóttir et al., 2014; Whyte, 2011).

There are overarching reasons relating to why learners are not able to access higher education in South Africa. In a study conducted by Ndokwana (2017) in four secondary schools in the Eastern Cape province, it appeared that, among the other reasons that lead to poor performance in matric results, are the barriers to LoLT as stated earlier on by MacKay (2014) and Sibanda (2014). Ndokwana (2017) goes further to state that isiXhosa speaking EFAL learners misinterpreted grade 12 questions for content subjects like mathematics, accounting and physical science, leading to poor performance in the overall results (Makgato & Mji, 2006; Ndokwana, 2017). South Africa continues to perform the lowest on international benchmark tests, not only in the Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (Howie et al., 2007; Mullis & Martin, 2021), but also in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subjects (Ndokwana, 2017, p. 2).

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2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The above concerns were a motivation for the author to explore how language practitioners address the challenge of second language learning with technology integration. Computer assisted language learning (CALL) researchers such as Lawrence (2010), Peterson (2009), and Ndokwana (2017) address the use of CALL to enhance language learning and teaching from different perspectives. They say ICT integration is a new opportunity and a technology revolution in the language pedagogical domain (Derakhshan et al., 2015). It enables language education practitioners to rethink and restructure the learning and teaching practices without compromising the quality of EFAL teaching and learning (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011, p. 3098). However, it is not clear if in South Africa, the integration of ICT in language learning and teaching is being prioritised the way it is in mathematics and science subjects. The fact that the same content subjects that are prioritised also make use of a language seems to be ignored. Therefore, this paper reports on the investigation into the learning and teaching of EFAL using digital resources.

The central question addressed in this study is: How do EFAL teachers integrate technology to enhance language learning in their teaching practices?

The following section provides the theoretical framework that explains the key concepts that pertain to ICT integration for the teaching and learning of EFAL. The discussion highlights the connection between the language teachers' general technological knowledge, teachers' use of digital pedagogical strategies and the relevance of applying these strategies to EFAL content knowledge. The discussion of the research methodology that follows will lead the article to the findings that relate to the research question.

3 COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING

Computer assisted language learning (CALL) provides new learning environments by exploring diverse ICT tools such as advanced games and simulations for the acquisition of language skills in the target language and for meaning-making (Peterson, 2009, p. 73). These environments require teachers to enable EFAL learners to negotiate meaning in order to comprehend and be able to respond to questions effectively. In the EFAL class, social interaction and the negotiation of meaning can take place if the teacher follows teaching strategies that involve learners' tasks which are communicative in order for learners to gain communicative competencies (Chapelle, 2001; Peterson, 2009; Pica, 1994). Others have argued that communicative pedagogies promote learner-centredness, which results in learners being less anxious, becoming confident and developing independent thinking skills in language learning (Ford & Botha, 2010; Shandu, 2011; Tarling & Ng'ambi, 2016; Warschauer et al., 1996). Similarly, these contemporary pedagogies for language learning and teaching could be developed from digital stories (Shandu-Omukunyi, 2022, p. 276) to 3D virtual and augmented learning in any language besides English.

In addition, some CALL researchers (Chapelle, 2001; Lawrence, 2010; Meurant, 2011;

Whyte, 2011) believe that educational technology was advanced for the purpose of developing language skills. Computer technology is used across learning areas to design (van den Berghe et al., 2018; Warschauer et al., 2004) valid ways of evaluating its effectiveness (Ou-Yang & Wu, 2016) as a multimodality approach. On the other hand, technological pedagogy, as described by some researchers (Laurillard, 2013; Webb, 2002; Whyte, 2011) can contribute to areas of language learning and development. For example, second language teaching and learning of grammar (van den Berghe et al., 2018; Whyte, 2011) applies to different genres such as comprehension text, language use and transactional writing, as well as literature. The development of writing skills, as explained by Englert et al. (2005) and Bano and Hameed (2007), would be meaningful if integrated with educational technology. In other words, writing skills cannot be developed if there is still a gap in the development of listening, speaking and reading skills. Therefore, there is a need to pay attention to educational technologies so that EFAL teachers can effectively promote learning and language acquisition efficiently (Ellis, 1997; Laurillard, 2013) using ICT integration.

4 TECHNOLOGICAL PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

This article is guided by the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, developed by Harris et al. (2009) and Mishra and Koehler (2006), which advocates for technology-integrated learning environments that are embedded with content knowledge. TPACK explains the connection in relation to a teacher's general understanding of technological knowledge, their understanding of content as well as their pedagogical practices (Srisawasdi, 2014). The use of the TPACK framework in this article is in line with work by Moll et al. (2022, p. 58) at Wits University where they have sought to understand how teachers recognise the pedagogical affordances of ICT integration, and how they select the digital technologies that would enhance their teaching practices with new methods of communication.

The TPACK model is an interplay of three components, as illustrated in Figure 1, emphasising that the integration of technology with pedagogy is a complex concept. Olofson et al. (2016) interpret TPACK as being relevant to radical constructivism of the 21st century and embracing different types of knowledge construction.

The TPACK model begins with the importance of the teacher's professional identity in relation to language teaching knowledge and the subject matter (content knowledge). Secondly, the teacher should identify the best technological teaching tool that will facilitate the language lesson, thus adding value to the learning and teaching process (technological knowledge). Finally, the selected technological teaching tool will inform the teacher of the transformed pedagogical practice that they should embark on in delivering the lesson. By applying the TPACK model during a language lesson, the teacher facilitates the learning process, whilst the learner learns by participating actively in language acquisition and meaning-making.

Dlamini et al. (2019, p. 198) argue that TPACK guides how EFAL pedagogy, content and technology should be incorporated by a teacher to create an ICT-enhanced and integrated language lesson. However, other TPACK researchers such as Olofson et al. (2016) argue that

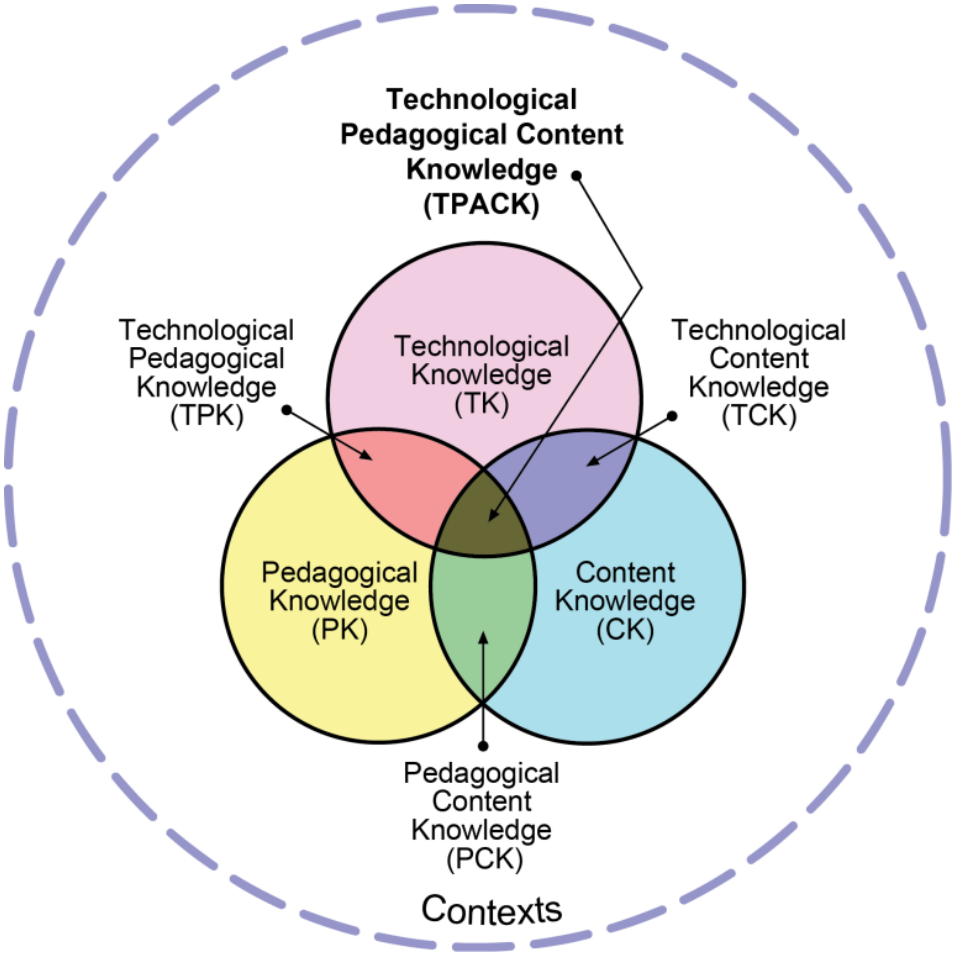

Figure 1: TPACK Convergence[a]

[a]Image reproduced by permission of the publisher, ©2012 by http://tpack.org

TPACK has a fixed way of classifying knowledge. Due to this limitation, they propose a TPACKing concept where TPACK is used as a point of departure in analyzing language teachers' knowledge construction practices (Olofson et al., 2016, p. 188). Whilst Olofson et al. (2016) are concerned with the limitations of TPACK, Koh and Chai (2016) highlight the importance of teaching using collaborative talk during an ICT-enhanced lesson plan design. They refer to their approach as design talk to encourage a learner-centred approach to language curriculum. In a study they conducted with 27 primary school teachers from Singapore, they reiterate that TPACK made the ICT-enhanced lesson design possible (Koh & Chai, 2016, p. 244).

The TPACK framework is also supported by the Substitution-Augmentation-Modification-Redefinition (SAMR) model (Dlamini et al., 2019, p. 27). The first two phases of substitution and augmentation focus mainly on the enhancement of teaching and learning through the use of technology. For example, a teacher may use a Power Point presentation as a substitute for

the chalkboard. The teacher may augment the use of Power Point by giving learners or students a project to create their own presentation from scratch. The second two phases of modification and redefinition focus on the transformation of traditional approaches into ICT integration approaches to learning and teaching (Dlamini et al., 2019, p. 27). For example, learners or students at this stage are able to modify the project, and the integration of technology allows them to construct their own meaning of the project. Therefore, this model enables a learner-centred approach to learning and teaching.

In addition, the conversational framework of Laurillard (2013) supports the concept of TPACKing by Olofson et al. (2016) by proposing the redefining of language learning and teaching practices with ICT integration. The TPACKing concept is supported by language learning theories that promote language acquisition through the learner's constructionist and constructivist approach to learning as opposed to the instructionist approach to language teaching. In a language classroom context, the evidence is seen in relation to learning through acquisition, learning through enquiry, learning through discussion and learning through collaboration etc. However, TPACK researchers in South Africa such as Tarling and Ng'ambi (2016) mention that the teacher's value in their learner-centred approach to learning and teaching is not influenced by the socio-economic status of the school. They refer to affluent, well-resourced schools of the 21st century where teachers continue to teach learners in a traditional way of teacher-centredness. As supporters of TPACK, they argue that the traditional transmission-based pedagogy compromises the ICT progressive transformation of learner-centredness, interactive and enquiry-based language learning (Tarling & Ng'ambi, 2016).

This study explored what is meant by TPACK and CALL in order to uncover and understand how teachers make use of digital resources to enhance EFAL learning in a Grade 10 township classroom. The study also explored the process of EFAL meaning-making through the teachers' pedagogical strategies with lessons that were conducted with and without ICTs. I did this exploration whilst I was mindful of the learners' social and cultural contexts (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011; Peterson, 2009) in EFAL learning.

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach and design. Data collection comprised observation in a traditional classroom, computer laboratory and media room. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with an EFAL teacher, the head of department (HOD) for languages and the school principal. The diversity of data collection aimed at applying triangulation as a method of data collection that ensures reliability and credibility (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 554).

5.1 Research Site

The research site is one of the schools that were built in the townships as a result of the back to school campaign conducted by Nelson Mandela after the 1994 elections in South Africa. It starts from grade 8 going up to grade 12 and is referred to as a low socio-economic status

school, namely quintile one. Learners walk to school, and are in a feeding scheme programme because the majority of parents are unemployed. The school had a total number of 1,378 learners enrolled during the time of data collection. There were 33 teaching classrooms, 2 computer laboratories that had 30 computers, all in working condition, and a data projector in each laboratory. It also had one biology laboratory, one physical science laboratory and a library with a TV or media room. The total number of grade 10 learners was 357 with approximately 60 learners in each of the six grade 10 classrooms. All of the learners in the school took EFAL as a subject and were taught all other subjects in English as a LoLT.

5.2 SAMPLING AND PARTICIPANTS

The study employed purposeful sampling which involved the EFAL teacher, the HOD for languages and the school principal. The language policy of the school comprises two languages namely, isiXhosa home language and EFAL. Additionally, there are learners that come from the neighbouring African countries and they have learned isiXhosa which should be an additional language in the form of home language. This is the same with those families in that community that have opted to take their children to English home language schools.

5.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research was conducted in accordance with the research ethics regarding participants' confidentiality, anonymity, respect and voluntary participation (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Ethical clearance was obtained from one of the institutions of higher education where the research was registered. Follow-up permission to conduct research was sought from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

5.4 METHOD

The grade 10 EFAL teacher was observed with the learners during a lesson that took place in a traditional classroom, modern computer laboratory and the media room. These observations happened over a period of five weeks.

The main aim was to understand the teacher's digital practices to enhance the learning and teaching of EFAL to isiXhosa home language learners. The observation targeted English language lessons and sought to investigate how the language learning skills of reading and writing are enhanced through teaching with digital resources. In other words, the investigation sought to determine the differences between teaching with modern technologies as opposed to traditional teaching strategies.

5.4.1 Language teaching in the computer laboratory

The first lesson that was observed was in the computer laboratory. Out of the two computer laboratories in the school, one was available for the EFAL teacher and her learners. The two

computer laboratories were mostly used by grade 12 teachers who teach mathematics and physics. However, the grade 10 EFAL teacher was the only one who had made a request from the school's management team (SMT) to use it for language teaching and learning. The teaching resources that the teacher used was a grade 10 EFAL textbook, and teaching digital resources which included computers, a data projector and the interactive whiteboard.

The teacher had planned to teach the Advertising for Language in Action component of EFAL in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, which starts from grades 10–12. Unfortunately, the computers were not working but the teacher was innovative in playing the video clip she had downloaded earlier on from her memory stick. The audio-visual material from the YouTube video clip was played using a projector and the whiteboard in the computer laboratory. In this lesson, learners were able to compare the differences between the MTN and Vodacom products by exploring their advertising strategies. The multimedia material was used in this lesson to complement and contextualise the content from the EFAL textbook, were digital images from a video clip of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa as illustrated in Figure 2 (YouTube pictures obtained from the participant teacher).

Figure 2: Mobile network advertising

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5.4.2 Language teaching with television

The media room was located inside the school library; it had bookshelves with books and magazines and newspapers. Tables and chairs were arranged in a way so as to accommodate learners' group work. The space in the room was not enough to accommodate 60 learners. The teaching resources included the EFAL grade 10 textbook, television, DVD player and a computer used by the school librarian. The lesson focused on the use of direct and indirect speech in the 'Language Use' component of the curriculum. The English period coincided with the time of a repeat of a popular South African soap opera known as Generations.

The aim of the lesson was to teach learners the difference between what someone says and when it is being reported on later without changing the meaning. The teacher started by using the traditional teaching method of telling learners about the principles of direct and indirect speech, and the tenses it is used for as a component use of grammar in the English language. The teacher's emphasis was on the change of tense when the sentence changes from direct to indirect speech. After watching a certain part of the soap opera on the television, learners were able to demonstrate what the teacher had taught them independently.

5.4.3 Language teaching in the traditional classroom

The traditional classroom is where the teachers and learners meet every day for learning and teaching. It only had learners' desks, a teacher's table and chair and the chalkboard. There were no visual pictures, teaching aids or language learning material on the walls to enhance the development of reading and writing skills. This lesson focused on transactional writing which is also one of the sections in the FET phase in languages. The lesson was about how to write a formal and an informal invitation. There were no digital teaching resources in this class. Therefore, learners depended on the notes that the teacher wrote on the chalkboard. The main outcome of the lesson was to teach learners how to write for different purposes. Learners were given worksheets with a formal and an informal invitation. They were supposed to work in pairs to read both letters and identify the difference between the two letters.

Semi-structured interviews were used following the interview protocol in order to probe for further information about the use of digital resources to enhance the learning and teaching of EFAL. The interview with the EFAL teacher was conducted to probe for information about differentiation in using both traditional and modern pedagogical strategies to teach language learning and acquisition. The school principal and the HOD were interviewed in order to understand their beliefs about technology integration into language learning and teaching from the perspective of the school's management team. The semi-structured interviews were recorded with the permission from the participants, so that they could be transcribed and coded for the purpose of data analysis.

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6 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section presents the findings from the school principal, HOD for languages and the EFAL teacher. The categories in which they are presented relate to the teacher's use of traditional and modern teaching strategies for EFAL teaching. These categories relate to the teacher's digital pedagogical strategies that were employed by the EFAL teacher in the teaching of the three lessons in a grade 10 classroom. The findings also highlight the limitations and differences that were observed between digitally enhanced and traditional EFAL learning and teaching. The first category relates to interactive and enquiry-based pedagogical strategies that were used by the teacher to teach EFAL. The second category highlights the pedagogic strategy employed by the teacher within the socio-culturally embedded learning environment with the use of computers and devices such as a television set for EFAL learning and teaching. The last category highlights the gaps found in the non-enhanced EFAL learning and teaching environment.

The findings indicate that there were more digital and pedagogical benefits for EFAL learning and teaching compared to traditional benefits. For example, both the observation and interview data showed that the teacher was able to be innovative in her ICT-enhanced teaching, irrespective of the challenges and disappointments that come with computer technology. However, in a traditional lesson, the teacher ran out of ideas, because even though learners were given the worksheets, they could not relate to the language and could not make meaning from the two letters of invitation. Details regarding the observation and interviews are provided in the next section.

The teacher used different teaching strategies in each lesson. Learners seemed to be enthusiastic whenever lessons took place in an ICT environment. The learners' participation was not active when lessons were not supported by technology. ICT integration encourages a learner-centred approach which is associated with more learner involvement and active learning. Three lessons were observed in total in different venues at the school. Out of the three observed lessons, the teacher used digital resources for lessons in the media room and in the computer laboratory in order to enhance learning and teaching of EFAL.

6.1 Computer interactive and enquiry-based language learning

The findings show that the EFAL teacher was intrinsically motivated to integrate ICT into her teaching practices. Dlamini et al. (2019) refer to intrinsic motivation as the process that occurs when teachers value ICT-integration, and make use of it effectively, whilst an extrinsically motivated teacher uses ICT for job promotion and other related administrative work reasons. As there was limited access to the computer laboratory, the teacher reported that she would sometimes use her own laptop for her lessons as she could not get access to the computer laboratory. The EFAL teacher is an example of an intrinsically motivated teacher. Teachers' motivation to enhance language learning and teaching is supported by the TPACK concept which promotes constructivism (Olofson et al., 2016; Whyte, 2011).

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For example, when the learners were asked if they knew anyone who used MTN or Vodacom mobile phones and why they chose those brands, they were able to interact with the teacher and relate to her question. Though learners did not initially comprehend that advertising is about competition, they were able to construct the meaning from their prior knowledge of Ayoba and Yebo Gogo as shown in the multimedia collage in Figure 2.

During the teacher interview, the EFAL teacher was asked to mention any ICT integration strength she thinks could be a requirement for language learning and teaching. In her response, she mentioned that the integration of technology is important to her teaching practices because learners can visualise what they are being taught. Below are her words during the interview:

> *It is good, learners see things visually even if they have not seen something before they understand better when they see it, and they have more fun which makes them to be more enthusiastic towards learning the English language with ICT. The strength is on the visual and hearing aspect of it; learners like things that are technical in this modern world, and another problem is the lack of resources it is a disadvantage for English L2 especially in "previously disadvantaged" schools.* [Interview with grade 10 English teacher]

The principal's view of ICT integration into English language teaching was that it helps learners to improve in English as it is not their mother tongue. In addition, his main concern was that if the learners' English language acquisition does not improve, it will affect all the subjects that are taught in English as a LoLT.

The three interview respondents had different opinions about the integration of ICT into language learning and teaching. Whilst they all saw the value in the use of digital resources, their interest seemed to be diverse. The EFAL teacher realised that ICT integration into language teaching goes beyond reading and writing as it had been the initial plan for her lessons. She mentioned the development of listening and speaking skills as being the basic skills in the learning of additional languages.

6.2 Socio-cultural language learning

The findings show that learners were very attentive and showed interest when the teacher used ICT. The lesson in the media room enabled learners to understand the transition from direct speech to indirect speech. The learning process here was more learner-centered than teacher-centered as learners could make meaning of what they had learned without the teacher's interference (Tarling & Ng'ambi, 2016; van den Berghe et al., 2018).

When the teacher was asked about the use of ICT for assessment, she was of the view that learners should be assessed through questioning. The teacher's view seemed to suggest that traditional teaching will always be a matter of concern, even if lessons were integrated with technology. Below was her response:

> *One would have to use the old school method of teaching and compare with the computer technology, it can be picked up in the way of questioning them which will determine the way*

> *they respond to questions, I think that would be a standard way of assessing if there is any improvement with the use of technology .* [Interview with grade 10 English teacher]

The teacher's response to the learners' assessment after a lesson that integrated ICT is suggestive of the fact that the scope of exploring the socio-cultural approach to language learning and teaching is wide (Nguyen & Williams, 2016; Peterson, 2009).

Both the school principal and the HOD expressed their concern about improving the grade 12 results and the training of teachers. The HOD mentioned that she personally trained teachers whilst the principal mentioned that teachers require training in computer literacy. Below is the principal's response:

> *Most teachers must be computer literate because in the beginning of the year the school has an in service training whereby it is expected that each teacher has access to computers for marks capturing and have access to templates that are embedded to the hardware of the computer so that they are able to type their own question papers in specific standard for standardised quality of work. In that way teachers are exposed to computer use.*
>
> [Interview with the school principal]

The principal and the HOD responses could be linked to the fact that they represent the school's management team and the WCED, whilst the EFAL teacher's focus is on the content and the development of language skills. The principal's awareness of the ICT gap between mother tongue and English as LoLT, requires further interrogation.

6.3 Implications for EFAL learning

In an EFAL classroom, learners' language skills should develop through listening, speaking, reading and writing. When the teacher talks more than the learners in a lesson, this forces learners to be passive and they consequently do not use the language to communicate with each other. Thus, if they are not given a chance to develop these skills with TPACK, their language learning might be impoverished. Learners do not read or write with comprehension when they are not exposed to interactive learning (Guðmundsdóttir et al., 2014; van den Berghe et al., 2018).

The teachers of the 21st century make use of technology for communication and social interaction purposes such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, video calls, etc. However, it is not clear how language teachers value these technologies as ICT-enhanced tools that could bring meaningful EFAL acquisition. The development and the introduction of artificial intelligence (AI) with computing, virtual and augmented reality, coding and robotics, digital storytelling, and other multimedia tools, are worth exploring for language learning, teaching and assessment. Lack of deeper understanding of the affordances these technologies bring for language learning and teaching, remains a problem. South Africa has a big challenge related to low literacy levels from early childhood development and education through to higher education (Howie et al., 2007). Additionally, the global outbreak of COVID-19 forced more

reliance on the use of technology. This also suggests that the teachers' TPACK skills will afford learners with better ways of learning, particularly those who come from the rural areas and the informal settlements. These factors influence proposals for the exploration of ICT integration through policy implementation, both in the CAPS curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2019) and the National e-Education Policy of 2004 (Department of Education, 2004).

7 CONCLUSION

The adoption of ICT-integration for teaching and learning poses a challenge both locally, nationally, regionally and globally. In South Africa, EFAL teachers have started to see the value that comes with TPACK. Even though there has been an amendment to the CAPS curriculum document for Further Education and Training (FET), there seems to be no mention of ICT integration. The document specifically focuses on an assessments programme which was due to be implemented in January 2020 (Department of Basic Education, 2019).

The implementation of a new curriculum, the implementation of ICT integration in schools, and teacher in-service training, are means of redressing the structured educational inequalities facing the country. Informed by the TPACK model, the Teaching Change Framework (TCF) of Tarling and Ng'ambi (2016) is not specifically directed to language and literacy teachers and practitioners. However, many language researchers (Desai, 2016; Ellis, 1997; Kerfoot, 2009; Lawrence, 2010; Ou-Yang & Wu, 2016; Shandu, 2011; van den Berghe et al., 2018) support the notion by stating that in language and literacy learning and teaching, the focus should be more on meaning-making, particularly in EFAL in South African classrooms. This article recommends that the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and e-education and CAPS policy makers should merge and share their expertise for language teachers in both pre-service and in-service training. This is to ensure that they are equipped in understanding the latest digital technologies and form part of global digital citizenship. EFAL teachers will also understand and gain awareness of what is entailed in AI tools such as ChatGPT. Access to the above digital literacy skills prepares language education teachers to enhance and support EFAL learning and teaching, particularly during the times of pandemics, where ICT integration is enabled by online learning.

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