

SECTION 1

ADMISSION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to orientate the reader. This section will provide a brief theoretical background culminating with the problem, the aims and objectives of the proposed research study. A brief rationale of the research design and methodology to be employed will be provided, as well as the methods that will be used to analyse the data obtained through the research. This section will conclude with an explanation of key terminology that will be used in this research study.

1.2 RATIONALE OF PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY

In essence, education serves three critical purposes. Firstly, it aims to educate the learner, secondly, to promote and teach the learner the values, norms and attitudes of society, and lastly, to serve as a miniaturized model of society as a whole (Knight and Swanwick, 1999: 12). As such, education serves the purpose of preparing an individual for adult life, by equipping all learners with the necessary intellectual and life skills necessary to ensure each learner's successful contribution to and integration within society, once he has completed his formal education. Until recently however, formal primary and secondary education within South Africa has failed to empower all learners from becoming active participants within larger society (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht, 1999; Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 1997).

Regular educational facilities prior to 1994 catered for an exclusive, and often minority group of individuals, discriminating against learners on the basis of colour, race, gender, ethics, beliefs, and abilities, (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 1997). Reinforced by legislature and the general failure of government to ensure that all of its citizens enjoy a democratic way of life, segregated education persisted. While in some cases a specialized school setting proved beneficial to the learner with a disability, in most instances, it proved detrimental, resulting in the effective disempowerment of the individual (Vaughn, Bos and Schumm, 2000). From 1960 onwards, a global move towards recognizing the individual's basic human rights rippled into the realm of education, highlighting the injustices and limitations of learner segregation.

In the United States, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act 1975 and its successor, the Individual with Disabilities Education Act 1990 (IDEA) sought to rectify the marginalisation of

learners with a learning disability. Introducing the theory of a least restrictive environment, IDEA propagated that the best educational environment for all learners, irrespective of their abilities or limitations, was the regular classroom. However, this theory proved to be problematic, criticised by many educationalists as being limited and presumptuous (Jenkinson, 1997:16). Originating from the limitations borne from IDEA, the United Kingdom's Warnock report (1978), gave rise to the notion of alternative placements, stating that within the general school environment, special classes, pull out programmes or additional tuition is the next viable avenue in addressing the educational needs of learners with learning disabilities. Consequently, the education of learners with a learning disability began to shift from a psycho medical discourse model towards a rights discourse model. Similarly, since 1994, South Africa has come to embrace the rights discourse, joining the international move against any form of segregation of learners with learning disabilities. As such the policies, principles and philosophies of inclusion began to gain momentum through the revision of the Constitution and Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996), as well as through White Paper 6, which focused on building an inclusive education and training system (Department of Education, 2001).

Promoting a single system of education, inclusion seeks to ensure that all learners are empowered to become caring, competent and contributing citizens in an inclusive, changing and diverse society (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Englebrecht, 1999:6). Moving from separate schooling for children with learning disabilities, to a system where all children, irrespective of their capabilities and limitations, are taught in the same, common educational environment, inclusive education necessitates the restructuring of educational policies and infrastructures so that all schools become supportive and nurturing communities, meeting and addressing the needs of all learners within them (O'Neil, 1995:7; Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000). Unlike its predecessors – mainstreaming and integration – inclusion calls for changes within educational principles, practices and policies as a whole, with particular emphasis being placed on the attainment of improved resources and support for both the educator and the learner. Furthermore, it advocates changes towards a more flexible curriculum, improved staff development, better allocation of staff and resources, adequate training programmes for teachers and effective educational policies for it to be of any significant success. Above all, it requires that educators recognise the unique, individual needs of each learner possessing an inherent learning disability. Upon realising that such learners have different educational needs and wants, it is imperative that educators adapt and modify their teaching and learning methodologies to ensure that they meet each learner's educational needs. This is particularly relevant in the education of deaf learners. Recognising that the educational needs of deaf learners are different to those of other learning disabilities is critical to their successful inclusion.

According to the Deaf community, in the case of Deaf learners, this implies a signing environment with unrestricted access to Sign language and Deaf culture. For them the most appropriate educational environment for learners with a hearing impairment would be one where their unique language needs are catered for through the utilization of Deaf adult role models, Deaf peers, a signing environment, teachers fluent in Sign language and free access to Deaf culture in school and residential facilities. For the Deaf community, full integration of a Deaf child into a hearing environment, even with the help of an interpreter, is seen as being restrictive to that child (http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/white_papers/disability1). However, inclusive policies and principles encourage the integration of deaf learners into mainstream education, maintaining that such learners can be successfully integrated in mainstream schools through the adaptation of the curriculum and by providing appropriate support where needed (Knight and Swanwick, 1999: 122; Department of Education, 2001). Bearing in mind the contradictory views as to the inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream classrooms, it becomes evident that research within this field is necessary, so as to ascertain the influences of mainstream education on such learners.

Internationally, research in to the mainstreaming of deaf learners by authors such as Ross (1982) and Luetke – Stahlam (1991) has focused on the experiences of the teacher and the curriculum. Expanding his research in 1991, Ross in co authorship with Brackett and Maxon, developed principles and practices for the assessment and management of deaf learners who have been mainstreamed, while Bunch in 1987 analysed the curriculum of regular schools and its implications for learners with hearing impairments. Locally, research conducted within South Africa has been limited due to the relative infancy of inclusion as an educational principle. Research conducted to date has focused on trying to ascertain the impact of teaching deaf learners from the educator's perspective, and aiming to design practices and strategies that will assist them within their classroom (Ross, 1982, Luetke-Stahlam, 1991, Bunch, 1987). A common feature evident in both international and local research conducted on deaf learners, who have been mainstreamed, is that the focus of the research has been on the experiences of the teacher and the adaptation of the curriculum, and not directly on the experiences of the deaf learner. Additionally, research focus has been on learners with a hearing impairment and not deaf learners (Ross, 1982, Luetke-Stahlam, 1991, Bunch, 1987). Due to lack of any auditory stimuli, a deaf learner's experience will be different to that of a learner with a hearing impairment who still possesses some degree of residual hearing. Consequently, in attempting to determine whether current educational practices and policies are satisfactorily addressing the needs of deaf learners in mainstream classrooms, it is

necessary that research is conducted on the experiences of deaf learners who have been mainstreamed.

1.3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Bearing in mind the contradictory approaches to the inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream schools, and the lack of research about the impact experienced by such learners within an inclusive environment, the research question for this proposed research study is:

What are the experiences of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school?

1.4. RESEARCH AIMS

In essence, the aim of this research is to examine the experience of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school, providing him with an opportunity to express his feelings in relation to his particular educational environment. Within the above broad question, the main aims of this research study are twofold. Firstly, to describe what the experiences of this deaf learner in a mainstream high school have been; and secondly, to identify and explain what advantages, challenges and limitations, if any, this learner has experienced in his mainstream high school.

While I am aware that my research sample is limited to a single case study, I believe that this learner's experiences can act as a valuable spring board, from which policy makers and educators can begin to adapt, adjust and modify current mainstream curricula with the aim of satisfactorily addressing and meeting the needs of deaf learners in the future.

1.5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.5.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995:13), the design of a research study serves two purposes. Firstly, it includes the overall approach to be adopted to conduct the research, and secondly, detailed information about how the study will be carried out, with whom and where. Silverman(2004:4) states that the research design chosen will depend on what the aims of the research study are. In view of the fact that this research aims to highlight the experiences of a deaf learner within a mainstream educational environment, I will adopt a qualitative case study research design.

I chose this particular research design, as a qualitative case study affords me the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of my sample participant in his particular setting, as well as the meaning he attaches to it (Merriam, 2000:19). In turn, such a research design gives rise to numerous potential research gathering tools.

1.5.2. DATA COLLECTION

My sample consists of one deaf learner, 17 years of age, attending a private mainstream high school. I will begin to gather data through documentation (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). My participant will be asked to give an autobiographical account of what his experiences of mainstreaming have been in his particular school. Following this, the participant will be asked to complete an open questionnaire (Key, 1997) with the intention being to gain more insight and in-depth information into his particular environment (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). During the course of collecting my data, I will also observe the participant in his particular educational environment.

As part of the aim of the research is to understand the experiences of the deaf learner in his mainstream educational environment, I believe that observation of the participant in his educational setting is essential. While I am aware that my presence could influence the participant's behaviour, I am assuming that by being unobtrusive I will minimize possible modifications of his behaviour (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:24). Once I have read through and partly analyzed his autobiographical account, questionnaire and my field notes, I will then interview him with the aim of gaining a more in-depth understanding of issues that arise through the various data collection tools. Additionally, the interview will be used to explore issues that the participant may not as yet have commented on.

1.5.3. DATA ANALYSIS

In qualitative research, data analysis occurs simultaneously with data collection, in that the researcher begins to analyse the data as she reads the first document, conducts the first interview and observes the participants for the first time (Merriam, 1998:14). In analysing my data, I will employ qualitative content analysis techniques (Henning, Van van Rensburg and Smit, 2004:104) analysing each unit of data with the purpose of identifying common themes and patterns. By disseminating data into codes, I will group the various codes into categories and ultimately into common themes uncovered within the data collection process.

1.6. TERMINOLOGY

In order for the reader to fully understand this research study, it is necessary that the terms deaf; Deaf and hearing impaired be defined.

deaf: According to the Oxford English dictionary, the term deaf refers to individuals who are wholly or partly unable to hear (1999:125).

According to the National Deaf Organization (<http://www.nad.org/infocenter/infotogo>), deaf, the noun, refers to the audiological condition of not hearing.

Deaf: the proper noun, refers to a particular group of deaf people who share a language, sign language, and a culture.

Hearing impaired: refers to individuals who have some hearing and are able to use it for communication purposes, and who feel reasonably comfortable doing so (<http://www.nad.org/infocenter/infotogo>). As such, such individuals have a mild to moderate hearing loss.

Within this research study, I will be utilising the term deaf as a noun, because my participant's hearing loss is profound. Furthermore, the participant does not use sign language, nor does he belong to the Deaf culture. Additionally, this research study will be written in the masculine tense when referring to the participant due to the fact that my participant is a male. Any references to the researcher will be in the feminine due to the fact that the researcher is a woman. Lastly, while the theoretical background provided is applicable to a large extent to learners who possess a learning disability and / or difficulty, within the text I will be making reference solely to a learning disability due to the fact that the research participant's learning difficulty is as a result of his hearing loss (physical disability) and not due to cognitive or emotional limitations (learning difficulty).

1.7. PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

As a practising educator for the past thirteen years, I have had first hand experience of the daily challenges that face educators in mainstream high schools. While I commend and strongly support the philosophy of inclusion, I fear that in many instances we may be moving too fast in trying to become an inclusive educational environment and failing to ensure that all the necessary curricula modifications and adaptations are in place. Subsequently, we may think that our schools are

inclusive, yet on closer inspection we will come to realise that we are functioning as yet another mainstream educational facility. The severity of such an oversight has far-reaching consequences and repercussions particularly for learners with physical disabilities such as deafness.

In my current position of employment I have had the opportunity to interact with Deaf and hard of hearing learners as well who attend Saint Vincents' School for the Deaf. In numerous informal interviews, these learners have portrayed mixed feelings with regards to their option of mainstream education. While their current learners are excited about the educational options and prospects inclusive policies and principles now affords them, they are quite content to remain in their specialized school setting. Their rationale for this is that in their current school setting their limitation is the "norm" and not the exception, and as such, the entire educational set-up is geared to cater for their particular disability. On the whole, I tend to agree with them.

I believe that deaf learners are currently being disadvantaged for a number of reasons. Firstly because their education occurs in mainstream educational environments and not in inclusive ones and secondly, the medium of instruction and learning is oral – aural which in most instances is inappropriate for deaf learners. Consequently, I believe that due to the fact that deaf learners are limited in their ability to hear and speak, they tend to miss out on a vast majority of the teaching and learning that takes place in mainstream classrooms. This in turn affects their academic performance and potential to achieve. In addition, due to communication barriers, secondary barriers to learning may arise, such as social and emotional ones. I do not however, wish to be misunderstood and seen as discouraging the inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream schools. On the contrary, I strongly recommend and encourage such a move. What I do wish to emphasize though, is that schools undertaking such a task need to realise the enormity of it and undertake and implement curricula modifications, adaptations and changes so as to ensure the effective education of such learners.

1.8. SUMMARY

Within the above section, I have provided the reader with a brief justification as to the purpose of my research. While inclusive policies and practitioners encourage the integration of deaf learners in mainstream schools, the Deaf society discourages it. Due to the conflicting opinions regarding the inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream schools, I wish to provide such learners who have been integrated into a mainstream educational facility, the opportunity to express their views on their experiences. My sample consists of one 17 year old Deaf learner, attending a private mainstream school. The qualitative research case study design will consist of a number of data collection

methods, namely documentation, an open questionnaire, interviews and observations. Subsequently, the data will be analysed, utilising qualitative content analysis techniques.



SECTION 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with a theoretical framework in respect of the ensuing research study. An overview of the development of inclusion policies, internationally and within South Africa, as well as their implications for education, will be furnished. After that, the reader will be provided with a historical account of deaf education, the effect inclusion has had on such learners as well as a brief overview of where deaf education currently stands.

2.2. DEFINING INCLUSION AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Led by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow (Dyson, 2001), the Index for Inclusion (a tool utilised by schools to assist them in developing inclusive policies and practices) defines inclusion in terms of education, culture and participation. In education, inclusion would involve increasing the participation of all its learners within the school's curricula, culture and community. Following this, it would become necessary that the culture of the school is modified so as to represent the diversity of its entire student body. Finally inclusion would aim to ensure that learners vulnerable to exclusion due to their special needs are active participants both in and out of the classroom. Consequently, according to this Index, learner exclusion can effectively be reduced by schools adopting an inclusive culture, policies and practices. As such, by incorporating inclusive practices within the realm of education, one can achieve increased learner participation (Dyson, 2001:6). For the past four decades, both internationally and locally, there has been a conscientious drive towards developing a more democratic and just society. Similarly, guided by the collective principles of human rights to basic education, equality and the recognition of democratic rights, education is moving away from a dual, special and general education system, to one where individual learner needs are recognised and addressed (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001: 303).

For Burden (1995:47), inclusion entails a move away from the psycho-medical discourse to a rights discourse. This involves shifting the responsibility for disabilities from learners with a disability and placing it into the hands of society, which should ensure that such individuals are accepted and educated without prejudices. For Dyson (2001), inclusion represents a collection of the broad ideologies of social integrity, educational fairness and school receptiveness. He identifies four types of inclusive ideologies namely, inclusion aimed at ensuring that all learners have access to

local classrooms and schools, inclusion aimed at adapting the education system to meet the needs of its diverse student body, inclusion aimed at ensuring the full participation of all its citizens, and lastly, inclusion aimed at ensuring the social inclusion of all members of society.

While in essence inclusion has come to be seen and interpreted in many different ways (Crockett and Kauffman, 1998:74), three universal commonalities underpin it. Firstly, inclusion is a commitment towards building a more just and unbiased society. Secondly, it is committed to building a more equitable education system. Lastly it is based on the conviction that, by extending the responsiveness of mainstream schools to student diversity, we develop the means to make these commitments a reality. Ultimately, inclusive policies and practices seek to provide learners with a disability with the necessary coping skills and mechanisms to “enable them to survive in their specific contexts or to empower them to become emancipated as people and to live as normally as their abilities allow them” (Burden, 1995:55). However, in order to achieve the ideals of inclusion, the educational setting itself has to adopt an inclusive policy. In other words, for inclusion to succeed, it has to be a whole school movement (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 2002).

Unlike its predecessors – mainstreaming and integration – inclusion calls for changes in educational practices, principles and policies as a whole, with particular emphasis on the attainment of improved resources and support for both the educator and learner. Inclusion is a move away from the mainstream deficit model to a more social model (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001:306), where the problem is seen as existing not only in the learner but also in his environment. As such, it advocates the change towards a more flexible curriculum, improved staff development, better allocation of staff and resources, adequate training programmes for educators and effective educational policies for it to be of any significant success. Accordingly, it calls for the adaptation and modification of existing teaching and learning practices, so that all schools become supportive and nurturing communities, meeting and addressing the needs of all their learners (O’Neil, 1995:7, Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000:5). The following table reflects the key differences between mainstream and inclusive education.

SALIENT FEATURES	INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	MAINSTREAM EDUCATION
Options in educational settings	All children, irrespective of the nature and severity of their learning disability, are entitled to be included in a mainstream school.	Children with a learning disability will only be included in a mainstream school if that learner himself can fit in.
Learning potential	All children can learn irrespective of their capabilities.	Children's learning potential is directly linked to their capabilities and limitations.
Perception of learning disability	Adopts a rights approach.	Adopts a psycho-medical model.
Learner support	Recognises that some learners may require coordinated learner support services	The learner must be able to keep up with the general status quo of the rest of the class.
Teaching methods	Different approaches and methodologies need to be adopted to meet the needs of all learners	A teacher needs to be aware that a learner in their class has a learning disability and that that teacher refers that learner to the necessary institutions.
Stakeholders	Necessitates a whole school change in attitudes and perceptions to teaching learners with a learning disability	Learners with a learning disability need to fit into the status quo of the existing school.
Classroom perceptions	Maintains that all learners benefit from interacting with each other, learning vital life skills. Learners with a learning disability learn social coping skills that equip them for interaction in larger society, while learners without a learning disability learn respect, acceptance and understanding of learners with a learning disability.	A learner with a learning disability will remain in the mainstream classroom so long as his presence does not become detrimental to the educational and emotional development of learners without a learning disability.

Table 2:1. Key differences between inclusion and mainstreaming
(Adapted from Roberts and Beech, 2003)

However in order to fully understand how South Africa's education has been affected by inclusion, in particular the education of learners with a learning disability, one needs to be reminded of the historical background of the education of such learners.

2.3. THE HISTORY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Until the late 1950's, the education of learners with a learning disability, both internationally and in South Africa, was based upon the psycho-medical model (Engelbrecht and Green, 2001: 17). Learners who failed to cope in mainstream classrooms due to their physical, mental and / or social limitations were assessed, diagnosed and accordingly labelled (http://www.randmutual.co.za/medical/disability_3analysis.html). By labelling them, these learner's medical conditions became their most important characteristics which was dehumanising. This set the stage for their physical exclusion and social isolation. Such learners were perceived as problematic and the ones who needed to change or adapt to suit their environment (<http://www.disabilityisnatural.com>). More over, in a system which failed to take into account their individual needs, such learners were seen as belonging in a specialised school setting.

Specialised school settings originated through the efforts of the charity discourse. Founded through the charity of benevolent non-governmental agencies (Kluwin, 1999) the charity discourse saw learners with a disability as philanthropic causes in need of patronage and financial support. Additionally, for a number of reasons, they perceived specialised educational settings as the best means of educating such learners. Firstly, by educating like-labelled learners in the same educational facility, specialised equipment, facilities, educators and supportive personnel were utilised as much as possible, as economies of scale were achieved. Secondly, such learners benefited from the individualised attention smaller classes afforded them. Thirdly, offering such learners a specialised school setting, ensured that non-disabled learners were not indirectly affected by the presence of learners with a disability. Lastly, by segregating such learners, they prevented any potential burdens that could have been placed on teaching and other educational resources in regular schools (Jenkinson, 1997:11). In essence, the psycho-medical and charity model had a negative impact on people with disabilities.

Entrenching the view that people with disabilities possess inherent problems, resulted in the social exclusion of deaf learners from mainstream society politically, socially and economically (http://www.randmutual.co.za/medical/disability_3analysis.html). While in some cases specialised school settings proved beneficial to learners with learning disabilities, in most instances they proved

detrimental, resulting in the effective disempowerment of learners with disabilities (Vaughn, Bos and Schumm, 2000). In spite of this however, because of the changing demographics of the school population, and economic and social conditions, the emphasis of education and its role within society began to change (Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000:14). As long as it could be proven that the learner with a disability was achieving better results in a segregated environment as opposed to a mainstream classroom, specialised education could be justified. If not, then the whole notion of segregated education needed to be revisited (Vaughn, Bos and Schumm, 2000). The idea that the role of education should be to provide good quality education to all and not to just a few elite learners, revealed the cracks within specialised education.

Specialised, segregated education failed to prepare all learners for a full and equal adult life. Promoting a sense of “community, collaboration, democracy and diversity” (Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000:5), and grounded in the rights discourse, education, both internationally and within South Africa, began to change with the principle of inclusion beginning to take shape. Endorsing a single system of education, where learners are treated as valued, active and equal participants, inclusion seeks to ensure that all learners are empowered to become caring, competent and contributing citizens in a democratic environment (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht, 1999:6, Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000:5). Consequently, the psycho–medical and charity discourse models that governed segregated education and the subsequent labelling of learners with learning disabilities gave way, both locally and abroad, to the rights discourse which recognised that all learners, irrespective of capabilities and limitations, have the right to be accepted and taught in the same, common educational environment.

2.3.1. INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENTS TOWARDS INCLUSION

The changes South African education has experienced since the creation of our democracy over the past decade would not have occurred had it not been for the work undertaken in countries such as the United States of America (U.S.A), Britain and Spain. Their efforts and vision have helped local educational policy-makers to develop South Africa’s inclusive policies. As such, in order to understand the foundations of South Africa’s inclusive policies, it is necessary to reflect on international developments with regard to the development and shaping of inclusive policies.

In the U.S.A., numerous acts have impacted upon the education, employment and social lives of individuals with disabilities (Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000:47). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 ensured that under-privileged groups had access to high-quality

educational programmes and outcomes. The Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1973 aimed to ensure that people with disabilities were not discriminated against. The Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975 and its amended version of 1990 (which gave rise to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 - IDEA), aimed to reinforce and recognise the educational rights of learners with a disability (Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000:47). The IDEA envisioned a least-restrictive environment, individualised educational programmes and the application of assistive technologies, and promulgated three critical modifications towards the education of learners with a learning disability (Lipsky and Gartner, 1998:78, Yell, 1998:70).

Recognising a child's local, mainstream school as the least-restrictive educational environment, IDEA stated that should it be the wish of both the learner with a disability and his parents, then that learner, irrespective of the severity of his disability, would have access to his local community school. Secondly, it stated that no such learner could be denied access to the school of his choice based on their learning disability. Lastly, it advocated that the least-restrictive environment was in the best interests of such a learner. However, while aiming to achieve inclusion, IDEA simultaneously cautioned against automatically assuming that all learners with a disability would benefit by being placed in a mainstream environment. Rather, in determining what kind of educational setting would best address and fulfil the needs of such learners, IDEA outlined that each learner would have to be assessed in terms of their particular disability. In addition, all involved stakeholders (parent, educator, school administration, etc.) would need to ascertain whether that learner would benefit from a mainstream environment, and, whether the necessary educational resources and support systems would be afforded to him so as to ensure that he could realise his fullest educational and personal potential. However while IDEA made headway in promoting and developing inclusive policies and practices in theory, in operation it proved to be problematic.

IDEA was criticised by many educationalists as being limited and presumptuous (Jenkinson, 1997:16). It was seen to promote the notion of mainstreaming rather than inclusion because it suggested that learners with a disability are taught in order to fit into the mainstream environment (Burden, 1995:47), instead of the environment adapting to suit the needs of such learners. Bilkin in Jenkinson (1997) further criticised the least-restrictive environment claiming that it failed to take into consideration the support services that a learner with a disability would require in order to succeed in mainstream education. According to him, the least-restrictive environment focused on the physical settings and the diagnosis of the learner's disability, consequently failing to take into account other infrastructures necessary to ensure the successful integration and education of such learners in mainstream classrooms (Jenkinson, 1997:16). Based on the above identified limitations,

and in an effort to rectify the shortcomings of IDEA, the United Kingdom's Warnock Report (1978), gave rise to the notion of alternative placements.

The theory of alternative placement suggests that in mainstream educational facilities' special classes, pull-out programmes and additional tuition become the next viable avenues after the traditional mainstream classroom. The determining factor as to which alternative option is most viable would largely depend on the learning capabilities of that particular learner. More importantly, however, the Warnock Report emphasised that such placements should be seen as temporary rather than a permanent arrangement. In other words, a learner with an identified learning disability will be assessed to determine which alternative placement option best meets and addresses his needs. Once that is ascertained, he is placed into that programme and will remain there until he has mastered the skills required of him to keep up with his non-disabled peers. Thereafter, he will be reintegrated into the mainstream educational programme. Fundamentally however, the Warnock Report encouraged integration and not inclusion, as it necessitates that a learner with a disability be able to adapt to a mainstream educational environment, and not the environment to him. The Warnock Report also identified three levels upon which learners with a disability can be included in a mainstream environment.

The three levels of integration that occur within a mainstream environment are locational, social and functional integration. Locational integration exists when abled and disabled learners are taught together in a mainstream classroom. Social integration occurs when abled and disabled learners socialize with each other during meal time and on the playground. Functional integration occurs when disabled learners receive instruction in all or some of the classes with abled peers. Subsequently, the full integration of a learner with a disability occurs when that learner participates fully in all three of the above areas. Through the combined efforts of numerous international acts and recommendations, disabled learners have moved from being isolated, to being integrated, to being mainstreamed within a mainstream educational environment. However, the ideal of true inclusion was only realised in 1994 through the efforts of the Salamanca Statement on Principle, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education.

In 1994, representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organisations formed the World Conference on Special Needs Education, held in Salamanca, Spain (<http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/slmca.htm>). Based on the driving vision that all learners requiring special education be incorporated in mainstream educational facilities, the Salamanca Statement saw the mainstream classroom as the most operative means of fighting discriminatory attitudes,

creating friendly communities, constructing inclusive societies, and attaining education for all. Adopting a new Framework for Action, it stipulated that mainstream schools should accommodate all children, “regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions.” (<http://inclusion.uwe.ac.uk/csie/slmca.htm>) As such, it propagated that inclusive education provides the most effective means to educate the majority of learners, while simultaneously improving the efficiency and ultimate cost effectiveness of the entire education system. As such, inclusion was embraced by the world as the way forward. In South Africa, the new democratic government began to develop its inclusive policies grounded on the principles, ideals and visions of its international counterparts.

2.3.2. SOUTH AFRICA’S ENDEAVOURS TOWARDS INCLUSION

Historically, education in South Africa has been at the peril and discretion of political powers changing every time a new political party comes into power, so as to reflect, promote and realise the desired ideologies of that government. Resource allocation and accessibility historically was governed according to Apartheid laws. This meant separate schooling for all learners based not only on their learning abilities or limitations, but also on their racial, ethnic and political backgrounds (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 1997). In South Africa, learners with disabilities were further ostracised as both mainstream and specialised educational facilities catered for an exclusive, often minority group of individuals. Reinforced by legislature and the general failure of an apartheid government to ensure that all of its citizens enjoyed a democratic life, segregated education persisted with further discrimination against learners on the basis of colour, race, gender, ethics, beliefs, and abilities (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 2002). A paradigm shift in the early 1900’s in South African government eradicated the Apartheid rules, embracing the ideals and vision of a democratic society. The imbalances in education based on one’s skin colour, beliefs and political affiliations began to be effectively eliminated.

Under the auspices of the African National Congress, the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) was launched to evaluate the needs of special education (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001:307). Its guiding principles were the protection of human rights, values and social justice; the development of a unitary educational system and the elimination of any form of discrimination. Additionally, it sought to promote the active participation of all stakeholders, to make education affordable and available to all, as well as to redress past educational inequalities. In its findings, the NEPI “recommended a framework for the provision of support services which would be holistic, integrated and require interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaboration between various sectors”

(Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001:307). Based on the NEPI's vision and framework, as well as international guidelines such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Disabled Persons (United Nations, 1993) and the World Conference on Education for All by the year 2000 (Education for All, 2000), South Africa policy developers began to develop their inclusive policies.

In the development of an inclusive policy, South Africa has formulated and revised a number of policy documents and acts. Firstly, there is the White Paper on Education and Training (Department of Education, 1995a), which introduced a number of key projects such as the Culture of Teaching, Learning and Services, the National Qualifications Framework and the Outcomes Based Curriculum. The Culture of Teaching, Learning and Services document seeks to restore respect for diversity and a culture of teaching and learning, while the National Qualifications Framework seeks to recognise life long learning, aiming to build a just, equitable and high quality education system. The Outcomes Based Curriculum document was designed to respond to the diverse needs of South Africa's learner population, while the New Language Policy recognises 12 official languages for South Africa: 11 spoken languages and Sign Language.

The South African Schools Act (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001) abolished any form of exclusion from mainstream schools. It dictates that mainstream schools must admit all learners and serve their educational needs without unfairly discriminating against them in any way. It empowers the parents of such learners by equipping them with the power to override the admissions policy of a school's governing body in respect to the admission of their child to their chosen mainstream school. The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy made recommendations for the provision of assistive devices and specialised equipment in the education of disabled learners, shifting the perception of a disability from the psycho - medical model to the social model.

The National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) were created to investigate and make recommendations on all aspects of special needs and support services in education and training in South Africa (Englebrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht 1999:6). Their primary task was to prepare a proposal for the future vision of education, its principles and strategies. The NCSNET and the NCESS raised the issue of barriers to learning and development. They claimed that in order to determine what system changes need to occur within education, we need to first identify what barriers to learning and development currently exist within education (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001: 311). According to them, a barrier exists when a learner is unable to successfully access an

educational facility or a learning breakdown has occurred. As such, a barrier to learning and development may exist within the learner, the educational environment, broader society and / or the economic, social and political environment. They identified a number of barriers to learning and development including socio- economic barriers; discriminatory and negative attitudes; an inflexible curriculum; language and communication blocks; inaccessible and unsafe built environments; lack of parental recognition and involvement; lack of human resources development; disabilities and lack of protective legislation and policy to support the development of an inclusive education and training system (Englebrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht 1999; Lomofksy and Lazarus, 2001). The identification of a number of potential barriers to learning by the NCSNET and NCESS further entrenched the rights discourse within South African education. Consequently, at the forefront in the development of an inclusive policy and education system, the NCSNET and NCESS prescribed its vision.

According to the NCSNET and NCESS, an inclusive education and training system has certain distinct key features. Firstly, it comprises of a single education and training system. Secondly, it offers a range of learning contexts and varied curriculum to address the diverse needs of its learner population. Thirdly, it offers appropriate additional support to learners who require it. In addition, such a learning centre embraces a welcoming and supportive ethos, encouraging the active participation of all interested stakeholders. In essence therefore, the NCSNET and NCESS recommended an education and training system that encourages education for all and further development of inclusive and supportive centers of learning. It is their belief that through this, all learners become active participants in their educational process, developing and broadening their potential to partake as equal members of society.

From this brief framework we are able to note how specialised education, including deaf education, in South Africa has evolved. Through our revised Bill of Rights of 1996, the South African Schools Act of 1996, and the New Language Policy in the 1995 White Paper, just to mention but a few, sign language has been recognised as a language for development. Deaf learners are no longer open to discrimination and they are eligible for mainstream education. However, although the progress South Africa has made in developing inclusive policies is evident, the implementation of these policies is proving to be the real challenge (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001:314; Grey 1999). This is due to the fact that inclusion calls for changes within the actual realm of the educational setting. In other words, for inclusion to succeed, it has to be a whole school movement (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 2002)

2.4. DEAF EDUCATION

2.4.1. DEAF EDUCATION FROM THE 16TH TO THE 21ST CENTURY

Deafness is considered to be the single largest disability grouping in South Africa. An estimated 3.5% of the population has some form of hearing loss (<http://www.umthombo.wits.ac.za/deafed/cds.html>). However, within the South African education and training system, the deaf community is amongst the most severely marginalised and neglected population (<http://www.saqa.org.za/main.asp?main=docs/pubs/updates/update04-04.html&menu=h>). This marginalisation of the South African Deaf community can be attributed to the Apartheid education system, lack of resources in schools for the Deaf, an Oralist educational philosophy, and lack of teacher training and failure of the previous government to recognise South African Sign Language (SASL) as an official language (<http://www.ltconline.net/asllt/scdeafculture.htm>; <http://www.signgenius.com/info-statistics6.shtml>; Kiyaga and Moores, 2003:21). Because of this, one in three deaf adults in South Africa is functionally illiterate and the average deaf school leaver has a written language comprehension ability of a hearing eight year old learner. But, in order to fully understand the dynamics of the South African deaf education system, we need to review deaf education as it has evolved through the ages.

The earliest records of deaf education date back as far as the 16th century. Deaf children of very rich and affluent parents in Spain were placed under the care of monks and taught to communicate in the oral-audial mode. Ironically, even as far back as the 16th century, the debate as to which mode of communication best serves deaf learners (oral or Sign language) has persisted (<http://www.signgenius.com/info-sign-langauge-01.shtml>). Throughout the early 1800's, deaf education saw significant, and at times, detrimental changes (<http://www.ltconline.net/asllt/scdeafculture.htm>).

Heralded as the Golden Era in the education of the deaf, deaf learners were educated according to the Manualism approach during 1800- 1850. The most fundamental characteristic of this approach was that it propagated that sign language should be taught and learned as the deaf learner's first language. Based on this approach, schools for the deaf emerged, both in America and abroad. With it came the introduction of American Sign Language which had evolved from a combination of French, indigenous and home signs. By 1834, a single dialect, namely American Sign Language, was recognised in the U.S.A. as the national language for the deaf. However the Manualism era

and the recognition of sign language as an official language were short lived due to the rise to prominence of the Oralist movement.

Founded in 1860, and persisting until the late 1960's, Oralism argued that deaf people should learn to speak and read lips in order to function in a hearing world (<http://www.umthombo.wits.ac.za/deafed/cds.html>; <http://www.ltconline.net/asllt/scdeafculture.htm>; <http://www.signgenius.com/info-sign-language-01.shtml>). Following the Oralist rationale, deaf learners were taught in oral schools which required the exclusive use of spoken English. During the same period, the first deaf university, Gallaudet University, was launched in 1864 promoting bilingual education for the deaf and using American Sign Language to teach written English. Even with the emergence of a deaf university which reinforced the use of sign language, the Oralist movement persisted, gaining momentum through the 1880 Milan Convention. It was during this convention that deaf education was dealt an immense blow. The 164 hearing delegates who presided over the convention banned any form of sign language in the teaching of the deaf, stipulating that deaf learners would be taught English via oral training. As a direct consequence of this ruling, extensive speech therapy became an obsessive concern in deaf education. Similarly, embracing and adopting the ruling set out in the 1880 Milan Convention, deaf education in Africa was radically affected too.

In Sub-Sahara Africa, deaf education began during the 19th century for a fraction of the deaf population. Hearing missionaries followed their homeland's oral-only practices (Kiyaga and Moores, 2003:18). They catered mainly for the affluent African families. Based upon the Oralist approach, these schools forbade the use of any kind of manual communication, i.e. signed or finger-spelled. Exceptions did exist in some regions of Sub-Saharan Africa such as Ethiopia, where American and Scandinavian Sign Language was utilised to educate their deaf learners. Additionally, in South Africa, through the efforts of the Irish Dominican Sisters, the first deaf school was opened in 1863. Besides providing deaf learners with a religious and academic education, this school served as an example as to what could be done to assist disabled learners in South Africa (Theunissen, 2003). In general, however, due to the foreignness of sign language and the often complete disregard and disrespect for the indigenous language of the area, African deaf education systems came to reflect shattered playgrounds of inconsistencies and chaos. As such, the ramifications of the Oralist movement were felt throughout the world.

It was during this time that Deaf culture and identity began to truly establish itself. Due to international failure to recognise Deaf language within its own rights, Deaf identity began to

develop and take shape. Operating underground until well into 1970, Sign Language persisted to be taught within the classroom situation, remaining a living and natural language for the deaf (<http://www.deafsa.co.za/asp/signlanguage.asp>). As a result, Oralism was gradually replaced by the philosophy of Total Communication.

Adapted by the Oralist movement in an attempt to represent English visually, the 1970's saw the rise and acceptance of all communication means for the deaf. (<http://www.signgenius.com/info-sign-language-01.shtml>). Known as Total Communication, it stipulated that Sign Language, spoken and written English, finger spelling, miming, etc. could be utilised in the teaching and educating of deaf learners. Embracing both American and indigenous signs, Total Communication was first implemented in South Africa through the efforts of Andrew Foster. A deaf, African-American missionary and Gallaudet University's first African-American graduate in the 20th century, Foster established 31 schools for the Deaf, training deaf practitioners to work within them. While Total Communication was seen as a vast improvement on the Oralist approach to the communication of deaf individuals, it did hamper their overall linguistic development (<http://www.deafsa.co.za/asp/education.asp>). This was due to the fact that by employing both Sign Language and English simultaneously, the grammar of both languages was being largely violated. As such, while aiming to be of benefit, Total Communication resulted in a number of deaf learners failing to achieve any form of language proficiency within either language. The 1975 Education For All Handicapped Children Act had a similar effect.

Categorising deafness as a disability, the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act made deaf learners eligible for mainstreaming (<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/products/perspectives/nov-dec97/deafschoo.html>). Coupled with the historically low academic achievements of deaf learners, educational stakeholders were at a cross roads as to whether deaf learners should be mainstreamed, sent to specialised educational facilities, or if some alternative middle ground existed in between (Takushi, 2000). Numerous reasons have been cited as to why the mainstreaming of deaf learners is undesirable to their overall holistic development. One of the main arguments against mainstreaming stems from the fact that the needs of deaf learners are unique. As such, including deaf learners in mainstream schools is not as straightforward a process as it appears (http://www.teacher.co.za/cms/article_2002_05_21-3818.html). According to Storbeck (2004), "it is still being debated whether or not to include deaf learners in the mainstream schools...as each student needs individual attention" (http://www.teacher.co.za/cms/article_2002_05_21-3818.html). Therefore, the benefit mainstream education affords deaf learners is still a topic of heated debate.

Currently, mainstreaming of deaf learners is occurring in one of three ways. Firstly there is reverse mainstreaming which involves the incorporation of hearing learners into programmes for the deaf as a means of achieving integration. Secondly, there is full mainstreaming where the deaf learner is seen as just another learner in the classroom. Lastly, there is physical proximity where deaf learners are in the presence of hearing peers, but there is little meaningful interaction between them (Hottendorf, 1989:54). In addition, none of the above approaches embrace inclusive practices and policies. While IDEA and IDEA 2003 have vastly improved the overall educational services for special education learners, deaf learners have not had the same equal access to a seamless -birth through adult- educational system (Moore, 2003:278). In other words, the educational needs of deaf learners, from kindergarten right through to tertiary education, have not been adequately catered for.

Due to the fact that current inclusion practices fail to exercise the essence of inclusion, they fail to satisfactorily identify and address the needs of the deaf learner within their mainstream classroom. Research in some instances has shown that mainstreaming can have an adverse affect on the self-esteem and educational development of a deaf learner. This has been attributed to the fact that within mainstream classrooms deaf learners are isolated, feel “different” and have access to limited educational input due to lack of interpreters (Takushi 2000; Theunissen, 2003). As a result of this, for the past 29 years battles have ensued with government systems to get them to realise that deaf learners should be considered separately from children with other disabilities (Steffan, 2004:47)

Larry Steward, superintendent of Illinois School for the Deaf, has been at the forefront of this battle. He has requested a reversal in the trend of placing deaf learners in mainstream classrooms. Steward’s argument is based on the fact that a deaf disability is totally different to any other learning disability. He states that deaf learner’s “accessibility is through communication, not ramps; not social experiences like mentally retarded learners; not special resource help like learning disabled learners. Deaf learners are deaf 24 hours a day. They must be able to communicate with teachers, coaches and peers and this isn’t happening in many public school situations” (<http://www.deafed.net/PublishedDocs/sub/law-010.htm>). Similarly, through her personal experiences and research, Gina Olivia reinforces Steward’s sentiments (<http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/bookpage/AITMbookpage.html>).

Being deaf herself and having attended a U.S.A. mainstream educational facility, Oliva reinforces the fact that deaf learners’ educational needs are different to those of learners with other learning disabilities (<http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/bookpage/AITMbookpage.html>). Due to the fact that their

disability is further aggravated by the lack of effective communication, she highlights the need of deaf learners to be able to communicate freely. This does not imply that mainstream education is unfair to the deaf learner, but the fact that a common language does not exist between him and his hearing peers limits his socialization, which is an integral part of his growth and development. This was further reinforced through research conducted at a local Chicago school (Stinson, 1997:6). Recognising the unique needs of a deaf learner, the research attributes the success of mainstreaming experienced by such learners to the fact that they address and cater for the needs of deaf learners appropriately. However, for the South African Deaf community, the full integration of a deaf learner into a hearing environment is seen as restrictive to that learner (Department of Education, 2001). The South African Deaf Community resists the mainstreaming of deaf learners despite offers by schools for the availability of interpreters and the recognition of the unique characteristics of deaf learners and their needs.

According to the South African Deaf community, the most appropriate educational environment for deaf learners is one in which their unique language needs are catered for. This implies an educational environment which utilizes deaf adult role-models, deaf peers, a signing environment, teachers fluent in Sign Language and free access to Deaf culture in both school and residential facilities. However, even in light of existing criticism against mainstreaming, placement of deaf learners in mainstream educational facilities has become an increasingly common practice in many countries. This move has resulted not only in changing the educational setting for deaf learners, but also their social and recreational environments (Olivia, 2004:55, Lampropoulou and Padeliadu, 1997:27). Mainstreaming has become a central topic of discussion in the literature on special education over the past 15 to 20 years (Lampropolou and Padelliadu, 1997:26). Both mainstream and specialised educational environments have been recognised for exhibiting their own unique attributes, positive and negative.

Some of the main reservations with regard to mainstreaming have been directed at the educators. Under question is the competency and willingness of teachers to teach deaf learners, as well as their ability to instill culture, language patterns and systems common to that of the deaf community (Takushi, 2000). Currently, educators are seen as being unable to implant and appreciate critical aspects of Deaf culture. For example, the Deaf community has distinct communication patterns such as their long-goodbyes (reflecting a desire to promote unity and ensure a lasting bond); touching (essential to effective communication); conversation pattern (they get to the point quickly, with the aim of getting to know someone); visual connection (direct and necessary for effective communication); and sharing of information (due to the visual nature of their

language, private conversation is difficult). On the other hand, specialised schools prove beneficial in perpetuating Deaf culture, but fail to prepare the deaf learner for life outside their walls.

While research illustrates that there are numerous benefits to attending a specialized school setting, their strict and rule-governed atmosphere leaves many deaf learners incapable of making the transition not only to mainstream classrooms but also to larger society (Takushi, 2000). However, by attending a specialised educational setting, such learners receive all of their educational input from a staff that has been specifically trained to address their particular educational needs. They also find themselves in a community of like-abled peers and adults. Due to this, the hard reality is that many deaf learners currently attending specialised school settings in South Africa are content to remain where they are (Grey, 1999). This is attributable to the fact that they feel safe and at home within such an educational setting as, for a lot of them, a hearing world represents a constant struggle to fit in. While the debate as to whether deaf learners should be mainstreamed or not continues to waver on, the 1980's saw the rise of the bilingual – bicultural approach to teaching and educating deaf learners.

Finally acknowledging that deaf people live in two cultures – the hearing and the Deaf culture (<http://www.signgenius.com/info-sign-language-01-shtml>, <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/sp/2004sp0302.html>), the bilingual – bicultural approach is based on the assets of the deaf learner. Using this approach Sign Language and the spoken / written languages are kept separate from the curriculum because they are two completely different languages. Employing this method means that only once deaf learners have mastered Sign Language completely and to a satisfactory level, is a new, second language introduced. The adoption of this method of teaching has illustrated the ability of deaf learners to achieve a reading level and writing ability equal to that of their hearing peers. Additionally they can express themselves fluently and intelligibly in written text. But the main benefit derived from the bilingual – bicultural approach manifests itself in the increased levels of a deaf learner's self-esteem. In South Africa bilingualism is gradually becoming the teaching method used to educate deaf learners (<http://www.deafsa.co.za/asp/education.asp>). In essence however, besides the mode of communication used in their educational settings, a number of additional factors affect the development and communication skills of a deaf learner.

2.4.2. CHALLENGES FACING DEAF LEARNERS

Directly affecting a deaf learner's development are factors such as the severity and nature of the hearing loss, the age of onset and the age at which the hearing loss was first diagnosed. This is due to the fact that the longer it takes to establish the hearing loss, the longer it takes to make accommodations for this limitation, consequently affecting the developmental milestones of the deaf individual. Affecting his communication skills are aspects such as the deaf individual's main form of communication, his intellectual and verbal abilities, his family climate (their attitude, communication systems and resources) as well as the age at which he first began to receive alternative communication training (<http://www.deafsa>; Knight and Swanwick, 1999). As such, in trying to establish how a hearing loss comes to affect the holistic development of a deaf learner, stakeholders need to ascertain the impact such a condition has upon such learners in respect of their social, linguistic and intellectual development.

From the outset, it is important to bear in mind that a deaf learner does not have a learning problem (Mogford-Bevan and Sadler, 1993: 28). His problem has arisen because he cannot receive input data. His learning opportunities are thus restricted. In other words, such a learner receives the same input data as that of his hearing peers, but he battles to fully comprehend it, consequently learning at a slower pace than his average peers. This fact is reinforced by Lewis (1968) who maintains that a hearing loss impacts upon that deaf learner's language and communicative development and not his intellectual capabilities.

According to Lewis, a hearing loss affects a deaf learner's language acquisition in numerous ways. Firstly, the fact that as an infant there was no auditory input and as such no auditory reinforcement to link his vocalisation to a specific situation or result, he ceases to vocalise. Consequently language has to be actively taught to him (Mogford-Bevan and Sadler, 1993:33). Secondly, due to limited auditory exposure, other forms of communication become prominent (Lewis, 1968:9). This means that through his personal interactions and circumstances, the deaf learner will have developed his own particular and unique form of communication. For such a learner, lip movements and facial and physical features become the next major characteristics of his communication patterns (Roberts and Beech, 2003). Finally, due to limited auditory input, the deaf learner develops definite gaps in his vocabulary, the linguistic range of meanings associated with words, and delayed written language and reading comprehension. This means that while a deaf learner may be able to communicate by using the Oralist approach in a mainstream classroom, he may fail to comprehend the true meaning and content of a lesson and text. Furthermore, research

indicates that in order for a deaf learner to develop into a confident, well-rounded individual, he needs to be afforded the opportunity to interact both with hearing and non-hearing peers and adults (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). In research conducted on “60 adults ranging in age from 24-60 who had been mainstreamed most of their lives,” Olivia (2004:56) found that the social life of exclusively mainstreamed deaf learners was dismal.

Within this particular research study, one of the main contributing factors was the school’s extra-curricular program. While the school allowed the deaf learner to participate in the actual extra-curricular activity, he was generally unable to access the accompanying conversation. This resulted in further isolation the solitary mainstreamed deaf learner in a structured setting in which friends could normally be made. In some instances, while interpreters could alleviate the lack of effective understanding and communication, one research participant felt that “an interpreter is all well and good for the ‘formal’ kind of classroom communication that happens, but an interpreter is an adult and an artificial third party in the communication between deaf kids and their peers in the mainstream. Deaf kids miss out on informal chatter between their classmates because the interpreter’s very presence creates a psychological barrier between a deaf student and his classmates that precludes the informal chitchat” (Olivia, 2004:57). Similar findings were yielded by Luckner and Steward (2003), where a group of mainstreamed deaf learners described how their personal development had come to a standstill due to limited social interaction.

As such, deaf learners may experience secondary learning problems due to their isolation. Consequently, such learners have shown a tendency in later years towards learning to sign and to seek friends who can sign (Luckner and Steward, 2003). Understanding and appreciating how deafness affects the intellectual, linguistical and social development of a deaf learner reinforces the fact that their needs are different to those of any other learning disability. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of correctly identifying and appropriately addressing these needs.

The individual needs of the deaf learner include his language development, social skills and learning skills (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). His language development needs are firstly, to continue to develop receptive and expressive skills in his first or preferred language to a age-appropriate level, to continue to develop English as a secondary language if that is appropriate, and to be afforded the opportunity to communicate successfully with peers and adults both socially and academically within the school. Socially, a deaf learner’s needs are to be accepted by his school as a valued member of the whole school setting, to possess the communicative competence to relate equally to peers and adults and develop positive relationships with them, and, to be given the

opportunity to develop social and functional independence. A deaf learner's learning needs entail an expectation that he will reach his full academic potential, that he will be afforded the opportunity to develop independent learning skills and that he will have the same opportunities to fully access the curriculum of the school as his hearing peers. Being aware of the needs of deaf learners is only a starting point. Interested and proactive stakeholders also need to ascertain the implications of mainstreaming deaf learners as well as what additional support systems such learners would require for successful mainstreaming.

Current research shows that even though mainstreaming deaf learners can result in them experiencing social and communication difficulties (Knoors, Meuleman and Klatter-Folmer, 2003; Keating and Mirus, 2003), most mainstreamed deaf learners did not regret their mainstream educational experience. When deaf teenagers attending a residential school were asked to reflect on their educational experiences, they expressed an appreciation for both mainstream and specialised school placements. They felt that mainstreaming offered a number of advantages for deaf learners. These were higher academic standards, better English proficiency, knowledge about the hearing world, the development of similar mannerisms to those of hearing peers, and greater confidence in their interactions with the hearing world (Luckner and Steward, 2003). However, mainstreaming also had numerous disadvantages for the deaf learner. Deaf learners who mainstreamed developed less fluid signing skills, as well as poorer social and communicative skills, becoming more reserved due to the communicative difficulties they experienced. The research participants also felt that deaf learners who had solely mainstreamed and who had had no exposure to Deaf culture had a stigma attached to them when they tried to gain access to the deaf community. This further perpetuated their isolation and seclusion. Similarly, specialised education afforded advantages and disadvantages for deaf learners.

Within a specialised school setting, the research participants felt that deaf learners develop a deeper understanding of the Deaf culture. This, in turn, enhanced their sense of belonging and helped them to gain an understanding of their needs and to be assertive about those needs. Furthermore, being surrounded by like-abled peers, who shared a common means of communication, helped in developing their social and communication skills. As such, a specialised school setting affords a deaf learner the advantages of fluency in Sign Language, good communication skills, as well as becoming strong participants and members of the Deaf community (Luckner and Steward, 2003). On the flip side however, such learners are also easily identifiable and stigmatised within the hearing community due to their distinct communication skills and characteristics. Because both mainstream and specialised school settings possess inherent advantages for deaf learners, the

research participants recommend that deaf learners get the opportunity to experience both environments at some stage in their education careers.

The majority of the research group felt that deaf learners should be mainstreamed for primary education and attend a specialised school setting in adolescence. For them, mainstreaming during the primary years is ideal as during this stage, differences in appearances and capabilities do not affect who you are or who you interact with. As such, a deaf learner will not experience as high a degree of isolation and social and communication difficulties in his primary school years as he would experience in his adolescence in a mainstream environment. Ideally, deaf learners should return to a specialised school setting during their adolescence so as to develop a sense of identity. Consequently, according to research findings (Luckner and Steward, 2003; Knoors, Meuleman and Klatter-Folmer, 2003; Keating and Mirus, 2003), both educational settings, while possessing distinct advantages for deaf learners, lacked in important life skills that could be attained through a mixed placement educational setting.

A mixed placement setting is viewed by some theorists as the way forward for deaf mainstream education. It is seen as an alternative that would offer deaf learners a well-rounded education (<http://clerccener.gallaudet.edu/products/perspectives/nov-dec97/deafschoo.html>). Learners will be provided with knowledge of both deaf and hearing environments, which will be better equipped to satisfy a deaf learner's developmental needs. Within such an educational setting, deaf learners can share a deaf peer group while being exposed to the social contact and academic requirements of a mainstream classroom (Kluwin, 1999:343). In other words, the deaf learner attends a mainstream classroom, accompanied by a number of other deaf learners. Due to this, they are neither socially isolated, nor have they got a poorer self-image than their hearing peers. Since a deaf learner's self-identity is affected by his educational mode and environment (Bat-Chava, 2000), a mixed placement setting could further accentuate and enhance his self-identity. Consequently, learners attending a mixed placement educational setting become bilingual, develop an appreciation and knowledge of both deaf and hearing culture, and develop skills that enable them to adapt themselves to both worlds.

A mixed placement setting theoretically is ideal. Within the reality of the South African context however, the creation of such educational facilities would require a substantial amount of both monetary and human resources which currently are relatively scarce. As such, the population of both deaf and hearing impaired learners need to be determined, as well as what current facilities and infrastructures can assist in the future development of mixed placement educational settings.

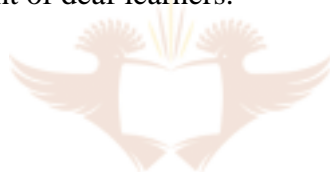
2.4.3. CURRENT TRENDS REGARDING DEAF EDUCATION WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA

Through my current school, I have been fortunate enough to have been afforded the opportunity to interact with Deaf learners currently attending Saint Vincents School for the Deaf. On numerous occasions, the topic of inclusion versus specialised educational settings has come up during impromptu conversations between myself and them. In essence, these learners have mixed feelings towards the inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream schools.

Currently, learners at Saint Vincents School for the Deaf state that they prefer a specialised educational environment to a mainstream one. This is because they are of the opinion that unlike a specialised educational setting, a mainstream one will be unable to provide them with a common language, mode of communication and culture which they currently enjoy in a specialised educational setting. However, they are aware of, acknowledge and admire their fellow learners who have mainstreamed and have managed to develop positive academic, social and emotional skills within such an environment. Consequently, their main reservation stems from the lack of a common mode of communication and a fear that they will become lost within a hearing environment as they perceive themselves as being different. As such, they are of the opinion that mainstream schools are currently unable to fully address and meet their educational needs. Envisioning a single educational environment that can cater for the needs of all learners, including the needs of deaf learners, policy makers are developing and recognising Sign Language as the official language of education for deaf learners.

Currently, South Africa has 35 schools for the deaf and hard of hearing, with sign language varieties and educational philosophies varying from one school to another (<http://www.umthombo.wits.ac.za/deafed/cds.html>). An estimated 1.6 million deaf / Deaf / hearing impaired individuals accept and use South African Sign Language as their natural and first language (<http://www.umthombo.wits.ac.za/deafed/cds.html>). More people use Sign Language than four of our eleven official languages – Tsonga, Swazi, Ndebele and Venda (<http://www.signgenuis.com/info-statistics5.shtml>). Because the deaf population makes up 3, 5% of the total South African population, our present government and policy makers recognise and support the use of Sign Language as the language of education for the deaf and as such a language for development. In accordance with this, current educational training facilities are developing programmes to achieve this ideal.

The University of the Witwatersrand, under the guidance of Professor Claudine Storbeck, is at the forefront of creating training centres that train professionals to communicate with deaf learners effectively. The Centre for Deaf Studies seeks to serve the needs of the Deaf community and of the larger South African society by training and equipping individuals to have the necessary tools needed to ensure effective communication with the deaf sector of the South African population (<http://www.umthombo.wits.ac.za/deafed/cds.html>). The Deaf Education Project aims to provide teachers with a better understanding of the Deaf culture and community and to teach them how to use sign language (http://www.teacher.co.za/cms/article_2002_05_21-3818.html). The Deaf Education Early Intervention Programme represents a commitment to developing the full potential of Deaf and hard-of-hearing children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds with the aim of providing knowledge and skills necessary to participate as successful, independent, contributing members of society, as well as providing information and support to their families (<http://www.umthombo.wits.ac.za/deafed/eip.html>). As such, through the combined, consistent and continued efforts of interested stakeholders, it is evident that deaf education in South Africa is on the brink of developing policies, facilities and infrastructures that will ensure the positive, self-empowering and holistic development of deaf learners.



2.5. SUMMARY

In this section I have given a brief yet concise theoretical background regarding inclusion and its evolution both internationally and within the South African context. Focusing specifically on the inclusion of deaf learners and its implications for mainstream educational facilities, I have traced the progression of deaf education from the Golden Era of Manualism in the 1800s to today's proposed mixed placement setting. Furthermore, through the investigation of research previously conducted on deaf learners who have been mainstreamed, I have provided the reader with various compelling arguments regarding both the advantages and disadvantages of mainstream and specialised school settings. This section concluded with a brief overview as to current developments and trends in deaf education within South Africa.

SECTION 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this section, I will be introducing the reader to the case participant and explaining the research design and methodology utilised to conduct this study. Due to the fact that this study focuses on the experiences of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school, a contextual background with regard to the case participant will be provided to provide the reader with a frame of reference with regard to the participant. The reader will also be informed of the qualitative research data collection and analysis methods utilised to gather the research data, as well as the measures employed to ensure the validity and reliability of this research study, and the ethical considerations that were adhered to.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

In essence, the design of a research study entails the overall approach and detailed explanation of how the research study will be carried out, with whom and where (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:24). At the outset of every research study, a researcher has the option of adopting either a quantitative or a qualitative research design. The ultimate deciding factor as to which of the two research designs a researcher will adopt, depends on the aim and purpose of the particular research study (Silverman, 2000:1). Due to the fact that this study seeks to highlight the experiences of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school, the research design that lends itself best, and provides me with the most appropriate data collection and analysis tools in which to conduct this research, is a qualitative research design.

According to Merriam (1998), a qualitative research study has the following key characteristics. It aims to uncover and portray the participant's opinions, perspectives and viewpoints, in that it generally seeks to understand an experience or an event (Caelli, Ray and Mill, 2003:4). Additionally, "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Merriam, 1998:7). Thirdly, due to the fact that the researcher needs to have an in-depth understanding of the participant, it involves extensive fieldwork necessitating that the investigator "spends a substantial amount of time in the natural setting of the study, often in intense contact with the participant" (Merriam, 1998:8). Fourthly, it is inductive in that it "builds abstractions, concepts, hypothesis or theories rather than test existing theory" (Merriam, 1998:7). Fifthly, it is "richly descriptive" (Merriam, 1998:8) in that words rather than numbers are utilised to convey the research findings.

Sixthly, the research is emergent, in that it begins with an initial focus of enquiry and refines its focus as ongoing data is collected and analysed, responding to the changing conditions of the study as it progresses (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:24, Merriam, 1998:8). Lastly, the sample selection is usually “non-random, purposeful and small” (Merriam, 1998:8). However, “qualitative research” is an umbrella term, and as such research can be further delineated according to the type of research design, analysis techniques and disciplinary orientation a researcher chooses to adopt within her particular research study.

Of the forty five research designs, analysis techniques and disciplinary orientations (Merriam, 1998:10) a researcher can adopt within a qualitative research study, five distinct major designs exist. In no preferential sequence, the first major design one can utilise is a basic or generic research study. Such a research strategy is utilised when a researcher seeks to “discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved” (Merriam, 1998:11). An ethnographic study would be employed when the researcher seeks to present “a socio cultural analysis of the unit of study” (Merriam, 1998:14). A phenomenological school of philosophical thought underpins all qualitative research. A researcher may embark on a phenomenological study which seeks “to depict the essence or basic structure of an experience” (Merriam, 1998:16). The fourth most common research design employed is grounded theory which is utilised when the researcher seeks to develop a theory grounded in the data collected. Lastly a researcher may employ a case study which possesses the key characteristic of being “an intensive description and analysis of a single unit or bounded system” (Merriam, 1998:19), usually employed when an “in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved” (Merriam, 1998:19) is sought. Drawing from the above definitions, and bearing in mind the purpose of my research study – to disclose the experiences of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school – it becomes evident that a qualitative research case study lends itself best to the aims of this research study.

Merriam (1998:21), initially defined a case study as “an empirical inquiry investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context”. In 1998, after extensive research in a genre of qualitative design that has limited academic sources (Merriam, 1998:19), Merriam came to refine her definition of a case study, defining it as a study of a single unit with clearly defined boundaries. For Key (1997), a case study can be defined as a detailed investigation of an individual with the objective of analysing the variables relevant to the research participant and developing an understanding of the particulars and complexities of that case study. A case study can further be characterised as being particularistic in that it focuses on a “particular situation, event, program or

phenomenon”, descriptive in that it seeks to provide a “thick description of the phenomenon under study” and heuristic in that it “illuminates the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study” (Merriam, 1998: 29).

A case study as a research design possesses both advantages and disadvantages. One of the major disadvantages of a case study, is its susceptibility to biased findings due to its subjective nature (Merriam, 1998). However, through the implementation of stringent control measures to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the above disadvantage can be eliminated. On the other hand, the advantages of a case study design are numerous. Firstly, it offers a means of “investigating a complex social unit consisting of multiple variables of potential importance” (Merriam, 1998:41). Secondly, it is anchored and based on real life situations (Merriam, 1998:41). Thirdly it “provides a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998:41). Lastly, a research case study can be based on one or more case participants. Due to this, a case study can often bring about a deeper appreciation and understanding of an issue, process or programme that can ultimately result in that phenomenon’s improved practice. Faced with a number of logistical limitations such as time and the scope of my research essay, as well as seeking to present a descriptive, in-depth account of the phenomenon under study, I chose to base my research study on one case participant. Consequently, I began my specific and purposeful search for an appropriate case participant.



3.3. CASE SELECTION

3.3.1. SELECTING MY RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Due to the fact that I was trying to ascertain the experiences of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school, my research study outlined the specific criteria that my research participant needed to have. Firstly, he had to be attending a mainstream high school, he had to be deaf and not Deaf (in other words, the participant had to have limited, if any hearing capabilities and not belong to, or identify with, the Deaf community and their culture) and, due to the fact that most of research to date has tended to focus on numerous deaf learners attending a common mainstream school (Olivia, 2004), I was seeking a solitary deaf learner in a mainstream high school. As such, I wished to provide a solitary deaf learner the opportunity to express his experiences within his particular educational context. I approached my case participant who fulfilled the above criteria. However, this was not the first time that I had worked with this particular participant in a research study. On numerous

occasions during the past two years, I have observed the participant and his environment. At this stage I believe it is important that the nature and extent of our association be divulged to the reader.

3.3.2. PREVIOUS INTERACTION BETWEEN CASE PARTICIPANT AND RESEARCHER

Within every qualitative research study, the researcher plays a pivotal role. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research is influenced by the researcher's perceptions and views (Silverman, 2000:2, Key, 1997). Due to this, I would like to provide the reader with a brief history of my involvement with this particular case participant.

I first began to work with my participant in March 2003. At that stage my Master's course work required that I conduct research on a learner with a hearing impairment. Having identified a deaf learner and adopting an eco-systemic approach, I gathered data regarding him, his hearing impairment, his family and his learning environment. Subsequent to that, in April 2004, in order to fulfil my course work requirements for the module Learning Difficulties, I once again worked with this learner to develop an Individualised Educational Programme to address his educational needs. Subsequently, a lot of the background material I will furnish on my research participant with regard to his hearing loss, assistive devices, family and educational background, are derived from previous questionnaires, observations and interviews.

Due to the fact that I would like the reader to "vicariously experience the setting of the study" (Merriam, 1998, 41), I would like to introduce them to the case participant.

3.3.3 PARTICIPANT'S BACKGROUND

The research participant is a 17-year-old boy who is currently enrolled at a mainstream private high school. His school implements the IEB curriculum and syllabi, and in 2005, he will complete his Grade 12 year.

The participant originates from a hearing family of Greek descent, rich in culture, values, ethics, beliefs and religion. He has a brother 11 months younger than him (also currently in grade 11). As a family unit, they are close knit and supportive of each other, with the parents encouraging independence, understanding, acceptance, love and their son's active participation in both his home and school environment. Both parents are prominent, active members of their cultural community.

At seventeen months old, he was diagnosed as being profoundly deaf. Being diagnosed as profoundly deaf bears a number of implications and limitations for such individuals. Without a hearing aid, they hear absolutely nothing. When such individuals speak, they are only aware that they are making a sound due to the fact that they can feel the vibrations made by their vocal cords. Sound is only heard through the utilisation of assistive devices. Due to limited, if any, hearing ability, such individuals tend to develop alternative modes of communication.

Without a hearing aid the case participant hears absolutely nothing. As such, he has employed a variety of different assistive hearing devices to enhance his hearing threshold. Initially he utilized both a hearing aid and an FM system; however he stopped using the FM system sometime during grade 7, due to the fact that he found it “awkward”. From then on until August 2003, he utilized only a hearing aid. This particular hearing aid enables the participant to hear sounds of 40dB, which categorises him as having a mild to moderate hearing loss (40dB). As such, with the aid of this hearing aid, the participant can hear some sounds. Generally, he can hear a person talking to him; however he cannot hear certain consonant sounds such as s/f/d/k/b. He can hear background noise in the classroom / corridor / shopping center, but, this is a cumulative sound and not a specific, distinct sound. He can hear the beat of music, which for him is a monotonous sound, but not the lyrics. Furthermore, he can hear the television, but unless the characters are looking at the screen, he fails to understand what is being said and the sound being emitted is meaningless. For a number of years it was felt that this particular hearing aid was failing to provide the participant with the “best hearing” possible.

Because it is battery-operated and has a manual ‘on’ and ‘off’ switch, there were often times when the participant failed to get any sound input due to the batteries having expired or him forgetting to switch it on. This became a graver concern when the participant began his Grade 10 year. Grade 10 is the first year of a three year preparation course towards a school leaving certificate, as well as the grounding upon which further tertiary acceptance would be decided so, it was felt by both his mother and speech therapist, that they had to ensure that the participant was maximising his hearing ability. The advances and successes of cochlear implants had gained momentum and confidence in recent years and all interested stakeholders urged the participant to consider undergoing this process.

The participant’s hesitancy to undergo a cochlear implant was largely related to his passion for and active involvement in sporting activities. He was greatly concerned about the limitations such an operation would place on his ability to participate in sporting events such as soccer and rugby.

However, after extensive research, he realized that the advantages of this procedure by far outweighed the disadvantages and the participant underwent a cochlear implant in August 2003. While deriving numerous benefits from this operation (which will be discussed further in Section 4), the case participant still fails to attain clarity of sound and effective understanding without actively lip-reading.

Despite being taught sign language from the age of 18 months old, exposure to a predominantly aural-audal academic setting, the participant has come to rely more and more on lip-reading and hearing in his day-to-day communication because of this. However, a number of factors impinge upon his ability to lip-read effectively. Firstly, facial hair, such as a beard or moustache, can block the speaker's lip movements and as such make it difficult for the participant to understand. Secondly, the participant finds it difficult to lip-read if the speaker fails to pronounce their words clearly. This can be due to the fact that words lack distinct lip movement and therefore clarity, or due to the fact that some words share similar lip movement. The participant has found this to be a particular problem when communicating with other men. Thirdly, an accent can affect his understanding of what is being said. He has managed to overcome this difficulty when speaking to people with a Greek accent as he has had to understand his father who has a Greek accent. However, when a speaker has a different accent, this once again proves problematic. Another factor that affects his understanding of what is being said is the direction which the speaker is facing when talking to the participant. If the speaker is not facing him, the participant cannot understand what is being said. Finally, it is critical that the speaker maintains a slow speech pace so that the participant can follow the lip movements. While there are numerous factors that can affect the participant's understanding when he lip reads, overall he has become skilled in lip reading. Additionally, due to his exposure to a hearing - speaking world, it became necessary that he be equipped with the ability to speak English.

To assist the participant in acquiring and utilising speech as a form of communication, he began attending speech therapy at 18 months old. He has been with his current speech therapist since grade 5 and is taught speech, language, clarity of speech and articulation. At all times, including at home, the participant communicates by lip-reading and speaking. Consequently, working intensively with his speech therapist, he has acquired and improved his ability to lip read and to speak English over the years.

Besides his hearing impairment, the case participant has not to date, had any other medical problems. His central language learning processes are intact and are able to function efficiently. As

such, he has no learning problems. He does however have a learning difficulty. In other words, because he cannot get adequate input data, he fails to fully understand what is going on despite having 100% cognitive ability. This results in him experiencing difficulty in his academic tasks. The case participant's learning barrier thus exists because of his inability to hear and understand what is being said and taught. Bearing this in mind, educational settings were predominantly chosen for their ability to address the participant's academic needs.

The participant's educational history includes both specialised and mainstream educational facilities. His entire nursery school career and part of his junior primary education (grade 1 to grade 3) occurred within a specialised educational setting that specifically catered for learners with a hearing impairment or who were deaf. However, while catering for deaf learners, the participant was removed from a specialised educational setting. This was due to the fact that his family was of the opinion that he was not getting enough academic stimulation and that as an individual he wasn't developing. Furthermore, they believed that since he would ultimately be required to live in a hearing - speaking environment, it would be critical to their deaf son's successful future that he learn to interact, cope and live in a hearing world. In their opinion his specialised educational setting was too sheltered an environment to adequately provide him with those vital life skills. Consequently he was enrolled in a mainstream educational facility.

He attended this particular mainstream school from Grade 3 to Grade 6. This particular school was chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, it would expose the participant to a hearing world. Secondly, while by nature being a mainstream school, it had a number of other deaf and hard of hearing learners currently enrolled there. As such, the school strove to accommodate and meet the academic, social and personal needs of such learners, by creating a unit that consisting of three teachers who specialised in dealing with and addressing learners with hearing impairments. However, in order to make the transition from a specialised school setting to a mainstream one as fluid as possible and to ensure this learner's successful mainstreaming, the participant was advised by the school to repeat Grade 3. The school made this recommendation on the basis that there were great academic differences between specialised Grade 3 curriculum and mainstream Grade 3 curriculum. Due to this, they feared that he would be ill-equipped to cope with the Grade 4 mainstream curriculum based on his Grade 3 specialised curriculum. Consequently, he repeated Grade 3 (which is why both he and his brother are currently in the same grade), obtaining additional support from the specialised units set up to assist learners with hearing impairments like his.

The specialised units served a number of vital roles. Firstly they provided the participant with the necessary support needed to ensure his success in a mainstream environment. Secondly, they were utilised to reinforce work done in class, and to help the participant in areas identified by the mainstream teacher as needing additional revision and reinforcement. An important characteristic of these units to note, is that the mode of communication utilised was still Oralist, in that there was no sign language interpreter. During Afrikaans and Bible Education classes, the participant, along with other like-abled learners, was removed from class to attend these units. However, by the time the participant was in Grade 6, this unit was closed down. This was due to the fact that by Grade 6, the participant was the only deaf learner there, the other learners having sought alternative schooling facilities – mainstream and specialized. Consequently the participant was no longer obtaining the additional help he had initially been getting. The final decision to remove the participant from this school was taken when his Grade 6 English teacher thought that the best way to communicate with him was by screaming at him. This caused the participant much emotional distress and he was subsequently removed from this mainstream educational setting.

A number of factors contributed towards the participant's parents enrolling him at his current school. Firstly, as a school, it upheld and promoted his heritage, culture and ethos. Secondly, due to the fact that he was a bright, intelligent and capable individual a specialised educational setting was not seen as an option, as it was felt that it would not nurture and enhance these qualities in him. Thirdly, at some stage of his life, the participant would be expected to interact in the larger hearing – speaking society and it was felt once again that a specialized educational setting would not equip him with the necessary skills he would need to successfully integrate in society. As such, the participant enrolled at his current mainstream school and has been there since Grade 7.

To date neither the participant nor his parents have encountered any problems from any of the school's stakeholders with regard to his inclusion in this mainstream educational setting. In order to facilitate his inclusion in the school, his speech therapist was called in to inform the educators and all relevant stakeholders what to expect from this learner and how best to address and meet his needs. The school psychologist also helped to make the whole integration process easier by working closely with the participant's teachers, parents and speech therapists. Where possible, the participant was provided with additional support services, such as the school's psychologist and speech and hearing therapist. However, he preferred to utilise his own private, external practitioners. Additional academic support was provided for in terms of extra lessons after school or on an appointment basis. Again, the case participant preferred to utilise external practitioners

because extra curricula activities often clashed with pre-scheduled school extra lessons. Overall, the school has viewed the inclusion of the participant as a privilege.

The above information is a culmination of an 18 month relationship between the researcher and the participant. Besides having obtained a relatively in-depth understanding of the participant and his world, I have also come to learn which data collection methods work and yield the best responses from him. Subsequently, I designed my data collection methods on the basis of that knowledge.

3.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.4.1. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Ultimately, within a qualitative research study, the researcher aims to get to know and understand the research participant. In essence, the strategy employed to gather data will depend on two factors. Firstly, it will depend on the question of the research study. Secondly, it will depend on determining which sources of data would yield the best information with which to answer the research question (Merriam, 1998:12). Traditional data collection methods utilised within a qualitative research study that lend themselves to the objectives of this research study are documentation, questionnaires, observations and interviews. In this study, I have utilised all four data collection methods, commencing my research with the data collection tool of documentation.

3.4.1.1. DOCUMENTATION AS A DATA GATHERING TOOL

Seeking an autobiographical account of my participant's educational experiences in his current mainstream school, I began my data collection through the utilisation of documentation. Within a qualitative research study, documentation as a data collection tool can offer great insight and understanding with regard to the phenomenon being studied (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). Documentation can be either personal in its origin, such as diaries, letters and autobiographies, or public, such as policy manuals, film and written media, photographs, etc. Due to the nature of the research study, personal documentation data was required.

From the outset, the participant had difficulty conceptualising what was required of him with regard to an autobiographical account. As such, a few brief guidelines as to possible issues and topics he could discuss were provided (Appendix 1). However, this particular data collection method proved unsuccessful for two reasons. Firstly, according to the participant, documentation was too

similar to an English essay which he finds difficult to do. Secondly it involved talking about feelings and experiences which he also found difficult to do. As such, my data collection in essence began with an open questionnaire.

3.4.1.2. AN OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE AS A DATA GATHERING TOOL

Key (1997) defines a questionnaire as a means of eliciting the feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attributes of a sample participant. Bearing this definition in mind, as well as the fact that within a questionnaire, the questions we ask will determine the answers we find (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994:22), I developed an open ended questionnaire (Appendix 2). Unlike a closed questionnaire which seeks a yes or no answer, an open questionnaire allows for a free response from the participant, as such allowing them greater depth in their responses. Following the guidelines that a questionnaire needs to be clear, defined and objective (Key, 1997), I developed my questionnaire based on the specific phenomena I wished to uncover. As such, I devised questions relating to the participant's academic performance, his extra-curricular involvement at school, his relationship with his peers and teachers, the emotional impact mainstreaming has had on him, and his perceptions and feelings regarding mainstream and specialized educational settings. Below is a brief extract of questions from the questionnaire.

Extract of some of the questions asked from questionnaire

Academics

1. How do you feel in the classroom during a lesson? Why do you feel this way?
2. How do you find the work that you do in class – easy, difficult? If difficult what makes it so?
3. Do you find it easy to cope with your current work load? Why?

Extra curricular

1. What sports are you currently involved in and why?
2. How do you find your coaches / trainers? Is there a particular coach you like and if so why? Is there a particular coach you dislike and if so why?

Social

1. How would you compare your interactions at home with school? Is it easier / harder / the same? Explain.
2. How do you interact with other people in the school who are not your friends?
3. How do you find interacting with teachers who don't teach you and the principal and administrative body of the school?

Emotional

1. What highs have you experienced at school? Explain.
2. What lows have you experienced at school? Explain

School

1. Knowing what you know today and having experienced life in this school, would you recommend such a school to deaf learners? Explain.
2. In which ways would you say attending this school has assisted you?

I was present while the participant completed the questionnaire at his house so that I could clarify any confusing questions, words or statements that he may have encountered. An extract of the completed questionnaire has been provided in Appendix 2. When he had completed the

questionnaire, I initiated contact with his school's management team to organise opportunities for me to observe the participant in his school environment.

3.4.1.3. OBSERVATION AS A DATA GATHERING TOOL

By definition, observation requires that the researcher places herself in the research participant's natural setting to observe day-to-day experiences; phenomena and behaviour (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). Its two distinct features are firstly, that the observation occurs in a natural setting (where the phenomenon is naturally occurring), and secondly, that it is a "firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest" (Merriam, 1998:94). Consequently, as a data collection tool, observation is utilised when it serves a formulated research purpose, when it is planned and deliberate, when it is systematically recorded and when it is subjected to rigorous checks and controls to ensure its validity and reliability (Merriam, 1998:96). Due to the fact that the aim of my research study was to establish the experiences of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school, it was imperative that I observe the participant in the academic, social and extracurricular activities of his particular school environment.

When utilising observation as a data gathering tool, it is necessary to bear in mind that what the observer will observe is largely dependent on the purpose of the study, its "conceptual framework" (Merriam, 1998:96). Seeking to determine the participant's experience in a mainstream high school, it was concluded that certain key settings needed to be observed as they would yield the researcher with valuable insight and relevant data. As such, on two separate occasions for a period of four hours at a time, I observed the participant in his natural school setting, paying particular attention to his school's physical setting, his classroom, extra curricular activities, his interactions with teachers and peers, his conversations and any non-verbal forms of communication. However, while observation as a data collection tool provides the researcher with a fuller picture of the participant's world, it does have certain limitations.

One of the main limitations of observation is the possibility of the participant acting or behaving differently due to the presence of the researcher (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:24). As such, it is necessary that throughout the observation process the researcher is aware of her own behaviour. Consequently, on the two different occasions that I went to the participant's school, I assumed a passive participant observation role (Key, 1997) by placing myself at the back of the class and away from the participant's line of vision (both within the class and at break). This was done so as to minimise the effect my presence would have on the participant, as well as the whole teaching and

learning environment. In addition, I was counting on the fact that our familiarity with each other would make him less self-conscious in my presence. Both of my observations yielded numerous field notes of what I saw, heard, experienced and observed (Marshall and Rossman, 1995) which have been attached in Appendix 3.

Extract of field notes collected from observation sessions

Foyer of class circulating from peer to peer

Conversation –

N: “I don’t like the beat of that song. It has too much base.

P: “ Yia, it goes doesch, doesch, ...

Notice: Friends answer facing him when they talk, they make sure they are facing him. Some emphasise their lip movements

English class

Seated in the center of the class, in a group seating arrangement of six seats.

Other peers in that seating arrangement are girls

Teacher, when teaching, teaches from that spot.

Total amount of learners in this class: 20

This teacher has taught this learner before. According to her, initially she was his teacher, but now she feels more like a mother figure to him.

Teacher “I even sometimes forget of his impairment. Remarkable, hey?”

“He is absolutely divine. I am more like a mother to him. He spends at least two hours a day with me as he comes to me during Afrikaans for extra instruction.”

The next step in the data collection process was to conduct an in-depth interview with my participant.



3.4.1.4. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

Described as a conversation with a purpose, an in-depth interview is used to uncover the participant’s meaning and perspective (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:80). There were two reasons why I left this data gathering tool for last. Firstly, I wanted to provide myself with a means of verifying my findings thus far by gaining further reinforcement from the participant himself. Secondly, I wished to query and raise issues that I had uncovered through my literature review that the participant had failed to mention or comment on. Having analysed my data according to Henning, van Rensburg and Smit’s (2004:102) qualitative content data analysis technique (which is explained further in 3.4.2.), I sought to establish the issues I wished to further clarify as well as the issues I wished to raise further (Marshall and Rossman, 2004:18). Consequently, prior to conducting the interview, it was necessary that data thus far collected through the questionnaire and observation, be analysed, so as to develop an interview guide.

Seeking to gain a more in depth understanding of key issues that had arisen through the questionnaire and field notes, as well as to explore issues that had not as yet been raised, I

developed my interview guide. Defined as “nothing more than a list of questions” (Merriam, 1998:81), an interview guide can be highly structured containing “dozens of very specific questions listed in a particular order” (Merriam, 1998:81) or unstructured containing “a few topical areas jotted down in no particular order” (Merriam, 1998:81). In addition, there is no set rule as to the order in which questions should be asked within an interview, their order being determined by the aim of the research study, the participant, the time limitations of the interview, and the sensitivity of the questions being asked. Due to my relative inexperience as a researcher, I developed a highly structured interview guide consisting of distinct categories and following a logical sequence of thought.

Extract from interview guide

Learning environment

1. What do you enjoy the most about school – subject / teacher/ activity – what about it do you enjoy?
2. In which part of school life are you most comfortable – classroom; sports field; break – why?

Communication

3. How has the cochlear implant affected / changed your life?
4. Do you still rely on lip-reading to understand and communicate?

Socialising

5. You appear to enjoy socialising with your peers. You are friendly with everyone and often initiate conversations with different people. Do you in fact like socialising?
6. I observed that at break you tend to sit on the grandstand by the basketball court watching others play basketball. Do you ever get involved? What do you generally tend to do at break?

Mainstreaming

7. In one of your responses, you said that initially you felt different to the others but that that was not the case anymore. How did you feel different? What happened to change that feeling?
8. You said that one of your highlights at school is the extra-curricular activities, physical education – you forget about stress; problems. What problems or stresses are you referring to?

The interview was conducted at the participant’s home; video taped; transferred to a compact disc and transcribed verbatim (Appendix 4). Having gathered all my data, I began to analyse all the data in its entirety, seeking to assign academic meaning to the data I had collected.

3.4.2. DATA ANALYSIS

In essence, in a qualitative research study, data analysis begins from the moment the researcher starts to collect data. In other words, the researcher begins to analyse the data from the moment she has read the first document, seen questionnaire responses, observed behaviour and heard responses to interviews (Merriam, 1998). Adopting the qualitative content analysis technique of Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004:102), I sought to analyse each unit of data with the objective of identifying repetitive themes and patterns.

In short, qualitative content analysis requires that data is read critically and disseminated into codes, categories and eventually into prevailing, common themes. As such I began my data analysis by examining the data. Also known as open coding, this process entailed that the data thus far collected be read in its entirety so as to gain a “global impression of the content” (Henning, van Rensburg and Smit, 2004:104). Having gained a general overview of the data, I then began to attach meaning to different segments of the data, developing codes. I then placed the different codes into numerous specific categories. Next, having coded and categorized all the data, I began to look at all the categories with the aim of identifying any relationships in meaning between the different categories (Henning, van Rensburg and Smit, 2004:106). In essence, “a category will already begin to show the themes that will be constructed from the data and that will be used in the discussion of enquiry” (Henning, van Rensburg and Smit, 2004:104). As such, utilizing the qualitative content analysis method, I transformed my raw data into prevalent, relevant themes. The above process is more clearly illustrated by the example that follows from the interview, observation and questionnaire.

Examples of coding process

Interview :

Participant: “...easier to follow a face that does not have an expression.”

Code – facial expressions

Initial category – teaching technique

Revised category – curriculum

Theme – the learning environment

Researcher: “ ...Can I ask if you find it better to sit next to a girl or a boy? Is there a difference?”

Participant: “ Yes.”

Researcher: “Why?”

Participant: :Because a boy they don't work.”

Researcher: laugh

Participant: laugh. “They prefer to talk than work. Girls they concentrate quieter.”

Code: prefers to sit next to a girl

Initial category: seating arrangement

Revised category: the classroom environment; additional support

Theme: the learning environment

Observation:

Seated in the center of the classroom next to a girl

Teacher teaches from that spot most of the time, moving within one step on either side or to write on the board

Code: sits in the middle of the class

: next to a girl

: teacher movement

Initial category: seating arrangement, teacher teaching adaptations

Revised category: the classroom environment, additional support, classroom atmosphere

Theme: the learning environment

Going up the stairs between classes a friend stops him and starts to sign to him

Participant signs back. They laugh. They go to class.

Code: friend using sign language

Initial category: communication adaptations made by peers, acceptance by peers as one of them

Revised category: communication utilised, peer relationships

Theme: modes of communication, socialisation in a hearing world

Questionnaire:

Question: How do you experience classroom life – easy, difficult? Explain.

Answer: Depends on the class peers. For example I have two English classes one with girls who concentrate and work, the other mostly boys. I get distracted and I battle to concentrate in the class with the boys. It is a small class, there is background noise and I need to concentrate more.

Code: classroom experience dependent on peers.

Affected by number of boys and girls

Classroom noise

Concentration affected by noise in class

Initial categories: academic achievement

additional support

seating arrangements

classroom experience

environmental pollution

Revised category: the curriculum

The classroom environment

Capacity of input

Theme: the learning environment

Mode of communication

Consequently, in seeking common themes and prevailing patterns, I systematically analysed each data-collection tool. Starting with the questionnaire, I highlighted key phrases, points and issues. From there I looked at repetitive themes and the emergence of patterns. I regrouped and clustered phrases and issues that shared a common link and sought to determine what underlying theme or

principle they shared. The field notes and in-depth interviews were similarly analysed. Table 3.1. is a schematic representation of the above process. After intensive analysis, I arrived at four predominant themes, namely the learning environment, socialization in a hearing world, mode of communication and mainstreaming versus specialized education. The particular content and scope of each theme will be discussed in detail in section 4.4.



RAW DATA COLLECTED	CODE	INITIAL CATEGORISATION OF CODE	REVISED CATEGORISATION	THEME
<p>Questionnaire How do you experience classroom life – easy, difficult? Explain?</p> <p>It depends on my class. For example, I have two English classes. The one is with girls. They concentrate, they work. The other class is mostly boys. Here I battle to concentrate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - class peers affects his concentration - prefers girls to boys as they concentrate and work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Classroom atmosphere -Classroom experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum The classroom environment Extra-curricular environment 	The learning environment
<p>How do you find your coaches / trainers? Is there a particular coach you like and if so why? Is there a particular coach you dislike and if so, why?</p> <p>My soccer coach. I have known him for a long time. He speaks to me on a one to one and makes sure that I understand. My cricket coach. He is young. When he talks I often miss out on what he says. He lacks experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowing his coach for a long time - coach talks to him on a one to one basis, makes sure he understands - cricket coach lacks experience - learner misses out on what is being said 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - affects understanding - adaptations made to ensure understanding - experience of trainer - limited input of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral-audal mode Capacity of input Communication The curriculum The classroom environment Extra-curricular environment 	<p>Mode of communication</p> <p>The learning environment</p>
<p>Observation: English class The work pace is slower than the average learner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - works at a slower pace to like aged peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work to age peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The curriculum The classroom environment 	The learning environment
<p>There is extensive eye-contact between this teacher and the participant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - touch / eye-contact extensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teaching technique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantages Disadvantages Effect on character 	Mainstreaming versus Specialised educational settings

RAW DATA COLLECTED	CODE	INITIAL CATEGORISATION OF CODE	REVISED CATEGORISATION	THEME
<p>Interview: R: You said in your questionnaire to forget...remember when we did the questionnaire, you said to forget all my problems. What problems are you talking about? P: Stress from all the work and concentrating too much. R: So stress from all the work and concentrating too much? P: Hmmm R: Okay P: Because I lip read all the time I get tired easy R: Sorry, because you have to? P: Lip read R: So do you still lip read P: Yes R: To understand? P: Hmmm R: So even with a cochlear implant you still need to lip read? P: Hmmm. You still have to.</p>	<p>- stress caused due to extensive concentration on lip reading to ensure understanding, which is tiring - cochlear implant still requires lip reading</p>	<p>- to understand needs to concentrate all the time - understanding dependent on lip reading - lip reading is demanding - effective understanding occurs only through lip reading</p>	<p>Teacher interactions Peer interactions Group conversation Social activities Advantages Disadvantages Oral-audal mode Capacity of input Communication</p>	<p>Socialisation in a hearing world Mainstreaming versus Specialised educational settings Mode of communication</p>
<p>R: And can you still sign-language? Are you still fluent? P: I forgot some. Yia R: Do you miss it? Do you miss being able to talk to people in a sign language? P: Little bit R: No, but would you like to be able to do that instead of having to lip read? P: No R: Are you fine with both? P: Yes. Because with sign language they don't have enough vocabulary. That's why it affects my English a lot.</p>	<p>- fluency of sign language has been affected due to non usage - prefers to hear and talk rather than sign as sign language has limited vocabulary - signing affects his English -comfortable in both modes of communication</p>	<p>- sign language not as important in effective communication - preference for the spoken word</p>	<p>Oral-audal mode Capacity of input Communication Advantages Disadvantages Effect on character</p>	<p>Mode of communication Mainstreaming versus Specialised educational settings</p>

Table 3.1.: Analysing raw data into categories

Having identified key themes and distinct patterns within all the data collected, I then combined all of my data together, seeking to further cluster and group my findings. However, due to the fact that by nature a qualitative research study is susceptible to bias through its subjectivity, I had to implement stringent controls and measures to ensure that my findings were reliable and valid.

3.5. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995:24) in establishing validity and reliability, the researcher is asked to furnish the measures undertaken to ensure its reader that the findings are credible. In other words, it is necessary that the reader be provided with a detailed step-by-step guideline as to the various data collection methods utilised and how, in turn, that data was analysed. A qualitative research study has often been criticised academically as being too subjective in nature (Merriam, 1998, Silverman, 2000). As such, it is necessary that the validity and reliability of a qualitative study be exposed to stringent checks and control measures.

According to Caelli, Ray and Mill (2003:9) validity and credibility is achieved when four issues are addressed. Firstly, the theoretical position of the researcher needs to be disclosed. In other words, the reader is provided with the rationale and motivation as to what drove the researcher to research the ensuing study. Secondly, congruency between methodology and data methods employed has to be established. In other words, the theoretical framework that guides how the research will be executed and the tools; techniques and procedures utilised to gather evidence needs to be compatible. Thirdly, the reader needs to be furnished with the strategies that were employed to establish rigour within the research study. Lastly, the analytical lens, how the researcher engaged with and examined the data, needs to be provided. Utilising the validity and reliability requirements as stipulated by Marshall and Rossman (1995) and Caelli, Ray and Mill (2003), I will establish the validity and reliability of this research study.

A number of measures have been taken thus far within the documented research study to establish reliability. Within Section 1 I provided the reader with a detailed explanation as to how this research study came about and why it interested me. In addition, within Section 1, I stated the personal assumptions and presuppositions that I, the researcher, brought with me to this research study. Thirdly, I provided the reader with an audit trail (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994:146) as to how I came about my findings and conclusion from the data collected. This audit trail was achieved by attaching within the appendix of this research study my completed questionnaire, field notes and interview transcriptions. Furthermore, I utilised a variety of data-collection tools, which according

to James Key (1997) of Oklahoma State University, is one way of ensuring the reliability and validity of my findings and conclusions.

Known as triangulation, the first strategy I employed to establish internal validity (“how research findings match reality” [Merriam, 1998:201]) was through the utilisation of various data collection tools, specifically documentation, questionnaires, observations and interviews to gather my data. I observed my participant on two separate occasions, for a period of four hours at a time, within his school environment. Through the in-depth interview, I sought to further clarify and solidify my findings and conclusions by gaining the participant’s validation and corroboration. During the process of analysing my data in terms of themes and categories, I also sought content validity through the collaboration of raw data collected.

According to Key (1997), content validity “can be defined as the degree to which the test items represent the domain or universe of the trait or property being measured.” As such, by identifying repetitive categories and themes, I sought to establish content validity. Where solitary findings occurred, they were further delved into through the interview to ascertain whether they were relevant to this research study or not. In addition, all the data collected was recorded exactly, transcribed and included within the appendix of this research study. Furthermore, throughout the process of analysing my data and developing my findings, I sought feedback from my supervisor. Lastly, but most importantly, I have sought to remain objective within my research findings by comparing data I have collected with existing research and reporting any correlation and deviations between the two. In seeking to determine to what extent the findings of this research study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1998:207), I sought to establish external validity, by providing the reader with a thick; in-depth description of my participant, his family and educational background, his hearing disability and assistive devices utilised so that others can understand the research study’s context and experience it vicariously (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:260). The measures undertaken to achieve validity and reliability were done in accordance with the ethical considerations to which the researcher sought to adhere.

3.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In order to gain ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education and Nursing ethics committee, a number of ethical considerations needed to be stipulated and adhered to. Firstly, written consent was required from the participant himself, his parents, his school and the school’s district office (Appendix 5). In addition, a number of ethical considerations were taken into account to ensure that

this research study was in compliance with the University's ethical code of conduct (Appendix 5). The goal and purpose of the study as well as the benefits such a research study would provide the case participant were explained to the participant, his parents and school were explained. They were assured of their privacy, confidentiality and anonymity during and after the research. The participant was briefed with regard to what was expected of him in terms of time and research methods that were to be utilised to collect data. He was also informed of the fact that at any time during the course of the research he could withdraw from the research study, and that he retained the right to refuse to answer questions he did not wish to answer. Every effort was made to ensure that the participant experienced no physical, mental or emotional harm, and that should such harm occur, competent and appropriate redress would be sought. Being aware of the personal and academic demands of the participant, I endeavoured to minimize his time commitment with regards to the research, and to spend time together constructively. Lastly, the participant was allowed access to the research during the course of the study, and will be provided with a final copy of this study upon its completion.

3.8. SUMMARY

In the above section, I have sought to familiarise the reader with the research design and methodology utilised to conduct this research study. Having categorised this study as a qualitative research case study, I proceeded to explain what such a research study entails, and the data-gathering tools that best lend itself to this. After that, I provided the reader with a brief overview of the research participant, as well as the relationship dynamics between the researcher and the participant. Subsequent to that, the reader was provided with an extensive explanation and illustration as to the qualitative content analysis method employed to analyse the raw data. This section was concluded by conveying the methods employed to ensure the validity of this study, as well as the ethical considerations.

SECTION 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPETATION OF DATA

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In Section 4, the findings of this research study will be discussed and interpreted. I will reiterate the research question, the various categories and main themes that emerged during the analysis of the raw data. Thereafter, in an attempt to show similarities or in some instances differences, the data findings will be compared to existing literature where this exists. After that, I will present some recommendations and adaptations based on the findings of this study, and will conclude by highlighting possible areas of future research that may further enhance the inclusion of deaf learners.

4.2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

From the outset, this study has sought to investigate the experiences of a deaf learner in a mainstream high school. This research study originated from the diverse and conflicting thoughts regarding the inclusion of deaf learners, as well as the lack of research as to the experiences of solitary mainstreamed deaf learners. Consequently, this research study has sought to provide such a learner with the opportunity to explain to interested stakeholders what his personal mainstream experiences have been. Gathering my data through the utilisation of various data collection tools and analysing them according to the qualitative content analysis method, this research study based on a solitary, grade 12, mainstream learner, has yielded the following findings.

4.3. DATA RESULTS

Having explained the content analysis method that was utilised to analyse the data in Section 3, a number of significant issues and thoughts arose. In some instances there was a repetition of the issues and thoughts throughout the different data collected, while in other instances, the data findings were unique. Having highlighted pertinent thoughts and issues, I then proceeded to cluster my findings into categories and then into themes. The following table is an explanation of the different categories that emerged and how they were clustered together to develop predominant themes.

Initial categorization	Final categorisation of data	Themes and sub-themes	Essence of theme
<p>Work / syllabi difficulties and experiences OBE portfolio work Additional support Teaching technique Seating arrangement Academic achievement</p> <p>Classroom atmosphere Classroom experience Work to age peers Teaching technique Seating arrangement Academic achievement</p> <p>Extra-curricular environment</p>	<p>The curriculum</p> <p>The classroom environment</p> <p>Extra-curricular environment</p>	<p>THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * the curriculum * the classroom environment * extra-curricular activities 	<p>This theme refers to aspects of the learning environment (the classroom; the academic and extra curricular curriculum; and general school activities) that directly impact on the teaching and learning experience of a deaf learner</p>
<p>Interaction at home</p> <p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Familiarity of teachers - Experience - Care, effort and relationship - Temperament - Length of relationship <p>Interaction with peers / friends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friendly - Adapted communication - Support - Conversation in groups - Conversing with strangers 	<p>Interacting with hearing parties Teacher interactions</p> <p>Peer interactions</p> <p>Group conversation Social activities</p>	<p>SOCIALISATION IN A HEARING WORLD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * interaction with peers * interaction with teachers *socialization skills 	<p>This theme covers all forms of socialisation that the participant engages in a hearing world with regard to his family, peers, friends and teachers</p>
<p>Writing and listening Cochlear implant Environmental pollution Limited communication Increased awareness of bodily movements</p>	<p>Oral-audal mode Capacity of input Communication</p>	<p>MODE OF COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * oral-audal mode * cochlear implant * communication skills 	<p>This theme covers all aspects of the participant's communication activities, aiming to provide insight on how the mode of communication utilised affects his overall communication and understanding</p>

Initial categorization	Final categorisation of data	Themes and sub-themes	Essence of theme
Character traits: - Strong belief in self - Positive outlook on life - Intelligence - Sensitive; quiet Result of mainstreaming - Grasp of English - Solitude; feeling different - Academic performance - Social interaction Specialised education - like culture and character - greater respect - education poorer - socially different	Effect on character Advantages and Disadvantages of mainstreaming Advantages and Disadvantages of specialised education	MAINSTREAMING VERSUS SPECIALISED EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS * character changes * advantages and disadvantages of both forms of education	This theme contains the participant's views on mainstreaming and specialised education and how the mainstreaming has come to affect his character and who he is

Table 4.1: Classification of categories into themes and sub-themes

Consequently, data collected through the questionnaire, observations and interview, were categorised into four all-inclusive themes. Having done an extensive literature review concerning the inclusion of deaf learners and their experiences in Section 2, I then proceeded to interpret my research findings within the framework of existing literature.

4.4. INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Having categorised my research findings into four themes, I reviewed existing literature to ascertain how my findings within each of the key themes correlated with existing literature. At this stage I would like to make the reader aware of the fact that while Table 4.1 and the interpretation that subsequently follows gives the impression that data gathered fitted into distinct categories, that was not the case. In many instances, findings overlapped into numerous categories. However, in order to try and report back in a coherent, logistical and practical manner, I found it easier to categorise my findings under separate, distinct headings. As such, my findings will be disclosed under the following headings – *the learning environment, socialisation in a hearing world, mode of communication and mainstream versus specialised educational settings.*

4.4.1. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Within this theme, I have sought to identify the effect the learning environment has on a deaf learner. Initially, one would assume that a learning environment involves only the academic and curricula milieu of the school. Bearing in mind that inclusive practices encourage the holistic development of a learner, it happens that besides the school's curricula, the classroom environment as well as the extra-curricular activities the school offers, also affect the entire learning experience of a deaf learner. As such, it is critical that stakeholders are made aware of how the curricula, the classroom environment and extra curricular programme, both individually and collectively, affect the holistic development of a deaf learner.

Research has identified three critical learning needs regarding the education of deaf learners (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). Firstly, educators need to envisage that a deaf learner will reach his full potential, as their perceptions and mind-frame can have an impact on the deaf learner's opinion of himself and his capabilities. According to the participant, the care, support and confidence his teachers have in him and his capabilities is clearly evident. As a whole, his teachers are positive and enthusiastic, providing him with the belief and confidence that he will attain a matric pass. Similarly, apart from having to attend the occasional extra Maths and Science lessons (in a private capacity), the participant is confident that he is capable of satisfactorily meeting the syllabi requirements of grade 12.

Secondly, it is important that educators provide the deaf learner with the necessary opportunities to develop independent learning skills (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). Consequently, through active class instruction as well as one-on-one interaction, the participant's teachers have engaged with the participant to ensure that he develops independent learning skills. According to the participant's speech therapist, in most examination settings, the participant will battle with the vocabulary and syntax of a question, and in some instances be unable to answer the question properly, not due to a

lack of knowledge but due to his inability to grasp the essence of the question. The participant's teachers were made aware of this, and many endeavors in the past three years have been undertaken to assist the participant in overcoming problems he has encountered in the understanding of questions and in the development of autonomous learning skills.

Thirdly, a deaf learner needs to have the same access to the school curriculum as hearing peers,(Knight and Swanwick, 1999). While taking into account the fact that the participant is deaf, he has been expected to fulfill the needs of the school's IEB curricula, with the only compensation being the allowance of additional time during examinations and tests. While the participant works at a slower pace than his peers and has a poorer concentration and writing ability, his educators have every confidence that he will successfully complete and pass his matric year. Furthermore, like his hearing peers, the participant has had the same opportunities to access the curriculum and develop independent study skills. From a theoretical perspective it would therefore appear that the school has managed to address and meet the participant's learning needs. However, in his personal academic experience, he has at times encountered minor problems regarding the school's curriculum.

There are a number of factors that can influence the quality of input data the participant receives during a lesson. For example, he can miss out on work being taught due to his inability to simultaneously write down and listen. This was evident during my observation of him in an English poetry lesson. The participant sat and watched the teacher, and did not once did he take down any notes. When I commented on this during the subsequent interview, his response was “..while she talks in class everyone writes down the notes but I don't write it down...I listen to her. So I have the girl next to me she take her paper and she make a photocopy for me...Yes, that's how I follow in English” (Interview, line 154). As such, when a lesson requires that the participant simultaneously listens and writes, he chooses to rather listen and then take the necessary notes from one of his class peers. In such instances, the participant has arranged to make a photocopy of the notes of the girl sitting next to him. In other instances, if the work is

complex and requires extensive insight or information which he failed to grasp, the participant will approach the teacher. Generally, however, he is more comfortable approaching one of his friends for supplementary help as he is very familiar with them, and "...they (his friends) will always help me" (Interview, line 223). At times when he is absent for an extended period of time, the teacher will organize a make up session for the participant to catch up the work he has missed. From the above data provided a number of significant findings become evident.

Firstly, there are instances where he battles to cope with the oral-audal mode of teaching. For example, how a teacher speaks and hands instructions affects his understanding of the work. If a teacher verbally issues out assignments while she is busy doing something else, he will fail to comprehend that homework has been given. Similarly, if a teacher talks while she is writing on the board, he fails to understand what is being said. He will also battle to understand what is going on if the teacher talks quickly, moves around a lot and fails to make eye-contact with him. Similarly, he also battles with group activities. He stated that group work is "...a little bit difficult...because I see the person talking I have to look but if someone says something I have to find who is talking...difficult to know who is talking" (Interview, line 542). In addition, it requires a greater amount of concentration and effort on his part to follow the entire conversation, and as such, he can miss out on the total exchange of information. He explains this by stating that in group conversation he has to "...stay at a spot where I can see everyone easy (during group conversations) and (in instances when he is not following the conversation) "...leaves it...I don't want to disturb them...I wait to finish I ask one of my friends what is happening" (Interview, line 570). Consequently, group work is difficult because of the participant's inability to fully comprehend what is going on. Secondly, he relies a lot on his peers for their help and assistance with regard to curricula work.

According to the participant, who he sits next to and who his class mates are affects his concentration, ability to understand and work output. While in most classes, his seating arrangement is random, the participant generally prefers to sit next to a girl "...because a boy they don't work...they prefer to talk than work. Girls they concentrate, quieter"

(Interview, line 172). In addition his peers' work-ethic affects him as in classes where his peers "fool around and talk a lot", he gets distracted, battling to concentrate. "They want to talk to me...I tell them leave me alone, I want to concentrate" (Interview, line 92). It also becomes evident that the participant in general, prefers one-to-one / small group sessions. This is due to the fact that he finds himself concentrating more and working harder if the teacher is solely focused on him. Stemming from this, it becomes evident that the teacher and her teaching strategies and techniques greatly affect his comprehension during a lesson.

While the participant maintains that his academic performance as a whole is largely dependent on the amount of effort and work he puts into it, he is also aware that the nature of the task and its difficulty also determine his ability to satisfactorily complete that task. To a large extent, the requirements of the new Outcomes Based Education (OBE) policy have helped to improve his confidence and academic performance in all of his subjects.

According to the new OBE policy, a learner's final assessment no longer consists solely of his final November examination mark. Instead, utilising a Continuous Assessment approach, the learner's final mark will consist of all his work completed during that year, as well as the final examination. Consequently, due to the fact that a large portion of the participant's final mark is now based on the total year's work performance instead of just on a final written exam, the participant has benefited from the additional support and the varied assessment structures of the different tasks. Because he is able to do portfolio work with his peers ("...I prefer working at school...my friends are there...they can help me" [Interview, line 260]), at home and with the aid of his speech and hearing therapist and additional English teacher, the standard of work he is currently producing has dramatically improved, which has consequently boosted his confidence in his academic ability. To a large extent, the participant's academic success is a combination of his efforts and the nature of the task at hand. In addition to this, he maintains that the teaching strategies and skills his teachers employ, also contribute to his academic success.

According to the participant, a teacher's familiarity and teaching experience affects his understanding of the work and his subsequent performance. He believes that an experienced teacher "...knows what they doing. If someone's got no experience they panic and they will do everything quickly. They will forget about me...they don't project properly...they talk while they writing on the board..." (Interview, line 192). As such, according to the participant, not only does the teacher's care and efforts affect his academic performance, but also their years of experience. Due to the fact that an experienced teacher is aware of the participant's different educational needs as well as realising what teaching and learning strategies maximise his academic understanding and performance, the participant believes that teacher experience and familiarity is critical to his academic success. According to him, a teacher who has taught him before and is experienced, makes adaptations in her classes and lessons to ensure that she meets his particular academic needs. In addition, he is also affected by a teacher's temperament, stating that, "I don't like a teacher in a bad mood...it make me look at her face with expression not lip read...forget about lip reading. You look at her when she is angry" (Interview, line 242). In essence therefore, adaptations made by the educator with regard to their teaching strategies and techniques, can have a positive impact upon the academic performance of the participant. Many of the participant's educators however, contribute his personal success at their school not due to his academic performance, but rather due to his active involvement in the extra curricular activities of the school.

Because the participant is able to fully access the school's extra curriculum programme, many of his educators are of the opinion that the school's extra curricular activities are "what keeps him going...as in the classroom he is a bit of an anomaly, but on the sports field all differences fall aside and he is just another team player" (Observation, line 58). This is further verified by the participant who states that on the sports field "...I forget about the stress...stress from all the work and concentrating too much" (Interview, line 29). While being limited in the types of sports he can participate in due to his cochlear implant, the participant is an active member of the school's soccer and cricket teams.

He particularly enjoys cricket due to its silence – “...it’s a silent game...you watch the ball, the players...you know the rules and you know what to do” (Questionnaire, line 72). Due to the possibility of an injury occurring during a game, the participant removes his hearing aid and cochlear implant when playing any sports. As such, he will at the beginning of a game, inform the referee of his deafness so that the referee is aware of the fact that he cannot hear the whistle / instructions being said. On one occasion when the participant failed to inform the external referee of his deafness (the team had arrived late for the match and had immediately started the game), an irate referee had stopped him when he had repeatedly failed to hear the whistle and asked him “Are you deaf or something?” to which the participant laughingly replied “Yes” (Questionnaire, line 98).

From the above research findings and in accordance with existing literature, it becomes evident that the learning environment can affect and ensure the successful inclusion of deaf learners. According to the participant of this research study, it becomes evident that the classroom atmosphere and setting, as well as the educator’s teaching strategies and methodologies can affect the quality of input data a deaf learner receives in a formal classroom setting. Noting this, it consequently becomes necessary that educators of deaf learners are aware that such learner’s academic performance is directly affected by the quality of input data they receive (Lewis, 1968). Therefore, until this communication barrier is eradicated, ensuring that deaf learners are communicating freely, educators need to be aware that a deaf learner’s educational needs are different to those of hearing learners. Furthermore, besides a deaf learner’s limited auditory input affecting his academic performance, it also affects and hinders his communication (<http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/bookpage/AITMbookpage.html>).

4.4.2. MODE OF COMMUNICATION

In this theme, I have provided the reader with an overview as to the participant’s mode of communication and the implications such a mode of communication has upon the quality of data input the participant ultimately receives. Because he originates from a hearing family, the participant of this research study has been predominantly exposed to the oral-

audal mode of communication. Research has shown that the deaf learner's family system, their attitude and mode of communication will affect the mode of communication the deaf child is exposed to. At the age of 18 months when the participant was diagnosed as being profoundly deaf, he was enrolled in a nursery school that catered for deaf learners, and as such was exposed to and taught how to Sign. His parents wished for their child to ultimately be able to cope in a hearing environment, so he was simultaneously sent to a speech and hearing therapist, where he was actively taught how to lip read. Consequently, as his capability to communicate utilising the oral-aural mode improved, he was moved to an educational facility that, while it catered for deaf learners, consisted predominantly of hearing learners. Being raised in and educated in an oral-aural mode, the participant has, through the years and subsequent lack of exposure to Sign language lost his fluency in Sign language.

While to a certain extent the participant is still able to Sign, he tends to find this mode of communication difficult and restrictive. He states that "...it takes time to make a sentence..." (Interview, line 659). While there are instances in which he misses being able to sign with others, overall he prefers utilising the oral – audal mode of communication as in "... sign language they don't have enough vocabulary...That's why it affects my English a lot" (Interview, line 672). In addition, when asked if he would like to see a combination of both forms of communication within his school setting, he stated that he prefers to utilise one mode of communication in that "...it affects my mind if I talk with someone or if I Sign ... because when you sign you don't talk and then you make a funny sound and then when I talk I forget to change...to speak properly ... it affects me little bit" (Interview, line 643). As such the participant, through exposure and training, has developed sufficient proficiency in his speech and lip-reading abilities to be able to satisfactorily utilise the oral-aural communication method. Research has substantiated this, stating that the age at which learners with a hearing impairment receive alternative forms of communication, will affect their capabilities and fluency in that form of communication (<http://www.deafsa>, Knight and Swanwick, 1999, Mogford-Bevan, 1993:33). His subsequent cochlear implant at the age of 17 years old has further helped to enhance and enrich his oral-aural mode of communication.

The participant states that “I find a big difference when I had it (the implant). It made me think how much sound I have missed. My old one, the hearing aid, was a very old, was a very different experience for me” (Interview, line 335). The positive effect this procedure has had on his overall aural input becomes evident. Through the utilisation of both the hearing aid (right ear) and the cochlear implant (left ear), the participant is now able to hear sounds he was previously unable to, for example, he has developed a greater appreciation for music, as through the utilisation of both assistive devices, he can now hear both the lyrics and the tune of the song. He describes the experience as follows – “Okay...take music...hmmm...this one with the beat (point to hearing aid on the right ear) and this one with the talking (points to cochlear hearing aid on left ear) with the singing....so I switch off (left ear), I can hear the beat and I switch off (right ear), I can hear singing. So I put both on, I can hear both....It makes me a better dancer” (Interview, line 339). However, while the cochlear implant has improved his ability to hear a song, the participant is unable to clearly distinguish what is being said without first having familiarised himself with the lyrics of the song. He says that “...if I hear the song for the first time, can’t make out the words. If I read the song or hear the words again, I can make out what the song says” (Interview, line 370). Currently, the cochlear implant is programmed at a low frequency to allow his aural nerve endings to adjust and become accustomed to sound. At a later stage it will be programmed to a higher frequency which he has been told will further enhance his hearing. Similarly however, due to the fact that his aural input has improved, his exposure to environmental pollution has also increased.

Research has shown that environmental pollution, which in many instances the educator themselves may be unaware of, can have a huge impact on a deaf learner’s auditory input (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). However, in most instances, the participant of this research study is able to distinguish between and eliminate most of the environmental pollution. On the days upon which I observed him, there was a substantial amount of environmental pollution. Being situated a kilometer away from a highway and on a main arterial road, there is a considerable amount of traffic noise that can be heard in various classrooms. The school is also currently extending their buildings so there is additional

construction noise. Furthermore, some of the participant's classrooms are within close proximity to the athletics field and learners can be heard playing / practicing on the field during some of his lessons. The participant states that while he can hear this noise, "...I forget about them" (Interview, line 640). Asked if he could separate the external noise from what the teacher is saying, he responded "Well it's the same like you. You can hear cricket and watch the tv...you forget the cricket" (Interview, line 647). However, if environmental pollution is extensive, he battles to distinguish clearly between what is relevant and irrelevant. Consequently, in a completely quiet classroom, his aural input is significantly higher. However, even though the cochlear implant has vastly improved his hearing ability, true comprehension and understanding occurs only once the participant effectively lip reads what the speaker is saying.

Research shows that deaf learners develop definite gaps in their vocabulary, written language and reading comprehension due to limited auditory abilities. Consequently, they develop other communication skills to compensate for their limited hearing abilities (Lewis, 1968:9). For such learners, lip reading, facial feature and bodily movements become critical communicative tools (Roberts and Beech, 2003). This research study further reinforces this finding. Because of the participant's limited communicative abilities, he has developed a keen awareness of movement. In the classroom one can note how aware he is of his peers' movements. He attributes this to his days in a specialised school setting where there was an increased awareness of body movements as a form of communication. He states that "...they (his deaf peers) used to wave to each other when they want to talk to each other...So now some people (peers in his current school) they want to call me but without calling my name they will wave so that I can know they are calling me" (Interview, line 440). The same is applicable on the sports field. Being unable to hear, he is very aware of his team mates' movements. By watching what his team mates are doing, he can know when the whistle has blown and when the game has stopped. In addition, he has also developed a good grasp of and ability to lip read.

Utilizing aural communication and observing bodily movements, the participant is made aware of when someone is trying to communicate with him. However, in order to fully

understand what is being said, he actively needs to lip read. Through extensive speech and hearing therapy, the participant has managed to develop a high degree of fluency in lip reading, and one can instantly note how intently he focuses on the speaker's mouth. Consequently, due to the extensive concentration lip reading requires, it can become tiring, and things such as facial hair and an accent can also affect how well he can lip read. The participant also finds it more difficult to follow a conversation where there are more than three to four people involved. When asked how he copes with group conversations, he had the following to say: “..Well, if it's a lot of people it's difficult but if its three or four people... yia I follow them...sometimes I loose my way in a conversation...I ask my brother (to fill him in on what was said)...cos I don't want to disturb them (friends talking amongst themselves)” (Interview, line 445). The participant's communicative ability is also affected by his familiarity with the speaker.

According to the participant, when the speaker is aware of the fact that he is deaf, they speak differently to him than those who don't know. For example, people who are familiar with him, ensure that they face him, that they speak slowly, that they project their voice, and that they keep the conversation short and to the point as he battles to engage in long, drawn out conversations. “Well I can't stay into long conversations cos it's difficult to make me stay that long...so...middle...not too really long” (Interview, line 483). In addition, people who are familiar with the participant are aware of his facial expressions when he does not understand something – “...I make a face...” (Interview, line 182) - and they tend to repeat what was said. As such, effective communication occurs through the participant's utilisation of his assistive devices, awareness of body movements, lip reading and the speaker's adaptations in their speech. By employing the same communication techniques and strategies, the participant is able to participate in the extra-curricular activities of the school competently.

Research shows that due to the lack of an existing common language between hearing and deaf learners, effective communication is limited which in turn limits their subsequent socialization of deaf learners (Stinson, 1997:6, <http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/bookpage/AITMbookpage.html>). The above finding is not

entirely applicable to this participant who appears to have achieved substantial proficiency in the oral-audal mode of communication. This is due to the fact that the participant in this research study has been allowed to develop a high degree of fluency in an oral-audal mode of communication as he has been able to develop receptive and expressive skills in his first / preferred language (English) to a level appropriate to his age. He has also been afforded the opportunity to successfully communicate with adults and peers within an academic and social environment (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). This in turn has contributed to enhancing his social abilities within a hearing environment.

4.4.3. SOCIALISATION IN A HEARING WORLD

This theme provides the reader with an overview of the participant's interaction within a hearing world. Paying particular attention to his relationships with his family, peers and teachers, I have portrayed his social skills and abilities in a hearing environment. Often being comfortable enough to initiate conversation, the participant has developed rich, intimate and supportive relationships amongst his peers. They will joke, laugh and discuss issues varying from school work to music and each other's personal lives. What has helped to enhance these relationships has been the modifications and adaptations his peers have made in order to make communication between themselves and the participant easier. For example, they will face him when they speak to him; touch him to ensure that they have his attention; emphasise their lip movements; and even shine a torch under their chin in discos and other dark places to ensure that the participant can see their lip movements. The participant has also taught them to finger spell and occasionally one can see them signing with the participant. As the participant himself states: " They (peers) understand me. It takes time...the same as with the teachers...they adapt to me" (Interview, line 623) From the above, it becomes evident that the participant has the communicative competency to relate equally to and to develop positive relationships within his peer group, which is critical to his successful socialisation (Knight and Swanwick, 1999, Olivia, 2004, Luckner and Steward, 2003). Similarly, in the past five

years the participant has also come to develop strong personal relationship with his teachers.

A number of key elements such as familiarity, care and effort have aided in developing strong interpersonal relationships between the participant and his teachers. With regard to his relationship with his teachers, the participant is of the opinion that his academic success is in direct correlation to the amount of effort he puts in, the length of the relationship between himself and his teacher, and the care and interest a teacher takes in him. While this has been discussed at length in section 4.4.1., it is evident that the school's educators have come to accept the participant as a valued member of the whole school community which in turn has contributed towards his successful socialisation (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). While preferring to be taught by a teacher whom he has come to know and who is familiar with him, having a new teacher does not affect his performance in or enjoyment of that subject or activity. In essence, the participant has developed good relationships with his teachers and is comfortable enough to approach them with any problems he may be encountering.

In addition, while his teachers have made certain adaptations in their teaching methodologies, they do treat him the same way they treat their hearing learners. In other words, while willing to make the necessary accommodations to address the participant's educational needs, they also in turn expect him to put a concerted effort into his work. As stated by the participant: "...my English teacher knows that I work hard for English and she works hard for me. If I don't, she won't care about me...so I have to work all the time so I can get help" (Interview, line 192). Consequently, while enjoying a full and active social life within his school, one must not forget that these rich and intimate relationships would not have been possible, had it not been that the participant was afforded the opportunity to develop skills to function and socialise independently.

As mentioned in section 4.4.1., the participant's hearing parents were of the opinion that their child had to learn the necessary skills to ensure his successful inclusion within a hearing society. As such, his parents encourage him to have an active social life outside

of school. One such example was his recent overseas trip to Cyprus. Organised by the South African Cypriot embassy, all interested school learners were invited on a two week historical excursion of Cyprus. While being nervous at the idea of being surrounded by numerous strangers, the participant looked forward to the whole experience. His main concern regarding strangers is that because they are not familiar with him, they are unaware of the fact that he is deaf. As such, he finds it difficult to communicate effectively with them. He states that "...strangers won't cope with me...because they never met a deaf person. They have no experience when talking to a deaf person. They'd don't know they must project. Sometimes when I ask what's the time (he laughs), they look at the time and they talk" (Interview, line 402). His socialisation is limited mainly to his hearing peers; interaction with his old deaf friends only if he happens to bump into them at social functions or shopping centers. As such, while research shows that in order for a deaf learner to develop into a confident individual, he needs to be afforded the opportunity to interact with both hearing and non-hearing peers and adults (Olivia, 2004, Takushi 2000), the participant of this research study appears to have developed strong social skills even though his socialisation has been limited mainly to hearing individuals only. In addition, the absence of a sign interpreter at his current school does not appear to have hindered his socialisation.

Theoretically it is believed that deaf learners can achieve sound social abilities within mainstream educational environment, provided that sign interpreters are available to facilitate communication (Luckner and Steward, 2003, Olivia, 2004). While having developed sound social skills without the presence of a sign interpreter, the participant does claim that the lack of a sign interpreter affected his choice of academic subjects. In Grade 9 when learners have to submit subject choices, the participant, in conjunction with his speech and hearing therapist reviewed the various subject choices he had. While being passionate about History, he was advised against doing it due to the fact that it is very theoretical and he would battle to gain the necessary depth and insight from the subject due to a demanding vocabulary and his limited auditory input. Research reinforces the fact that while a sign interpreter can assist in alleviating the lack of effective communication, they do so only within the formal school setting – the

classroom. As such, their presence does not ensure the active participation and socialisation of a deaf learner in all spheres of school life, particularly the extra-curricular activities of the school (Olivia, 2004:57, Luckner and Steward, 2003). Similar to findings in Olivia's study, the participant's social and extra curricular involvement at school have not been hindered by the lack of a sign interpreter

4.4.4. MAINSTREAMING VERSUS SPECIALISED EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Because the participant has been exposed to a specialized and a mainstream educational setting, this theme explores the advantages and disadvantages of both educational settings. Enjoying locational, functional and social mainstreaming as per the Warnock Report (Hottendorf, 1989:54), the participant is viewed as just another learner in the classroom. When asked about the benefits mainstreaming had afforded him, the participant listed numerous benefits. Firstly, he believes that mainstreaming provides a deaf learner with a solid grounding for life outside of school, in that it teaches such individuals how to deal with sound around them. He explains this by stating "... I would not be able to cope with sound around in a deaf school. It has prepared me for the hearing world" (Questionnaire, line 92). Similarly, research has shown that mainstreaming provides deaf learners with knowledge about the hearing world and with the capacity to develop similar mannerisms to those of their hearing peers (Luckner and Steward, 2003). Secondly, mainstreaming provides one with a better grasp of the English language.

According to literature, mainstreaming enables deaf learners to develop a greater proficiency of the English language. Similarly, the participant is of the opinion that deaf learners in a specialised school setting have a limited grasp of the English language. Because not all English words have corresponding signs to them, problem in the communication and understanding of a conversation between deaf and hearing people. The participant states that a mainstream school has provided him with "a better grasp of English, as this is a big problem in a deaf school" (Questionnaire, line 94). Research has shown that mainstreaming provides a deaf learner with a positive outlook on life and a

strong belief in himself and his ability to succeed in the larger society. Similarly, the participant is of the opinion that mainstreaming has equipped him with the knowledge and essential life skills necessary to integrate successfully in a hearing world. However, the participant stressed that success in a mainstream educational environment is reliant on a deaf learner's work ethic.

According to the participant, a deaf learner's ability to cope satisfactorily in a mainstream environment is in direct correlation to their work ethic and attitude. Firstly, he believes that it depends on an individual's intelligence, stating that "...you have to be clever to pass. Usually deaf learners can't cope by themselves and they battle" (Questionnaire, line 84). Secondly, the amount of effort and work ethic a deaf learner does affects his academic achievements as "If I don't work its difficult following what the teacher is saying. If I don't follow the teacher, it's a big problem." Thirdly, a deaf learner's concentration span will affect their academic success in that "...you have to concentrate all the time which can become tiring" (Interview, line 276). Deaf learners also need to have the confidence to query problem areas so as to maximize their understanding of the material taught. The participant believes that this is a big problem amongst deaf people in that "...they are shy to ask questions. That's a problem" (Interview, line 665). Lastly, the participant is of the opinion that having more than one deaf learner in the same school / class will make a difference to their mainstreaming experience in that they "would feel more comfortable if there were other deaf learners ...I wouldn't be the only one person...deaf person...person in the school...we could help each other, discuss things" (Interview, line 685). According to Olivia (2004), deaf learners need other deaf peers within their classroom environment so as to be able to create deep, intimate relationships as well as to help them overcome and deal with their feelings of being different to their hearing peers. Consequently, according to the participant of this research study, it becomes evident that a deaf learner needs to be conscientious, confident and have a strong and committed work ethic in order to cope in a mainstream educational facility. However, while mainstreaming provides deaf learners with numerous advantages, it can also create certain challenges for them.

Firstly, as discussed in section 4.1.1., with regard to the school's educators, the participant is of the opinion that their role, interest and effort taken in teaching him affect his success. Secondly, when initially entering a mainstream environment, a deaf learner tends to feel different. When he initially entered this school, the participant felt different because he was deaf, and everyone tended to treat him differently, stating that it "... takes time for the teachers to be there, to understand me...when I see my teachers the first time, they don't understand me...say it takes time..."(Interview, line 468). However, as time passed and all involved came to understand him and his needs, he stopped feeling different, now only experiencing that feeling when encountering strangers. Thirdly, he found mainstream curriculum to be different in terms of its pace, expected outcome levels and mode of communication. However, he did stress that having a sign language interpreter would not have made a difference. Instead, he believes that simultaneously being required to sign and speak in English would have confused his entire communication process in that "...when signing you need to use your imagination to understand what is being said ...signed...I have to change my way of communicating with people" (Interview, line 644). While the above information explained some of the challenges the participant experiences in a mainstream environment, a review of existing literature raises some disadvantages with regard to mainstreaming.

Firstly, the literature stated that deaf learners lose their fluidity in Sign language. This results in them developing poorer social and communicative skills which in turn results in them becoming more reserved due to the communication difficulties they encounter daily. While the participant has stated that he has lost his fluency in Sign language, findings in this research study have demonstrated that he has managed to develop sound communicative and social skills as discussed in sections 4.4.2. and 4.4.3. respectively. Furthermore, research has shown that sole mainstreamed deaf learners who have had no exposure to the Deaf culture are further isolated due to the fact that they are perceived by the Deaf as not belonging (Takushi, 2000; Theunissen, 2003). Due to limited interaction between the participant and other deaf people, there was insufficient data within this research that could reinforce or challenge this statement. However, bearing in mind the above disadvantages, the main theoretical criticism against mainstreaming has been

directed at the educator and their inability to instill Deaf culture (Takushi, 2000, Department of Education, 2001). While the participant has on numerous occasions commented on the importance and role of the educator, one must remember that the reason he mainstreamed was to learn to cope and succeed in a hearing world. Furthermore, from a young age, he has been encouraged to identify with a hearing culture and not a Deaf culture. As such, whether the educators of his school could instill Deaf culture or not, was never a requirement for the participant and his family.

Having attended a specialised school setting during his academic career, the participant believes that such a setting leads "...to a shared world...shared culture...language...greater respect of one..." (Questionnaire, line 97). Similarly, existing research shows that deaf learners develop an in-depth understanding and appreciation of Deaf culture which enhances their self-esteem and self-concept, resulting in them being more assertive, confident and active participants within the Deaf community and amongst their peers (Takushi, 2000, Olivia, 2004, Luckner and Steward, 2003). In addition, their social and communication skills are improved as there is a common mode of communication. However, its strict and rules governed atmosphere fails to equip deaf learners with the necessary life skills to cope in a hearing world, resulting in them being easily identifiable and stigmatised. Largely agreeing with these findings, the participant is of the opinion that a specialised school setting unfairly prejudices deaf learners in that "...their education is lower..." (Questionnaire, line 99) and they develop different social mannerisms which makes them easily identifiable. Taking into account the above disadvantages, existing research shows an appreciation for both systems, with the general consensus and encouragement that deaf learners experience both mainstream and specialised educational settings within their educational careers (Knoors, Meuleman and Klater-Folmer, 2003, Keating and Mirus, 2003).

Research demonstrates that deaf learners should mainstream during their formative, primary school years. This is due to the fact that differences in appearances and abilities at this stage and age group do not affect ones overall interactions with one's peers. However, as they get older and start to develop their sense of self and belonging which in

turn enhances their self-worth and identity, it is advised that deaf learners return to a specialised setting in high school (Kluwin, 1999). The participant in this research study did the opposite of what is theoretically perceived as ideal. He attended a specialised school setting in his junior years, and mainstreamed in his adolescence. Conversely, in this single case study, it is evident that the participant has managed to develop strong, intimate relationships with some of his teachers and peers, and is an active participant of the entire school curriculum. This has been discussed at length in sections 4.4.1. , 4.4.2 and 4.4.3. While at times he may feel isolated due to the nature of the task (for example during assemblies, he cannot follow what is going on), on the whole he strongly recommends the mainstreaming of deaf learners as he believes that the benefits deaf learners derive from such an educational setting by far exceed its limitations. However, he wants other deaf learners to be aware of the fact that mainstreaming can affect one's character and who they become. He states that, “ I think to myself if you hmm...sometimes I think that if I don't be nice to these people they don't want to talk to me so that would be a problem so that why I have to be a good person so they will help me, talk to me...” (Interview, line 728).

According to his teachers and his principal, the participant possesses certain key characteristics that aided in his ability to cope and develop in a mainstream environment. Some of these personal characteristics are sensitivity, generosity, he is observant, social, quiet and emotionally strong. When the participant was asked to comment on these character traits, he was notably uncomfortable, stating that “I never think of myself ” (Interview, line 714). With a bit of urging, he stated that he believed he was quiet and an observer due to the fact that he is deaf “...if a conversation started...if I get lost...I pretend that I understand but don't say anything...don't interrupt them...I just watch...” (Interview, line 720), and says that he is sensitive in that “...I'm a good boy...”(Interview, line 727).

Through his responses, it becomes evident that he has developed a strong character in that he is able to stand up to peer pressure “...when my friends want to talk (during a lesson) I tell them leave me ...let me concentrate”(Interview, line 91), as well as a strong

sense of belonging and achievement through his close personal relationships with his peers and his numerous academic and sporting awards. In essence, he believes that he has adapted his character and who he is to suit his hearing environment, stating that "...I think to myself if you...hmmm...sometimes I think that if I don't be nice to these people they don't...they don't want to talk to me...that's what I do" (Interview, line 614). He substantiates this by claiming that he believes that he would be different if he could hear, because it would alleviate personal guilt and pressure and he could participate in different activities, "...I would talk active...because I know a lot of things...play better sports because I could hear...I don't have to worry about my father's money because he uses his money to support me" (Interview, line 715).

Consequently, from the above data it becomes evident that while the participant acknowledges the advantages and disadvantages of both mainstream and specialised educational settings, he recommends mainstream education to other deaf learners.

4.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUDING DEAF LEARNERS IN AN INCLUSIVE HIGH SCHOOL SETTING

From the above research study, it becomes evident that a number of factors have enhanced the inclusion of the participant within this particular mainstream high school. Firstly, in order for the inclusion of deaf learners to be successful, it is critical that it is a whole school involvement (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 1997). Within this research study, it was evident that the education of the participant did involve a whole school involvement. A positive approach to the participant stemmed from the principal of the school all the way through to his various educators, they all had an inherent interest in developing and enhancing the holistic development of the participant. As such, it is essential that the school's educational body – its staff – possess a positive attitude to teaching deaf learners as well as an awareness of deaf language and cultural issues. This alone will determine whether a school successfully includes deaf learners or not.

In addition, educators would also have to be equipped with knowledge about deafness and the implications of having a deaf learner in their classroom (Sands, Kozleski and French, 2000). They would also benefit from being exposed to and corresponding with other deaf adults and professionals, as well as developing a good, collaborative working relationship amongst themselves (the teachers of the deaf learner) and that learner's additional support system (speech and hearing therapist, psychologist, etc.) A close working relationship between the school, the participant's parents and his speech and hearing therapist is maintained, and it is evident from this research study how such a symbiotic working relationship has contributed to the successful mainstream education of the participant. In addition to ensuring the collaborative work of all interested stakeholders, certain aspects of the curriculum would also need to be modified to suit the needs of the deaf learner, such as the school setting and the teaching and learning environment (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht, 1999, Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 2002).

As such, the second critical factor to the successful inclusion of a deaf learner is ensuring that adaptations and modifications occur both within the classroom and the teacher's learning and teaching strategies. Aspects observed within this research study that enhanced the participant's understanding during a lesson, were where the teacher positioned themselves during the lesson (the participant favored that the teacher positioned herself in the center of the class where he could easily see her), and the degree of eye-contact the teacher made with the participant during a lesson. They also need to ensure that they speak clearly, projecting their voice and at all times facing the participant when they are talking and that all instructions regarding tasks are clearly communicated to him. The familiarity, care and effort the teacher took in the participant also affected his overall academic performance and understanding.

With regard to the classroom environment, educators need to be aware that the learners' seating arrangement and the peer group present will affect the quality of input the deaf learner acquires. Within this research, there were numerous incidents when the participant illustrated his preference as to who he sat next to in class. He also stated that

his class peers and their subsequent classroom and work ethic affected his level of concentration and ability to work effectively within the classroom. Furthermore, while the participant of this research study was able to differentiate between background noise and what the teacher was saying, he did claim that when external background noise was excessive, he battled to differentiate the different sounds being emitted. As such, the physical properties of the classroom also play a critical factor in the quality of input data a deaf learner acquires. For example, background noise, poor lighting, fast conversation, mumbling, chewing gum and more than one person talking simultaneously are all factors that make conversation problematic for a deaf learner who relies on a hearing aid /cochlear implant and lip reading (Olivia, 2004:56). Therefore, it would be beneficial that all interested stakeholders collaborate to develop an Individualized Educational Programme (IEP) for the deaf learner attending their school.

Due to the fact that a deaf learner has needs that are different to those of his hearing peers, it is critical that an IEP is developed for that specific learner. Such a programme would identify and explain the deaf learner's needs and develop a programme of action that would aim to satisfy that learner's specific learning needs. Being a collaborative and combined effort between the parents of the learners and the school, it would take into account that learner's strengths and weaknesses academically, personally and socially, how the learner currently communicates, the family's mode of communication and the linguistic needs of that learner, the severity of the learner's hearing loss and potential of using his / her residual hearing and what assistive devices and technology that learner currently utilises. It would take into consideration the learner's current IEP and have a regular reevaluation date. Having satisfied the above requirements, the IEP would contain the educational programme of that learner with regards to teaching, learning and assessment, the short-term and long-term goals for that learner, what additional support services will be utilised and accessed to aid the learner in his or her education, an explanation for time the learner spends apart from his or her hearing peers, and the dates when the programme will begin, be reassessed and evaluated. Lastly, it is critical that the deaf learner be encouraged to and be given the opportunity, to actively engage in the social and extra-curricular life of the school.

In this research study, it was evident that the participant's strong social skills had developed through his active involvement within the school. Enjoying an active social life both within the academic and extra-curricular life of the school, the participant had been afforded the opportunity to interact as an equal to his hearing peers. This, apart from enhancing and developing his social skills, also helped to enhance his strong character and healthy self-esteem.

Within this research study, both the participant and his educators noted how his involvement in the extra-curricular life of the school enhanced his school experience. Being accepted by the school as an important and integral part of the whole school dynamics, helped to empower him into developing close, personal relationships with his peer group.

4.6. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The above research study has numerous limitations regarding both the researcher and the method of data analysis. Firstly, I found it extremely difficult to adhere to the specified length of a research study. Due to this, my literature review in Section 2 is not as detailed and comprehensive as I would have liked it to have been. Secondly, while having completed numerous case studies, I have never before had to complete a research study of this nature and, as such, I am a novice researcher which, while following the theoretical explanation of how to analyse my data findings utilising the qualitative content analysis method, could "lead to superficial and naively realistic findings because it captures what I presume to be real" (Henning, van Rensburg and Smit, 2004:102). In order to overcome this, I spent a substantial amount of time analysing my data and the subsequent categorization of it to ensure that my interpretation of it was not a misrepresentation of the participant's experiences. Also, the above research study is based on a single case study. Due to this, it is difficult to determine its relevance and applicability to other deaf learners who have mainstreamed. However, I do believe that other deaf learners could benefit from insight into the coping skills and mechanisms the participant has employed in order to ensure that he succeeds in a mainstream environment. Lastly, while the participant's school has officially adopted inclusive

policies, I found this research to be based more within a mainstream educational environment than an inclusive one.

4.7. TOPICS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Within the above research study and subsequent literature review that I undertook, there were numerous areas of research that I thought could further contribute to the successful inclusion of deaf learners. Due to the fact that within this research study the participant's parents have played an active role and contributed to his overall positive educational experience, it would be interesting to note how parental involvement affects the subsequent inclusion of deaf learners in a mainstream school. In addition, while this research study focused on a deaf learner from a hearing family who had mainstreamed, it would be interesting to note how a Deaf learner from a Deaf family (who embraces and accepts Deaf culture) adjusts and copes in a mainstream facility. During the course of this research study, there were references to the fact that mainstreaming had affected the participant's character. Further research in this phenomenon could further verify or contradict this finding. Also, the participant of this study had developed a high degree of fluency utilising the oral-aural mode of communication. Research into deaf signing learners who mainstream without the assistance of a sign interpreter may yield very different results with regard to their academic, social and overall learning experience. Lastly, while the participant of this research study maintains that he very rarely felt isolated within his school environment, it would be interesting to note how other deaf mainstreamed learners feels and whether they experience any loss of self-identity from constantly seeking the approval of others' views / feelings/ attitudes first.

4.8. SUMMARY

In this final section, I have discussed the findings of this research essay. Having provided the reader with a brief schematic representation of how I developed the themes of this research study, I proceeded to discuss each theme in relation to the data provided by the participant and its subsequent correlation or variance to existing literature. Originating predominantly from the data collected, I provided certain recommendations that according to the participant assisted in making his inclusion in a mainstream

environment successful. I concluded by determining both the limitations and contributions of this research study, providing any interested stakeholders with potential areas of further research that will enhance the inclusion of deaf learners.



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Appendix1 - Documentation

In your own words, I would like you to discuss your school experience within your current school. I would like you to comment on all aspects of your school career:

- Academics
 1. the classroom
 2. the syllabus
 3. the workload
 4. the teachers
 5. your class peers
- extra curricular
 1. the sports you play
 2. your coaches
 3. your team mates
- social
 1. your interactions at school vs those at home
 2. with other school pupils in other grades
 3. with teachers that don't teach you
 4. with the principal and administrative body of the school
- emotional
 1. your highs
 2. your lows
 3. memories that have stayed with you (made a lasting impression)

I would also like you to discuss the ADVANTAGES and DISADVANTAGES of attending your particular school.

The above points are guidelines. Feel free to expand as you wish. Try and write as much as you can. There are no right or wrong answer. I am looking for your honest feelings and perceptions.

Appendix 2 - Extract from Questionnaire

Current grade: ____11_____

Subjects taken: ____English; Maths; Science; Geography: Art; Computers

Academics

4. How do you experience classroom life – easy, difficult? Explain?

It depends on my class friends. For example I have two English classes. One of them has more girls. They concentrate and work. The other has mostly boys. They get distracted easily and I battle to concentrate. I prefer a small class. Having noise around makes it difficult to concentrate.

5. How do you find the work that you do in class – easy, difficult? If difficult what makes it so?

I don't have much of a problem. I need to learn exam techniques. That's where I battle. In Maths for example, the teacher will hand out the homework assignment while doing class work and I might miss out. It is better to have a more experienced teacher. They know what they doing.

3. Do you find it easy to follow a lesson? Explain

It depends on teacher care. If a teacher cares for me it makes it easier to follow. They put more effort into me.

4. How do you catch up what you have missed out on during a lesson?

Sometimes I ask the teacher. Mostly, I ask a friend

Social

4. How would you compare your interactions at home with school? Is it easier / harder / the same? Explain.

It is easier at home. There are fewer people. At school there is a big crowd. When they all talking to each other, I don't know what is happening.

5. How do you interact with other people in the school who are not your friends?

Okay, but I battle to understand and follow the person if they don't know I am deaf.

Emotional

3. What highs have you experienced during school? Explain.

I really enjoy Phys Ed. I forget about my problems, the stress.

4. What have you really enjoyed about being in this school? Explain.

The close friendships I have formed with my friends, some teachers

5. In your own opinion, how would you say attending this school has affected your self-confidence and belief in your self? Explain.

It has given more confidence. It makes me able to go out of school into the world and be okay. It has taught me to cope.

School

3. Knowing what you know today and having experienced life in this school, would you recommend such a school for deaf learners. Explain.

If they are very clever they can go to a hearing school. Most deaf learners can't cope on their own. It helps if there are some deaf learners around you. You can discuss with each other. You can help each other.

4. In which ways would you say attending this school has assisted you?

I would not be able to cope with sound around me in a deaf school. It has prepared me for a hearing world. I have a better grasp of English. This is a big problem in a deaf school. I can't sign difficult words.

5. How do you feel being the only deaf learner in this school has affected your overall (academic; social and emotional) development? Explain?

The academic work is difficult. Socially I am involved a lot. Just sometimes like at parties, etc, I battle. I am happy. I am positive

6. Do you feel you missed out on anything by not attending a deaf school? Explain.

In a deaf school you have respect as you are the same as the others. The academics are not as good as a hearing school. I would do different things if I had deaf friends. Talk, sign different to those hearing around me.

Appendix 3 - Observation

17-9-2004

8:00 Met at the office and taken to his first class
On the way there stopped and greeted a friend
At the entrance of the class he was chided by a peer in a friendly manner about being late

Foyer of class circulating from peer to peer

Conversation –

N: “I don’t like the beat of that song. It has too much base.

P: “ Yia, it goes doesch, doesch, ...

Notice: Friends answer facing him when they talk, they make sure they are facing him. Some emphasise their lip movements

English class

Seated in the center of the class, in a group seating arrangement of six seats.

Other peers in that seating arrangement are girls

Teacher, when teaching, teaches from that spot.

Total amount of learners in this class: 20

This teacher has taught this learner before. According to her, initially she was his teacher, but now she feels more like a mother figure to him.

Teacher “I even sometimes forget of his impairment. Remarkable, hey?”

“He is absolutely divine. I am more like a mother to him. He spends at least two hours a day with me as he comes to me during Afrikaans for extra instruction.”

Teacher ensures that he has grasped what is required by making eye-contact frequently during the lesson, touching him to ensure he is following, and resays and emphasises key words by repeating them / writing them on the board

Touch – “Highlight (emphasised) your answer on the answer sheet”

Work pace slower than the average learner (teacher verified observation)

Teacher: “Needs to apply for extra-time during his matric year for exams as he needs it. Needs to obtain an external assessment for this.”

“Has poorer comprehension and writing abilities in comparison to his peers.

He does not enjoy this section of the work. He absolutely loves poetry, especially war poetry. He has a very sensitive side. He is a very gentle child. Does fine in oral presentations also.”

“His confidence in this subject has been boosted due to the portfolio

component required. He has been assisted by his extra English lesson teacher, and this has helped to increase his marks and bolster his confidence.”

22 September 2004

11:10

Break – same place, same set-up, same activity
Does he ever participate in the actual game?

English - Poetry
The teacher is reading the poem to the learners.
When she reads, she places her sheet in front of N and trails what she is reading as she goes along.

In general, he participates very little in the conversation of the class. He queries concepts on a one-to-one basis with peer / teacher but does put his hand up to make a general comment / query / observation.

He is very aware of what his other peers are up to, as he constantly follows any movement changes. Very interesting to note how he picks up the slightest of movement. Has always got a smile on his face.

Overall, he is a relatively quiet learner.

Seems to be able to follow the class lesson easier with the cochlear implant as before – reason – looks up when she has finished reading a portion. Is he hearing better? Coincidence or fact?

Teacher: Only learner not writing explanatory notes as the text is being explained. Occasionally teacher puts certain words on the board, but in general, explanation is occurring orally with learners writing down.
“Does not write down as I explain, as he finds it distracting. He finds it easier to understand by listening to me. Also, he has reinforcement in this, when he comes again with my other English class.”

“In comparison to his peers, he is intelligent. What would he be capable of achieving if he could actually hear and comprehend everything?”

Geography: Teacher has taught N before.
N seated on the external side of the U in which the seats are arranged. In the center there is a group of desks.
Class is on the outskirts of the school building facing the athletic field.

Class very distracting – aside from external pollution (builders and physical education classes taking place) the actual class is distracting and noisy.

Predominantly a boys class, N is seated between two other learners and often gets distracted by them. The center group is 8 boys who are exceptionally rowdy (Teacher: “And today was a good day because you were here”)

Also interacts with his peers seated next to him. Teacher teaches from the center of the class and occasionally looks his way to ensure that he understands.

Teacher: “I am finding it easier to understand him this year. I don’t know if that is because I have gotten used to him, or because his oral communication has improved, especially since his cochlear implant.

“He is also very popular with his peers. You can see they like him.”

On the way to the next class, he stops and talks to a friend using sign language. He has taught some of his friends over the years how to sign. (question- does he still use sign language / is he proficient?) They utilise this language as a secret language as very few can understand what is being said.

While the school may fail to have the ideal infrastructure to cater for deaf learners, what it has achieved has been remarkable. The empathy, care and compassion of this learner’s peers and teachers as a whole have enabled his learner to develop into a capable, confident and enthusiastic young man, who believes in himself and his capabilities.

Appendix 4 - Extract from Interview

Transcript of interview

Researcher: Okay. I have divided the question into three sections. I have divided them into what its like for you in the classroom, then divided into you talking to other people, being friends with other people and then I have divided into going to a school like _____ instead of going to St Vincents. All right. Your learning environment what do you enjoy the most about school

(participant nodded to acknowledge understanding during the above) explanation

Participant: Hmm.... Ahhm.... I enjoy when they do things right for me.(pause) Hmm... I am happy when they know what they doing. (pause)

Researcher: In terms of a teacher. Is there one particular teacher you really like

Participant: I like my English teacher because she always stand close to me when she talks to the class. Hmmm ... While she writing on the board she never talks when she writings. Only when she has finished... I think, she talks

Researcher: So you like what she does to help you

Participant: Yes

Researcher: Okay, and an activity like your English teacher says you enjoy a lot of poetry

Participant: (shrugs) Hmmm

Researcher: Is there any activity at school you really enjoy?

Participant: Hmmm. I enjoy sport. Hmmm

Researcher: That's fine that's enough. Okay, in which part of school life are you most comfortable – in the classroom on the sports field at break. Where you most comfortable

Participant: Sports field

Researcher: Why

Participant: There I can forget all my problems

Researcher: You said in your questionnaire to forget...remember when we did the questionnaire you said to forget all my problems. What problems are you talking about?

Participant: Stress from all the work and concentrating too much

Researcher: So stress from all the work and concentrating too much

Participant: Hmmm

Researcher: Okay

Participant: Because I lip read all the time I get tired easy

Researcher: Sorry because you have to

Participant: Lip read

Researcher: So do you still lip read

Participant: Yes

Researcher: To understand

Participant: Hmm

Researcher: So even with a cochlear implant you still need to lip read

Participant: Hmm You still have to

Researcher: Okay, and if you have to. Okay so you still have to lip read. Hmmm... when I observed you in class something that struck me was what do you actually hear

Participant: I can hear the background and the people talking

Researcher: Can you hear distinct noises
Participant: I can hear noises
Researcher: No but distinct, like hmm can you hear what they are saying or is it just a noise
Participant: Oh just a noise
Researcher: Just a noise.
Participant: Hmm
Researcher: Okay
Participant: I can hear the teacher. Sometimes the music from the hall Hmm
Researcher: So you can hear that
Participant: Yes
Researcher: Clearly
Participant: Yes
Researcher: Ok. Now you said that with your English teacher you said what you liked about her was the way she speaks to you, the way she
Participant: Yes she speaks projecting
Researcher: Projecting
Participant: Yes and hmmm ...I..... medium. She goes medium fast. Not easy if you talk too fast. Difficult. She speaks medium speed so its easy for me to understand
Researcher: what other teaching tecahniques work best for you
Participant: work best for me
Researcher: yes
Participant: Maybe Art
Researcher: What about it. No. You saying if a person looks at you and pseaks slowly, hmm if she doesn't write on the board and talks what else works well for you
Participant: hmm
Researcher: Helps you. Helps you in understanding what is being said or taught
Participant: Sometimes when she forgets that she talks in the other direction, sometimes she looks back because she remembers about me
Researcher: Hhmm
Participant: Turn around, talk to me .If I don't understand sometimes if I make a face and she repeats it
Researcher: Okay. Hmmm You said that you found Maths, the way the teacher teaches it difficult because she's often has her back to you while she writes on the board
Participant: Yes
Researcher: What other thinks do they do that makes it difficult for you to follow a lesson
Participant: Yia because the pupils are not well behaved and they talk all the time. They like to whisper all the time
Researcher: I noticed it in Geography. Geography is very bad
Participant: Hmmm
Researcher: And the teacher said that was a good day that day
Participant: Hmm
Researcher: Hey, yes she said what's his name Thomas
Participant: Tomi
Researcher: Yes that Tomi was very well behaved that day and I thought yia (laugh).
Participant: Hmm (laugh)

Researcher: So how the other pupils are in the class affects you
Participant: Well...they want to talk to me while the teacher talk. Talking. It's a problem. Tell them leave me let me concentrate
Researcher: Do you tell them to leave you so you can concentrate
Participant: Yes
Researcher: Okay. Hmmm something I want to ask you, the people you sit next to in class is there a reason why you sit next to them? Did you choose them so that they can help
Participant: No I did not choice them. The teacher came with a sheet I can sit in front
Researcher: The teacher told you to sit in front
Participant: Hmm
Researcher: Yia
Participant: Hmm the same in English I sit next to someone so she can help me
Researcher: And in Geography do you sit next to that person so he can help you
Participant: No. Not really. Because the teacher always comes to me and helps me
Researcher: So the teacher comes on her own and asks and helps you
Participant: When she not busy
Researcher: And in Maths
Participant: Maths. We have to ask her questions
Researcher: You got to ask questions
Participant: Yes
Researcher: And hmm what other subjects? Computers
Participant: No Computers No
Researcher: No. And Greek? How do you cope with Greek?
Participant: I am not into Greek
Researcher: You not into Greek
Participant: Hmmm I don't do much work in Greek
Researcher: Because the girl you sit next to is also very weak
Participant: Hmm
Researcher: Is she quite good?
Participant: She can't. Everyone in my class they cant speak Greek
Researcher: Yia, yia
Participant: Hmm
Researcher: So you don't choose the person next to you because they clever or they can help you?
Participant: No
Researcher: Okay. Hmmm Now that you were away your Geography teacher said that when you came back she would catch up the work with you
Participant: Yes
Researcher: Okay. How do you find those catch up sessions? Are they helpful?
Participant: Yes very helpful
Researcher: Do you prefer that one-on-one to being in a class
Participant: No I did not have one-on-one
Researcher: Who . How many were you with at the catch up session
Participant: Me umm and the other boy who went to Cyprus. Both of us
Researcher: And how did you find that?

Participant: Easy. Easier to concentrate

Researcher: Why

Participant: Work harder. They look at us and talk

Researcher: So it was quite and they look at you when they talked

Participant: Easier

Researcher: Okay. And then if you miss out on work... You said one of the things you didn't like about school is catching up. Is it catching up like you did now when were in Cyprus or is it catching up because you where in the lesson but didn't get all the information?

Participant: The information

Researcher: So you were in the lesson but you never got all the information

Participant: Hmm

Researcher: So do you have to do that quite often

Participant: Hmm. I don't do catching up after. Or if I miss a lot of work I normally catch up

Researcher: Okay in a lesson you normally follow everything that is happening

Participant: Yes

Researcher: Okay. And additional notes and that where do you get that from

Participant: From the teacher

Researcher: Because remember in your poetry, you were doing Commonplaces

Participant: Oh yes that well. Okay while she talks to the class everyone writes down the notes but I don't write it down

Researcher: Yia you look at her

Participant: I listen to her . So I have to get the girl next to me she take her paper and she makes a photocopy for me

Researcher: Oh Okay Okay

Participant: Yes that's how I follow in English

Researcher: Now have you asked that girl to do that for you?

Participant: Hmm

Researcher: Did you ask her to do that for you?

Participant: Yia I asked her to do it for me

Researcher: The girl

Participant: Hmm

Researcher: Or did the teacher ask her to do it for you?

Participant: No. I do that myself

Researcher: Yia but who initially told her to do it?

Participant: I told her to

Researcher: You told her. Okay. Can I ask you find it better if you to sit next to a girl or a boy? Is there a difference?

Participant: Yes

Researcher: Why?

Participant: Because a boy they don't work

Researcher: Laugh

Participant: Laugh. They prefer to talk than work. Girls they concentrate, quieter

Researcher: You see we have always been saying girls are easier

Participant: Hmm

Researcher: Okay. Hmm. You said that you preferred a teacher that's got experience.

Participant: Yes

Researcher: What do you mean by experience. What.. What..

Participant: Because they know what they doing. If someone whose got no experience they panic and they will do everything quickly. They will forget easy about me

Researcher: Yia

Participant: So if they experienced ...hmm.. they will remember about me and what she doing

Researcher: And what they need to do to help you

Participant: Hmm

Researcher: Okay Hmm Is teacher experience necessary only in the classroom or also on the sports field?

Participant: Sorry. Confused

Researcher: Here. You like a teacher that's got experience. Is it important for them to also have experience on the sports field?



Appendix 5 – Ethic Clearance Letter





Appendix 6 – Consent letters

Parental consent letter

To the parent of _____

Mr and / or Mrs: _____

September 2004

RE: Proposed Research Study

My name is Joulia Karamichael. I am currently completing my Masters degree in Educational and Learning Support at the Rand Afrikaans University. My student number is 200008212.

As part of the requirements of my Masters programme, I am required to complete a research essay. The topic I have chosen to do my proposed essay on is “Including deaf learners in a mainstream high school.”

The aim of the proposed essay is to foster and encourage inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream schools. I believe that your child, who is currently attending a mainstream school, is the best source from which to get first hand accounts as to the advantages, challenges and limitations mainstreaming affords such learners. Through your child’s participation, I wish to highlight his experiences within his current high school, as well as provide him with the opportunity to voice his thoughts and feelings.

I believe that his experiences can act as a valuable spring board from which policy makers and educators can begin to adapt, adjust and rectify current mainstream curricula in aim of satisfactorily addressing and meeting the needs of such learners in the future.

I do realise that currently he has school and personal commitments. As such, I will endeavour to ensure that I utilise our contact time together constructively. Furthermore, I will strive to ensure that as little of his time is taken up as possible. This research study will have been completed for submission by the end of November 2004.

Your child’s participation within this research study is purely voluntary. To obtain information relevant to my research I will be interviewing as well as observing your child within his school. Additionally, I will ask that your child write an autobiographical account of his experiences within his school to data.

Should your child choose not to participate within this study, there will be no negative repercussions. Should he choose to participate within the research study, he is welcome to decline in answering any questions that he may not wish to comment on. Additionally, should he wish to withdraw during the course of the research, he may do so.

Throughout this research essay I will seek to honestly portray his experiences, remaining unbiased and neutral throughout the whole research. At any time, should he so wish, he can have access to the data of my essay. Additionally, upon the completion of the research, he will be furnished with a copy of my findings.

In permitting me to conduct my research study on your son, I will at all times ensure that his privacy and total anonymity are upheld, as I will be the only one to have access to his responses throughout this research. Furthermore, I will endeavour that no physical, emotional or mental harm comes to him, and should he experience any discomfort, immediate and appropriate redress will be sought.

Thanking you for the privilege of allowing me to work with your child.

Joulia Karamichael

I _____ parent of _____ hereby give Joulia Karamichael permission to conduct her research essay on my son.

Date

Signature



Principal consent letter

To the principal of _____

Mr/ Mrs:

September 2004

RE: Proposed Research Study

My name is Joulia Karamichael. I am currently completing my Masters degree in Educational and Learning Support at the Rand Afrikaans University. My student number is 200008212.

As part of the requirements of my Masters programme, I am required to complete a research essay. The topic I have chosen to do my proposed research essay on is "Including deaf learners in a mainstream high school."

Your school has been one of the first mainstream educational facilities to include deaf learners, and as such, I wish to base my research on learner _____ who is currently registered at your school.

The aim of the proposed research study is to foster and encourage inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream schools. Through the participation of the identified learners, I wish to highlight his experiences within your school. I wish to offer him the opportunity to express his experiences as they have been within your school. I believe that this learner's experiences can act as a valuable spring board from which policy makers and educators can begin to adapt, adjust and rectify current mainstream curricula in aim of satisfactorily addressing and meeting the needs of such learners in the future.

The identified learner will be required to write an autobiographical account of his experiences and participate in an interview. Furthermore, I would like to be permitted to observe the participant within your school so as to get a more comprehensive understanding of his environment.

I do realise that currently he has school and personal commitments. As such, I will endeavour to ensure that I utilise our contact time constructively. Furthermore, I will strive to ensure that as little of his time is taken up as possible. This research study will have been completed for submission by the end of November 2004.

A number of ethical considerations will be taken into account to ensure the compliance of this research study with the ethical codes of conduct as set out by RAU. The participation of the identified learner in this research study is purely voluntary. I will at all times ensure that privacy and total anonymity of both the participant and the school are upheld, as I will be the only one to have access to the participant's responses throughout this research. The participant will be explained the goal of the study, briefed as to what is required of him in terms of his time and the research methods that will be utilised to collect data. Additionally, throughout this research study I will seek to honestly portray the participant's experiences, remaining unbiased and neutral throughout the whole research. Upon the completion of the research study, both the learner and the school will be furnished with a copy of my findings.

Thanking you for the privilege of allowing me to work with your learner.

Joulia Karamichael

I _____ (principal) hereby give Joulia Karamichael permission to conduct her research study at our school on the above mentioned learner.

Date

Signature



Pupil consent letter

Master: _____

September 2004

RE: Proposed Research Essay

My name is Joulia Karamichael. I am currently completing my Masters degree in Educational and Learning Support at the Rand Afrikaans University. My student number is 200008212.

As part of the requirements of my Masters programme, I am required to complete a research essay. The topic I have chosen to do my proposed research study on is "Including deaf learners in a mainstream high school."

The aim of the proposed research study is to foster and encourage inclusion of deaf learners in mainstream schools. Being one of the first learners to take opportunity of the inclusion of deaf learners in a mainstream educational environment I believe you are the best source from which to get first hand accounts as to the advantages, challenges and limitations mainstreaming affords deaf learners.

Through your participation, I wish to highlight your experiences within your current high school, as well as provide you with the opportunity to voice your thoughts and feelings. I believe that your experiences can act as a valuable spring board from which policy makers and educators can begin to adapt, adjust and rectify current mainstream curricula in aim of satisfactorily addressing and meeting the needs of such learners in the future. I also believe that this research will provide you with insight as to your own educational process as well as self knowledge.

To obtain information relevant to my research, I will require that you write an autobiographical account of your experiences within your current educational facility, as well as to keep a journal in which you can account and comment on daily challenges, limitations or advantageous that you face may encounter during the course of the research. You will also be required to participate in an interview with me, and lastly, I will be taking some time to observe you within your school environment.

I do realise that you currently have school and personal commitments. As such, I will endeavour to ensure that we utilise our time together constructively and that we determine meeting times that are convenient for both of us. Furthermore, I will strive to ensure that as little of your time is taken up as possible. This research study will have been completed for submission by the end of November 2004.

Your participation within this research study is purely voluntary, and should you choose not to participate within this study, there will be no negative repercussions. Should you choose to participate within the research study, you are welcome to decline in answering any questions that you may not wish to comment on. Additionally, should you wish to withdraw during the course of the research, you may do so.

In permitting me to conduct my research study on yourself and your experiences in your mainstream high school, I will at all times ensure:

1. Your privacy and total anonymity, as I will be the only one to have access to your responses throughout this research. Furthermore, upon the completion of this research, all responses from your self will be destroyed.
2. That no physical, emotional or mental harm comes to you, and should you experience any discomfort, immediate and appropriate redress will be sought.

Throughout this research study I will seek to honestly portray your experiences, remaining unbiased and neutral throughout the whole research. At any time, should you so wish, you can have access to the data of my study. Additionally, upon the completion of the research study, you will be furnished with a copy of my findings.

Thanking you for the privilege to work with you.
Joulia Karamichael

I _____ parent of _____ hereby give Joulia Karamichael permission to conduct her research essay on my son.

Date

Signature



Appendix 7 – Letter from editor

4 Windsor Royale
37 Earls Avenue
Windsor West
2194

28 February 2004

To whom this may concern

Masters of Education thesis of Joulia Karamichael

This serves to certify that I, Lisa Ann van der Want (720812 0159 084), an English Educator at Kingsmead College in Melrose, Johanensburg, proof read / edited the Masters of Education thesis by Joulia Karamichael on the education (mainstreamed or specialised) of deaf learners.

Please feel free to contact me in this regard if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully

Ms. L. van der Want
083 643 5720

