

**IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN
THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE AT KING CETSHWAYO
DISTRICT SCHOOLS**

BY

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IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN THE
INTERMEDIATE PHASE AT KING CETSHWAYO DISTRICT SCHOOLS

by

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Submitted: January 2018

Signature.....

DECLARATION

I, NOMBALI LUCRATIA ROSE NTULI hereby declare that this dissertation, entitled ‘IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE AT KING CETSHWAYO DISTRICT SCHOOLS’, is my own original work and has never been submitted to any University for the award of any degree. All the sources have been acknowledged in the form of references.

CANDIDATE’S SIGNATURE.....

DATE

SUPERVISOR’S SIGNATURE



March 2018

DATE

CO-SUPERVISOR’S SIGNATURE.....

.....

DATE

January 2018

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late parents for laying the foundation for education, my two sons Mngqobi and Nkululeko for their support and my four grandchildren for allowing me time to complete this dissertation.

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I wish to thank the following people who walked this journey with me, providing support in various ways. My Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for the wisdom and strength that contributed to the successful completion of this study.

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- King Cetshwayo District officials especially the director, Mr Chonco, for affording me the opportunity to use the schools in the district.
- All school principals and educators who participated in this research project.
- Dr Jacqui Baumgardt for professionally editing my entire dissertation.
- Lastly, I thank my entire family and wider family for their support and encouragement, may God bless all of them abundantly.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand the efficacy of the implementation of Annual National Assessment (ANA). In this study, the researcher chose King Cetshwayo District and Mthunzini circuit as a field of investigation. The investigation was conducted using a mixed method approach which was driven by both qualitative and quantitative approach. In this case, the Intermediate Phase schools were the main target to select a sample of 75 participants. All these randomly selected educators answered a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions while five Heads of Departments (HoDs) and five educators were purposively selected to participate in the in-depth interview session. The main objectives of the investigation were to: (a) explore teachers' views about the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase; (b) find out teachers' perspectives of on the use of ANA as diagnostic assessment tool; and (c) find out about the impact of ANA on learner performance in English First Additional Language. The findings revealed that the majority of educators complained about lack of training, administration including time in which ANA is written, exposure of underperforming schools and methods of teaching which encourage rote learning. Most educators were unhappy that their district officials were not supportive during the administration phase. Educators raised concerns that Grade 4 learners have difficulty in understanding the questions since it is their first year of using English as Language of Learning and Teaching. Some educators indicated that they have not been sent to ANA workshops yet they are expected to administer the assessment.

Based on the findings, the researcher realised that the objectives of the implementation of ANA were not achieved in some schools due to the negative attitude displayed by educators towards ANA. The inconsistency of the test questions makes it difficult for the Department of Basic Education to ascertain whether or not there is any improvement in ANA results. The researcher recommends that in order for ANA to be successfully implemented, the school management teams and the subject advisors have to work closely with Intermediate Phase educators and provide necessary resources and support.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANA	Annual National Assessment
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CASS	Continuous Assessment
CDE	Centre for Development Enterprise
CHAT	Cultural-Historical Activity Theory
CiPELT	Certificate in Primary English Language Teaching
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EFAL	English First Additional Language
EFL	English First Language
ESL	English Second Language
FAL	First Additional Language
FET	Further Education and Teaching
FFL	Foundations for Learning
HoD	Head of Department
HSRC	Human Sciences research Council
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
NATU	National Teachers Union
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
OBE	Outcomes-based education
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACMEQ	The Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SADTU	South Africa Democratic Teachers Union
SAOU	Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie

SBA	School-Based Assessment
SGB	School Governing Body
SIMCE	Sistema de Medicion de la Calidad de la Educacion
SMT	School management team
SNA	Standardised National Assessment
TAM	Test Administration manual
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe School Examinations Council

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The process of teaching and learning should be driven by clear continuous assessment practices, Continuous Assessment (CASS), involving carefully planned activities that are meet curriculum standards. These activities should be undertaken throughout the year, using various kinds of assessment techniques (Department of Education [DoE], 2007). It is argued that some of these assessment activities are unreliable, and their validity has been questioned in recent years (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2010). In response, South Africa, like many other progressive countries, has introduced a large-scale educational assessment programme called the ANA as part of diagnostic assessment (DBE, 2011). This new assessment tool is used not only to measure student achievement, but to identify both the strengths and weaknesses of either the learner or the teaching methodology, with the aim of holding schools accountable for the educational outcomes of students (Crundwell, 2010; Earl, 2011).

Furthermore, ANA was prioritised as the central tool for tracking progress towards achieving measurable educational goals of high quality in English and Mathematics. Since the implementation process started in 2010, the analysis has shown very little improvement in learner performance. Moreover, when one compares literacy levels to those across the national borders, in poor countries such as Zimbabwe and Swaziland, South Africa fares badly (The Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality [SACMEQ] III, 2014). The performance of learners in the Mtunzini Circuit, particularly in Grades 4, 5 and 6, in First Additional Language (FAL) and Mathematics has also proved to be below average (DBE, 2014), giving impetus to this study. These notable challenges raise concern about exactly what factors contribute to learners' poor performance in these subjects at the Intermediate Phase.

In the light of this, the purpose of this study is to investigate educators' views about the practices and challenges of administering the ANA for literacy in the Intermediate Phase in King Cetshwayo district in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). The study interrogates the consequences of the state of literacy as reflected in the ANA results in South Africa. There are few studies focused on

ANA in South Africa (Lee, 2012). Moreover, no studies have been done in the province of KZN on educators' perceptions on the implementation of the literacy component of ANA.

Internationally and continentally issues of assessment refers to the process of documenting knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs. According to Alausa (2005), assessment is defined as a means of judging or assessing a person or situation or event. A broad overview of assessment in countries other than South Africa shows that:

- In Britain, they refer to assessment as the evaluation of a student's achievement on a course.
- Other studies conducted in Finland understand assessment as a measure of equality across schools regarding student placement in schools or programmes after basic education. The final assessment of a comprehensive school curriculum is considered crucial as it determines whether or not students should earn a certificate of completion, and can continue to secondary school (Finnish National Board of Education, 2010).
- Britain and Chile, countries with highly centralised educational curricula commonly developed at the national level, have large-scale testing programmes designed either to monitor or certify student achievement in relation to national standards (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2004; National Assessment Agency, 2008; Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2008).
- As an international benchmark, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is administered every three years to 15-year-old students in approximately 57 countries (Kupianinen, Hautamaki & Karjalainen, 2009).
- In Zimbabwe, assessment is divided into two categories, i.e. school-based and national assessment. School-based assessment (SBA) attempts to empower the learner. If correctly implemented and incorporated into a summative assessment, a more comprehensive and cumulative judgement about the learner is achieved (Masole, 2004). SBA is not a common feature in the examination system as it is only used for practical subjects. Only projects, portfolios and practical tests fall under SBA. Marks from these tasks set by the examination board are validated by moderators to verify marks. Results obtained reveal that SBA can be a trusted benchmark for promotion of pupils from primary into secondary school as those pupils who have passed teacher tests at Grade 7 have also passed ZIMSEC national examinations.

National assessments in Zimbabwe are set at national level and are written at a particular time and date all over the country. Rubadiri (2005) and Sommerset (1987) call such examinations “high-stakes examinations” because their results are used for certification and selection for further education or vocational careers.

The researcher has concluded that the assessments in both Finland and Zimbabwe serve the same purpose because they are both used to pass the learners into the next grade, which is not the case in South African schools. In South Africa, the national assessment is not used to pass or fail the learners, but only to check whether or not learners have any challenges in literacy and mathematics while they are still in primary school. It is only used as a guide to see whether there is any improvement in these two skills. As a result, parents are only asked to encourage and not to punish their children for failing an ANA test. Given this scenario, it would be interesting to investigate the practices of educators and their challenges in preparing learners for the ANA.

The South African curriculum framework has reflected a widespread faultline in its international assessment standards benchmark. According to the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) reports released in 2012, 2013 and 2014, South African learners perform poorly in both numeracy and literacy as early as Grade 3 when compared to other countries in the world (CDE, 2012). The low levels of performance in schools are a serious indictment of the ever-changing curriculum that our modern society has come to accept. The introduction of ANA was seen as a response to the literacy crisis that has plagued this country in the past (DBE, 2011), and was touted as the panacea for all the problems that beset education. The rationale was to strengthen the weak school assessment regimes which were not standardised to the level of national standards as prescribed in the Education Act, 84 of 1996 (DoE, 1996). The South African government has therefore identified the achieving of high quality basic education as the top priority for the country, and this has to be delivered by the DBE. In this regard, ANA is a critical measure for monitoring progress in learner achievement at the national level (DBE, 2012). The ANA is administered annually to Grades 1-6 and Grade 9 learners.

A study conducted by Heritage (2007) reveals that effective assessment practices are vital components in developing students’ metacognitive skills, and valuable in giving feedback and crafting instructional strategies. Njabili (1985) defines CASS as a process which involves the systematic collection of marks or grades by the teacher over a period of time, and the

consolidation of these marks or grades to decide learners' final grades. According to Anikweze (2005), CASS is the process of investigating the status of a student's ongoing performance. CASS needs a rigorous approach to assessment, and ANA is aimed at addressing some of the major systemic challenges embedded in current curriculum assessment practices (DBE, 2013). Generally, in schools, marks and grades are collected from homework, practical assignments, quizzes, tests and projects done by learners. According to Falayajo (1986), marks and grades can be collected based on cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning tasks. CASS enables the teacher to modify his/her teaching strategies, monitor learner progress, and make decisions about progress in curriculum implementation (Alausa, 2005). It also enables educators to make predictions about learner performance in public examinations.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Owing to the persistent challenges of poor learner performance in both literacy and mathematics in the Intermediate Phase, the DBE has introduced ANA in order to monitor learner performance across the country (DBE, 2011). The implementation of ANA has revealed many significant systemic challenges that are embedded in schools as a result of poor training of educators. If left unchallenged, the whole education system will soon collapse, and there will be far-reaching consequences, not only for our education system, but also for the type of skilled learners that will be produced, and for the economic growth of the country. Currently, some of the educators in South African schools are foreigners who were not trained or oriented in terms of the CAPS. Nor are some of those who are currently employed as temporary educators.

1.3 AIM OF STUDY

This study aims to investigate the challenges faced by teachers in preparing to implement ANA in their schools in the Intermediate Phase.

1.3.1 Research Objectives

- To explore teachers' views about the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase.
- To find out teachers' perspectives on the use of ANA as a diagnostic assessment tool.
- To find out the impact of ANA on learner performance in the English First Additional Language course.

1.3.2 Research Questions

- What are the educators' views regarding the challenges encountered in implementing ANA in the Intermediate Phase?
- What are educators' perspectives on the use of ANA as a diagnostic assessment tool?
- What is the impact of ANA strategy on learner performance in the English First Additional Language?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on its topic by enhancing the literature that sets out to explain why learners in public schools have difficulty in performing to the expected levels. The reviewed literature has shown that South African learners are performing very poorly, when compared to other countries, in both numeracy and literacy. The study will be of great assistance to the education sector in different areas, like Mtunzini Circuit, since it will highlight common problems. If these problems are solved, the solutions will apply across the board rather than focusing on challenges of specific schools in specific areas. This study highlights the concerns of the curriculum implementers, and considers a bottom-up approach as compared to many top-down approaches that have been tried with less little success since the country became a democracy.

1.5 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

1.5.1 IMPLEMENTATION

Meyer (2013) defines implementation as a process of executing a decision or plan into effect. It is a specified set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or programme of known dimensions. It may be referred to as a method or any design, idea, model, specification, standard or policy for doing something.

1.5.2 ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The ANA is the process of obtaining relevant information from the education system to monitor and evaluate the performance of learners and other significant role-players as well as the

functioning of relevant structures and programmes within the system for the purpose of improving learning (Kanjee & Moloi, 2014). It is conducted on an annual basis.

1.5.3 Assessment

Assessment in this study is understood as a process in which evidence of performance is gathered and evaluated against agreed criteria. Brainard (2006) states that the word assessment is derived from the Latin verb, *assidere* which means ‘to sit beside’. Assessment can be seen as the ability to observe learners, to perceive what they do so as to support their learning.

1.5.4 Intermediate Phase

This is a phase in the primary school level which covers Grades 4-6. It is a phase that comes after the Foundation Phase which is Grade R-3 and is followed by the Senior Phase which is Grade 7-9 (DBE, 2011).

1.5.5 Diagnostic Assessment

Louw (2003) defines diagnostic assessment as a tool that is used to determine the nature and causes of learning disorders experienced by specific learners in order to implement possible interventions. Diagnostic assessment is conducted prior to any form of instruction by the educator and provides evidence of the current status of learning of each learner.

1.6 CHAPTER DIVISION

This dissertation has five chapters which are organised as follows:

- Chapter 1: Orientation: This chapter outlines the whole dissertation. The statement of the problem, aim of the study, objectives, significance of the study and the definition of operational terms were discussed in this chapter.
- Chapter 2: Literature review: This chapter explores the literature on the topic of assessment and includes an overview of relevant theories.
- Chapter 3: Research design: This chapter outlines the research methodology used in this study, which includes research methods, sampling procedure, data collection procedure, data analysis and instrumentation.

- Chapter 4: Data analysis and presentation of results: This chapter presents the field work, analysis and interpretation of the findings.
- Chapter 5: Summary, conclusions and recommendations: This chapter provides an overview of the study, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In conclusion, this chapter conceptualised the research problem which is the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase. The aim of the study was presented to outline what the study aims to achieve. The research problem was contextualised and relevant operational terms were defined.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a literature review is presented. The literature review sheds some light on the problem being investigated. The current chapter is based on the critical Braun and Clark (2006) observe that high-stakes testing can lead to unwanted consequences such as the narrowing of the curriculum and an excessive emphasis on test preparation. According to Burger, Crous and Roodt (2012), domestic and international surveys of educational achievement have drawn the attention of the DBE to the underperformance of South African children in key learning areas such as literacy, Mathematics and Science. He argues that the systemic evaluations undertaken by the department and the Quality Learning Project have revealed that most children are performing well below the standards required by the curriculum. Education systems globally have adopted standardised testing in schools to address the weaknesses of learners and to respond to issues of public accountability, quality education and transparency. In countries like Zimbabwe and Finland, these standardised tests are administered for the promotion of learners to other grades (Rubadiri, 2005). This is not the case in the South African context of standardised testing where this is used only to check the level of learners' competencies in Mathematics and English.

In the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) of 2012, Grade 8 learners from South Africa achieved the lowest average scores in both Mathematics and Science out of 46 countries, including six African countries (DBE, 2011a). In the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) of 2006, which measured the literacy rates at primary school level, South Africa came last out of 40 countries. In the SACMEQ II and III surveys of 2000 and 2007, South Africa performed below the average of 14 Southern and East African countries in Grade 6 Mathematics and reading (Rubaduri, 2005). The poor performance of South African learners in these systemic evaluations has drawn sharp criticism from the public that continues to question the quality of education offered to the learners. What exacerbates the criticism towards the DoE is that even countries like Kenya, Swaziland and Zimbabwe which are less developed than South Africa perform far better in these evaluations. In response to these criticisms, the DBE introduced ANA tests in 2008 (Rubaduri, 2005).

National assessments are defined as the process of obtaining relevant information from an education system to monitor and evaluate the performance of learners and other significant role-players as well as the functioning of relevant structures and programs within the system for the purpose of improving learning (Kanjee & Moloi, 2014). He further argues that the defining characteristics of any national assessment must locate the learner as the most significant participant of a country's education system, and thus the improvement of learning, arguably by way of teaching as the most critical outcome to attain.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Imenda (2014) defines a theory as a set of interrelated concepts which structure a systemic view of phenomena for the purpose of explaining or predicting; it is like a blueprint or a guide for modelling a structure. There are a number of theories that underpin the practices of assessment activities. The researcher identified two theories as appropriate for this study; that is, Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) and Activity Theory.

2.2.1 Cultural-Historical Activity Theory

Cultural-Historical Activity Theory arises from the work of Vygotsky 1978-1986 which was extended by Leont'ev in 1981. This perspective provides a framework for considering social and cultural practices; both how an individual learns by engaging in these practices and how mediational tools such as language shape human beings. The emphasis of CHAT is on action or intervention in order to develop practice and the sites of practice. Leont'ev (1981, cited in Wilson, 2014:21) argues that collective activity systems have a particular motive or object, which participants achieve through various forms of mediation, even if individual participants are not aware of the objective that the activity system wants to achieve. The characteristics of this theory is that an activity is embedded within the surrounding system for specific learning and teaching strategies which are embedded in an activity of classroom learning, which is, in turn, embedded in the activity system of the school.

ANA is a standardised activity that is meant to check the level of performance of learners in Mathematics and English First Additional Language (EFAL) (DBE, 2016). It is a systematic practice that is implemented by all schools with the intention of coming up with intervention programmes for the development of these subjects. The researcher concurs with the tenets of the

CHAT since ANA is written by learners who are sometimes not aware of the main objectives; sometimes, even teachers are not fully aware of the aims to be achieved after mediation of these tests (Wilson, 2014). It is against this background that CHAT was found to be relevant for this study.

2.2.2 Activity Theory

On the other hand, the Activity Theory is also based upon the work of Vygotsky, Leont'ev and Luria in the 1920s. According to Morf and Weber (2000), Activity Theory is based on the idea that an activity is primary, that doing precedes thinking and that goals, cognitive models and abstract notions grow out of people doing things. They further state that this theory uses the whole work activity as the unit of analysis, where activity is broken into the analytical components of subject (person being studied); tool (mediating device); and object (intended activity). In the same vein, ANA is written by learners; who are subjects in this context, the actual test is an intended activity which is the object; mediated by the DBE working collaboratively with teachers; the department officials and teachers are mediating tools following rules in administering the writing of ANA which is an activity. The aim is to achieve an outcome of the analysis of performance which will give guidance to the kind of intervention that could be implemented to improve learner performance in Mathematics and EFAL in particular; as the focus of this study is on EFAL (Wilson, 2014). A sketch illustrating the Activity Theory concepts is provided

in Figure 1.1:

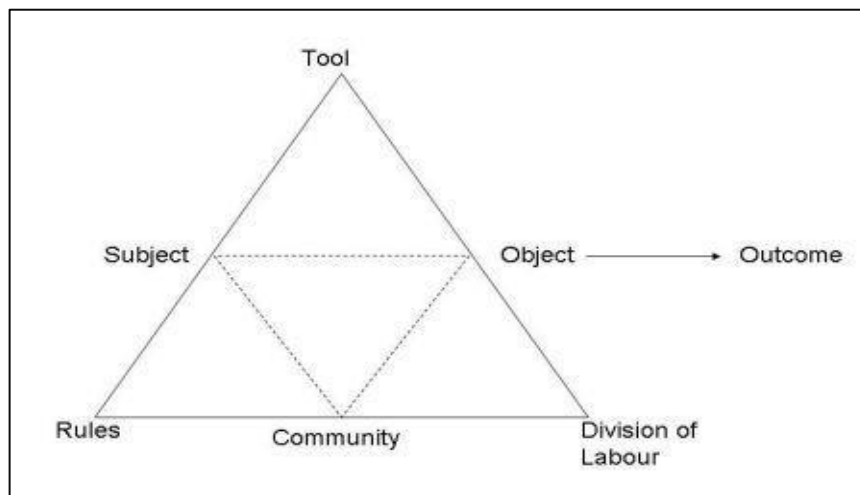


Figure 1.1: Theory Engeström's Activity Model

Source: (Engeström, 2001:11).

2.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF ANA

The introduction of ANA was necessitated partly by repeated findings that South African learners were underperforming in relation to the financial and resource inputs that the state invested in education (Chisholm & Wildeman, 2013). A presidential injunction was issued to conduct ANA and monitor performance, with the target set at 60% of learners in Grades 3,6 and 9 achieving acceptable levels of literacy and numeracy by 2014 (DBE, 2010). According to the plan of the national education department, ANA was expected to improve learning in four key ways, namely: (1) exposing educators to best practices in assessment; (2) targeting interventions to the schools that need them most; (3) giving the schools the opportunity to pride themselves in their own improvement; and (4) to give parents better information on the education of their children (DBE, 2012).

In the same document, it is stated that implementation of ANA was envisaged as a two-tier approach for testing learners, based on the administration of a ‘universal ANA’ and ‘verification ANA’ (DBE, 2012). With ‘universal ANA’, the action plan specifies that all schools in the country must conduct the same grade-specific Language and Mathematics tests for Grade 1 to 6 and for grade 9. These tests are to be marked by schools and moderated by the province. Each district is required to produce a district-wide report and inform schools how well they are performing in relation to other schools in the district, province and country (DBE, 2014). Specifically, the action plan requires the districts to promote improvements in all schools and explain how school results feed into district results, but without attaching actual performance targets to every school. The action plan notes that the district-wide ANA report is a vital tool for managing improvements, and specifies that the district office will pay particular attention to supporting schools that have performed poorly in ANA, and to ensure that these schools have the teachers and materials they should have (DBE, 2012a). The researcher supports the idea that the purpose of verification ANA is two-fold; that is, to report on performance at the national and provincial levels using ANA scores that are highly reliable, and secondly, to identify key factors that impact on learner performance. However, ANA results are not meant to determine whether schools’ performance is poor or good.

2.4 ROLE OF TEACHER UNIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ANA

Immediately after the implementation of the ANA in South African schools, a memorandum of understanding was signed by the following teacher unions: South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), National Professional Teachers of South Africa (NAPTOSA), Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysers' Unie (SAOU) and the National Teachers' Union (NATU) for the first time. The DBE mobilised a collaborative teacher development initiative in an effort to enhance quality of teaching and learning, thus to improve learner performance. The ANAs were designed to measure and track the literacy and numeracy skills of learners in Grades 1-9 with the intention to diagnose areas of weakness and provide the DBE and educators with insights that can be used to craft remedial interventions. But the educator unions say the ANA is not achieving its intended purpose of measuring the health of the education system and assessing whether there is an improvement from year to year. This is why all the educator unions decided not to administer the tests in 2016 which was scheduled for 1 to 4 December – a date stated by the DBE without consulting teacher unions.

The DBE, on the other hand, maintained that the tests would go ahead as planned. A leader of a teacher union (NAPTOSA) was asked about his views on how the ANAs could be remodeled. Taylor (2015) argued that for the ANAs to be an effective mechanism to track progress in the country's education system, they need to be administered independently. He further stated that the ANAs faced a legitimacy problem in that they are set, marked and reported on by the DBE. He suggested that an independent agency should work with the DBE to help design, administer and report on the results. Furthermore, he said this would reduce the administration burden on the educators to conduct the tests, and would also help promote the integrity and independence of the testing process. Taylor (2015) claimed that not only would this provide for a more reliable measure of how the system was doing, but would also increase public confidence in the results. He further stated that the last two ANA reports stated that scores were not comparable from year to year, but nevertheless claimed to have achieved major gains. He concluded by saying these contradictions seriously undermined the integrity of the results in the eyes of the expert community and the public in general. Following this he was also convinced that not all learners in the country, from Grades 1 to 9, needed to take the tests. He suggested that using a national representative sample of schools would help to drastically reduce the costs of tests.

Graven (2015), who is a Professor at Rhodes University, chairs the South African Numeracy Project, a research initiative aimed at improving mathematics education in the country, insisted that ANAs need to inform educators about the levels of competence, and not only performance. While the DBE reported an improvement in the national average mathematics results in 2014 for Grades 1 to 5, it was the Grade 9 results that were a shocker. In 2014, the national average result for Grade 9 mathematics was 11% which was the lowest since the tests were first introduced. He concluded by saying that the ANAs should be designed to point out the level at which educators need to begin remediation work with the learners. By contrast, the current ANAs only assess at a particular grade level focusing on curriculum coverage at that grade level whereas they would be more useful as a diagnostic assessment indicating the levels (from previous grades) that learners are operating at. NAPTOSA suggested that ANA tests could be written only at the exit points of the various phases in South Africa's education system which is Grades 3, 6 and 9 as opposed to Grades 1 to 9. According to Graven (2015), one of the limitations of the ANAs currently, is that they do not track the progress of the learners over time. He argues that learners move from one grade to another, writing the tests each year, without their cumulative knowledge being assessed. He concluded by saying that one cannot measure progress of the education system if the learners' progress is not tracked over time.

SADTU looked at ANA as an instrument introduced by the DBE to enable a systemic evaluation of education performance and therefore enhance learner performance. However, there have been complaints that results of ANA are not being used as intended. SADTU argued that ANA is used to assess teacher competency and to categorise schools as performing and underperforming. SADTU proposed that ANA should remain a systemic evaluation mechanism with appropriate time frames. SADTU encourages the use of ANA but cautions against unintended consequences and potential negative implications for teaching and learning. Further, they propose that ANA should be discontinued as an assessment and be administered over a period of three years, not annually. The motive for ANA to be administered over a period of three years is to enable systemic monitoring of educational progress at national and regional levels, and to facilitate the qualitative documenting of teacher and learner performance over time. If ANA could be administered over a period of three years, they feel it can generate relevant and timely information for the improvement of the education system (DBE, 2014).

2.4.1 Criticisms of ANA by Teacher Unions

According to the DBE (2013), the teacher unions, in particular, the SADTU, are of the opinion that a high-stakes test like ANA encourages rote learning and the memorisation of random facts to make scoring easy which in turn compromises the achievement of broader educational goals. They are of the view that schooling goes beyond the narrow-minded approach of testing and examination but is more about the cognitive development, knowledge construction, critical and independent thinking.

2.5 HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF STANDARDISED TESTING

According to Gallagher (2003), the use of standardised scholastic testing dates back to the mid-nineteenth century. Horace Mann introduced the concept of using examinations in Boston schools to gain objective information about the quality of teaching and learning in urban schools, monitor the quality of instruction and compare schools and educators within each school (Gallagher, 2003). World War I also had a significant impact on testing strategies in the early 20th century (Pioneers in Standardised Testing, 2002). The U.S. Army required a method for quickly identifying potential officers among large numbers of recruits. To do so, Arthur Otis and Robert Yerkes developed the Alpha Army Test, which gauged a soldier's mental capabilities. The Alpha Army Test, which had an efficient and effective scoring method, became a scoring model for many future standardised tests. This test changed the image of standardised testing, and patent and copyright requests for tests soared. Student tracking became a common practice in the 1920s and standardised tests were used to sort students into different curricula based on abilities. The use of standardised testing in classrooms rose during World War II and the Cold War. Gallagher (2003) notes that national leaders believed maintaining a competitive position in the world was dependent on identifying student talent in academics, leadership and managerial skills. As a result, the use of standardised testing to determine class placement and advancement increased. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act in the USA, also known as Title I, channeled money into many under-funded schools and acknowledged the federal government's responsibility to ensure access to educational opportunities nationwide (Scott, 2004). However, in return school districts had to prove that funds were being used appropriately through quantifiable results. Thus, Title I required schools to submit standardised tests scores in order to receive federal funding. Despite the widespread use of testing, standardised testing had little

effect on teaching practices until the late 1970s (Moon, Brighton, & Callahan, 2003). Demands for educational accountability increased in the 1970s; when students scored poorly, educators and school administrators were held accountable (Savage, 2003).

2.5.1 The Social Foundations of Standardised Testing

The standardised testing movement has been influenced by the social theory of functionalism. Schools act as sorting mechanisms from a functionalist view point, grouping students according to achievement or ability which standardised testing facilitates (Scherer, 2005). Functionalism leads to a rigidly-structured hierarchical society based on merit. The abilities of all students are carefully evaluated, and students are sorted based on merit. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University from 1933-1953, fervently advocated the functionalist view of society by emphasising the selective function of the school system (Tozer, Violas & Senese, 2002). Conant helped to develop the Scholastic Aptitude Test as an objective means of selecting the best candidates from across the country to enter Harvard. Conant was more concerned with maintaining social stability than with meeting the intellectual needs of every student in the country, and he later helped to found the Education Testing Service. Functionalism provides a logical, scientific and highly integrated framework to explain the function of education and may have the unintended effect of making learning in schools a secondary function. Scherer (2005) further states that educators should work to ensure that deep learning remains the primary function of schools.

2.5.2 The Perceived Positive Aspects of Standardised Testing

Standardised testing has numerous negative points, but there are also positive aspects of testing and accountability. Standardised testing has a long history based on the need for accountability in the classroom. It encourages the development of communication skills rather than the use of rote memory and a narrow range of specific test-taking skills may exert a positive influence on the curriculum. Standardised testing can also foster teamwork among teachers. The positive effects of faculty teamwork on student achievement are even more visible in schools in areas of high poverty. Wheelen and Kesselring (2005) point out that if faculty members trust each other, and work collaboratively with a focus on students, learning and achievement will increase among their students. Standardised tests can help to focus both students and educators on the

achievement of clear objectives. Williamson, Bondy, Langley and Mayne (2005) suggest that in order to maintain this equilibrium in the classroom, students should be challenged with cognitively complex tasks; teaching and learning should be contextualised in the experiences of home and community; students should be engaged in instructional conversations; and students' competence in language and literacy throughout all instructional activities should be developed.

2.5.3 The Negative Effects of Standardised Testing

Amrein and Berliner (2002) maintain that standardised testing results in an increase in dropout rates, especially among minorities, higher levels of cheating and a narrowing of the curriculum. They stress that too much focus on test-taking skills may reduce opportunities for deeper learning. Political and economic considerations often take precedence over considerations of teaching methodology. For example, the 1983 report, 'A Nation at Risk', a highly political report based on a perceived economic threat from global competitors, primarily Japan and Germany, had a major impact on the American educational system (Tozer, Violas & Senese, 2002). Business interests involved in educational reform may give priority to developing competent workers instead of members of society that possess a deep social conscience (Noddings, 2005). While test scores offer clarity and efficiency in the curriculum, and increase the confidence of the community in high achieving schools, standardised tests may do little to develop the individual beyond the fundamental processes of rote teaching (Phelps, 2005).

Ullman (2005) highlights the correlation between increased dropout rates and the use of standardised testing which was also indicated in a joint study conducted by the University of Texas and Arizona State University. That study revealed that dropout rates had increased, and the curriculum had narrowed due to the pressure to focus on preparing students for standardised graduation examinations (Ullman, 2005).

2.5.4 The Goals of the Standardised National Assessment

The DBE (2011) indicates numerous standardised national assessment goals in its guideline document on the interpretation and use of ANA results. This guideline document is a preferred source as the goals of ANA are clearly listed. Similar standardised national assessment (SNA) goals were part of the advocated assessment landscape and media documentation when the ANA was first launched as part of the Foundations for Learning (FFL) in 2008 by the Minister of

Education. According to DBE (2011), the goals of SNA aimed at serving numerous communities and are outlined as follows:

- To provide the DBE with important information that will help to identify areas that needs urgent attention in order to improve learning success levels of learners.
- To assist provincial departments and district offices to make informed decisions about schools that require urgent attention in terms of providing necessary resources and support to improve learner performance in literacy and mathematics.
- To inform the government and the South African public as to how well the schools are serving the country's children where it matters most, like the attainment of skills that will enable them to study successfully in all subjects/ learning areas and to compete equitably in the labour market.
- To provide educators with necessary data about the baseline language and mathematics capabilities of learners at the beginning of each grade and to help them make sound decisions when planning the learning programme for the year.
- To inform individual educators as to how close they are to realising the target goals that they seek to attain through their teaching, and to motivate them to align their teaching strategies towards accomplishing those goals.
- To provide parents with a better picture of the levels of learner performance at school so that they are better informed when they become involved in improving performance through decision-making; for example, when they participate in the school governing body and give support to learners at home.
- To provide an appropriate benchmark for educators in the development of assessment tasks that form part of their SBA programme.
- To assist the SMT to select and implement school-based interventions for improving learner performance in Languages and Mathematics.

2.5.4.1 Advantages of standardised testing

DoE (2011a) outlines the advantages and disadvantages of standardised tests as follows: they are practical, easy to administer and they take less time to administer than other assessments. Standardised testing results are quantifiable; by quantifying learners' achievements, educators

can identify proficiency levels and more easily identify students in need of remediation or advancement. Standardised testing provides a longitudinal report of student progress. Educators are able to see a trend of growth or decline and rapidly respond to students' educational needs. Standardised testing allows educators to compare scores of students within the same school and across schools. This information provides data on not only the individual student's abilities but also on the school as a whole. Areas of school-wide weaknesses and strengths are more easily identifiable.

2.5.4.2 Disadvantages of standardised testing

According to Standardised Testing in Education document (DBE, 2013), standardised test items are not parallel with typical classroom skills and behaviours. Due to the fact that questions have to be generalisable to the entire population, most items assess general knowledge and understanding. The limitations of this type of test are: only general knowledge is usually assessed; educators cannot use standardised test results to inform their individual instruction methods; and educators may begin to *'teach to the test'* as opposed to teaching what is currently in the curriculum or based on the needs of their individual learners in their classrooms. The researcher is of the view that standardised test items do not assess higher-level thinking skills. Standardised test scores are also greatly influenced by non-academic factors such as fatigue, anxiety and attention.

2.6 THE FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING CAMPAIGN

The initial policy imperative for introducing SNAs like ANA was the FFL which specified intentions to support and to measure performance of learners in literacy and numeracy on a regular basis (DoE, 2011a). Linked to the FFL campaign, the ANA tests were designed to assess learner competencies based on the assessment standards of the Revised National Curriculum Statement. The FFL campaign has been launched to focus the system on the improvement of learner performance in literacy and numeracy. The annual assessment of learners that is set by the Department of Education is based on these FFL campaign as quarterly assessment tasks (DoE, 2011a). With the introduction of the FFL campaign, there was a move to a more detailed accountability framework for assessment at primary school level. The FFL policy which made standardised testing of all learners compulsory for public schools, had precedents in the

international context. Black and Duhon (2003) state that in 2002, President Bush of the United States of America signed a school reform measure that required standardised testing of all learners in mathematics and reading every year from Grade 3-8, so that assessment could be used as a tool for school improvement. The Gauteng Department of Education in 2009 drafted a document entitled 'FFL Provincial Improvement Plan 2009-2011' which pronounced the aim of all learners by the end of 2011 in the Foundation and Intermediate Phase to increase a high degree of skill in literacy and mathematics by 30% to meet the National Department of Education's improvement target of 50% by 2011 (DoE, 2014). For increased monitoring of learner achievement, educators in Grade 1-6 would administer quarterly district-wide mathematics assessments and use the data from the assessments to revise the action plan.

The Education Sector Plan was drafted by a new board that regarded regular testing and standardised testing as an important intervention to measure progress on learner achievement towards a desired target of 60% learner competency by 2014. According to the DBE (2011), the action plan specified that ANA was to be used as a part of a testing programme by all schools in South Africa to conduct the same grade-specific Language and Mathematics tests for Grades 1-6 and 9. Like the FFL campaign, the standardising of assessment as a tool to improve performance became an explicit goal. The Education Sector Plan had to address improvements in literacy and numeracy at the transitional grades which are Grade 3, 6 and 9. This progress was to be measured through ANA. This assessment was put in place by the DBE as a strategy to measure progress in learner achievement annually towards the 2014 target of ensuring that at least 60% of learners achieved acceptable levels in literacy and numeracy. ANA is one of the initiatives that form the backbone of the DBE's action plan to the vision, 'Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025' (DBE, 2010).

The following section is presented in line with the research questions and will be divided into subsections covering the following: implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase; ANA as a diagnostic type of assessment; the impact of ANA as a strategy on learner performance in EFAL; the impact of EFAL used as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT); and the role of SBA compared to ANA.

2.7 IMPLEMENTATION OF ANA IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE

Abu-Alhija (2010) notes that the general purpose of any national assessment should be to improve educational outcomes, and lists four key functions of these assessments as follows: (i) to ensure accountability; (ii) to assure quality control; (iii) to provide instructional diagnosis; and (iv) to identify needs and to allocate resources. In the same vein, he highlights the function of instructional diagnosis which has led to the most controversy regarding the use of these assessments. Some of these controversies are that teachers only ‘teach to the test’, that is, they will focus mainly on test-taking strategies and therefore spend less time on actual teaching, or that teachers are not adequately equipped to use assessment results effectively for the purpose of improving their teaching/ instruction (Kanjee & Mthembu, 2014).

Park (2012) identifies a number of constraints to teachers’ use of assessment data: the irrelevance of data derived from national assessment tests is a demotivating factor that discourages teachers from trusting the validity of this data; when data are made available at a time that teachers do not need the information, teachers are less likely to use it; data are often reported in formats that are either not familiar to the teachers or are perceived to be irrelevant to what happens in the classroom; teachers often find their own classroom assessment data more relevant to what they are doing; teachers often lack relevant skills to analyse data; and the absence of strong leadership and support from school district personnel in terms of promoting a culture of evidence-based decision-making inhibits the potential of teachers to use data, although, where district staff provide good role models of data use, teachers tend to respect and value the importance of data. In some schools where learners are not performing well in these assessments; they think that ANA is for the purpose of ‘naming and shaming’ their schools (DBE, 2010).

To contextualise the findings regarding the key challenges and prospects facing teachers in the implementation and use of the ANAs, the information was obtained on teacher views about the value of testing in general and the ANA in particular. The majority of the Intermediate Phase teachers displayed a positive view of testing, and also agreed that the ANA can assist teachers to improve learning. However, a large group of the Intermediate Phase teachers said in a statement that ANA tests were a waste of time and money (DBE, 2013). Graven and Venkatakrishnan (2013) report similar responses from a group of mathematics teachers who noted that ANAs are good for standardising content coverage, making explicit one’s expectations about what will be

assessed, providing information on learners' levels of understanding, and providing guidance on content coverage.

On the other hand, there are negative aspects of ANA. Kanjee and Mthembu (2014) report that teachers highlighted the issue of language within the questions, the timing of ANA in September and the bureaucratic arrangements. The limited assessment knowledge and skills of teachers have been reported by a number of studies over the years (DBE 2012; Kanjee & Croft, 2012; Kanjee & Mthembu, 2014). The latter also reported equally low levels of assessment in literacy among South African teachers across the different school quintile categories. Limited teacher assessment knowledge and skills were also highlighted in Chile, where ANA-type census-based national assessments, known as Sistema de Medicion de la Calidad de la Educacion (SIMCE) are also conducted. At the school level, SIMCE information seems to be underused. While educators value the SIMCE information, they have difficulties understanding and using it for pedagogical purposes.

2.8 ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AS A DIAGNOSTIC TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

The DBE (2014) document states that ANA is premised on the principle that effective testing affords learners the opportunity to demonstrate relevant skills and understanding and also assists the education system with diagnosing learners' shortcomings. Teachers have confirmed that 'ANA has a diagnostic value as they use its results to determine shortcomings in learning and improve their own teaching in the areas of weaknesses' (DBE, 2013:35). The researcher, being a teacher in the Intermediate Phase, has observed that ANA as a diagnostic test shows teachers where problem areas are and how far the learners are progressing in their learning towards achieving learning aims, and allows teachers to adapt and adjust their teaching approaches.

Diagnostic assessment is specifically focused on finding out the nature and cause of learning difficulties and providing appropriate remedial help and guidance, either from the educator or from the other expert (DoE, 2014). The researcher believes that some learning difficulties can be caused by educators ignoring the range of capacity in the class; for example, gifted learners may not be adequately challenged and others may be given activities beyond their capacity. Problems may also be the result of specific learning difficulties. Van der Host and MacDonald (2012) state that diagnostic assessment serves as a guideline for the teacher to develop suitable teaching,

learning and assessment strategies that will ensure maximum progress. Strategies for diagnostic assessment can be formal or informal. Informal diagnostic assessment strategies are unstructured and are often accomplished through questions posed by the teacher. A formal diagnostic assessment is a scheduled and structured assessment. This could take the form of a preliminary test i.e. baseline assessment that measures the learner's prior knowledge. Louw (2010) concurs with Van der Host and MacDonald (2012) that effective assessment plays a vital role in diagnosing the learning progress and problems of an individual learner or of the group. Diagnostic reports are compiled by panels of educators and subject advisors who are specialists in Mathematics and Languages. The data that were used in compiling the diagnostic report were obtained from marked scripts collected from representative samples of schools and learners, drawn from all nine provinces that participated in verification ANA in 2014 (DBE, 2016).

2.9 THE IMPACT OF ANA AS A STRATEGY TO IMPROVE LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN EFAL

Standardised assessment in education has a range of objectives and predicted effects. Assessment must measure pupil attainment as an indication of the quality of the education service's output. It also serves as a link between those responsible for providing the service such as teachers, schools and the local education authorities, and the administrators at a national level, who define the service. DBE (2014) therefore avers that standardised assessment is a management tool that both influences the actions of the implementing agents and provides information about their performance to their superiors. Standardised assessment is expected to provide information for people outside the school in general and for parents in particular.

According to the DBE (2014), there has been a noticeable improvement in learner performance both in the Foundation and Intermediate Phase. ANA results have provided a measured picture of levels of performance in literacy (language) and numeracy (mathematics) at the key transitional stages of Grades 3, 6 and 9 and Grades 1, 2, 4 and 5. This feedback has assisted schools to build on their strengths and to develop intervention strategies to address their areas of weakness (DBE, 2014).

2.10 IMPACT OF EFAL USED AS LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

In South Africa, the LoLT from Grades R to 3 is the mother tongue (DBE, 2014). In the province of KZN the Home Language is isiZulu. English is only introduced in Grade 4 as a LoLT. Teachers experience great difficulties in teaching English in the Intermediate Phase because of the language transition from the Foundation Phase where learners have been taught in their mother tongue. Learners do not understand questions especially because they are not allowed any assistance in the reading of questions when writing ANA. The learners have not yet mastered the vocabulary used in the ANA in Grade 4.

When teachers are revising the previous assessment questions, they are not sure whether the questions will be asked again or not, because there is no duplication in the ANA tests; questions change every year. Teachers are of the view that the set of questions in ANA do not allow for learners to demonstrate multiple ways of understanding the content learnt. Questions do not seem to cater for diverse learner intelligences; they do not require learners to demonstrate problem-solving and critical thinking skills as Bloom's Taxonomy guides assessment practices. The ANA tests are written during the third term of the school academic year. This puts pressure on both teachers and learners to run through the curriculum in an attempt to cover all the content within three terms to prepare the learners. The scheduling of ANA in the third term causes anxiety to teachers because they have to revise most of the work already covered during first and second term to prepare for ANA. Teachers are also concerned about the marking which they say it gives them a great pressure. They believe that the DBE should hire temporary markers to do the work (Earl, 2011).

Teachers raised concerns that when English is introduced as a LoLT in Grade 4, learners struggle to make a smooth transition from learning through their Home Language to learning using English. Teachers are of the view that this puts learners at a disadvantage when they have to learn concepts in another language. Learners in Grade 4 need assistance in order to understand a question in English and they also struggle to provide correct answers because of a lack of vocabulary in English. Teachers recommend that English should be introduced as a LoLT at an earlier age for a smooth transition into the Intermediate Phase (DBE, 2012).

2.11 ROLE OF SBA AS COMPARED TO ANA

Assessment is defined as a process in which evidence of performance is gathered and evaluated against agreed criteria (SAQA, 2000a). SBA is conducted in schools in an attempt to empower the learner. Masole (2004) asserts that if ANA could be correctly implemented and incorporated into a summative assessment, a more comprehensive and cumulative judgement about the learner would be achieved. SBA is not a common feature in the examination system as only practical subjects make use of it. Only projects, portfolios and practical tests fall under SBA. Marks from these tasks are validated by moderators sent by the examination board to verify marks. Results obtained reveal that SBA can be a trusted benchmark for promotion of pupils from primary into secondary school. SBA is a compulsory component for progression and promotion in all the different school phases. In the Foundation Phase, the SBA comprises 100% of the assessment with no end-of-year examination. In the Intermediate Phase, the SBA comprises 75% with 25% coming from an end-of-year examination. In the Senior Phase, SBA comprises 40% with 60% allocated to the end-of year-examination. In the FET Phase, SBA comprises 25% with 75% allocated to the end-of-year examination (Chetty, 2016). In SBA there are various forms which are:

- Baseline assessment – this is an assessment the educator uses at the beginning of a new set of learning activities in order to find out what the learners already know and can demonstrate in order to decide what level of demand to build into the learning experience plan (DoE, 2012).
- Formative assessment – this assessment is conducted as the learning process takes place and it is used to influence or inform the learning process e.g. in a lesson the educator moves around from one learner to another providing feedback on their progress in solving the problems they encounter in that lesson. It is therefore, sometimes seen as being the opposite of summative assessment. The educator can provide feedback verbally or commenting in learners' exercise books. A number of tests are written during the year, in addition to the end of the year examination in order to facilitate more authentic learning. It involves a developmental approach because it informs the educator's decisions with reference to selecting appropriate follow-up activities. It also helps to determine what the learners' strengths and developmental needs are in relation to a particular outcome or criteria. It also indicates which situations help or hinder the learner's strengths and indicates which

assessment tools, methods and techniques are appropriate for the learner (DoE, 2012). Formative assessment is designed to monitor and support learning progress. It is for learners' growth, development and support.

- Summative assessment – this assessment can be defined as the assessment that takes place at the end of the learning experience for a purpose outside the learning experience (Flanagan, 2012). It usually consists of one main test or examination that is written at the end of the school year. Its aim is to determine how much of the subject content the learners know. It does not provide a learner with any kind of information about his or her actual progress. Summative assessment is used to give feedback to other people e.g. parents and employers (Flanagan, 2012).
- SBA is done in a particular school and is different from that of another school. It is done with the aim of empowering a learner. If correctly implemented and incorporated into a summative assessment, a more comprehensive and cumulative judgement about the learner is achieved (Masole, 2004). SBA can be a trusted benchmark for the promotion of pupils into another grade. ANA on the other hand is not administered to pass learners to other grades. This assessment only checks whether or not learners have any challenges in literacy and mathematics while they are still in primary school. It differs from SBA because it is administered by all schools in all the nine provinces of South Africa at the same time. The researcher feels that the ANA's activities are beneficial for learners who move from one district to another in that it prevents them from being behind or ahead of other learners in their new schools.
- Standardised tests may be comprised of different types of items, including multiple-choice, true-false, matching items and essay type questions.

2.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The literature reviewed in this chapter was presented to provide a conceptual framework and background for the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase. Various theories underpinning assessment were discussed. The difference between theoretical and conceptual frameworks was discussed. It is evident that there is a need to monitor the implementation of ANA to ensure that there is uniformity in conducting these assessments in all South African

schools. In the next chapter, the research methodology adopted in this study is explained in detail.

CHAPTER 3:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the design and procedures that were used when collecting data for this study. This chapter also focused on the research design, research methodology, and instruments as well as data analysis used to address the research question. The discussion on methodologies and design is meant to address how the aim and objectives stated in Chapter 1 are achieved. Mixed methods design was used in this study. First, issues pertaining research paradigm are critically presented to locate the study.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This is a mixed methods study. De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2011) support the idea that the mixed method central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination of research problems than either approach alone. The goal of the mixed methods approach is not to replace either the quantitative or qualitative approaches, but to draw from the strength of both these approaches and minimise possible weaknesses (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In this study, in particular, the idea was to produce a report which would highlight the most acceptable and significant contributions of both. There was a desire from the onset to get the whole information with regards to the implementation of ANA as much as possible.

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011: 6) further outline the following values of a mixed method approach:

- It provides more comprehensive evidence for studying a research problem than either qualitative or quantitative methods on their own.
- It provides the opportunity for a greater assortment of divergent views and perspectives and makes researchers alert to the possibility that issues are more multifaceted than they may have initially supposed.
- It eliminates different kinds of bias, explains the true nature of the phenomenon under investigation and improves validity and reliability.

- It provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research, and therefore has the potential to provide stronger inferences.
- It is pragmatic in the sense that researchers are free to use all methods possible to address a research problem as well as the fact that they combine inductive and deductive reasoning processes.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design defines the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom and under what conditions the data was obtained by (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Furthermore, it indicates the general plan to be followed, how the research structure is set up, what happens to the subjects and what methods of data collection are used. Mixed methods design was used to guide the entire research process, by using both qualitative and quantitative methods which were deemed necessary to answer the main research question. The researcher used structured interviews to solicit views and attitudes of educators about the implementation of ANA in schools while questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from the respondents. This design ensures that properly predetermined procedure for collecting and analysing data was used in study to understand the research problem under investigation (Creswell, 2012). In essence, this design is suitable for this study as it employs multiple sources of data such as questionnaires and interviews with the participants concerned. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) further states that a design that involves a survey as part of the research process empowers the investigator to select a sample of respondents from a larger population and administer a questionnaire or conduct interviews to collect information on variables of interest.

3.4 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The sample of the study was from a cluster that had teachers who have been experiencing difficulties with the implementation of ANA in general. This was established during the researcher's visit to this cluster meeting in which most of the educators raised their concerns with this process. Educators were able to discuss their assessment challenges and performance based on ANA and its usefulness to their profession. These educators were forthright in their articulation of multiple challenges they are facing and in turn trying to establish areas of

common concerns with ANA. It was for this reason that purposive sampling was used to select participants. The following criteria were used during the selection process of the sample.

Participants were selected from King Cetshwayo District schools through purposive sampling which is defined as choosing participants based on the qualities they possess (Tongco, 2007). The criteria were that they must be teaching Grades 4-6 (Intermediate Phase). The sample size was 75 educators and 5 Heads of Department from the population of approximately 200 Intermediate Phase educators in the circuit: 75 participants constitute 37% of the population. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) state that in purposeful sampling, the researcher selects certain elements from the population that is representative or informative about the particular issue or topic. These educators are required to implement ANA in their schools. Their qualifications and experience in conducting ANA to solicit Intermediate Phase learners' performance in EFAL are vital.

This study focused in the Intermediate Phase, where 75 participants are Grade 4-6 educators. Schools were purposively chosen from semi-urban, rural or deep rural schools. Five HoDs were interviewed; one HoD from each school especially those who teach Grade 6, since this grade is an exit class in the Intermediate Phase. Five structured interview questions were prepared for these HoDs.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

3.5.1 Research Instruments

Research instruments are defined as “tools for measuring, observing, or documenting ... data” (Creswell, 2012). Researchers identify these instruments before they collect data, and they may include a test, a questionnaire, a tally sheet, a log, an observational checklist, an inventory or an interview or any combination of these.

This study was conducted using both questionnaires and interviews. An interview schedule using direct and indirect questions was employed to collect data. Structured questionnaires were constructed and distributed to schools in King Cetshwayo District, particularly in Mthunzini Circuit. Both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires were set for completion by the respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to targeted schools by the researcher so as to solicit

information from the respondents. The respondents were the educators who taught Grade 4-6 in the Intermediate Phase.

3.5.2 The Questionnaire

McMillan (2010:35) defines a questionnaire as “a written set of questions or statements that is used to assess attitudes, beliefs, opinions and biographical information”. Creswell (2012:65) further defines questionnaires as “forms used in a survey design that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher, where participants mark answers to questions and supply basic, personal, or demographic information about themselves.”

A structured questionnaire was used to gather data from educators pertaining to the challenges experienced by learners during the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase. The questionnaires comprised of open and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions allowed participants to respond freely and present a wide range of ideas. Closed-ended questions only allow for specific answers and not for elaboration; for example, Yes or No answers.

3.5.2.1 Advantages of using questionnaires

It is cost-effective to use questionnaires because they enable a researcher to collect the information from many subjects at the same time. It also saves time. The respondents cannot be manipulated by the researcher to answer in a particular way (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

3.5.2.2 Disadvantages of using questionnaires

There is often a low response rate because some questionnaires either get lost or are ignored. Uneducated people may not be able to answer questions because they are illiterate. Some questions may be difficult to understand. Sometimes the researcher may not get first-hand information where subjects influence each other (Cohen et al., 2011).

3.5.3 Interviews

According to Kumar (2014), an interview is a person-to-person interaction, either face-to-face or otherwise, between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind. Furthermore, it is defined as a social relationship designed to exchange the information between the participant and the researcher (Creswell, 2012).

Structured interviews were conducted with five educators and five HoDs which were purposively selected in each participating schools. The interviewer made appointments with the interviewees ahead of time. The interviews were designed to start off with simple and non-sensitive questions.

3.5.3.1 Advantages of using interviews

Kumar (2014) states that it is less likely that a question will be misunderstood as the interviewer can either repeat a question or put it in a form that is understood by the respondent. He further adds that an interview has a wider application since it can be used with almost any type of population: children, the handicapped, illiterate or very old. De Vos et.al. (2014) agree with him in that misunderstanding can be clarified easily there and then. He further states that an interviewer gets first-hand information and concludes by saying high responses can be gained because it is impossible that some information can get lost.

3.5.3.2 Disadvantages of using interviews

According to Kumar (2014), this method is very expensive and time consuming since you may need transport or if it is done telephonically. He further states that an interviewer may influence an interviewee and that interviews are more biased than questionnaires. He concludes by saying an interviewee may not be free to express him or herself.

3.6 PILOT STUDY

Before the questionnaire was put into a final form, a pilot study was carried out. The subjects for the pilot study were educators teaching Grades 4-6 in one of the primary schools in Mtunzini Circuit where the researcher is employed. Those educators for the pilot have experience in conducting ANA in the Intermediate Phase. This pilot was aimed at determining the time that the pilot group of participants spent in answering the questions in the questionnaire and whether or not the questions were clear and easily understood. The pilot aimed to solicit any useful comments from the participants. It also aimed to test whether the study would be researchable or not. Thereafter, adjustments were made to the questionnaire and ambiguous questions were amended to obtain the required information.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis can be regarded as the techniques by which the researchers convert data to a numerical form and subject it to statistical analysis (De Vos et.al, 2014). They further explain that the purpose of analysis is to reduce data to an intelligible and interpretable form to be able to answer the research questions and draw conclusions.

The process of data analysis started immediately after all questionnaires were collected and interviews had been conducted. The sample size enabled the researcher to ensure that all questionnaires distributed to schools were used in the study. This study analysed both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously in order to provide coherence and better synthesis to the envisaged results. Quantitative data was collected through questionnaires. In the case of questionnaires, the analysis of data was presented in the form of tables and graphs. Rating scales were also used to compare ANA results from different schools since 2009, when ANA was implemented in the Intermediate Phase. Data collected through interviews were analysed through the development of themes and/ or categories. The data were analysed and patterns and categories that emerged were incorporated in the final analysis process. The results are presented in Chapter 4. In the case of interviews, they were all transcribed verbatim into a word document. It was deliberate that grammatical errors were not corrected in order to ensure that the comments would not lose their original meaning. Qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions in the questionnaire and interviews. Qualitative data were analysed narratively using themes.

3.8 ETHICAL AND SAFETY ISSUES

Confidentiality and anonymity are ethical issues which must be taken into consideration. Thus, in this study, it was of paramount importance to protect the identities of the participants, and to ensure that the information collected was reported truthfully. This meant that the researcher had to ensure that the rights of all the participants (interviewees) were respected, and in particular the right to non-disclosure of their identity. The researcher carefully explained to the interviewees their right not to disclose their names, and that participation in the study was voluntary. They were told that they had a right not to respond to questions if they were not comfortable to do so. Leedy (2005) states that there are four categories of ethical issues, namely, protection from harm;

informed consent; right of privacy; and honesty with professional colleagues. Gumbo (2003) adds that it would be unethical to collect information without the knowledge of the participants, and their express willingness and informed consent.

3.9 INFORMED CONSENT

Participants in this study were fully respected in terms of the fully informed of the nature and aims of the study. This was important in order to ensure that their rights to terminate at any stage or withdraw their participation were respected. During the interview process, before each interview, participants were asked to complete a consent form (Appendix C) and participants who agreed to answer questionnaire were provided with a letter explaining the ethical issues such as freedom to participate or withdraw and confidentiality (Appendix E). Kvale (1996) states that prior to starting any interview, the phase referred to as “briefing” should be held with participants where they are reminded of the purpose of the interview and are given time to ask questions. In this briefing session, they are assured that their right to terminate or withdraw from the interview or their participation will be respected at any stage of the interview process.

It is critical to underscore the significance of the ethical issues in the research process, as part of the respect to the participants. Each participant was asked to consent to audio-recordings of the interviews which were then transcribed for analysis.

3.10 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The issues of anonymity and confidentiality are central to the research process, and they cannot be taken lightly. Anonymity means the identity of participants is protected, and not exposed to anyone outside the research team; however, this may be compromised in case studies where there is a structural linkage between samples (Lewis, 2003). It is for this reason that absolute guarantees of anonymity with respect to this study could not be given. However, each participant was assured that his/her identity would be concealed as far as possible.

In terms of confidentiality, participants were given the assurance that in this study, confidentiality would be maintained and the results would be made available upon the completion of the study. According to Lewis (2003:67), confidentiality means avoiding the attribution of comments that identifies participants. Two of the teachers requested that the results

of this study could be made available as this study can make significant changes in the way ANA is implemented in schools.

3.10.1 Protecting Participants from Harm

It is incumbent on the researcher to protect participants from harm at all costs. Lewis (2003) states that participants might disclose sensitive information which they might feel later that they should not have revealed. In this study, the researcher needed to stay a while with the participants after the completion of the interviews to respond to some anxieties that two of the participants had regarding confidentiality and when the results of this study would be made available to their school. Lewis (2003) emphasises that the judgement of risk or harm is likely to involve subjectivity on the researcher's part.

3.10.2 Researcher Integrity

Field workers or researchers need to exercise common sense and have a moral responsibility to their subjects first, their study next and to themselves last. In learning about people, the researcher must remember to treat them as people and they will expose elements of their lives to us. It is important to note that ethical obligation rests with researcher to ensure that investigation proceeds correctly and that the results are reported honestly.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the research process, research design, methods and the research instruments used in the study in order to answer the questions. The approach taken was that of a mixed methods study using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The tools used in the study were interviews and a questionnaire. This chapter underscores the idea that research methodology is an engine for any successful research investigation. The next chapter consists of data analysis, presentation and discussion of findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4:

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents and interrogates the research findings of how educators in the Intermediate Phase perceive the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase. This chapter addresses the results of the three objectives that the study set out to investigate. The three main research objectives that guided this investigation were:

- To explore teachers' views about the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase.
- To find out teachers' perspectives on the use of ANA as a diagnostic assessment tool.
- To find out the impact of ANA on learner performance in the English First Additional Language course.

These results are preceded by the presentation of the profile with regard to the participants.

4.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The findings in this chapter are aligned to the research questions and conceptual/theoretical framework. This was to allow the generation of research themes and subthemes arising from the research questions. The first sets of themes generated relates to the educators' profiles where the subthemes included qualifications, teaching experience, and grade taught, and teaching of languages. The second group of themes relates to the role of school management

4.2.1 Findings from Questionnaire

The data analysis presented in this section is based on the 75 questionnaires that were returned during the data collected process. The generated data were analysed to present demographic and general information from the participants.

4.2.1.1 Demographic and general information

This section of the questionnaires as shown in Appendix E, gives account of the demographic and general information that was collected from the participants.

Table 4.1: Gender of participants

Gender	No	%
Males	28	37
Females	47	63
Total	75	100

Table 4.1 shows that 75 participants took part in the survey. This table provides general information about the gender distribution of the participants. It reveals that 37% of the participants were males while 63% were women. The percentage of female educators was high compared to male counterpart, and this can be attributed to the fact the district has more female educators than male educators. There was a considerable enthusiasm to participate in this study in particular by female educators.

4.2.2 Qualifications of the Participants

In Table 4.2, the participants' academic and professional qualification are summarised.

Table 4.2: Qualifications of educators

Qualification Type	N	%
Matric/Grade 12	-	-
Matric + Certificate	1	1
Diploma	17	23
Degree	34	45
Post Graduate /Senior Degree	21	28
TOTAL	75	100

Table 4.2 reveals that the number of participants (n=34; 45%) having completed four-year degree programme suggests that participants were familiar with the implementation of educational programmes. Of the 75 participants, a total of n=17 (23%) participants had a diploma in education. Twenty-one (28%) had a post-graduate degree or senior Degree while n=1 (1%) had a Matric plus 1 certificate which qualified them to teach.

4.2.3 TEACHING EXPERIENCE

The idea of understanding teaching experience emanates from the notion that says some educators might be considered highly competent or experts, while others might be incompetent 'non-experts' (Tsui, 2003). The interesting aspect about experience is that it does not always guarantee expertise as a teacher. Killen (2012) states that experience is necessary, but not a

fundamental requirement in teaching and learning. This study identified teaching experience as a main catalyst in facilitating the process of effective implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase. Experience provides knowledge of assessment on a wide spectrum. The lack thereof would render the implementation a futile exercise and unsuccessful for many teachers. The results presented in Table 4.3 show the breakdown of years of teaching experience the participants have in the teaching profession.

Table 4.3: Educators' years of teaching experience

Years of Experience	N	%
0-2 years	3	4
3-4 years	7	9
5-10 years	29	39
11+years	36	48
TOTAL	75	100

It is evident from the results presented in the Table 4.3 that n=3 (4%) of the participants had four years or less experience; n= 7 (9%) of the participants had three to four years' experience; n= 29 (39%) of the participants had more than five years' experience; and n=36 (48%) had more than 11 years' experience. Thus, most participants had requisite experience in the field of education. These participants are likely to offer a credible account of how ANA was implemented in the Intermediate Phase and one could rely on the responses of such a research sample.

4.2.4 Grade Taught

The data about the grade level these participants were teaching was significant in this study. Table 4.4 shows which grades the participants were drawn from in order to ensure validity of results. The main objective of this study was to understand how ANA was implemented across the entire Intermediate Phase. According to the DoE (2014), ANA was specifically spearheaded to target lower grades with the view to assessing the levels of achievement and to offer carefully-planned diagnostic assessment in the early years of schooling in order to improve performance. Considering the fact that the ANA was introduced to deal with issues of diagnostic assessment, these participants should know the basic forms of assessment and assessment criteria.

Table 4.4: Grades taught by the participants

Grades	N	%
R-3	4	5
4-6	58	78
7	13	17
TOTAL	75	100

Table 4.4 shows the grades taught by the participants, and Grades 4 and 6 were of particular interest to this study. This group constitutes n=58 (78%) of the sample and it was a significant group to have participated in the study. Their knowledge of diagnostic assessment and implementation of ANA cannot be overstated.

4.2.5 Teaching of Languages

The involvement of the participants in teaching languages is summarised in Table 4.5. The implementation of ANA was to help learners to improve their results in English.

Table 4.5: Involvement of the intermediate phase educators in the teaching of languages.

Subjects	N	%
IsiZulu	12	16
English	50	67
Afrikaans	1	1
Other (specify)	9	12
Not responded	3	4
TOTAL	75	100

The results in Table 4.5 show that n=12 (16%) of educators teach isiZulu; n=50 (67%) teach English; n=1 (1%) teach Afrikaans and n=9 (12%) are not involved in the teaching any of the languages. The highest number of participants was those who teach English.

4.2.6 Role of School Management in Promoting the Implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase

The results presented in Table 4.6 show participants' answers regarding their role in promoting the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase.

Table 4.6: Role of SMT

Participants	N	%
Deputy Principal	3	4
HoD	9	12
Senior Teacher	17	23
Other (specify)	19	25
No response	27	36
TOTAL	75	100

From Table 4.6 only n=3 (4%) are deputy principals; n=9 (12%) are the Heads of Department; n=17 (23%) are senior educators; n=19 (25%) are ordinary Post Level 1 educators while n=27 (36%) did not respond. The large number of those who did not respond indicates that they do not participate in the promotion of ANA in schools.

4.2.7 Location of Schools

The results in Table 4.7 provide a summary of the schools according to their location in King Cetshwayo District.

Table 4.7: Location of participating schools

Location of Schools	N	%
Urban	10	13
Semi-Urban	40	53
Rural	22	29
Other (specify)	1	1
No respond	2	4
TOTAL	75	100

From the results in Table 4.7, n=10 (13%) of schools are situated in an urban area; n=40 (53%) are in semi-urban areas; n=22 (29%) are in rural areas; n=3 (3%) did not respond. The largest number of schools (n=50; 66%) are situated in areas where learners have access to technology and electricity.

4.3 EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE USE OF ANA AS A DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT TOOL

This section seeks to determine the views and perspectives of educators on the use of ANA as a diagnostic assessment tool. This was aimed at answering the second research question.

4.3.1 Views of Educators about the Implementation of ANA

Table 4.8: Participation in ANA workshops

Views of Participants	Yes		No		Responses	No response	Total
Do you know anything about ANA?	N	71	N	3	74	1	75
	%	95	%	4	99		
Are you playing any role in the assessment of ANA in your school? If yes, what?	N	58	N	16	74	1	75
	%	77	%	21	98		
Were you involved in any workshop related to the implementation of ANA?	N	38	N	37	75		75
	%	51	%	49	100		
Do you have any idea why ANA was initiated by the DBE?	N	60	N	13	73	2	75
	%	80	%	17	97		

Table 4.8 indicates the views of educators on their awareness and participation in ANA workshops is presented. The results show that n=71 (95%) of the participants were aware of the project while only n=3 (4%) did not know anything about ANA's workshops. Out of the 75 participants, n=58 (77%) played a role in the assessment of ANA and a small number of n=16 (21%) did not play any part. Only n=1 (1%) respondent did not respond. Participants were also asked if they were involved in any workshops related to the implementation of ANA. Of the 75 participants, n=38 (51%) were involved while n=37 (49%) were not involved at all. There was no substantial difference in numbers between those who were involved and those who were not involved. Participants were asked whether or not they have any idea why ANA was initiated by the DBE. Of the 75 participants, n=60 (80%) knew while only n=13 (17%) did not know; n=2 (3%) participants did not answer.

4.3.2 Involvement of Educators in Workshops to Implement ANA

The majority of educators were involved during the preparation stage and their level of readiness was heightened before the commencement of ANA. The majority of the participants in the survey chose to be involved in the workshops organised to capacitate them for smooth implementation of ANA, despite the fact they were located in the rural schools. The reality reflected in the participants' views is crucial because they are contradictory, and these views are briefly interrogated in this chapter. Most participants (n=71; 95%) said they knew about ANA yet n=37 (49%) had not been involved in any workshops related to the implementation of ANA assessment.

These findings indicate a significant gap between the district officials and the management teams the survey relates to the curriculum support at the level of teaching resources and the nature of professional support that was never provided prior implementation. It must be pointed out that the number of participants who were excluded from the departmental/district or circuit workshops was significant. The department undertook to conduct workshops in all schools but the evidence shows that this was not the case as the DBE (2014) diagnostic report suggests.

4.3.3 Educators' Perspective of the Use of ANA as a Diagnostic Assessment

Table 4.9: Educator's perspectives on the use of ANA as a diagnostic assessment

		SA	A	D	SD	Total responses	No response	Total
1. The time during which ANA is written is appropriate for all South African Schools	N	35	25	11	4	75		75
		60						
	%	47	33	15	5	100		100
2. The written of ANA interrupts the curriculum plan of the school	N	35	24	13	3	75		75
		59						
	%	47	32	17	4	100		100
3. ANA results are reliable though monitoring and invigilation is done by the educators of the same school	N	26	19	28	2	75		75
		45						
	%	35	25	37	3	100		100
4. ANA question papers cater for validity as a principle of assessment	N	31	22	18	4	75		75
		53						
	%	41	29	25	5	100		100
5. ANA contributes to improvement in EFAL and Mathematics	N	37	30	6	2	75		75
		67						
	%	49	40	8	3	100		100
6. Educators are comfortable with the procedures used to access ANA results for the schools	N	26	27	21	1	75		75
		53						
	%	34	36	28	2	100		100
7. The BDE has intervention programmes for the schools performing below the expected standards	N	26	27	21	1	75		75
		53						
	%	34	36	28	2	100		100
8. The interventions assist learners to improve in English FAL and Mathematics	N	38	23	12	2	75		75
		61						
	%	50	30	17	3	100		100
		80						

*Key: SA = Strongly agree; A = Agree; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly disagree. ** Rounding means that percentages do not always add to 100%

Table 4.9 analyses the responses of participants on the critical areas in the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase. These areas were among others: the timing in scheduling assessment tasks; timetabling; reliability of results; validity of question paper; the contribution to improvement in EFAL; interventions for the underperforming schools; and the success of the intervention.

1. Timing for conducting ANA assessment – Most participants (n=60; 80%) agreed and strongly agreed that the examination timetable for ANA was appropriate and they felt that it was aligned with the year plan for the majority of the schools and there was nothing wrong with the schedule. N=11 (15%) of the participants disagreed while n=4 (5%) of the participants strongly disagreed.
2. The writing of ANA examination interrupts the curriculum plan of the school – most participants (n=59; 79%) agreed with the notion that the date of the ANA assessment interrupted the official curriculum planning in many schools. The other 17% (n=13) disagreed with the view that the writing of ANA interrupts the normal programming of curriculum while n=3 (4%) of the participants strongly disagreed.
3. ANA results are reliable although monitoring and invigilation is done by the educators of the same school who have interest in the outcomes of the process – the majority of the participants (n=45; 60%) perceived the ANA results as reliable. In this regard, it is very difficult to understand their conclusion on this particular matter. Some of the participants (n=28; 37%) did not agree that ANA results are reliable. One could conclude that these participants were skeptical about the reliability of results, doubting that the educators who conducted the monitoring and invigilation cannot be objective. The remaining 3% (n=2) of the sample strongly disagreed.
4. ANA question papers cater for validity as a principle of assessment – most of the participants (n=53; 70%) agreed that the ANA question papers were valid while 25% (n=18) of the participants disagreed that ANA question papers were valid. Some participants (n=4; 5%) strongly disagreed.
5. ANA contributes to improvement in EFAL and Mathematics – the overwhelming majority (n=67; 89%) of the participants agreed that the implementation of ANA as a diagnosis

assessment made a significant contribution in improving the level of English language in schools. Some participants (n=6; 8%) disagreed that the implementation of ANA contributed to the improvement of EFAL while 3% (n=2) of the participants strongly disagreed.

6. Educators are comfortable with the procedures used to access ANA results for the schools – most participants (n=53; 70%) agreed that the DBE communicated ANA results to schools without any problem. A small number of participants (n=21; 28%) disagreed while n=1 (2%) strongly disagreed.
7. The DBE has intervention programmes for the schools performing below the expected standards – most participants (n=53; 70%) agreed that the DBE had presented a concrete plan or intervention programme to assist underperforming schools while 28% (n=21) of the participants disagreed with the notion that the DBE had a practical plan to assist those schools whose performance was bad. The remaining 2% (n=1) strongly disagreed.
8. The interventions assist learners to improve in EFAL and Mathematics – most participants (n=61; 80%) agreed that ANA was assisted learners to improve English FAL and Mathematics while the n=12 (17%) disagreed and n=2 (3%) strongly disagreed.

4.4 FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Most of the interview questions were geared towards answering the research questions on how educators implemented ANA; educators' perceptions of using ANA as a diagnostic tool; and its impact on learner performance in EFAL. To ensure confidentiality, the interview participants were given the following codes:

Table 4.10: Coding of participants

Participants	Codes
HoDs-Head of Department	HoD1 – HoD5
Teacher 1- Educators	T1 – T5

4.4.1 Challenges Encountered during the Implementation of ANA Strategy in Schools

The participants felt that the use of ANA as a diagnosis assessment tool was challenging for many educators to implement as its emphasis was on diagnosis. The process of preparing for the assessment was cumbersome and difficult. In the main, the circulars communicating ANA

implementation were not clear about the rationale for running the programme, and the participants were not convinced about the main objective of the project.

The in-depth analysis generated from the interviews gave rise to the following themes on the implementation of ANA as a diagnostic assessment tool.

- Timetabling of ANA during the third term of the academic year.
- The co-existence of ANA timetable and the year plan for the school.
- Reliability of ANA results.
- Validity of ANA results.
- The contribution of ANA to the improvement in EFAL.
- The procedure used to access ANA results from the district offices.
- The lack of DBE intervention programmes for poor performing schools.
- The usefulness of DBE interventions to improve EFAL.

The challenges indicated by educators' raise a concern as they appear to be based on a lack of orientation before ANA implementation.

4.4.1.1 The writing of ANA interrupts the curriculum plan of the school

There was a general view held by many participants that the implementation of ANA brought positive change in the curriculum. This was supported by the assertion that ANA as a diagnostic tool is closely aligned with curriculum. In fact, ANA was introduced to correct major curriculum challenges with subjects like English and Mathematics across the schooling system. The planning which was done by the DBE coincided with some of the major projects in a calendar year. It was noted that even though the majority of participants did not note any interruptions resulting from ANA scheduling although some notable and contrary responses were recorded. Some HoDs from different schools who participated in the interviews answered positively that the schools' curriculum plans were not interrupted although a few were of the view that the schools' curriculum was severely compromised and interrupted by the administration of ANA. These participants did not shy away from expressing their displeasure about the whole planning and scheduling of ANA. This was evident from the in-depth interviews, which were intended to

gauge their views on how this practice interfered with their normal daily operation. One HoD who was also a member of the SGB made the following observation.

HoD1: The dates for the writing of ANA were aligned with normal assessment programming issued by the DBE. You can imagine while preparing for the main examination for your learners which will count for something at the end of the year, we were also expected to prepare our learners for ANA assessment. It was a disaster in waiting to continue with ANA under such condition.

It is worth highlighting that the interruptions and unintended consequences put stress on educators and timetable committees and planners in schools. .

Findings of this study are in accordance Louw (2010) who reported that close alignment between the year plan and any programme should always be prioritised in order to improve the outcomes of that programme as well as the education system in general.

4.4.1.2 Educators' reflection on the challenges faced during the implementation of ANA

The majority of the participants claimed that the major reason for implementing ANA in the Intermediate Phase was to gather evidence about the performance of learners. Linked to this was the idea which sought to provide a systematic diagnosis of EFAL in order to identify problematic areas in the curriculum that needed special attention. This was because DBE was pressured by stakeholders to conduct international benchmarking that in order to align our education with global expectations. However, many participants thought ANA was a fact-finding mission, and saw themselves as being targeted by the DBE. These participants felt a lot of frustration and anger while ANA was in progress because they both had to prepare learners for the ANA and for the year-end examination. Participants' complained bitterly about the way ANA was implemented, and stated categorically that something was amiss:

T3: Since the introduction of the ANA, we are not certain which curriculum to prioritise, and how can we prepare students for two examinations at the time.

T4: People in the position of authority find it convenient to run programme without any feasibility study to ascertain the readiness of implementers. Their imposing ANA on school created a lot of uncertainty among educators in the schools in my district. Some of

us were frustrated as to what were the expectations of this diagnostic assessment as it was not meant to contribute anything to the current curriculum.

T1: The government must understand that our schools are located in remote areas where language is a major challenge in the implementation of any curriculum. It puts more pressure on us as educators to produce desired results in a short space of time.

The concern noted from these narratives reflect that many of these challenges are contextual and systemic. Participants were convinced that the ANA was doomed to fail considering the contextual factors and the speed at which everything was implemented. One important factor that was missing from the initial preparation and subsequent implementation was the readiness of educators to roll this programme. A recurring concern was that of pupil-teacher ratios in semi-rural schools. These fears were widely expressed by HoD4 who said:

... the introduction of ANA brought fears and anxiety among my educators in the department. They all got frustrated by the lack of clarity from the department with regard to how this diagnosis assessment was going to assist them to improve the level of literacy and mathematics.

The studies conducted in Zimbabwe by Chinase (2011) caution educationalists and policy makers against introducing quick and poorly-planned interventions without proper consultation. He warns that this can put unnecessary pressure on educators and school leadership if the implementation fails. Some participants indicated that the DBE should review its policy of introducing significant interventions in schools without getting educators' input and their participation. This was based on the views of T4 who said:

Sir,....listen, my views are clear,the department has been struggling to organise itself maybe because of arrogance always shown by the officials towards us and what we do. One cannot stop ... but I wonder how much time it will take for the department to stabilize the education system because every time they introduce something, it becomes a disaster. We are all left depressed and bruised by these interventions.

The lack of transparency during the drafting of policies and adoptions is a concern for many participants and places a great deal of pressure on them to perform. The department should have

learned from their previous mistakes that curriculum intervention requires participation from all stakeholders (Mochala, 2003). As the ANA was meant to improve the overall quality of basic literacy and mathematics, there was a need for buy-in from the curriculum implementers on how best ANA strategy should be implemented.

It is therefore evident from interviews that the DBE needs to be upfront in monitoring the implementation of initiatives such as ANA to ensure that the teachers have full understanding of its objectives, since these tests are meant for benchmarking learners' level of performance in particular subjects.

4.4.1.3 The DBE mentoring of officials to ensure the reliability of ANA results

Many of the participants agreed that it was important to monitor the reliability of the ANA results. Most of the participants were aware of the roles and responsibilities of the test administrators. They reveal that, as administrators, they were expected to follow a detailed Test Administration Manual (TAM) that was developed and distributed to all schools by the DBE. This was consistent with the ANA report (DBE, 2016) which stated that training sessions for provincial core training teams were conducted by the DBE in all provinces.

T5: The monitoring of ANA assessment during the examination process was to be handled with care. Our HoD attended the training and she brought the Test Administration Manual to use in the department. She stressed the importance of familiarising ourselves with the examination guidelines contained in TAM in order to make sure that ANA results are reliable and credible.

T4: It was very difficult to invigilate your class, but nevertheless we were obliged to invigilate under the disguise that should anything happen under your watch it will compromise the reliability of learners' results.

This training was conducted on an ad hoc basis according to the participants as some recalled that the so-called core teams were responsible for cascading the training to all officials as well as the school principals in their respective provinces but this did not happen. This left the assessments vulnerable to cheating and other malpractices because the class educators were invigilators. This had been the case in the ANA for Grades 1 and 2. The participants stated that

this happened in these two grades to ensure younger learners would be writing the test in familiar environment. This is despite the fact that the TAM specifies, among other things, how the invigilation process should be managed.

T5: In my view as an educator, it was difficult to confirm reliability of ANA examination from these two Grades. I am sure these invigilators were tempted to assist their kids during the examination process.

In the case of Grade 3 upwards, the participants confirm that these learners were not assisted at all, and the TAM was very clear that learners were supposed to answer questions independently and write the answers in the booklets provided. The rules are that educators should not help learners in these grades in any way to ensure that the assessment produced credible and reliable results in order to diagnose any problems correctly.

T3: I must admit in my district there were lot of cases reported of invigilators who took part in cheating scandal and assisted learners during the examination. Some of these cases were also scrutinised during the marking of ANA. Markers discovered that some learners were unable to comprehend simple statements but later noticed a pattern of massive copying when correct answers were spotted out of the blue. This was the clear indication of the level of assistance the invigilators were giving to learners.

The report compiled by the DBE seems to corroborate the role played by the department as very significant in ensuring that reliable results are produced by ANA. According to DBE (2014), intensive monitoring was supposed to be provided by the district, province and the national level to ensure strict compliance with the TAM. It was interesting to note the contradictory remarks made by the participants totally rejecting that strict and intensive monitoring provided for by TAM was conducted. However, T5 elaborated that reliability is ensured, because, even if the invigilation is done by educators of the same school, educators were not allowed to invigilate their own classes.

Mochal's (2003) argument that projects do not succeed because of the lack of educators' orientation at the implementation stage. He further states that certain steps must be followed in implementing projects such as consulting with the organisations involved in the implementation,

training of pioneers of the project, and understanding of the implementation plan by all stakeholders involved.

4.4.1.4 Validity of ANA question papers as a principle of assessment

All of the participants agreed that the question papers do cater for validity as a principle of assessment. However, it appears that participants did not understand the meaning and the importance of validity as they were personally involved in the implementation of ANA. The sense I got from them was that validity is the most important criteria for the quality of any assessment. HoD2 stated that validity refers to whether or the test measures what it claims to measure. In fact, this explanation was very good from my point of view considering that ANA was said to be bound this this principle (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

HoD2: Information provided to assists us in the preparation of the ANA examination was indeed not helpful. Everything depended on the knowledge one has about the subject under his/her care.

The sense I got from this perspective was that educators were confused by the idea of validity as one of the principles of assessment, despite the educators being given guidelines in advance of what ANA was expected to assess. The fact that these participants were not specialists made it very difficult for them to deal with issues of validity in the question paper.

HoD3: Sometimes measuring something that you don't understand yourself as an educator, in this case validity was very difficult to do. However, as a cluster in my district, we try to understand this criteria in order to give balanced feedback.

T4: Since the question papers arrive in school on the day of the writing of the test, they are sealed and, in that way, we can rest assured that they are valid.

These findings are in accordance with DBE (2012:115) guidelines which state that “the question of validity in assessing learners with an aim of proving intervention remains critical and it help to eliminate distractors”. The majority of participants in this study did not understand the critical element of validity, and, in this regard, failed to carry out their professional duty.

4.4.1.5 Contribution of ANA to the improvement of EFAL

The introduction of ANA created a lot of uncertainty among participants about how to improve the level of literacy in both spoken and written English language and mathematics. The international benchmark from many reports consistently pointed to the education system having major systemic challenges that needed bold action from the DBE. Most of the outcomes were consistent and in order to address them, ANA had to focus on improving EFAL and Mathematics. These concerns came from rural and semi-urban schools across the country. Without doubt, these were genuine concerns which prompted educators to ponder how to deal with such negative perception from their schools.

T3: Eish...the implementation of ANA brought some positive outlook in English as this subject is the language of teaching and learning. Look...in our attempt to help our learners to speak in English at school is fruitless exercise because at home they speak vernacular.

HoD 5: As SMT in our assessment, we saw the light at the end of the tunnel, but the context was working against our effort and that of the department.

These two participants were able to give some insight into the contribution of these interventions that were designed to improve the level of education and performance. According to the DBE (2014), many learners in both Home Language and First Additional Language struggle to respond to questions that require the use of their own words. This revelation was a concern for many respondents and no one knew how to solve this mystery from an educational point of view. Participants confirmed that it was extremely difficult for their learners to summarise a simple text using own words. The evidence of this was clear during the interview with HoD2:

HoD 2: Remember, we were aware that we needed to prepare our learners for this important exercise. Let me tell you what happened, in class you will give learners passage to read and write a summary but to our surprise as cluster, all our learners failed this important assessment.

The outcome of ANA confirmed what we know in some of the areas in English (DBE, 2016) which became clearer during the examination process. Almost all learners had difficulty when

they were about to answer this section in the examination session. This failure was acknowledged during the public announcement of results by the principals. The DBE also spoke strongly to this challenge and promised to provide new interventions to assist educators. There is, however, no doubt that ANA has brought about improvements in some of these notable shortfalls. The following year 2013 educators were able to refocus their attention on this aspect and everybody managed to get it right.

The other area of major concern to most participants was the fact that learners were unable to interpret a sentence or give an opinion when required. The educators did not accept responsibility for this particular problem. The amount of anxiety and frustration was noticeable when participants spoke about this challenge in the assessment.

T4: No one anticipated that learners would struggle even to attempt simple interpretation of sentences as this was a grey area in our preparation. These learners sometimes deceive you by pretending to know something while they don't. Finally, we nagged to crack this one and the following year my learners were on top of their game in Grade 4.

The educators said they were exposed in these revelations when the ANA results were released, and, some said that they were surprised by the outcome as, in their experience, this had not been a challenge for their learners.

The last segment that is worth highlighting is the fact that learners improved their editing skills in basic writing. This improvement was encouraging to many participants because they emphasised this for the remainder of the session. It was pleasing to learn that there was something significant that improved their outlook.

Many participants answered positively on this question and only one disagreed. Many participants said they tried to encourage learners to speak English in class and even outside the classroom. One respondent further stated that they used an award system to encourage learners to speak English.

T1: "We give them merits if they speak English outside the classroom and demerits if they don't."

Serra (2014) and Colorado (2007) state that educators and parents need to help EFAL learners to improve in the use of English if it is mandatory to use it as the LoLT. In agreement, the researcher believes that, without practice in speaking English both at home and at school, learners will inevitably fail to meet the minimum requirements when they sit for the standardised tests.

4.4.1.6 The procedures used to access ANA results for the schools

Most participants were troubled by the procedure used by the DBE to release the results to the public. It was evident that some of the participants were embarrassed by the performance of their learners which is why they criticised the department. Anybody who wanted to access the results was able to get them with ease. The schools were each given a copy that had a comprehensive analysis of how the school had performed in ANA. HoD2 and HoD7 did not approve this procedure at all and expressed their frustrations as follows:

HoD2: I remember the first time ANA results was released in 2012 and that day it was a worst embarrassment any professional is not supposed to be subjected to. My team did all possible to prepare the learners with very little information from the DBE, but educators were happy to learn. The product of that group was a disaster I wish never happened.

HoD5: Educators working on our environment, where information is hard to get, libraries are scarce, you are definitely condemned to the work from of defeat or humiliation. Our learners are not exposed to information technology where they can learn from television or internet. As a teacher, you feel sorry for your kids when giving them work to do at home as part of the preparation for ANA.

Besides all of these structural and systemic challenges, participants tried and do their best to respond to what the department required with a positive attitude. The odds, however, were stacked against them every time they were given new curriculum to implement. In this instance, they felt that rural schools were likely to come out last followed by very serious criticism from the Minister. On this item, there were very few positive opinions. This shows that educators are not comfortable with the procedures used to access ANA results since they are displayed

alphabetically according to the schools' performance. They felt that this demotivated the educators. T2 said:

This affects the school negatively because parents take their children to schools which perform well and that affects the enrolment in poor performing schools which leads to educators being deployed to other schools.

Furthermore, some educators in the same school said they did not have access to the results which meant they did not know how the learners performed in the ANA tests which the researcher feels was not correct. It was very difficult to verify the veracity of this assertion.

Some of the participants were very supportive of the publication of results in this manner, simply because they always received positive feedback from the ANA results. For these participants, results were motivating for the entire school to continue strive for the greater heights. In essence, what they observed was a change in learner behaviour as they were praised by educators for their good performance. It was a step in the right direction which HoD4 and HoD5 expressed as follows:

HoD4: As a language head, the implementation of ANA strategy strengthens my department in many ways. Educators indicated that their confidence was improved significantly after learning that their learners performed well.

HoD5: I got praise from my principal for the first time after my Grade 4 did wonders in the ANA assessment strategy. My mood was always down to tell the truth, but to learn that our school performed well, we were identified as the model of good practice in my district.

All the schools were able to see the strength of each school and that made it easy for struggling educators to source help from those neighbouring schools that performed well. The only negative conclusion one can draw from the interviews is that those schools that were badly affected by the ANA results were not happy about the psychological impact of making such results public to their reputation. Some schools felt the pain as their enrolment targets fell below expectations as parents took their children elsewhere where performance was good. The interviews, however, indicate that HoDs support ANA implementation and are happy with their learners' performance.

4.4.1.7 The DBE interventions to improve in EFAL and Mathematics

Several of the participants involved in the ANA in one school discussed how they understood the introduction of ANA as a diagnostic assessment instrument to address challenges of poor literacy and numeracy. In this regard, educators expressed how they and their school colleagues had benefitted from the range of interventions which improved their understanding of both the problematic subjects in question. According to the participants, the DBE initiated a collaborative approach with provinces as part of its interventions geared at improving learning outcomes in Languages and Mathematics, and thereby, improving the ANA results.

HoD3: My school was involved in these proposed interventions by getting involved in the strengthened Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement in all the phases. The other intervention was called the strengthening of EFAL through a programme known as the Certificate in Primary English Language Teaching (CiPELT) in the Foundation and Intermediate Phase.

T3: Some of the most bizarre interventions were introduced to schools without our prior knowledge in particular in my district. I suppose some districts were fortunate to be involved as pilot, but all these so-called strengthened intervention programmes got us confused and frustrated. Well, it was indeed without trying, and we had to learn from that process otherwise I was in trouble with my team.

These reflections from these participants were noteworthy, but one would expect the DBE, in rolling out this intervention throughout the country, to give teachers enough time to acclimatise and get ready for the implementation. The preparatory training was meant to be done by each individual district. I was told about the actual process that plays out prior to the ANA being introduced in each province. The participants spoke about the fact that the DBE initiated specific interventions for each province to support the teaching and learning of Mathematics with the sole purpose of improving results. The participants spoke about forums or meetings where educators were invited to discuss and share expertise in the topics they taught.

HoD4: As educators, we were encouraged to form teams in our own district and work together to share our experiences in both Mathematics and English. Some of us did try to

gather as much information from our peers on how we can best teach these two subjects prior the introduction of ANA.

From these teams, better performance and recognition from the DBE were anticipated. Part of the interventions that all provinces implemented was the common tests and/or examinations. Through these initiatives, according to the DBE (2015), learners were prepared to cope with the cognitive demands of ANA, as well as to narrow the gap between SBA and ANA. This initiative found resonance with many provinces. In this regard, participants acknowledged that the provinces were interested in understanding how other educators approach certain questions and responded to them. The comparative approach was seen in a positive light, and most participants understood the positive impact it might have on developing a broader understanding of what was expected from diagnostic assessment.

HoD3: Let me tell now my dear..., the common tests and/or examinations of each province was shared with other provinces to identify [and] implement best practices throughout the country.

The report produced by the DBE (2014) reveals that educators and officials embraced the idea of sharing common tests and examinations as best practice that would encourage educators to work towards a common goal. In addition, provinces such as Mpumalanga, Western Cape, Gauteng, Free State and North West conducted numerous workshops targeting the content that posed difficulties for educators. This information exchange was met with positive feelings as HOD3 revealed how he began to engage with the information from other provinces. The irony though, was that KZN had never felt the need to get involved despite the magnitude of the literacy and numeracy challenges it was facing.

HoD3:... as we began to receive tests and examinations which were set from other province we started to wonder, and thought maybe our province will begin the very same practice to expose educators in setting examination question papers. Unfortunately, we only consumed the work we got from other province, which was a shame.

All participants agreed that provinces laid the groundwork for teacher development programmes to support the use of ANA results. In addition to preparatory interventions, each district ran workshops and training sessions with selected educators to implement programmes to improve

the ANA results. In these workshops, it appears that a few educators were trained on specific, targeted, generic programmes with a view to having a pool of experts who would supervise the implementation of ANA. However, participants stated that it made no sense that only a few individuals were exposed to this training while the rest were left out of the loop. HoD1 who shared his recollection of how he was chosen to participate in the training reveals that:

As a HoD in my school, I was expected to better understand what is expected from the ins and outs of ANA including analysis of ANA results per subject and item, [and] strategies on how to use the results in schools. The training focused on the inclusion of the ANA data in school improvement programmes, and topic specific programmes.

The major focus was on EFAL as it was subject to international scrutiny. The poor level of literacy was the cause of much criticism from international education agencies. Underperforming schools were monitored on a quarterly basis and curriculum coverage was the main focus of monitoring and support to these schools.

On this item, most of the participants were positive. This item contradicts the earlier findings where most participants said the DBE had no intervention programmes for the underperforming schools, but now, the majority stated that the interventions assisted learners to improve in EFAL.

4.5 THE IMPACT OF ANA STRATEGY ON LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN EFAL

The views of educators on the impact of the ANA strategy on learner performance in EFAL were sought. The views of participants are presented in the sections that follow.

4.5.1 Full Implementation of ANA Promotes the Use of English

The educators declared that the learners are encouraged to speak English even outside the classroom. When teaching, they do not do code-switching because they want learners to master the English language. The participants reminded me that in schools, the official language of instruction is English; however, circumstances beyond their control compel code-switching. This is where many challenges emanate from as they understand the shortcomings emanating from language but are extremely embarrassed by the ANA results. Many participants observed the signs of improvement in learners' English proficiency. The participants stated that:

T2: Improvement in English only became evident in the second year of the full implementation of ANA strategy in my school. As teachers, we were keen to force our learners to converse in English.....this is after knowing very well that they will benefit during the examination.

T3: My school was abuzz with excitement that ANA created in ensuring every learner had to improve his/her English language proficiency in both spoken and writing skills.

T5: For the first time, teachers and learners were willing to address each other in English without any fear of backlash or laughter from peers which is the common syndrome facing society today. The language barrier facing our education system can be solved if our siblings, brothers and sisters and family members in our society can change their attitude towards the language of teaching.

Some of the teachers stated the schools did not heed the call to use the implementation of ANA as a springboard for improvement. Clearly, participants felt the frustration of having to converse in English with learners even outside of the classroom. In short, educators were reluctant to act as motivators to these learners probably because of their own inadequacies. In practice, teaching in poor rural schools prompts us to remember the context: how can the DBE expect teachers to change overnight to force learners to begin conversing in English while they are struggling to cope in their own language? HoD5 gave the following scenario:

Can I tell you that as teachers in staffroom do, we break the convention because we speak in Zulu all the way, and then expect young learners to do something we can't do. This was an ambitious underhanded technique which was bound to fail.

Another stumbling block to this intervention was that parents at home were illiterate.

HoD2: We experience lots of problems from learners with illiterate parents because they can't help their children with homework. As a result, these children are struggling even in class.

4.5.2 Programme of Promoting the use of English in your School

Most participants answered that they had programmes to promote the use of English at school. It is worrying that some educators are not committed to supporting the programme, yet they complain about the high failure rate of learners due to the lack of English competency in schools.

4.5.3 Inclusion of ANA in the Assessment Year Plan

In some schools, the SMT boldly confessed that the school does not have a plan for ANA in their year assessment plan, yet they administer the ANA.

T1: We do not have a plan for ANA because it is the test which is set by the Department. The DoE has its own plan and time of conducting these tests. We just do what they want us to do at the time they say we must do it.

4.5.4 Does Learner Participation in Writing ANA improve English FAL?

The question was aimed at determining whether the participation of learners in the writing of ANA improved performance in EFAL. Most participants answered positively. The educators said the improvement was seen mostly in urban and semi-urban schools where learners had access to libraries and their parents could help them with homework.

HoD3: Here in rural areas where there is no electricity; televisions and libraries, it's very difficult to see the improvement because the majority of parents cannot read or write. These parents are not part of their children's education.

ANA has managed to provide valuable information on how to improve the levels and quality of learning outcomes in literacy, in particular. The DBE uses the ANA results as an indicator or proxy for the health of the education system (DBE, 2013). Most participants were in agreement that ANA has not only provided valuable information on learner performance, but it pointed to areas that needed special attention. These indicators prompted the need for an urgent response in order to realise the improvement targets and ultimately address whole system.

The 2013 ANA results gave a much clearer picture of where learner improvements were needed in EFAL. Most participants were of the view that the results showed steady improvement. It was important to trace the 2012 results and compare them with 2013 and 2014 to understand why

participants generally express optimism as they did. According DBE (2014), the 2012 results revealed very poor results of 35% in English overall performance, while in 2014 the results significantly improved to 50%.

HoD2: My school realised that there was a big jump from 35% we achieved in 2012 as we got 50% in the year 2013. My principal was very proud of his learners and staff. Again, this brought a big sigh of relief from the pressure were carrying for two years in a row.

The conclusion of these participants correlated with the views of many reports compiled during these three years. The reports stated that learner achievement in English language was generally at an acceptable level in terms of promotion of learners who achieved 50% and above in the tests in many grades.

4.5.5 Are Learners in your School Motivated English Users?

The participants' overall observation with regard to learners being motivated to speak English especially outside the classroom was positive. Some educators said they encouraged learners to engage in debates and dramatise the stories from the books they read in class to encourage the learners to speak English confidently and with fluency. T2 said:

T2: Our school observes Readathon Day where each class has to render an item in English. We invite neighbouring schools and judge the process. The winners get awards as a token of appreciation. It really motivates our learners."

Only a few participants said their learners were not motivated to speak English because learners had no background in English, and stayed in rural areas where there was not access even to television. The context impacts any intervention one proposes, because proposing any new strategy for the learners is generally met with negative perceptions that it is impossible to improve the EFAL results for rural learners.

The exposure of these learners to the outside environment is seen as a major drawback in that they do not have access to libraries where teaching material is easily available. Again, without regular exposure to EFAL as the LoLT, learners are reluctant to try other languages apart from

their vernacular. This points to the resistance which has become an accepted norm in many rural schools.

HoD5: I joined this school in the late 1980s during difficult times in our history. During this period we used to have highly motivated learners who used to enjoy speaking fluent English language. But this recent crop of learners refuses completely to try and converse in English.

The conclusion one can draw from these participants is that no matter how much emphasis schools place on learning English, learners see no value in speaking it. The irony though is that, no matter what the DBE does, the culture and motivation to change has evaporated completely. The participants felt investment teaching English in the early years of schooling is crucial. The current practice in the education system is that learners in their early years of schooling (from pre-school to Grade 3) are encouraged to converse in their mother tongue before being introduced to English in Grade 4. Most parents are aware of the current language policy in rural schools and semi-rural schools which allows educators to teach in the vernacular. One can only reach the conclusion that learners develop resistance to learning English at Grade 4 upward if the foundations are not established in the Foundation Phase.

Krashen (2002) makes the point that, if children are to become lifetime consumers of books, they need motivation as well as access to books that suit their own reading preferences. Having reading materials in schools available for learners to read for enjoyment increases the possibility of improving their use of English.

4.5.6 Do Educators comply with the use of English as a LoLT?

Most of the educators said they use English as the LoLT, although the few that said they did not comply, the reason being that learners in the Foundation Phase are taught in the mother tongue (isiZulu) which makes it very difficult for learners in grade 4 to understand in English. They are forced to do code-switching for the learners to understand. The grade 4 learners are in their first year in the Intermediate Phase. A Grade 4 educator responded and said,

T5: “The grade 4 learners do not have the vocabulary and they do not understand. What is more worrying is that when this ANA is being administered, no educator has to read or

explain the questions to learners. As a result, they end up not finishing writing and they experience barriers in writing. As a result, most educators, especially in Grade 4 end up code-switching so that learners may understand what the teacher is talking about.

The results have confirmed that educators find it extremely difficult to present their lessons in English in the early years which is against the language policy of the DBE. The transition from IsiZulu to English has not been an easy process which is why educators in urban schools find it absurd to think that educators in the teaching profession can introduce the EFAL as the LoLT from Grade 4 upward.

Mochal (2003) argues that projects are hampered because of challenges during implementation; and further states that the major issues associated with the implementation of the project are coordinating with the organisations involved in the implementation; training of pioneers of the project; and understanding of the implementation plan by all stakeholders involved.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter has provided the results based on the field work. It is clear that some educators have a negative attitude towards the implementation of ANA in schools because they did not include ANA in their assessment year plans. The majority say there are no intervention programmes on the part of the DBE for the underperforming schools yet they also say the intervention programmes assist learners to improve in English FAL. Some participants complained about not knowing how their schools performed in ANA because there is no feedback but at the same time they complained about the display of ANA results in the district offices because they felt embarrassed when their results were not satisfactory. The researcher feels that the educators are not fully committed to the implementation of ANA in schools.

CHAPTER 5:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises the research findings based on the objectives, highlights the limitations of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations. The findings in this section are summarised under each of the study's objectives. The objectives were to:

- explore the teachers' views about the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase.
- find out teachers' perspectives on the use of ANA as a diagnostic assessment tool.
- find out the impact of ANA on learner performance in the EFAL.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.2.1 The Teachers' Views on the Implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase

This objective sought to explore the views of educators on the implementation of this ANA in the Intermediate Phase. There was a strong feeling that ANA was not fully implemented in schools because some educators had not undergone the training when the assessment was introduced for the first time in schools. Other educators did not know why ANA was initiated by the DBE in the first place. Educators were therefore reluctant to fully commit themselves to a practice that they do not even understand its objectives.

5.2.2 Teachers' Perspectives on the use of ANA as a Diagnostic Assessment Tool

The findings revealed that the time during which ANA is written is not appropriate for all South African schools. Educators are of the view that the DBE has no intervention programmes for the schools that perform below the expected standards (DBE, 2014).

5.2.3 The Impact of ANA on Learner Performance in the EFAL

The findings revealed that most schools do not have a programme of promoting the use of English in their schools. They do not include ANA when they compile their assessment year plan. Some educators do code-switching because they feel learners do not understand English.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was not undertaken without limits. The limitations were on collection of questionnaires, sampling and population as well as interviewees. The researcher conducted research in one district in the province of KZN; due to the size of the province, conducting research in all districts was not feasible. Hence, the findings presented cannot be generalised since they are based on a small section of the population in the province. The researcher did not get back all questionnaires from participants, but most participants who did respond were able to answer the questionnaire. Therefore, unreturned questionnaires did not have any negative impact on the findings. Lastly, one of the Heads of Department did not turn up for her interview because she was running half-yearly examinations. Her absence did not affect the attainment of data from other colleagues.

5.4 DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS IN AGREEMENT WITH THE RESEARCH TOPIC

The aim of the study was to discover the challenges that the educators are faced with in preparation to implement ANA in their schools, focusing in the Intermediate Phase. The statement of the problem discussed in chapter 1 was based on the persistent challenges that beset poor learner performance in both literacy and mathematics in the Intermediate Phase. The review of the selected literature in chapter 2 provided a theoretical framework for the data collection and the empirical study undertaken in chapter 3. Chapter 3 outlined and presented the discussion on the planning and organisation of the empirical study which comprised of the research design, sampling procedures and methods of data collection. The data analysis and interpretations presented in chapter 4 provided answers to the research questions.

The summary of findings as they are presented in this chapter leads to the following conclusions on the ‘Educators’ views about the implementation of ANA in schools’:

- Lack of trained educators in the implementation of ANA in schools.
- The implementation plan did not provide educators with sufficient time to understand the goals of the assessment. Many schools did not include ANA timetable in their assessment year plans.

Not much remedial work was done on the part of the district officials to help schools which were not performing up to the standard. Many educators taught to the test to be able to cover the work to be done for the assessment.

5.5 CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study show a lack of proper planning for the implementation and monitoring of the assessment by the Department of Education: the DBE did not do enough to help the schools that were not performing well. The novice educators were not supported and given training in the administration of the assessment. Although some schools gave positive responses about the assessment, it still shows that schools are not provided with sufficient support.

The three major teacher unions which are SADTU, NAPTOSA and SAOU resorted to boycotting the writing of the ANA in 2016 (DBE, 2016). As a result, the DBE issued a statement that the assessment has been put on hold until further notice where the assessment will be replaced with revised assessment. The assessment has been on hold for two years, which is 2016 and 2017. The DBE has not sent a word to the schools as to when the assessment will resume. This is worrying and raises a concern that the Department had neither a goal nor specific objectives when initiating these standardised tests.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- This study revealed that the ANA was not properly communicated with the educators because newly employed educators were not provided with training, yet they had to administer the assessment in their classes. It is recommended that information on new implementations should be disseminated to teachers on time to avoid uncertainty and confusion.
- The DBE should consider the dissatisfaction and frustration of the educators and review the purpose, scope, the standard and quality of the tests. Educators should be aware of the purpose of assessment and the scope of the work to be covered for the test.

- The inconsistency of the test questions meant that the educators were not able to determine whether there was any improvement in the teaching of EFAL or not. It is recommended that there is consistency in test questions every year so that they can ascertain whether there is any improvement or not.
- In terms of the frequency of the administration of ANA and its administrative demands, it is recommended that it should be administered in a three-year cycle to provide room and time for improvement strategies to take place before learners are re-assessed.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study focused widely on the implementation dilemma and other intricacies faced by curriculum implementers in the midst of ensuring that ANA strategy was implemented. It further identified both opportunities and challenges which have characterised the implementation of ANA in few selected schools in South Africa. It is therefore recommended that further research be conducted to improve the most notable shortcomings that were identified in this study to ease implementation. Further research could be conducted on the processes of orientating educators in preparation for ANA to check whether justice is done in preparing them for the writing of these tests or not. Furthermore, future research could also focus on the use of ANA as a diagnostic test, to ascertain whether or not it was able to diagnose what it aimed to.

This study was conducted in only one district in the province of KwaZulu-Natal; further research could be done in other provinces of South Africa since ANA is a national standardised assessment practice. Doing further research on this phenomenon will verify and confirm the credibility of ANA as a benchmarking tool for the Department of Basic Education.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER TO THE CIRCUIT MANAGER

P.O. Box192
Esikhawini
3887
3 August 2015

The Circuit Manager
DBE
Esikhawini
3887

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

I am employed by the DBE at Mtunzini Primary school. I am currently registered for a Master of Education degree (M.Ed.) at the University of Zululand in the department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies. The topic of my research project is: **Implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase at King Cetshwayo District schools.**

I wish to seek permission to conduct research in schools under King Cetshwayo District in the Mthunzini circuit. The educators of Intermediate Phase will used as participants to collect data for the study.

I hope the findings of this study will benefit and assist the DBE and educators teaching in the Intermediate Phase.

Yours faithfully

Mrs N.L.R. Ntuli

Contact numbers: 082 732 5631 (mobile) 035 340 1620 (w)

Email: mbalintuli92@gmail.com

Dr D.W. Mncube (Supervisor)

Dr H.R. Mhlongo (Co-Supervisor)

APPENDIX B: LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

P.O. Box 192
Esikhawini
3887
3 August 2015

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH INTERMEDIATE PHASE EDUCATORS AS PARTICIPANTS

I am an educator employed at Mtunzini Primary school. I am currently registered for a Master of Education degree (M.Ed.) in the department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies at the University of Zululand. The topic of my research is: **Implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase at King Cetshwayo District schools.** The focus of my study is with the Intermediate Phase educators.

I wish to seek permission to conduct research in your school using Intermediate Phase educators as participants. A copy of a questionnaire that will be sent to educators is attached. I hope the results of this study will be used by the DBE to check whether or not ANA has positive impact towards the improvement of English FAL in the Intermediate Phase.

Your positive response in this request will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Mrs N.L.R. Ntuli

Contact numbers: 082 732 5631 (mobile) 035 340 1620 (w)

Email: mbalintuli92@gmail.com

Dr D.W. Mncube (Supervisor)

Dr H.R. Mhlongo (Co-Supervisor)

APPENDIX C: LETTER TO THE DBE (HEAD OFFICE)

P.O. Box192

Esikhawini

3887

29 June 2015

The HoD – Dr. Sishi

DBE

Pietermaritzburg

3200

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

I am employed by the DBE at Mtunzini Primary school. I am currently registered for a Master of Education degree (M.Ed.) at the University of Zululand in the department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies. The topic of my research project is: **Implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase at King Cetshwayo District schools.**

I wish to seek permission to conduct research in schools under King Cetshwayo District in the Mthunzini circuit. The educators of Intermediate Phase will be used as participants to collect data for the study.

I hope the findings of this study will benefit and assist the DBE and educators teaching in the Intermediate Phase.

Yours faithfully

Mrs N.L.R. Ntuli

Contact numbers: 082 732 5631 (mobile)

035 340 1620 (w)

Email: mbalintuli92@gmail.com

Dr D.W. Mncube (Supervisor)

Dr H.R. Mhlongo (Co-Supervisor)



ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Certificate Number	UZREC 171110-030 PGM 2015/176									
Project Title	Implementation of annual national assessment in the intermediate phase at uThungulu District Schools									
Principal Researcher/ Investigator	NLR Ntuli									
Supervisor and Co-supervisor	Dr DW Mncube					Ms HR Mhlongo				
Department	Curriculum and Instructional Studies									
Nature of Project	Honours/4 th Year			Master's		x	Doctoral			Departmental

The University of Zululand's Research Ethics Committee (UZREC) hereby gives ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project proposal and the documents listed on page 2 of this Certificate.

Special conditions:

- (1) The Principal Researcher must report to the UZREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.
- (2) Documents marked "To be submitted" (see page 2) must be presented for ethical clearance before any data collection can commence.

The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this Certificate, using the reference number indicated above, but may not conduct any data collection using research instruments that are yet to be approved.

Please note that the UZREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the documents that were presented to the UZREC
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

APPENDIX D: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

Classification:

Data collection	Animals	Human Health	Children	Vulnerable pp.	Other
X					
Low Risk		Medium Risk		High Risk	
		X			

The table below indicates which documents the UZREC considered in granting this Certificate and which documents, if any, still require ethical clearance. (Please note that this is not a closed list and should new instruments be developed, these would require approval.)

Documents	Considered	To be submitted	Not required
Faculty Research Ethics Committee recommendation	X		
Animal Research Ethics Committee recommendation			X
Health Research Ethics Committee recommendation			X
Ethical clearance application form	X		
Project registration proposal	X		
Informed consent from participants	X		
Informed consent from parent/guardian			X
Permission for access to sites/information/participants	X		
Permission to use documents/copyright clearance			X
Data collection/survey instrument/questionnaire	X		
Data collection instrument in appropriate language		Only if necessary	
Other data collection instruments		Only if used	

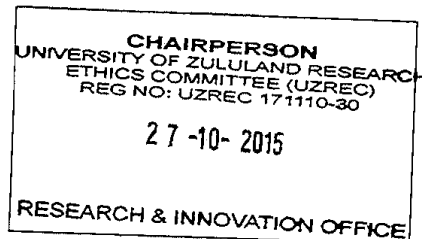
The UZREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Certificate if
 - Any unethical principles or practices are revealed or suspected
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
 - The conditions contained in this Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project

The UZREC wishes the researcher well in conducting the research.



Professor Nokuthula Kunene
Chairperson: University Research Ethics Committee
27 October 2015



APPENDIX E: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN KZN SCHOOLS



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:2/4/8/498

Mrs ML Ntuli
PO Box 192
ESIKHAWINI
3887

Dear Mrs Ntuli

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DōE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: “IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE AT UTHUNGULU DISTRICT SCHOOLS”, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 August 2015 to 31 August 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

UThungulu District

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 27 July 2015

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 **beyond the call of duty**
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: WWW.kzneducation.gov.za

PARTICIPANT CONSENT LETTER

Dear Educator/Participant

You are requested to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully.

Please complete the questionnaire by answering all questions honestly. The information you will provide will be used in a research study to explore the views of educators on the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase. The results obtained from this research study will be shared with the DBE and will be used to ascertain whether or not implementation of ANA has a positive impact in the improvement of English FAL in the Intermediate Phase. You are assured that all information you provide will be strictly kept confidential, therefore do not write your name or the name of your school on this questionnaire.

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without any costs. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for your participation and cooperation in this research project.

Mrs Nombali Ntuli

P.O. Box 192

Esikhawini

3887

Contact Number: 082 732 5631(Mobile)

Email: mbalintuli92@gmail.com

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR EDUCATORS

Introduction

This questionnaire aims at collecting data from you as an Intermediate Phase educators regarding view about the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) at King Cetshwayo District Schools. The data that you provide will remain confidential and anonymous; therefore, you do not have to write your name in this questionnaire. Please respond as honestly as you can. There is no right or wrong answer; it all depends on your views-and your responses will not prejudice you in any way.

Please answer the following questions by putting a cross (X) in the box that corresponds to your answer:

1. Educational qualification

Matric/Grade 12	
Matric + Certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Post Graduate/Senior Degree	

2. Teaching experience (years)

0-2	
3-4	
5-10	

11+	
-----	--

3. Grade taught

R - 3	
4 - 6	
7	

4. Teaching of languages

isiZulu	
English	
Afrikaans	
Other (Specify)	

5. Role of school management

Deputy Principal	
HoD	
Senior Teacher	
Other (Specify)	

6. Location of school

Urban	
Semi-urban	
Rural	
Other (Specify)	

SECTION B

The following questions seek information based on the views of educators regarding the challenges encountered during the implementation of National Annual Assessment (ANA) in the Intermediate Phase. Please answer the following questions by crossing yes or no in the box and elaborate on the provided spaces where necessary.

1. Do you know anything about ANA?

Yes
No

2. Are you playing any role in the assessment of ANA in your school? If yes, what?

Yes
No

3. Were you involved in any workshop related to the implementation of ANA?

Yes
No

4. Do you have any idea why ANA was initiated by the DBE?

Yes
No

Please support your answer.

SECTION C

The following statements are designed to seek the educator's perspectives on the use of ANA as a diagnostic assessment. For each statement, put a cross (X) on a category which best describes your views, according to the following Likert Scales:

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

	SA	A	D	SD
9. The time during which ANA is written is appropriate for all South African Schools				
10. The written of ANA interrupts the curriculum plan of the school				
11. ANA results are reliable though monitoring and invigilation is done by the educators of the same school				
12. ANA question papers cater for validity as a				

principle of assessment				
13. ANA contributes a lot in improvement of EFAL and Mathematics				
14. Educators are comfortable with the procedures used to access ANA results for the schools				
15. The BDE has intervention programmes for the schools performing below the expected standards				
16. The interventions assist learners to improve in English FAL and Mathematics				

SECTION D

The following questions are designed to seek your views about the impact of ANA strategy on learner performance in English FAL. Please answer the following questions by putting a cross (X) in the box which has an appropriate answer as your view. You are also requested to briefly support the answers you have chosen in the spaces provided below each box.

1. Has your school fully implemented ANA to promote the use of English FAL?

Yes
No

Please justify your answer.

2. Do you have a programme of promoting the use of English in your school?

Yes
No

If your answer is yes, do learners have access to the library materials/books? And if your answer is no, how do learners access reading material to improve English?

3. In your view, do you think ANA questions papers are valid and reliable?

Yes
No

Please support your answer.

4. Does your school include ANA when compiling assessment year plan?

Yes
No

Please support your answer. If your answer is no, state the reasons for not including ANA in your assessment year plan.

5. Does learner participation in writing ANA improve their performance in EFAL?

Yes
No

If your answer is yes, please justify. If your answer is no, what do you think the reasons are?

6. Are learners in your school motivated users of English?

Yes
No

Please support your answer.

7. Do educators comply with the use of English as a Language of learning and Teaching (LOLT)?

Yes
No

If no, what are the reasons of code-switching during teaching and learning?

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Intermediate Phase English FAL educators

1. What are your views about the implementation of ANA in the Intermediate Phase?
2. Do you think ANA is ideal for the Intermediate Phase since it is an exit point?
3. Do learners take this assessment seriously since they know that it is not meant for pass or fail their learners?
4. Does the SMT give full support during the assessment period?
5. Does ANA have any role in the improvement of English in your school?