

*ESP Working Paper Series*

**Exploring the Impact and Effectiveness  
of the Use of the *Breakthrough to Literacy (BTL)*  
Program in Grade One Classrooms in Socially  
Disadvantaged Schools**

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EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM



## About the initiative “Strengthening Education CSOs` Evidence-Based Practice“

Over recent years there has been a significant shift in provision of educational services to those who are marginalized in education – especially young people. Increasingly this has resulted in government organizations (traditionally providers of these services) outsourcing provision to third sector/civil society organizations. The implications of this migration of large scale public services to CSOs and the creation of a quasi-market for delivery are wide-reaching. This trend could lead to a change in the role of CSO.

In the absence of effective systems for gathering data, knowledge about ‘what works’ would be fragmented and rarely disseminated to policy makers or other CSOs. The need to understand how CSOs can build their research capacity to become credible sources of such data led to the launching of a Research Strategy Capacity Development Program. Its primary aim was to improve the ability of CSOs to produce valid sources of systematic social data through a grant-making program “Strengthening Education CSOs` Evidence-Based Practice“. It was designed to promote the joint development and field testing of data-gathering strategies for educational CSOs for maximizing the organizational and social value and utility of the data emerging from their daily work.

The primary goals of the initiative were:

- 1) Advance the analytical skills and research strategy development capacities of educational service delivery CSOs
- 2) Increase education service delivery CSOs’s disposition to adopt comprehensive data gathering protocols and strategies to systematically collect data emerging from their service work;
- 3) Facilitate learning among education service delivery CSOs in regards of evidence on the efficiency of different approaches to lead to expected outcomes and results

The education CSOs engaged in the implementation of the Initiative were: Center for the Implementation of Public Policies Promoting Equity and Growth, Argentina; Center for Innovations in Education, Azerbaijan; FAR Association for Democratic Education, Bulgaria; Kurt Lewin Foundation, Hungary ; Performing Arts Center Multimedia, Macedonia; Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) – the “Centre of Education and Consciousness”, Pakistan; Educational Society for Malopolska, Poland; Namibia Paralegal Association, Namibia; The Romanian Foundation for Children, Community and Family, Romania; Institute for Educational Research, Serbia; Molteno Institute for Language and Literacy, South Africa.

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Mandisa holds a Masters in Research Psychology from the University of the Witwatersrand and possesses both qualitative and quantitative skills in research. Her interests are not only in education but also in gender studies and human rights issues. Her main interest in education is on the development of comprehension skills and her gender interest is on balancing the gender approach.

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## Abstract

Widespread concern about poor literacy performance in South African primary schools has led to an increased emphasis on assessment and measurement of learner performance, and on service provider accountability. In this context, Molteno Institute for Language and Literacy (MILL), a provider of African languages and English training programs in the primary school, has for several years conducted pretests and posttests to assess the impact of its programs. Results from these tests did not, however, provide insightful explanation for certain trends in performance, hence the decision to conduct an in-depth study.

The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness and uptake of MILL's Breakthrough to Literacy (BTL) program in Grade One classrooms by identifying underlying factors that may affect classroom practice and learner performance. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to gather data through the use of interviews, observations, and learner tests. Key findings illustrate that teachers' literacy understanding had an effect on classroom practice and learner performance, and this was also informed by the quality of training. The quality and utilization of different means of support as well as the attitudes toward and perceptions of the program were key contributory factors as well. The research process, in addition to being important for informing our own practice, will serve as a blueprint for future studies, enabling the strengthening of organizational research strategies and methodologies. Findings from the study will also inform educators, donors, and policymakers concerned to maximize benefit from in-service literacy teacher training interventions.

## I. Introduction

Attainment of literacy skills at an early age lays a foundation upon which formal education and the learning of other knowledge areas depends (Moats, 1999; DoE, 2001). Literacy development at the foundation phase is critical and serves as the basis for accessing information for personal and socioeconomic growth and participating in decision-making. The lack of this skill, therefore, poses a threat to the development of a country and its people, constraining access to information that could enable active participation and decision-making (Moats, 1999; DoE, 2001). The lack of literacy skills may affect individuals' access to varied sources of information.

Literacy in South Africa is in crisis, and a number of studies seem to indicate that the literacy levels of South African learners are very low, below the benchmark (Sibiya, 2005; Wessels & Knoetze, 2006). Studies seem to indicate that a number of South African learners lack higher order skills in literacy and tend to do better at tasks that do not require more than low levels of cognition (Fleisch, 2008; Howie, et al., 2008; Momberg 2006; Wessels & Knoetze, 2006). The Education for All Campaign study indicated that about 44% of Grade 4 learners attained scores below 25% and less than 12% attained scores above 75% in literacy (Strauss, 1999). These studies further emphasize the literacy crisis, showing that a large number of children are not able to read and write at the appropriate grade level. There is, therefore, an urgency to effectively attend to the literacy crisis.

Molteno Institute for Language and Literacy (Molteno) is one of the organizations in South Africa working in the field of literacy to attempt to provide effective programs that will assist in responding to the literacy crisis in the country. Molteno offers different literacy programs with the objective of improving the levels of literacy, especially in primary grades by providing educators with strategies, methodologies, and supportive structures that may enhance literacy development in learners. It is common knowledge that a system is made of simple networks of information that work together to develop a whole. It is also believed that in order to master anything, one has to have developed the foundational skills on which later mastery is based. This belief has thus been at the forefront of the organization: if as an organization we want to contribute to the resolution of the literacy crisis, skills have to be developed in the early grades. Other authors also concur with this, arguing that the development of literacy skills at the foundation phase has extensive effects (Reynolds & Farrell, 1996). Instilling critical literacy skills at an early age in the foundational phase is more critical than doing so later in the intermediate phase and may be a preventative means to address the literacy crisis. The provision of well-thought-out programs and literacy strategies based on good literacy practice is necessary, and the evaluation of them is important to gain insight into what contributes to their effectiveness or lack thereof.

A number of evaluations have been conducted on Molteno's Breakthrough to Literacy (BTL). BTL is an early mother tongue literacy program developed in African languages and used throughout South Africa and other neighboring countries. Evaluations of the program seem to indicate that the program is an effective mother tongue literacy program (Kaoma, 2008; Letshabo, 2002; Linehan, 2004; USAID, 2004). Most of the studies were conducted outside of South Africa and those conducted within the country were in the form of learner assessments, which did not provide insight on what factors contributed to the effectiveness of the program. Findings from these studies illustrated an improvement in learners' literacy skills, with some studies indicating that BTL learners were performing better than learners in non-BTL implementing schools. The BTL

program approaches were affirmed as more effective than traditional approaches. It was felt that the BTL approaches made teachers feel competent about their work since they had provided strategies on how to improve classroom instruction, classroom management, and effective interaction with learners. It was also indicated that learners' enthusiasm about school had increased and parents' interests in their children's schoolwork had improved through the introduction of the program (USAID, 2004; Kaoma, 2008).

Even though the studies indicated improvement in performance, there were still concerns about certain aspects of this performance. Some of the studies indicated that learners performed better in emergent literacy tasks than in tasks that required higher order skills such as word recognition and comprehension. This has been a concern for the organization as well since the internally conducted assessments seemed to indicate a similar trend. Even though learner posttests generally indicated significant improvement over baseline, a more detailed analysis of the scores seemed to indicate that the improvements were greater in lower order skills such as matching tasks, dictation, alphabetization, and writing of personal information such as the name and surname. Furthermore, these assessments did not provide information on what was happening in the classrooms and within training that contributed to such results.

Therefore, it is imperative as an organization that provides critical services to conduct self-evaluation and assess the impact and effectiveness of our programs and be able to account and be informed. In an effort to respond to this, Molteno embarked on a research project that aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of one of its programs: the BTL program for Grade One. This study aimed to identify factors contributing to the effectiveness of the program in improving literacy pedagogies and the concomitant performance of learners' literacy skills. The objectives of the study were to learn from the results and use them to inform future decisions on how to improve program impact and close the literacy gap. The study also intended to utilize the research experience in developing future research, monitoring, and evaluation strategies that can be systemically embedded in organizational research practices, creating a culture of reflective practice. This article will thus share findings of the BTL Grade One evaluation study (Magwaza, Ntshi, Nawe & Gains, 2011).

## 2. Method

The current study employed a mixed method design to elicit in-depth information regarding teachers' and trainers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the BTL program, to assess their understanding of literacy, and how that contributes to classroom practice and learner performance. In order to elicit qualitative information, interviews and observations were conducted with BTL teachers and trainers; observations focused on BTL training workshops and classroom implementation. The qualitative method provides insightful information about the manner in which the BTL methodology and approach is trained, transferred, understood, and implemented (Babbie & Mouton, 2005; Nachmias & Nachmias, 1976). The quantitative information through the use of learner tests provides complementary information for the qualitative data and measures the impact of the program on learners' performance. The results based on the qualitative analysis and the quantitative analysis will be integrated to provide a sense of how some of the identified contributory factors may be reflected in the performance of learners.

The sampling techniques adopted for collecting data were the convenient and purposive sampling techniques (Singleton, Straits & Straits, 1993) since participants were

only BTL trained teachers and trainers who volunteered to participate in the study. The sample consisted of 20 teachers from 10 different schools. Of the 20 teachers observed, 13 were also interviewed; only 9 of the interviewed teachers had their learners assessed. All the schools in which the data was collected were from semi-rural areas, with a classroom average of 42 to 65 learners. Five Molteno trainers were interviewed and of these, three were observed conducting trainings. Most of the trainers interviewed had more than 10 years in the organization.

### *Sample of learners per school*

Names of schools	Number of learners	Percentage of overall	Cumulative percentage
School A (2 teachers)	91	28.1	28.1
School B (2 teachers)	65	20.1	48.2
School C (2 teachers)	76	23.4	71.6
School D (1 teacher)	25	7.7	79.3
School E (1 teacher)	30	9.3	88.6
School F (1 teacher)	37	11.4	100
Total	324	100	100

The above table represents the number of learners sampled per school. The table illustrates that School A, B and C had two classrooms tested and School D, E and F had only one classroom tested. The learner sample size was 324, with the most learners from School A (91) and the least from School D (25).

Ethical considerations were adhered to when conducting this study and an information sheet was provided to participants involved in the study. The training team assisted in identifying and paving the way for prospective BTL schools, which were then contacted and informed about the study and what participation entailed. Issues of confidentiality, anonymity, voluntarism, withdrawal, benefits of participation, and possible harm were addressed as well as what would happen to the information once collected. Participants were required to sign consent forms to participate in the study and to be recorded.

## 3. Results

Effective implementation of a program is dependent on a number of factors, such as the understanding and receptivity of the program itself (aims, objectives, approaches, methodologies) as well as the motivation and attitude towards the program and the teaching of literacy. The program by itself cannot be effective without proper understanding of the approaches and methodologies that inform it and the contexts in which it is implemented. Programs do not exist as entities but exist within communities and fields, within and among individuals. They therefore have to be well understood within these settings and adaptable to address core concerns of those they are proposed or offered to.

In evaluating the effectiveness of the BTL program, it was therefore important not only to understand the program and how it is structured but also how it was understood, perceived, and implemented by those that facilitated it in training workshops and those that utilized it in their classrooms. It was also important to understand the attitude, motivation, and support for this program among its users.



Effectiveness in the transfer of knowledge and skills correlates with the possession of knowledge and skills in a particular subject. It consists of content knowledge, awareness and interest about how individuals and groups learn and how to effectively transfer skills (Medwell, Wray, Poulson & Fox, 1998). In conducting this study it became apparent that in order to study the effectiveness of the program, it was essential to get insight into trainers' and teachers' understanding of literacy and how that understanding was transferred in practice. In order to elicit this information questions focused on these five aspects: 1) perceptions of literacy, 2) perceptions of a literate person, 3) understanding of the approaches adopted in the BTL program, 4) alignment of BTL with the curriculum, and 5) how teachers and trainers perceptions informed training or implementation.

### **Perception of Literacy**

Results indicated that there was a higher level of literacy understanding among trainers than among teachers, and trainers were conscious of the lack of understanding of literacy among teachers. Most trainers perceived literacy as encompassing not only reading, writing, speaking, and listening, which was also typical of the response of most teachers, but also encompassing meaningful and critical engagement with the different forms of communication. They also perceived literacy as a lifelong skill that can be applied in other learning areas and which utilizes language as a learning vehicle. Only 5 of the 14 teachers interviewed had this deeper level of understanding of literacy, and this was also reflected in the way they implemented in their classrooms. In responding to the question about their perceptions of a literate person, while most teachers stated that a literate person is one who possesses skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, almost all the trainers emphasized meaningful engagement with tasks and critical thinking. They perceived a literate person as one who is able read, write, and communicate meaningfully, illustrating understanding, critical engagement, and reasoning abilities. They felt that a literate person can apply literacy skills in other areas and in everyday life and is also someone who acknowledges the use of print.

An illustration of teachers' understanding of the objectives of literacy teaching was also observed through the comparison of two schools. In one school, teachers were ahead with the syllabus but learners were struggling. In the other school learners seemed behind with the syllabus but their literacy competencies were advanced.

### **Perceptions of the BTL approaches**

The BTL approaches that were identified by both trainers and teachers were the Language Experience Approach (LEA), which utilizes learners' knowledge and experiences in the classroom to transition from the known to the unknown (utilizing learners' language skills in speaking and listening, and helping them acknowledge that what they hear and say can be written and read). The notion of bridging the gap between home and school is regarded by Cleovoulou (2006) as a socially inclusive pedagogy since it is deemed to promote a sense of identity and belonging and to heighten learner interest, thus engaging learners in discussions that center around their experiences. Trainers' understanding of this approach was well informed and in one training workshop, a particular trainer ensured that whatever activity teachers executed, they were reminded and informed by the LEA thinking. Teachers' understanding, on the other hand, was vague, with some contending that by merely utilizing the language of

learners, they were automatically utilizing the approach; they failed to deeply embed the concept in their approach to teaching. For example, the program has posters that refer to the home, school, and modes of transport. Instead of teachers utilizing these resources to encourage learners to relate these contexts to their own lives and language experience, they would tend to ask literal questions about what was happening in the posters, unable to contextualize the topic in relation to the learners' own lives and experiences. The result is a mechanical classroom in which teachers simply follow instructions on what to do without engaging learners and ensuring active participation and understanding. Learners need to understand that what is learnt in school can be applied in everyday life.

Most teachers who seemed to apply the language experience approach were the ones that showed understanding of its purpose and value. A few teachers were able to utilize learners' prior knowledge and experience during story telling or reading sessions by engaging learners in questions that required skills in prediction, inference, problem solving, interpretation, and evaluation. A few teachers evoked learners' previous knowledge and experience, relating classroom activities to learners' own lives, contexts, and experiences. These findings concur with other studies that posit that teachers' ways of thinking and approaches to literacy inform classroom practice (Gains, 2010; Medwell, et al, 1998). Most teachers who showed a lack of understanding of the BTL approach and only a superficial understanding of literacy, implemented classroom lessons in a dogmatic manner, illustrating a lack of understanding of the outcomes.

Results of the current study seem to show that the teachers who were able to read or tell stories dramatically and vividly to learners were able to incite interest and enthusiasm and improve learners' attention spans, and these classrooms seemed to perform well in reading comprehension tasks compared to classrooms that were less engaging. In one of the schools, the teacher whose classroom was more engaging attained a score of 50% in comprehension compared to the classroom that was less engaging, attaining a score of 47%. Interestingly, the less engaging teacher promoted a lot of writing activities and this was indicative in her performance in writing related tasks such as dictation and sentence construction, where she attained a score of 70% and 53% respectively, whereas the other teacher attained 65% and 35% respectively. This finding provides insight into how assessment results may be reflective of what actually happens in the classroom and may assist in the development of strategies to address gaps.

Findings based on the observations seemed to indicate that active engagement of learners in comprehension tasks was almost nonexistent in most classrooms. This concurs with Durkin and Harker's claim that comprehension activities are rarely practiced in the Foundation Phase (FP) (Grade 1 to 3), mainly because of the lack of awareness from teachers about comprehension and the strategies they can use to teach it. There seems to be a tendency amongst FP teachers to view comprehension as a task rather than a skill that can be exercised and taught (Durkin's 1979; Harker, 1973). Teachers seem to also underestimate their learners and have the perceptions that FP learners are not prepared for comprehension tasks since focus needs to be only on decoding skills. This was also avowed in a writing research project, where a significant number of FP teachers claimed that their learners were not prepared to engage in demanding and creative tasks since their focus as FP teachers was to ensure that learners were able to read and write. This perception has been asserted by the lack of proper emphasis on thinking and reasoning skills and is related to the construction of literacy as a school-based task rather than a lifelong skill as defined by a number of literacy teachers that participated in the study. Some teachers even confirmed that even

though a number of their learners read, they seemed to lack understanding and practically fail to respond to comprehension questions. This nature of thinking disadvantages and cripples learners' progress and contributes to the literacy crisis and underperformance of learners in cognitively demanding skills.

The learner-centered approach was also indicated as a BTL-adopted approach. Findings indicate that even though the BTL classrooms in this study aim to foster learner-centeredness, teacher domination in the classroom is prominent. Even though learners are taught using different methods such as whole class, group work, paced groups, individual work, the program itself is not designed to foster interactive classrooms where learners are able to exchange ideas and learn from each other. Even during story telling or group reading, learners were not encouraged to debate but teachers tended to facilitate sessions and discouraged discussions among learners. Learners therefore sat in group arrangements but did individual tasks. Teachers and trainers felt that learner independence is mainly achieved in the second stage of the program, where learners are encouraged to work independently and develop their own sentences. As necessary as this may be, it is not sufficient in developing learner-centered classrooms, since such classrooms encourage passive learning, where learners hardly take responsibilities for their own growth and grow to think that the only correct responses can be provided by the teacher (Blumberg, 2008; Weimer, 2002).

The Balanced Approach was one of the approaches about which teachers and trainers were most knowledgeable. This approach combines phonics with the whole language approach, where learners are taught to learn words in meaningful contexts and also break the words into different syllables and sounds, using phonics, phonemic awareness, and sight word knowledge. Even though all the teachers were able to identify the balanced approach, implementation of this approach seemed to reflect that most teachers were utilizing this approach dogmatically without understanding the objectives. For example, there were situations where teachers discouraged learners to build words utilizing the skills learnt. For instance, if learners had to build the word 'ubona' (she sees) and the sentence maker had "u" and "bona," some teachers and trainers would discourage learners from building the word by collecting individual letters (u, b, o, n and a) and would encourage them to select the chunks of prefixes and suffixes. This indicates a lack of understanding and appreciation of the objective of the balanced language approach and learners' individual learning styles and strategies.

### **Alignment of the BTL program with the curriculum**

The lack of understanding of literacy and of the program and its adopted approaches may indicate a teacher's ambiguity resulting from the uncertainty of the objectives, tasks, and means for achieving the goal of the program. This may also be related to the interest and motivation one has toward a task and its intended goals (Abadzi, 2006). In order to get a clearer insight on teachers' understanding of the BTL program as a literacy program, teachers were asked how the BTL program aligned with the curriculum. As posited by Abadzi, teachers who had a clearer understanding of the goals of the program were more reflective of the alignment and motivated to implement. Their classroom practice responses in the interviews illustrated understanding. For example, one teacher stated that she knows that the BTL program is aligned because "most of the activities in the literacy learning area, if I intently focus on the policy documents and also the milestones, you can see how each assessment standard matches with a certain milestone." This statement illustrates that the teacher understood the link and even referred to the

milestones and assessment standards that are addressed in curriculum policies. Teachers with a clearer understanding of the alignment and literacy objectives were better implementers than those who were uncertain.

Most teachers who were still ambiguous about how BTL coheres with the Foundations for Learning (FFL) lesson plans seemed to illustrate that lack of understanding in their implementation and were at a higher risk of discarding the program. These teachers need motivation and support in order to bridge the gap in their understanding to ensure that learning occurs in the classrooms.

“The problem is that on the one side it is BTL, on the other side, it is government, and you do not know what exactly it is that you are following. . . . [G]overnment also has its own [way], so we do not know where we are going, we’re unsure of which one to follow, and government always wants their things. They often set common assessments and when they set these assessments, they base them on what they gave us from government,” said one teacher.

This is an example of a teacher who lacks understanding of the objectives of the program, which then contributes to her frustration and confusion. This particular teacher felt that the program and government policies were separate entities, hence the lack of confidence in the program. This reflection seems to be shared by a number of teachers in schools, and leads to frustration and a sense of hopelessness. It is thus imperative that teachers are made to understand and to make meaningful and informed links between the programs and curriculum policies so as to limit the sense of despair and ensure literacy needs of learners are met. The ambiguity seems to reflect that teachers are not clear on how the BTL program serves the objectives of the curriculum.

There were a few teachers who were confident of the program and asserted that whilst government policies provide guidelines, the BTL program provides not only the content but also a guide on how to interact with the content as well as strategies for effective teaching. The significant level of frustration evidenced among teachers also indicates that there is a high likelihood that government officials are not adequately informed about the program. This also points to the need for Molteno to involve government in its advocacy plans to ensure that teachers are not torn apart. Another possibility in this context may be that teachers may be using this as an excuse for poor implementation. It is thus important that a thorough understanding of government policies is developed so that when teachers give excuses, organizations providing programs will be prepared to respond and provide explanation and alternatives to guide teachers on better strategies of ensuring that curriculum requirements are met.

### **How training informs classroom implementation**

Training is an important component of a program, and how it is conducted plays an important role in the receptivity of the program. This includes the quality and knowledge the trainer possesses, the ability of the trainer to effectively transfer good practice and respond to teachers’ concerns, the quality of the relationships developed as well as the approaches and strategies adopted by the trainer in transferring skills. Abadzi assert that “. . . a goal that is distant in the future must be made more immediate and tangible, and strategies must be developed to get there, and indicators of success must be developed to keep performance high and prevent people from becoming discouraged” (Abadzi, 2006, p. 120).

Teachers' understanding of literacy and their implementation of the BTL program tend to be informed by their past experiences as literacy teachers. Trainers therefore need to take this into consideration when conducting training workshops, try to understand teachers' experiences, and link these with the new proposed methodology embedded in the program. Trainers' abilities to effectively transfer their experience, knowledge, and understanding in BTL workshops by helping teachers understand how the information learned can be meaningfully used and applied in the classroom settings is fundamental.

Having gathered information on trainers' perceptions and levels of literacy understanding, it was imperative to link this information to what guided trainers in the selection of topics in workshops by asking what informed this selection within the limited time scheduled for training. A number of trainers stated that their training focused on enabling teachers to understand the approaches that inform the program and how to use the BTL method with understanding. There was an overarching sense that clarifying approaches and instilling understanding would change mindsets and ensure effective implementation. The ability to effectively use the BTL material was another important aspect emphasized in training as well as conducting teacher role-plays and providing constructive criticisms.

Only one of the five trainers interviewed stated that the method was more important, arguing that teachers cannot implement without knowing the method. This particular trainer seemed to lack the understanding of literacy and the objective of the program. Her lack of understanding was also reflected in the training workshops as she emphasized the different mechanical aspects of the program. The years of experience also played a crucial role, as this particular trainer had only a year in the field. Observations of the schools she trained seemed to reflect her emphasis on the method rather than approaches and strategies, with most teachers dogmatically following the methods rather than applying their own understanding in their practice. Teachers who seemed to implement better despite being trained by this particular trainer were the ones that seemed to be influenced by their past experience of good literacy practice. So even though they did not get proper training, their knowledge of good practice assisted them.

There was insufficient empirical evidence to support the responses provided by trainers since only three trainers were observed for a short period of time. The few observations indicated that of the three trainers observed, two seemed to show a significant level of understanding of the program and seemingly the years of experience in the field played a particular role in the quality of training and understanding.

### **Teacher attributes linked to learner progress and performance**

“You are no longer the teacher but their mother, and when you come to school they are happy, when you do not come they ask a lot of questions. Where is she? We are looking for her. So it has changed me because I never thought I would find myself laughing with a child and telling stories,” said one teacher.

Multiple interrelated factors such as the understanding of the program, motivation and interest in learners' development, coupled with one's stance toward teaching and/or the program may have significant impacts on the program's effectiveness. Teachers' positive attitude, commitment, enthusiasm, and interest in developing learners' literacy skills had contributed positively to the success of the BTL program. Teachers' roles in

executing program activities and their ability to effectively transfer literacy skills to learners is vital for the success of the BTL program. Teachers thus play a critical role and are essential instruments for the success of programs (UNESCO, 2002). Teachers who associated being a good literacy teacher with having a good relationship with learners were more patient with their learners and approachable, making it easier for learners to communicate, ask, and respond to questions. In other classrooms where the teacher's style was authoritarian, this was impossible and learner progress was slow.

Effective continuity in implementation may be dependent on the nature of the motivation. Previous studies seem to assert that internally motivated actions are easier to sustain than externally motivated actions (Abadzi, 2006; Ames, 1990; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002) since they are closely related to the meaning derived from an act.

*When people are motivated, they are alert, they pay attention and their recall improves. . . . People's interests survive best when rewards are used neither to bribe nor control, but to signal when a job has been well done. Rightly administered, intrinsic rewards can stimulate high performance and creativity (Abadzi, 2006, p. 115- 116).*

Teacher motivation seemed to have a strong contributory factor in the quality of classroom practice. Most teachers who seemed to be passionate about the program or their work as literacy teachers seemed to have well-managed classrooms, had good relationships with their learners and their classrooms were more interactive, and demonstrated a level of creativity. A number of these teachers had a better understanding of literacy and tended to have a certain level of support, either from a colleague within the school or with other neighboring schools. Teachers said that colleague support and networks with other teachers were encouraged by BTL trainers and they felt that they were very useful, providing them forums to be reflective, address their challenges, and exchange ideas. Most of the teachers who were deemed good practitioners were enthusiastic about the program and tended to appreciate the link between the BTL program and the curriculum. Teachers who possessed such attributes have been referred to as L1.

Teachers who were deemed average and those deemed slightly above average tended to have a limited perception of literacy and were not entirely convinced that the BTL program was adequately aligned with the curriculum. Some had well-managed classrooms but their level of implementation showed a lack of understanding of the objectives and their comprehension activities were very poor, with teachers asking learners very simple questions mainly about the names of the characters in the stories. At times when their classrooms were visited, they would make excuses. Teachers who possessed such attributes have been referred to as L2.

Teachers who were deemed below average implementers tended to have badly managed classrooms; even though they had very authoritarian methods, their learners seemed uncontrollable. Their perceptions of literacy were linked solely to the ability to read, write, and speak; during their story sessions they would either ask one question about the story or not ask a question at all. Their focus was mainly on the different mechanical aspects of the program such as the sequences of activities encompassed in the program than the reasons for doing the different activities. Some equated literacy to a language, making no distinction to literacy as a skill but instead referring to it as language (i.e., literacy is SiSwati or SeTswana) and were almost unaware of the underpinning approaches of the program. Teachers who possessed such attributes have been referred to as L3.

## Quantitative analysis

Results on the performance of learners on six different items will be presented in this section of the paper and will later be linked to teacher attributes. Firstly a description of the items or tasks learners were tested on will be provided, followed by descriptive analysis and later inferential statistics. A discussion and summary of the results will also be provided.

## Description of items

The results from the following tables describe that the overall performance of the learners is based on a sample of 324 learners; 183 were sampled from the competent teachers (L1), 69 from the average teachers (L2), and 72 from the below average teachers (L3).

Scores	Personal information	Missing alphabet	Dictation	Picture/word Matching	Jumbled sentences	Sentence construction	Comprehension
0	17 (5.2%)	51 (15.7%)	41 (12.7%)	6 (1.9%)	78 (24.1)	133 (41%)	108 (33.3%)
≥49%	60 (18.5%)	79 (24.4%)	59 (18.2%)	41 (12.6%)	69 (23.2)	73 (22.6%)	86 (26.5%)
≤50%	247 (76.2%)	194 (59.9%)	224 (69.1%)	277 (85.5%)	177 (52.7)	118 (36.4%)	130 (40.2%)
Total	324	324	324	324	324	324	324

### *Personal Information*

The table above represents overall scores of the six schools whose learners were assessed on the personal information task. This task assessed learners' ability to accurately write their names and surnames without errors. The table illustrates that of the 324 learners assessed, 5.2% (17) were unable to properly write their names while about 76.2% (247) had mastered this skill. A closer look at this task indicated that some of the learners who attained a score of one had only written their first names, which might be a classroom culture and may not be entirely interpreted as the inability of learners to properly write their full names.

Percentage scores for classrooms that had good implementing teachers ranged between 77% and 100% with an average of 86.5%. Scores for average teachers ranged between 79% and 92%, with an average score of 87% and for below average teachers, scores ranged from 79% to 88%, with an average of 82%. Even though the performance on this task was high, it is concerning that some (5.2%) of the learners were still not able to write their names by the end of the year.

### *Missing alphabet*

The scores represented are based on a string of letters of the alphabet where learners were required to fill in the missing letters. The table illustrates that of the 324 learners assessed, 15.7% (51) could not fill-in the missing letter and only 59.9% (194) attained scores above 50%. Based on previous assessments, the performance on this task has always been problematic, with most learners unable to respond to this task. According to the trainers, learners in the BTL program are not specifically taught to read or recognize letters in alphabetical order; letters are read as sounds within contexts. It was also indicated that in some African languages certain letters in the English alphabet system are not used, making it difficult to teach the sequence of the alphabet as it may confuse learners. Sequencing letters of the alphabet is a curriculum requirement and learners are expected to know how the letters are sequenced so that they can use the

alphabet skills in other activities such as reading a directory, looking for words in dictionaries and developing their own dictionary.

Percentage scores for classrooms that had good implementing teachers ranged from 58% to 84% with an average of 69.5%. Scores for average teachers ranged from 58% to 96%, with an average score of 78%, and from 55% to 56%, with an average of 55.5% for below average teachers. The average performance of all the schools on this task was 68.3%, which seems impressive in comparison to previous results. This may be an indication of the curriculum change, where propositions were made for teachers to teach English in Grade One, hence the improvement of results on this task. Even though this skill is deemed important, it does not seem to be an easy skill to teach in a number of the African languages and may need to be taught and/or assessed differently.

### *Dictation*

The scores represented are based on a dictation activity where learners were required to listen to different words dictated to them and write the correct spelling. Fifteen marks were awarded for this task, with three marks provided per word correctly spelt, one mark for the awareness of sounds and two marks for minor spelling errors. The table illustrates that of the 324 learners assessed, 12.7% (41) were not able to spell dictated words at all, 18.2% (59) were unable to attain a score above 50%, and 69.1% (224) managed to attain scores above 50%. It is impressive though that there were close to 70% of learners who attained scores above 50% on this task, meaning that most of the learners were either able to decode or could recognize whole words.

Percentage scores for classrooms that had good implementing teachers ranged from 65% to 91%, with an average of 75.6%. Scores for average teachers ranged from 41% to 61%, with an average score of 52%, and from 32% to 77%, with an average of 54.5% for poor implementers. The average performance of all the schools on this task was 65.9%. These results may illustrate the emphasis on the value of decoding and encoding emphasized by Foundation Phase teachers, which may be valued over and above other critical literacy skills, such as reading and writing with understanding and within meaningful contexts.

### *Matching*

The scores represented are based on a dictation activity where learners were required to match words with pictures provided in their question paper. Fifteen marks were awarded for this task, with three marks provided for every correctly matched word. The table illustrates that of the 324 learners assessed, 1.9% (6) were not able to match pictures with words, 12.6% (41) were unable to attain a score above 50%, and 85.5% (277) attained scores above 50%. The performance on this task is normally high and has similarities to the skills assessed in the dictation task, since both assess phonic awareness. While in one activity, learners are expected to read, in the other, they are expected to listen, aurally recognize the word(s), and write them with the correct spelling. Both these tasks require certain encoding and decoding skills or word recognition skills.

Percentage scores for classrooms that had good implementing teachers ranged from 76% to 97%, with an average of 81.7%. Scores for average teachers ranged from 68% to 99%, with an average score of 84.9%, and the poor implementers ranged from 64% to 92%, with an average of 78.1%. The average performance of all the schools on this task was 81.5%. Previous reports seemed to show high performances on this particular task as well as the personal information task. The way in which this task is administered impacts on how learners perform on it. If the administrator reads the



words for the learners, their performance may be boosted compared to schools where administrators instruct learners to read the instructions and the words in the task. This is an issue that needs to be addressed to ensure that data gathered is reliable.

### *Jumbled sentences*

The scores represented are based on a jumbled sentence task where learners were required to rearrange jumbled words to construct a comprehensible sentence. The table illustrates that of the 324 learners assessed, 24.1% (78) were not able to rearrange the words to comprehensible sentences, 23.2% (69) were unable to attain a score above 50%, and only 52.7% (177) managed to attain 50% and above scores.

Percentage scores for classrooms that had good implementing teachers ranged from 52% to 64%, with an average of 59.1%. Scores for average teachers ranged from 44% to 72%, with an average score of 57.8%, and from 38% to 52%, with an average of 44.9% for below average teachers. The average performance of all the schools on this task was 55.7%. The performance of learners on this task seems to be reflective of previous reports. The low performance on this task may be a result of the inability of schools to cover certain aspects of the BTL program, especially Stage Three tasks, where a number of jumbled sentence tasks are provided. It may also be an indication that learners are not learning in meaningful contexts, hence cannot develop comprehensible sentences, since a number of words may be learnt in isolation or as strings.

### *Sentence construction*

The scores represented are based on a sentence construction task where learners were required to write two comprehensible sentences. The table illustrates that of the 324 learners assessed, 41% (133) were not able to write comprehensible sentences, 22.6% (73) were unable to attain a score above 50%, and only 36.4% (118) managed to attain a score of 50% and above. The table illustrates that about 63.6% of learners attained scores below 50%.

Percentage scores for classrooms that had good implementing teachers ranged from 35% to 85%, with an average of 56.8%. Scores for average teachers ranged from 12% to 39%, with an average score of 25.3%, and from 21% to 39%, with an average of 30.5% for below average teachers. The average performance of all the schools on this task was 44.3%. This low average score was quite concerning and when compared to the higher scores for the dictation task, it may illustrate the drilling of words to learners and the lack of practice in expressive or creative writing beyond the prescribed core vocabulary of the BTL materials. It also may reflect teachers' underestimation of learners' capacity to do independent writing activities, despite their presence in the BTL learner books in Stage Two.

### *Comprehension*

The scores represented are based on the comprehension task where learners were required to read a comprehension passage and respond to the questions set. The table illustrates that of the 324 learners assessed, 33.3% (108) were not able to respond to any of the comprehension questions, 26.5% (86) were unable to attain a score above 50%, and only 40.2% (130) managed to attain a score of 50% and above. The table illustrates that about 59.8% of learners attained scores below 50%. The decrease in the performance scores in the jumbled sentence and the sentence construction task may

also explain the low performance on this task. As previously alluded, if a number of teachers teach words in isolation and emphasize decoding skills rather than comprehension skills, these trends will continue.

Percentage scores for classrooms that had teachers implementing well ranged from 35% to 85%, with an average of 56.8%. Scores for average teachers ranged from 12% to 39%, with an average score of 25.3%, and from 21% to 39%, with an average of 30.5% for below average teachers. The average performance of all the schools on this task was 44.3%. This is quite concerning and may be supported by the claim Durkin and Harker (1973) make about the inadequate comprehension activities in the Foundation Phase partly because teachers underestimate their learners and partly due to the lack of knowledge and strategies for teaching comprehension.

The results of the current study seem to be reflective of the national and international assessments on literacy, with Annual National Assessments indicating that learners attain average scores of around 35% in literacy and the PIRLS study indicating that comprehension levels of South African learners are well below benchmark, with most learners in possession of lower order comprehension skills and lacking in higher order skills that require interpretation, making inferences, predictions, critical reflection, and evaluation.

### **Descriptive analysis**

The results presented in the chart below provide scores on the performance of learners in six different items as presented in the previous section. The results have been presented according to the level at which teachers were deemed to be implementing in their classrooms. The codes L1, L2, and L3 therefore represent three different levels of teachers' implementation and competency with regard to their understanding of literacy pedagogy. Level 1 represents teachers who were deemed as highly competent, Level 2 represents average and slightly above average teachers and Level 3 represents those teachers who were below average.

The descriptive table provides useful information about the spread of the data such as the number of participant per group compared, the average and percentage scores, the standard deviation as well as the minimum and maximum scores attained per task per teacher group.

## Descriptive tables

Task	Teacher Group	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	Average percentage	Minimum	Maximum
Personal information	L	183	1.73	.494	.036	86.5	0	2
	L2	69	1.74	.560	.067	87	0	2
	L3	72	1.64	.698	.082	82	0	2
	Total	324	1.71	.558	.031	85.5	0	2
Alphabet	L	183	2.78	1.525	.113	69.5	0	4
	L2	69	3.12	1.388	.167	78	0	4
	L3	72	2.22	1.705	.201	55.5	0	4
	Total	324	2.73	1.564	.087	68.3	0	4
Dictation	L1	183	11.34	5.091	.376	75.6	0	15
	L2	69	7.80	4.708	.567	52	0	15
	L3	72	8.18	5.712	.673	54.5	0	15
	Total	324	9.88	5.405	.300	65.9	0	15
Matching	L1	183	12.25	4.099	.303	81.7	0	15
	L2	69	12.74	3.760	.453	84.9	0	15
	L3	72	11.71	4.365	.514	78.1	0	15
	Total	324	12.23	4.092	.227	81.5	0	15
Jumbled sentences	L1	183	7.09	4.755	.351	59.1	0	12
	L2	69	6.94	4.752	.572	57.8	0	12
	L3	72	5.39	4.869	.574	44.9	0	12
	Total	324	6.68	4.815	.268	55.7	0	12
Sentence construction	L1	183	2.27	1.664	.123	56.8	0	4
	L2	69	1.01	1.419	.171	25.3	0	4
	L3	72	1.22	1.612	.190	30.5	0	4
	Total	324	1.77	1.698	.094	44.3	0	4
Comprehension	L1	183	3.61	2.992	.221	54.1	0	8
	L2	69	1.61	1.919	.231	20.1	0	8
	L3	72	1.93	2.065	.243	24.1	0	8
	Total	324	2.81	2.756	.153	35.1	0	8

## Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
PERSONAL INFORMATION	4.987	2	321	.007
MISSING ALPHABET	8.684	2	321	.000
DICTATION	4.390	2	321	.013
MATCHING	2.080	2	321	.127
JUMBLED SENTENCES	.245	2	321	.783
SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION	5.116	2	321	.006
COMPREHENSION	35.087	2	321	.000

\* Significant at  $p=0.05$

The above table illustrates results of the Levene's test for homogeneity of variance, which assesses the extent to which the groups being compared are similar or comparable. The results in the above table indicate that the following tasks; personal information ( $p= .007$ ), alphabet ( $p= .000$ ), dictation ( $p= .013$ ), sentence construction ( $p= .006$ ) and comprehension ( $p= .000$ ) had statistically significant results at  $p= 0.05$ , indicating that there were variances between the group performances, but homogeneity of variance on the matching ( $p= .127$ ) and jumbled sentence ( $p= .783$ ) task. The results mean that the performance of the three groups on the matching and jumbled sentence task are not vastly different but are vastly different on the tasks where results were significant.

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ANOVA						
Items/tasks		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Personal information	Between Groups	.474	2	.237	.759	.469
	Within Groups	100.254	321	.312		
	Total	100.728	323			
Alphabet	Between Groups	29.325	2	14.663	6.187	.002*
	Within Groups	760.774	321	2.370		
	Total	790.099	323			
Dictation	Between Groups	896.736	2	448.368	16.852	.000*
	Within Groups	8540.807	321	26.607		
	Total	9437.543	323			
Matching	Between Groups	37.525	2	18.763	1.121	.327
	Within Groups	5372.114	321	16.736		
	Total	5409.639	323			
Jumbled sentences	Between Groups	155.137	2	77.568	3.395	.035*
	Within Groups	7333.480	321	22.846		
	Total	7488.617	323			
Sentence construction	Between Groups	106.329	2	53.165	20.678	.000*
	Within Groups	825.310	321	2.571		
	Total	931.639	323			
Comprehen-sion	Between Groups	271.376	2	135.688	19.954	.000*
	Within Groups	2182.760	321	6.800		
	Total	2454.136	323			

\*Significant at  $p=0.05$

The results illustrate that there were nonsignificant differences between the performance of learners in the three groups on the personal information and matching task as determined by the one-way ANOVA results; ( $F(2,321) = .759, p = .469$ ) and ( $F(2,321) = 1.121, p = .327$ ) respectively. Statistically significant differences were observed on the alphabet ( $F(2,321) = 6.187, p = .002$ ), dictation ( $F(2,321) = 16.852, p = .000$ ), jumbled sentences ( $F(2,321) = 3.395, p = .035$ ), sentence construction ( $F(2,321) = 20.678, p = .000$ ) and the comprehension task ( $F(2,321) = 19.954, p = .000$ ) as determined by the one-way ANOVA.

*Post hoc tests for Multiple Comparisons: Bonferroni*

Dependent Variable		(I) SCHOOL	(J) SCHOOL	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	Significance	95% Confidence Interval
							Lower Bound
NAME	1		2	-.012	.079	1.000	-.20
			3	.088	.078	.777	-.10
	2		1	.012	.079	1.000	-.18
			3	.100	.094	.863	-.13
	3		1	-.088	.078	.777	-.27
			2	-.100	.094	.863	-.33
ALPHABET	Bonferroni	1	2	-.335	.217	.375	-.86
			3	.559*	.214	.028*	.04
	2		1	.335	.217	.375	-.19
			3	.894*	.259	.002*	.27
	3		1	-.559*	.214	.028*	-1.07
			2	-.894*	.259	.002*	-1.52
DICTATION	Bonferroni	1	2	3.542*	.729	.000*	1.79
			3	3.158*	.718	.000*	1.43
	2		1	-3.542*	.729	.000*	-5.30
			3	-.383	.869	1.000	-2.47
	3		1	-3.158*	.718	.000*	-4.89
			2	.383	.869	1.000	-1.71
MATCHING	Bonferroni	1	2	-.493	.578	1.000	-1.88
			3	.538	.569	1.000	-.83
	2		1	.493	.578	1.000	-.90
			3	1.031	.689	.407	-.63
	3		1	-.538	.569	1.000	-1.91
			2	-1.031	.689	.407	-2.69
JUMBLE	Bonferroni	1	2	.145	.675	1.000	-1.48
			3	1.699*	.665	.033*	.10
	2		1	-.145	.675	1.000	-1.77
			3	1.553	.805	.164	-.38
	3		1	-1.699*	.665	.033*	-3.30
			2	-1.553	.805	.164	-3.49
SENTENCES	Bonferroni	1	2	1.253*	.227	.000*	.71
			3	1.046*	.223	.000*	.51
	2		1	-1.253*	.227	.000*	-1.80
			3	-.208	.270	1.000	-.86
	3		1	-1.046*	.223	.000*	-1.58
			2	.208	.270	1.000	-.44
COMPREHENSION	Bonferroni	1	2	1.998*	.368	.000*	1.11
			3	1.676*	.363	.000*	.80
	2		1	-1.998*	.368	.000*	-2.88
			3	-.322	.439	1.000	-1.38
	3		1	-1.676*	.363	.000*	-2.55

\*Significant at p=0.05

From previous tables, it has been illustrated that there were only two tasks that had nonsignificant differences, the personal information and matching task. The Bonferroni post-hoc test results affirmed this, revealing nonstatistically significant differences in the performance of the three groups on the personal information task; L1 ( $M = 1.73, SD = .494$ ), L2 ( $M = 1.74, SD = .560$ ) and L3 ( $M = 1.64, SD = .698$ ),  $F(2,321) = .759, p = .469$

and the matching task; L1 ( $M = 12.25$ ,  $SD = 4.099$ ), L2 ( $M = 12.74$ ,  $SD = 3.760$ ) and L3 ( $M = 11.71$ ,  $SD = 4.365$ ),  $F(2,321) = .1.21$ ,  $p = .327$ . These results illustrate that average performances between the three different groups were not considerably different, meaning that whether learners were in the L1, L2 or L3 classrooms, their performance on this task would not have been affected much.

Significant differences in the alphabet task were observed between L1 and L3, with the results showing that the performance was significantly lower in L3 ( $M = 2.22$ ,  $SD = 1.705$ ) than L1 ( $M = 2.78$ ,  $SD = 1.525$ ) and L2 ( $M = 3.12$ ,  $SD = 1.388$ ),  $F(2,321) = 6.187$ ,  $p = .002$  in the alphabet task. Nonsignificant results were observed between L1 and L2 in the alphabet task though. For the dictation, statistically significant differences were observed between L1 and L2 and between L1 and L3, with results showing that the performance in L1 ( $M = 11.34$ ,  $SD = 5.091$ ) was significantly higher than L2 ( $M = 7.80$ ,  $SD = 4.708$ ) and L3 ( $M = 8.18$ ,  $SD = 5.712$ ),  $F(2,321) = 16.852$ ,  $p = .000$ . Nonsignificant differences were observed between L2 and L3 in the dictation task. These results illustrate that learners in the L1 classrooms performed better in the dictation task than the L2 and L3 classrooms and better in the alphabet task than L3. The results also indicate that L2 classrooms performed better than L1 in the alphabet task but not in the dictation task. The competence in alphabetization for L2 classrooms did not seem to contribute to the performance in the dictation task and was not statistically different to the performance of L1.

Similarly, statistically significant differences were also observed in the jumbled sentence, sentence construction and comprehension activity. L1 ( $M = 7.09$ ,  $SD = 4.755$ ) performed better than L3 ( $M = 5.39$ ,  $SD = 4.869$ ),  $F(2,321) = 3.395$ ,  $p = .035$  in the jumbled sentence task. L1 ( $M = 11.34$ ,  $SD = 5.091$ ) also performed better than L2 ( $M = 7.80$ ,  $SD = 4.708$ ) and L3 ( $M = 8.18$ ,  $SD = 5.712$ ),  $F(2,321) = 20.678$ ,  $p = .000$  in the sentence construction task and lastly L1 ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 2.992$ ) had higher performances than L2 ( $M = 1.61$ ,  $SD = 1.919$ ) and L3 ( $M = 1.93$ ,  $SD = 2.065$ ),  $F(2,321) = 19.954$ ,  $p = .000$  in the comprehension task. These results illustrate that learners in the L1 classrooms performed better than the L2 and L3 classrooms in the sentence construction and comprehension task. Being in the L1 classroom thus seems to be beneficial for learners especially in developing the higher order skills that enable the development of meaningful and critical engagement with tasks. While there was a significant difference in the performance of L1 and L3 in the jumbled sentence task, there was no significant difference between L1 and L2. There was also no significant difference in the performance of L2 and L3 in the tasks that required slightly higher order level skills, even though there were significant differences in the lower order skills, showing that learners were better in L2 classrooms than in L3 classrooms.

## 4. Conclusion

Overall, the results seem to indicate that the performance of learners who were sampled from the classrooms of competent teachers was higher in comparison to the average and below average classrooms. This was especially observed in the tasks that required higher order skills, where learners had to apply certain levels of thinking and reasoning, such as the jumbled sentence, sentence construction and the comprehension task. From the descriptive analysis table, it is quite clear that the performance of the teachers who were deemed to be highly competent (L1) attained higher scores mainly in the higher order skills than the average (L2) and below average (L3) classrooms. L1 classrooms attained scores above 50% in all the items while L3 classrooms attained scores below 50% in all

the items that required higher order skills, and L2 attained scores below 50% in two of the higher order skills items, namely the sentence construction and comprehension task.

L2 managed to attain the highest mean scores in the tasks that required lower cognitive skills such as the personal information task (87%), the alphabet task (78%) and the matching task (84,9%). Two of the three tasks where L2 attained the highest mean score had statistically nonsignificant differences, indicating that as much as these scores were high, the differences in the performance between the three groups were not considerable. L1 on the other hand attained the highest mean score in the dictation task (75%) and this score had statistically significant differences.

As discussed in the qualitative results, the satisfactory performances of all the three groups of teachers in the lower order skills, such as the personal information, alphabet task, dictation, and matching may be based on the emphasis on the encoding and decoding at the expense of meaningful, creative, and critical engagement with reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities. This may also reflect the lack of understanding of literacy and strategies of teaching higher order skills as reflected in some interviews and classroom observations. Furthermore it may be related to teachers' lack of confidence in the BTL program brought about by the lack of clarity and inability to identify the program as a literacy program that serves to fulfill curriculum requirements.

A clearer understanding of BTL as a literacy program and its ability to address curriculum requirements seemed to be a major contributory factor in teachers' classroom practice. This was seen to improve classroom practice and learner performance and also contribute to the sustainability of the program. Other factors that were identified as contributing to the effectiveness of the program were the quality of support from BTL trainers, the supportive networks among teachers, a clear understanding of the relationship between the BTL program and the curriculum. A further factor associated with effective performance was the quality of the training based on trainers' understanding and the support of the program by government officials. Finally, teacher attributes such as motivation, dedication, and a positive attitude toward teaching, the program, and learners were identified as key factors related to effective classroom implementation and learner performance thereof.

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