Room for Growth
Training and support for mother-tongue preschool teachers in the Guera region of Chad

Caroline J. Tyler
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Abstract

Teachers play a critical role in facilitating effective learning in the classroom. This is particularly true in innovative education projects in low-income countries which seek to ground children’s learning in their first language and culture. In this study I evaluated teacher training and support in mother-tongue preschool classes run by the Guerguiko language association in the francophone African country of Chad. These classes help children develop early literacy, numeracy and French language skills, giving them a head start in French-medium Grade 1. For this study I adopted a case study approach and gathered qualitative data through stakeholder interviews, class observations and project documentation.

The findings of my research underline the importance of timely and relevant training and ongoing support for teachers which actively promotes continuing professional development. The findings illuminated two areas of teacher competence in particular:

1) teachers’ development of linguistic skills appropriate to the multilingual learning environment in question, and

2) literacy teaching skills that incorporate both letter-based and story-based activities within a culturally relevant curriculum.

The study showed that teachers benefit from opportunities for reflective professional development within the context of a community of practice. This community is established and strengthened through pre-service training courses, one-to-one supervision visits from qualified and experienced support staff and regular in-service opportunities with other preschool teachers. This supportive environment gives teachers room to grow by encouraging them to practice and develop new knowledge, skills and attitudes. The recommendations flowing from my research centre around ways to improve aspects of current teacher training and support.

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### Abbreviations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>continuing professional development</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>early childhood development</td>
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<td>FAPLG</td>
<td>Fédération des Associations pour la Promotion des Langues du Guéra (Guera Literacy Federation)</td>
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<td>KRT</td>
<td>key resource teacher</td>
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<td>L1</td>
<td>first language, mother tongue</td>
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<td>L2</td>
<td>second language</td>
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<td>MLE</td>
<td>multilingual education</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoI</td>
<td>medium of instruction</td>
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<td>MSA</td>
<td>Modern Standard Arabic</td>
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<td>MT</td>
<td>mother tongue</td>
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<td>MTB-MLE</td>
<td>mother-tongue-based multilingual education</td>
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<td>MTE</td>
<td>mother tongue education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDL</td>
<td>non-dominant language</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NQT</td>
<td>newly qualified teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARSET</td>
<td>Programme d’Appui au Réforme du Secteur de l’Education au Tchad (Support Programme for Educational Reform in Chad)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEBIMO</td>
<td>Projecto de Escolarização Bilingue em Moçambique (Bilingual Schooling Project in Mozambique)</td>
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<td>SIL</td>
<td>SIL International</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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Chapter 1

Setting the Scene

“I really appreciate this work. Over the last 3 years, some of my [preschool] children have already reached Grade 1, 2 and 3 [in primary school] and are making good progress. Sometimes they are among the best pupils in the class and that gives me great pleasure”. NT, Guerguiko preschool teacher, Chad

One of the most vivid memories from my first months of living and working in the Guera region of Chad was visiting a preschool class in a rural village half an hour’s drive from the main town of Mongo. Like many Chadian classrooms, this class met in a makeshift shelter which hosted a crowd of dusty children sitting on a large plastic mat. Their teacher had only a few resources and a simple blackboard at his disposal. The teacher, a middle-aged man from the local community, had received no formal teacher training and had left secondary school after four years, having achieved the general secondary certificate. Unlike many other Chadian classrooms, however, the learners were attentive and engaged in their learning, participating in discussions and games, obviously enjoying a good relationship with their teacher and keen to show off their emerging literacy and numeracy skills to the visitors. Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this learning environment was the language factor—both children and teacher were at ease using their first language, or mother-tongue, as a valuable communication and learning resource.

I arrived in Chad in early 2006 to work as mother-tongue (MT) literacy specialist with SIL Chad, the local branch of SIL International, a “faith-based non-profit organization committed to serving language communities worldwide as they build capacity for sustainable language development” (SIL International 2013). I was seconded to the Guera region, home to 27 language communities (Lewis 2009), to help support MT literacy activities run by FAPLG, the Guera languages and literacy federation, a partner organisation of SIL Chad. Appendix A shows a map of languages of the Guera. FAPLG is a civil society organisation which currently supports 18 member language associations seeking to use their language for literacy and development activities. In 2013, FAPLG was awarded a UNESCO literacy prize in recognition of its efforts to combat illiteracy.

In 2006, FAPLG was composed of five member language associations running MT adult literacy classes in the following language communities: Dangaleat, Guerguiko, Kenga, Migaama, and Sokoro. In addition, two of these language associations (Guerguiko and Dangaleat) were running experimental MT preschool classes, following an introductory workshop in 2005. These classes aim to give 5–6 year old children a head-start to school life by introducing them to first language (L1) literacy, L1 maths, and second language (L2) speaking and listening skills (FAPLG 2010). Appendix B summarises programme objectives and content. SIL partnered with FAPLG in developing and expanding this project and specifically in the domains of programme planning, curriculum and materials development, and teacher training and support. Since the experimental phase, the preschool programme has expanded to include nine language associations and the number of classes has grown from five in 2006 to 75 in 2015. A total of 1,292 children completed the six-month programme in 2014 (FAPLG 2014). These MT preschool classes have generally been successful in helping children improve their chances of success at primary school by preparing them for school life and introducing them to basic literacy and numeracy skills.

1.1 Mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE)

Mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) has received increasing attention in recent years as a means of improving the quality of formal education offered to children whose home language differs from the official language(s) used in education. This need is clearly seen in the sub-Saharan country of Chad, where education is generally considered to be failing the majority of its 2 million school-aged children (UNESCO 2014; 2011).
While there are many factors that influence educational success, the language factor is now regarded as key to improving the quality of learning and teaching (UNESCO 2014; Save the Children UK 2009). Many countries in South America, Africa and Asia have implemented MTB-MLE programmes. While experiences vary and results have often been mixed, starting education in the language best known to children has been proven to increase their chances of success in primary school and beyond (Skutnabb-Kangas and Heugh 2012; Walter and Chuo 2012).

Using children’s home language as medium of instruction (MoI) in the early grades facilitates communication in the classroom and validates the child’s linguistic and cultural heritage, embedding them in their own culture, while at the same time equipping them to become active members of the wider regional or national context (Chimbutane and Benson 2012). Numerous studies have shown improvements in learners’ grades in all curriculum areas, including L1 literacy, L2 language and literacy, maths and science, while repetition and drop-out rates decrease significantly (Walter and Chuo 2012; UNESCO 2011; World Bank 2005).

Teachers play an indispensable role in ensuring quality learning in the classroom, as highlighted by the 2013/4 Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2014), which devotes several chapters to discussing teacher issues and how to support teachers to “end the learning crisis”. The authors acknowledge the importance of offering children from ethnic and linguistic minorities the chance to learn in the language they truly understand (2014:33). Others agree that the quality of delivery by teachers is central to the effectiveness of MTB-MLE programmes (Ouane and Glanz 2011; Benson 2000). Ouane comments (2012: viii), for example, that “implementing initiatives like these is contingent on developing the capacities of a critical mass of professionals at all levels”. Careful planning of in-service training and supervision is necessary to ensure ongoing support for teachers as they implement changes to multilingual classroom practice, including adapting to a new language of instruction and teaching reading in L1 (Nyaga and Anthonissen 2012).

1.2 The Chadian context

The Republic of Chad is located in central Africa with desert in the north, Sahel in the central belt and savannah grasslands in the south. It has approximately 11 million inhabitants according to the most recent national census (République du Tchad 2009), an almost 100% increase in the population since the previous census in 1993, which today means that around two-thirds of the population is under 25 years of age. Ethnically and linguistically Chad is a very diverse country with over 125 living languages recorded (Lewis 2009). French and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) are the two official languages used widely in education and business, and Chadian Arabic is the main language of wider communication. Christianity and Islam are the main religions, but many still hold to traditional African beliefs and practices. Since independence from France in 1960, Chad has had a significant history of political instability, with the most recent civil war taking place from 2005 to 2010.

Economically, Chad is one of the poorest countries in the world, with most of the population living as subsistence farmers and herders. There is a small cotton industry, and in 2003 oil exploitation began in the south of the country. Revenues from this industry now account for most of Chad’s export earnings. Other challenges faced by the Chadian population relate to food insecurity, unreliable rains, little access to potable water, deforestation and desert encroachment, lack of infrastructure such as roads, limited access to health care resulting in low life expectancy, rural exodus, and endemic corruption.

Like other Sub-Saharan countries, Chad faces many challenges in providing a quality education to its growing population. Chad’s literacy rate of 35% (UNESCO 2014:324) reveals an education system struggling to provide all school-aged children with a basic education in reading, writing and maths (UNESCO 2014; Ouane and Glanz 2011). A shocking 43% of primary school-aged children are never enrolled in school or drop out before they reach Grade 4, another 44% reach Grade 4 but without learning the basics, while only an estimated 13% of children reach Grade 4 and learn the basics (UNESCO 2014:1931). In addition to a high drop-out rate, learners often spend years repeating grades they failed. In 2011, an estimated 22% of learners enrolled in primary school were repeaters (UNESCO 2014:360). Equally shocking are the large gender disparities in education. In the 15–24 age bracket, for
example, around 47% of young men and 63% of young women are illiterate, while of those children successfully finishing primary school, 64% are boys and only 36% are girls (UNICEF 2014).

Many chronic issues affect educational quality in Chad, many of which relate directly to teachers. Children are often required to learn in large, overcrowded classrooms, typically with very few resources and no textbooks at their disposal. The average pupil to teacher ratio in 2011 was 63:1, but this vastly increases in the early grades with a ratio of over 80:1 in Grade 1 classrooms (UNESCO 2014:89, 377). Almost half of all students are taught in multi-grade classrooms, especially in remote, rural locations (ibid., 240).

Two-thirds of Chad’s teaching workforce are volunteer teachers from the local community, who themselves have little education and have received little or no teacher training. This is especially true in rural locations as civil servant teachers prefer staying in urban areas with better facilities. Teacher salaries are generally low, and salaries for community teachers are below a living wage, a situation that leads to low teacher morale and a high teacher attrition rate, with 5% of teachers leaving the profession each year (UNICEF 2014).

The Chadian government spent just 12% of its budget on education in 2011, down from just under 20% in 1999 (UNESCO 2014:114). As a result, educational infrastructure such as weather-proof school buildings, latrines and access to drinking water is poor. In addition, limited education support structures exist at regional and national levels. Due to frustrations with government-run schools, many communities in Chad are setting up their own schools in an effort to provide a better education for their children with an estimated 9% of primary school-aged children now enrolled in private, often community-run, institutions (ibid. 352).

Very little provision is made for early childhood development (ECD) in Chad via the Ministry of Social Action, with only 2.6% of children in Grade 1 having attended any form of preschool (UNICEF 2014). Where preschools do exist, they are under-staffed and under-resourced and are found mainly in urban areas. Preschool education in Chad is fee-paying, thus creating an additional barrier to access for the majority of the population.

1.3 Language-in-education issues

Article 9 of the 1996 Constitution stipulates that French and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) are the official languages of Chad and also enshrines in law the right to promote and develop national languages (Djarangar and Ahidjo 2011), a term which refers to Chad’s indigenous languages. With regards the use of languages in basic education, a further legal document from 13 March 2006, states that,

L’enseignement primaire est dispensé dans les écoles primaires ouvertes aux enfants de six (6) à douze (12) ans autour des apprentissages fondamentaux d’écriture, de lecture et de calcul dans les langues officielles. Il est également dispensé dans les langues nationales. [Primary education is dispensed in primary schools open to children of six (6) to twelve (12) years and offers fundamental acquisition of writing, reading and maths in the official languages. It is also dispensed in national languages.] (Article 25 of Law n°16/PR/PM/2006 relating to “Orientation of the Education System in Chad” as cited in Djarangar and Ahidjo 2011.)

French has traditionally been the main language used in education due to Chad’s colonial past. The French colonial administration set up an education system designed to provide training for future civil servants and it was this education system that the Republic of Chad inherited at independence in 1960. The French language has continuing socioeconomic importance for Chad’s relations with France and with other countries in francophone Africa and is also associated with the Christian religion, the main religion in the south of the country. Likewise, MSA holds significance as the language of opportunity in relations with Arab and North African countries with whom Chad enjoys close socioeconomic and religious ties. MSA is associated with Islam, the main religion in the north of the country. Thus the impetus for a (non MT-based) bilingual education system which affords children the opportunity to acquire some proficiency in both official languages. This impetus for bilingualism has received a renewed emphasis in recent years thanks to a strong government lobby and generous donations from the Islamic Development Bank (UNESCO 2007). MSA’s increasing use in formal education has been met with
a mixture of opinion and a flurry of practical challenges, not least the issue of finding a sufficient number of fluent and literate MSA speakers to teach in schools across the country. The literacy rates in both official languages are very low and few Chadians speak either language as their home language.

1.4 MTB-MLE in Chad

While the main emphasis on educational reform in recent years has been on bilingualism in official languages, many at the grassroots are calling for more attention to be given to MTB-MLE as an effective means of helping children bridge the gap between the language they understand best and the official (and foreign) languages. Several small-scale experimental MTB-MLE programmes have been carried out in Chad in recent years under the Support Programme for Educational Reform in Chad (PARSET) (République du Tchad 2004) in conjunction with international NGOs. However, none of these projects have transitioned to large-scale initiatives. In their evaluation report on the “Teaching in National Languages” component of the PARSET programme, Djarangar and Ahidjo (2011) outline the main characteristics, results and challenges encountered. This programme adopted an early-exit model of MTB-MLE, focusing on Grades 1–3 of primary school with a short transition to L2 as MoI by Grade 4. By the end of 2006, half way through the experimentation period, 135 schools in five language communities were involved (Chadian Arabic, Maba, Massa, Moundang and Sar), 366 teachers and 40 other local stakeholders had been trained, and teaching resources had been created and distributed in each language. Over 34,000 children in all had been impacted by the programme (Djarangar and Ahidjo 2011:25).

In May 2007, half-way through the experimentation, the evaluation team undertook interviews with parents, teachers, and education authorities, who reported the following results:

- better acquisition of basic literacy skills,
- ease of communication between children and their teacher, leading to less fear of going to school,
- use of more learner-centered, participative teaching methods,
- increased community/parental involvement and interest in children’s education,
- timely payment of school fees by parents because they see children learning,
- children sharing their learning at home with parents, brothers and sisters etc. resulting in effective family learning,
- less repetition of classes and lower drop-out rate,
- higher enrollment of girls in school,
- better acquisition of L2 (Djarangar and Ahidjo 2011:18–24).

However, the evaluators highlighted several challenges as follows:

- lack of supervision in some branches,
- teachers’ lack of teaching competencies,
- insufficient in-service training,
- teachers not being paid,
- teacher strikes,
- teachers leaving during the school year,
- teacher and pupil absences or irregular attendance,
- the late start to the school year in many rural areas, and lack of active interest among some parents in their children’s education (Djarangar and Ahidjo 2011:27–28).
Despite these challenges, evaluation tests revealed that children in experimental classes outperformed those in the control classes in all instances.

1.5 Impetus for this research

My FAPLG colleagues and I encountered a number of challenges as we sought to equip and support preschool teachers to effectively deliver the six-month mother-tongue programme. Preschool teachers are normally chosen by the local community and the language association according to specific criteria: completion of four years of secondary education and previous experience of teaching L1 adult literacy in their community. They undergo two weeks of initial training, facilitated by local literacy staff where possible. Teachers receive regular supervision visits from literacy staff during the school year. Language associations run annual four-day in-service training events before the school year begins. Our experiences have shown, however, that many of those trained as preschool teachers still struggle to teach well and that their learners do not all enjoy the success experienced by those in the class mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. These experiences have raised some important questions, which I hope to explore in this study. What particular challenges do teachers in MTB-MLE programmes face, and how can they be better equipped to face these challenges? How can current stakeholder views and experiences inform future planning and decisions regarding teacher education and support?

Alidou and Brock-Utne (2011:32) recognise the need for more “qualitative and quantitative studies on teaching in both national and official languages at all levels of instruction in Africa”. They encourage further such studies in order to assess the impact of innovations involving MTB-MLE. The aim of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge on teaching in rural, local-language contexts and to give a voice to teachers and support staff directly involved in innovative MTB-MLE initiatives.

1.6 Research aims

The overall goal of this research was to evaluate the role of teacher training and support in FAPLG mother-tongue preschool classes in Chad. In this research I aimed to 1) identify key considerations and challenges regarding training and supporting multilingual teachers, 2) evaluate critically teacher training and support models for MTB-MLE, 3) explore stakeholder views, practices and experiences of training and support in the FAPLG preschool programme, and 4) suggest recommendations on teacher preparation and support in MTB-MLE contexts.

To conduct this case study of the FAPLG preschool experience I analyzed qualitative data gathered from interviews with stakeholders and classroom observations and surveyed appropriate literature and project documentation.
Chapter 2

Considerations and Challenges for MTB-MLE Teachers

“Teachers learning to teach bilingually must integrate new ways of thinking and teaching into existing structures, beliefs, and traditions”. (Chimbutane and Benson 2012:13)

This observation underlines the extent of the challenges facing teachers in multilingual learning environments which embrace the use of L1 to enhance learning. Indeed, the need for competent teachers is widely accepted to be crucial to the success of MTB-MLE programmes (Jones and Barkhuizen 2011; Ouane and Glanz 2011; Dutcher 2003). But what are the specific competencies teachers need to develop and practise to facilitate learning in a multilingual classroom? How can teacher educators and programme leaders best train and support teaching staff in the process of developing these competencies? In this chapter I investigate what a selection of current literature suggests regarding these important questions.

UNESCO’s 2013/4 Education for All Global Monitoring Report (GMR) recommends that in order “to solve the learning crisis, all children must have teachers who are trained, motivated and enjoy teaching, who can identify and support weak learners, and who are backed by well-managed education systems” (UNESCO 2014:18). However, the authors of the report recognise that this is challenging, especially in multilingual contexts in low-income countries, and they advocate thorough planning on the part of education authorities in terms of provision and training of competent multilingual teachers. They add, “For bilingual education to be effective, governments need to recruit and deploy teachers from minority language groups. Initial and ongoing programmes are also needed to train teachers to teach in two languages and to understand the needs of second-language learners” (ibid., 33).

Nunan and Lam (1998) point out that the ideal teacher, whether in a monolingual or multilingual context, should possess certain generic competencies such as:

(1) A knowledge of the discipline,
(2) The capacity to employ a variety of pedagogical methods,
(3) Communicative effectiveness in the classroom,
(4) The ability to develop materials,
(5) The ability to design and implement instruments for assessment and evaluation,
(6) The capacity to understand and handle community relations,
(7) Competence in a range of educational technology,
(8) The motivation and ability towards further professional development.

The authors differentiate between these core competencies and those specific to multilingual contexts, which they consider to be 1) Teacher competence in the Non-dominant Language(s) [NDL] and 2) Teacher appreciation of the culture(s) of NDL speakers (1998:131).

While this focus on MLE-specific competencies is useful, many teachers in sub-Saharan African countries are far from the “ideal teacher” and struggle with many of the core competencies detailed above. Often this is because they are required to teach via a language in which they are not fully fluent and literate (Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook 2011a; Ouane and Glanz 2011). This reality constitutes “a serious pedagogical handicap” to the majority of African teachers (Trudell 2014). In MLE contexts, the fact that teachers and learners share a common ethnolinguistic background appears to promote certain generic competencies, even where teachers have limited education themselves. For example, using L1 enables teachers to communicate more effectively in the classroom, facilitates the use of a variety of teaching methods, improves community relations and renders materials development more feasible. In this regard, MLE could be viewed as enhancing overall teaching competence in multilingual teachers. Indeed, Nyaga and Anthonissen report that in observations in one rural school studied in Kenya, increased use of children’s L1 in the classroom corresponded to “more talk, more interaction and more learner participation in the lessons” (2012:6). Chimbutane and Benson (2012:13) in their research in the Mozambican context, found that certain competencies, such as classroom communication and the
teachers’ ability to assess student progress, improve naturally on adopting a bilingual approach that “legitimises” students’ home language. Nonetheless, they state that other competencies, such as methods for teaching language and literacy, require intentional training to help teachers improve classroom practice.

2.1 Key teaching competencies for MTB-MLE contexts

Benson (2004) describes a key set of additional roles teachers must assume in MTB-MLE contexts, based on research into bilingual education in Mozambique and Bolivia. These roles are: pedagogue, linguist, intercultural communicator, community member, advocate and innovator (2004:208–215). Benson postulates that these roles put extra demands on bilingual teachers and become a heavier burden in economically disadvantaged contexts, where teachers often receive inadequate preparation and have fewer resources at their disposal. In view of these roles, Benson identifies the following elements as essential to any bilingual teacher education programme:

1. First and second language learning theory;
2. Modelling of first and second language teaching methods (oral and written);
3. Modelling of methods for intercultural instruction;
4. L2 verbal and literacy skills;
5. L1 verbal and literacy skills, including pedagogical vocabulary;
6. Language and programme assessment, including international studies of bilingual schooling, models and evaluations;
7. Study visits and/or practical internships at functioning bilingual schools;

These roles are used below as a springboard for discussion. They have been regrouped under the broader headings of linguistic skills, (linguist), pedagogical skills (pedagogue; innovator) and intercultural skills (intercultural communicator; community member; advocate).

2.1.1 Linguistic skills

Jones and Barkhuizen (2011) identify L1 written skills as a pertinent need in their study of Sabaot mother-tongue education (MTE) in Kenya, stating that teachers’ “in-service training [of 1–2 weeks] was simply not long enough to prepare them to master the rather complex writing system of Sabaot” (ibid., 11). This lack of proficiency in L1 written skills resulted in a lack of confidence in using L1 for literacy activities in the classroom, and was identified by the authors as a priority for further training. Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook (2011c) concur in recommending that teachers receive in-depth training in the orthography of local languages, and note in their summary report on Mali that lack of training in using local languages in the classroom often causes a negative impact on children’s education (ibid., 3).

One response to this problem at a national level is suggested by Djarangar and Ahidjo in their evaluation report of the PARSET National Languages Education project in Chad. They recommend that the Ministry of Education introduce a linguistics training module into teachers’ initial training to better prepare candidates to teach in national languages (2011:31). Chimbutane and Benson mention a similar course that was introduced into Mozambican teacher training institutions in 2009 called “Linguistics of Bantu Languages” (2012:18). While they acknowledge that this course is insufficient, they applaud it as a step in the right direction and an investment in the future of MLE.

Another aspect of linguistic skills is the need for teachers to develop strategies for effectively using the mother-tongue as medium of instruction (MoI) in the classroom. As part of this competency, Benson stipulates that teachers should develop L1 pedagogical and academic vocabulary in order to feel comfortable teaching all relevant curriculum areas (2004:210). To achieve this, she recommends that,
“as much of the training as possible should be done in the L1 so that the required pedagogical vocabulary is agreed upon and put into practice” (2004:211).

Skutnabb-Kangas and Heugh (2012) likewise highlight the benefits of using the L1 for training in their study of MLE in Ethiopia. They cite the main advantage as helping develop academic and pedagogical vocabulary, but also commend its use as a symbolic affirmation that L1 is an appropriate language for education at all levels (ibid.). Using L1 for training would undoubtedly work well where teachers are trained in the L1 area and where trainers share L1 competency with the teachers they train. Otherwise exclusive use of L1 may prove problematic. L2 may, therefore, be necessary in joint sessions, even if group work and practice sessions operate in L1.

Researchers advocate a collaborative approach to developing L1 pedagogical language, involving programme leaders and local practitioners. The empowering role of including teachers and teacher educators in developing L1 writing systems and materials is documented by Skutnabb-Kangas and Heugh (2012) and Graham (2009). If teachers at the local level are involved in the development stage, they will become more confident users of both the writing system and the learning materials produced. This approach may prove challenging, however, in large-scale regional or national contexts. A final linguistic challenge to consider is that of teachers’ competence in L2 (and in some cases L3), in both spoken and written form. Indeed, this challenge was mentioned by Djarangar and Ahidjo (2011:28) as a particular difficulty in working in Chadian community-run schools, where it was often hard to recruit teachers with a sufficient level of L2. Benson (2000) reports that teachers from the PEBIMO project in Mozambique felt dissatisfied with their proficiency in L2 and lacked confidence in using it beyond the early grades. This is borne out in the example of a bilingual teacher who struggles to use Portuguese effectively with her students in a science lesson (Chimbutane and Benson 2012:13–15) and falls back on traditional L2 submersion methods rather than using the L1 to maximise comprehension of content and to facilitate a smooth transfer to L2 learning.

Alidou and Brock-Utne (2011:190–194) report an equally astonishing example from Tanzania, where they observed a secondary teacher conducting the same lesson in both English and Kiswahili to different classes. The teacher adopted active, learner-centred methods in the Kiswahili lesson and traditional teacher-centred methods in English. One reason for this stark difference in choice of methods was surely the teacher’s limited L2 competence, coupled with her underlying assumptions regarding L2-medium education. Williams (2006) describes similar findings in Malawi and Zambia where choral repetition and “coordinated chourusing prompts and responses” are used routinely by teachers in their classrooms. He views these practices not only as a means for teachers to mask poor L2 skills, but also as a teaching style in its own right, that has become ritualised and “rooted in social practice” (2006:41).

On the surface, it seems obvious to say that teachers need both L1 and L2 linguistic competencies which are relevant to their teaching context. The reality, as reported by the above researchers, reveals many problems beneath the surface, especially regarding the question of how these skills can be nurtured and used effectively. Knowledge of the L1 writing system is not in itself necessarily sufficient for teachers to develop appropriate literacy skills in the L1. Teachers who are not given opportunities to develop a repertoire of L1 pedagogical and academic vocabulary will struggle to use the L1 as MoI in their classrooms. Teachers limited by their L2 abilities often revert to ineffective “teacher talk” methods. While some pointers are given by the researchers discussed in this section, the specifics of how teachers can develop effective linguistic skills in order to maximise the mother-tongue in children’s learning remains a significant area of investigation.

### 2.1.2 Pedagogical skills

In addition to linguistic skills, MLE teachers must adapt their pedagogical understanding and practice. While a change in MoI does facilitate classroom communication, it does not automatically equate to the use of more participative, learner-centred teaching methods, as the examples mentioned above demonstrate and as many researchers attest (Skutnabb-Kangas and Heugh 2012; Chimbutane and Benson 2012). Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook (2011a) found that trainees and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in several Sub-Saharan countries focused mainly on the procedural steps involved in teaching reading, writing and maths, and showed little understanding of the theories behind the methods, which
explain why these methods help children learn. They emphasise the need to combine theoretical and practical knowledge in order to develop reflective practice among trainees (ibid., 9).

Teachers require a better understanding of how children acquire literacy skills, in particular the important role of constructing meaning from text, not simply decoding letters, syllables and words (Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook 2011a:10). Williams (2006) reports that in teacher training courses in Malawi, trainees are not trained to teach nor to expect reading for understanding in the first two years of schooling and that teaching reading, either in English or local languages, relies on repetition and “look and say” methods (ibid., 30). In Zambia, he found that teaching reading tends to be highly “text bound” with a focus on reading aloud (pronunciation) and little attention to meaning (ibid., 39).

In theory, teaching literacy skills via the L1 facilitates a range of techniques where meaning plays an important role. In practice, however, many teachers struggle with such a paradigm shift (Chimbutane and Benson 2012). Graham (2009) notes that a number of the ECD teachers she observed failed to implement whole-language techniques into their classroom practice, and subsequently grapples with how to encourage them to reflect on and adopt new practices. She contends that “teachers... need to be able to engage with the ideas on a practical level, a process which requires a cyclical mix of practice and reflection” (ibid., 216).

Trudell and Schroeder (2007) call for reading methodologies to be adopted which respect the linguistic features and writing systems of African languages and the social realities within which these languages are spoken. They argue that certain reading methodologies, popular for languages such as English or French, are simply not suitable in African contexts. For example, this could be due to an over-reliance on whole word recognition activities or because they require an abundance of resources which are not available to the typical African teacher. They advocate activities with a focus on phonological awareness, syllable recognition and morpheme spelling issues, coupled with an emphasis on reading connected text for meaning (2007:174). They recognise, however, that in practice, these new methodologies will often be “blended” with the more traditional methods that teachers have learned in teacher training.

In summary, there appears to be a significant disjoint between the ideal and the reality with regards teachers’ pedagogical skills in multilingual African settings. The ideal would have teachers acquiring new understandings of language and literacy acquisition and adapting their teaching methods to become more participative and learner-centered as a result. The practice of reading for meaning in literacy development appears to be a particular preoccupation of researchers because of the link to developing higher-level cognitive skills. The reality, by contrast, is that many teachers do what they have always done with the limited resources at their disposition. They rely on “old-fashioned”, repetitive, procedural methods learned during their own schooling or during subsequent teaching experiences. They fail to demonstrate the ability to evaluate why these methods may or may not be best for children’s learning. The question of how to encourage teachers to move somewhat towards the middle ground, somewhere between the ideal and the reality remains highly pertinent. How can teachers be encouraged to learn and implement new but realistic strategies for using multiple languages in the classroom?

### 2.1.3 Intercultural skills

Baker (2011) stresses the importance of teachers’ ability to use the L1 culture to learners’ advantage in the classroom. He posits that incorporating learners’ sociocultural background into their classroom experience gives them a more integrated view of the world (ibid., 311–337). He presents Moll’s “Funds of Knowledge” (1992) strategy as one way of achieving this interconnection of school and community, whereby local and household cultural knowledge in its broadest sense is used as a foundation for learning across the curriculum.

Canvin (2007) reports on curriculum reform in Mali, where learning is grouped around cultural themes related to local realities and presented through an interactive teaching methodology. However, Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook (2011c) found that while the Malian curriculum itself was very promising, both trainees and in-service teachers were being inadequately trained to deliver the curriculum and that even accessing details of the curriculum was problematic. This case highlights the challenge of upscaling reform in resource-deprived education systems. However, despite the challenges
involved, using children’s everyday world as a springboard for their education respects the learning principle of moving from the known to the unknown (Malone 2012) and validates children’s cultural heritage.

Another facet of the intercultural role outlined by Benson is that of “collaborating with parents and community members” (2004:216). She notes examples of improved home-school relations in both Mozambique and Bolivia. This encouraging phenomenon was also observed by Djarangar and Ahidjo (2011) in Chad during the PARSET experiment. However, in certain cases, this went beyond simply better home-school relations and included family learning with children reportedly passing on their learning to parents and siblings. As Baker (2011:330–334) suggests, teachers may need to acquire new strategies for navigating and enriching home-school relationships, especially where they have previously been antagonistic due to ethnic or linguistic tensions. Chimbutane and Benson also report that parents appreciate bilingual education for its role in maintaining and developing their languages and cultures (2012:13). This has resulted in a large groundswell of support for bilingual education at the local level in Mozambique.

2.2 Effective models of training and support

All teachers require continuing support once they reach the classroom to enable them to reflect on teaching practices, to foster motivation and to help them adapt to change, such as using a new curriculum or language of instruction (UNESCO 2014:26–27).

This section investigates models and principles of teacher education and support and considers how teacher educators can help teachers embrace change in the classroom, foster a commitment to continuing professional development and improve learning outcomes. I will also consider a number of concrete examples of training and support, before addressing practical aspects that can help improve the quality of training.

Nunan and Lam (1998:134–139) provide an interesting summary of several models for teacher education. They talk firstly of the craft model, whereby trainees are seen as apprentices learning their craft under the guidance of experienced teachers, and secondly, the scientific model, where teaching is seen as a body of knowledge to be mastered with an emphasis on the outward procedures. Thirdly, the reflective model focuses more on the inner resources of the teacher. This model seeks to build on previous experience and encourages teachers to practise new knowledge, then reflect on their practice regularly and thoroughly.

The final model they present and which they feel is most effective, is the professional development model, stemming from the reflective model. This model emphasises ongoing learning whereby “a teacher...makes it his or her lifelong goal to develop himself or herself professionally through a variety of activities such as classroom observation, peer review, team teaching, personal reflection, applied or action research” (1998:135). The authors concede that in reality training programmes use a mixture of models and that often the context will dictate which model suits. For example, the craft model may be more suited to pre-service training, while the professional development model suits in-service training.

Nunan and Lam further identify the following elements as essential to the professional development model. Programmes should be (1) school-based (teachers interact with the school community from as early a stage as possible); (2) experiential (teachers discover insights on their own through actual classroom observation, reflection and practice); (3) problem-centred (teachers tackle real classroom problems); (4) developmental (teachers will be at different stages of the development process); and (5) open-ended (encouraging teachers towards lifelong learning) (1989:135–136).

Nunan and Lam conclude by stating, “The best long-term hope for a teacher education programme is to inculcate in teachers the ability to constantly review and reflect upon their teaching and improve on it beyond the programme” (1998:138).

This emphasis on reflective practice is shared by Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook, who identify eight key influences that impact how trainee teachers acquire the necessary knowledge, understanding and practices associated with teaching:
- the trainee's own experience as a learner;
- the official curriculum for teacher training;
- the training institution's curriculum (which may vary from the official curriculum);
- the official primary curriculum;
- school placements;
- school culture and mentoring from experienced professionals;
- resources and teachers' guides and CPD (2011a:8).

Depending on the context in question, “the power and influence of these sources is variable” (2011:8). Indeed, the authors found significant incongruities in many of these areas, for example, the lack of availability of the primary curriculum. They also found that school placements were often badly timed and failed to offer opportunities for observation of more experienced staff or for reflection on trainees' own practice. The influence of teachers' own school experiences appears to be particularly powerful when implementing innovations.

As a result of their analysis of the current situation, the authors propose aligning theoretical and practical knowledge in “a study of practice”. This would incorporate reflection on four key elements of trainees' learning:

- trainees' own school experience;
- critical study of the school curriculum;
- reflective teaching practice;
- access to quality resources (2011a:9).

They realise, however, that such change would require a huge re-structuring effort, including major retraining of trainers, not to mention significant investment. They also emphasise the important role of reflective practice in ongoing professional development for teachers, but acknowledge the challenges of implementing such a model in low-income countries.

With regards this process of teacher change and development, Guskey (1985) presents a helpful model which “indicates that significant change in the beliefs and attitudes of teachers is contingent upon evidence of change in the learning outcomes of their students”. He stresses the pertinent need for teachers to see immediate and tangible results in the learning of their students as they try out a new idea or practice, in order to continue the new practice and ultimately change their beliefs and attitudes. In light of this view, he recommends the following considerations be taken into account when planning teacher development activities:

1. Change is a slow, difficult, and gradual process for teachers.
2. Teachers need to receive regular feedback on student learning outcomes.
3. Continued support and follow-up are necessary after initial training (1985:2).

In light of these considerations, he advises that innovations should not demand a high degree of immediate change from teachers, but rather should be modest in order to be combined gradually with current practices in an incremental, step-by-step approach. He also advocates changes that show an immediate positive impact in the classroom, thus giving teachers evidence that shows the innovation is making a difference. Utmost importance is given to supporting teachers during the implementation phase because “support during this period of trial and experimentation is critical” (1985:3). He especially recommends coaching and having opportunities to meet with others implementing the innovation to discuss progress and exchange ideas.

Vella, in her work on “the power of dialogue in educating adults” (2002), presents further interesting ideas pertinent to this discussion on teacher education. She identifies twelve general principles she considers as powerful tools to help adults acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes. These principles include:
(1) learning needs and resources assessment;
(2) a safe learning environment;
(3) sound relationships;
(4) appropriate sequencing and reinforcement activities;
(5) ‘praxis’ (action plus reflection);
(6) learners as decision makers;
(7) whole-person learning, using ideas, feelings and actions;
(8) immediacy of learning;
(9) clearly defined roles of learner and teacher based on mutual dialogue;
(10) teamwork, or learning together;
(11) active engagement in learning; and

Vella’s principle of praxis is particularly relevant. She posits that, “Praxis can be used in teaching knowledge, skills and attitudes as learners do something with the new knowledge, practise the new skills and attitudes, and then reflect on what they have just done” (ibid., 14).

The above authors highlight the importance of teachers putting new learning into practice, then being given opportunities to intentionally reflect on that experience. This process seems particularly significant to MTB-MLE contexts, where ideas may be radically different from anything previously experienced by the teacher, such as using L1 as MoI or new methods for L1 early-grade literacy. Trainers subsequently face the challenge of giving trainees sufficient time, space and support to develop new skills so they can confidently and competently use them in their classroom. This challenge increases as the resources available for training decrease, and where large numbers of teachers need to be trained.

The following subsection considers some examples of training and support interventions and highlights some points relating to this discussion. Graham’s study of Pokomo Early Childhood Development (ECD) teachers in Kenya (2009), for example, provides interesting insights on the impact of in-service training on teachers’ classroom practice. Graham seeks to understand the extent to which ECD teachers put the short, innovative mother-tongue education training they received into practice and the reasons behind their choices. Her observations of ECD teachers, and subsequent interviews with them and others involved revealed a varied picture of implementation. She reports that ECD teachers were more willing to try new techniques where they could be combined with their traditional teaching methods (ibid., 189). The new techniques which deviated greatly from their previous training and experience (such as whole-class composition) were less likely to be attempted. One reason Graham suggests for this is that “the limited MTE training may not have been sufficient for teachers to develop the confidence to take on an innovation, without sound knowledge of the underlying principles and reflections on how it may affect their own practice” (ibid., 185).

In addition to the need for sufficient time, she postulates that teachers need a “supportive environment” that reaches beyond the training event—a “community of practice”—in order to have space to try innovations, reflect on that practice and receive helpful feedback. In this regard, she suggests regular monitoring visits from supervision staff are necessary to encourage and guide teachers seeking to “explore new ways of being teachers” (ibid., 189). Like Vella, she encourages reflective practice being emphasised when planning training and support programmes, and that training be seen “as an ongoing series of events where teachers are helped to reflect on innovative as well as traditional ways of teaching and on the theories underlying the different expressions of both” (ibid., 317). Group discussions, linking schools, peer observation and review, and reflective writing could all be useful activities in creating and maintaining such a supportive environment.

The 2013/4 Education for All Global Monitoring Report affirms the importance of continuing to help teachers grow professionally beyond their initial training and emphasises the importance of in-school mentoring: “Mentoring new teachers once they are in the classroom is vital, particularly in poorer countries where teachers have limited prior practical experience” (UNESCO 2014:244). The report demonstrates this with an example of an Early Grade Reading Assessment project in Liberia, where teachers participated in an intensive one-week course on new methods of reading instruction and were then given regular classroom follow-up over the two-year implementation period by trained mentors.
The report claimed this extra teacher support had a positive effect on teaching and learning and specifically on children’s reading comprehension abilities.

Taylor (2012) highlights an interesting aspect related to her role in a Nepalese pilot MLE programme, training trainers and material developers, who, in turn, train others as the programme expands. This idea of “cascade” training has great potential for building capacity in MLE contexts, especially where reform is necessary across a country’s education sector. However, this principle does raise questions of quality assurance as programmes expand. There is a risk that the innovation gets diluted rather than multiplied and strengthened, especially where sufficient resources are not invested in the process.

Several practical issues regarding the quality of training and support emerged from the literature review and are discussed below. Vella highlights the issue of group size for quality training events and advocates a “one-digit classroom”, i.e. under 10 learners per trainer, for optimal learning to take place (2002:112–113). Whether this is feasible, even in well-resourced contexts, is open to discussion, however pertinent her point about ensuring quality training.

Another recurring concern is that of modelling, i.e. the importance of teacher trainers acting as good models to trainees and competently demonstrating and applying effective techniques for trainees to emulate. Teachers who experience effective modelling on the part of their trainers will be more likely to integrate similar interactive principles and methods into their classroom practice (Benson 2004; Malone 2004:105). This, in turn, raises the issue of building capacity in teacher trainers, an issue highlighted by several researchers (UNESCO 2014; Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook 2011a).

The importance of adequate and relevant practice opportunities is highlighted by Malone (2004), who argues that Vella’s principles for adult education should be taken as a guide for planning training workshops for MTB-MLE. She suggests some practical activities that could facilitate their incorporation such as discussions and role-plays, and proposes the “30-10-60 rule” for training events as a means of ensuring active and participative learning (2004:105–106). Under this “rule”, participants should spend 30% of their time working in groups, 10% of their time listening to presentations or watching demonstrations, and 60% of their time practising what they are learning. Following this guideline should help trainers avoid talking too much and integrate group-work and practice sessions. Malone also highlights that trainers should be concerned with their own development in mentoring others (2004:106).

Malone further suggests that trainees be given mentoring opportunities from successful, experienced teachers, which would include observing these “master” teachers at work. Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook (2011b) discuss a similar idea developed in Kenya aimed at encouraging in-school CPD for teachers. “Key Resource Teachers” (KRTs) were identified and trained who, in turn, were expected to mentor colleagues in their respective schools (2011b:6–7). The authors found that these KRTs demonstrated more effective teaching skills and a deeper understanding of the learning process than NQTs, but make no comment on whether they successfully fulfilled their role as mentors to peers. This idea has great potential for ongoing, reflective CPD for teachers.

Several authors commented on the need for authenticity in classroom observation and practice, such as practising with appropriately aged children. For example, Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook (2011c:3) observed instances of classroom simulation with fellow trainees acting as “learners”, but noted that this proved unrealistic, as “learners” invariably reacted differently from early grade learners. An alternative is cited by Graham (2009:122), who reports that for one Pokomo practice teaching session, ECD pupils were invited to the session for trainees to practise the new story-telling techniques with improved results. Malone (2004:101–106) likewise calls for real practice situations. Issues of feasibility would need to be addressed for this to be effective. For example, training may take place during vacation time when children are unavailable.

Where suitable technology is available, some authors suggest utilising video recordings as a basis for discussion and critique by trainees (Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook 2011a; Graham 2009; Vella 2002). This appears a valuable exercise, allowing trainees to observe real classroom teachers in context, and facilitating critical analysis. While this strategy would undoubtedly be highly beneficial to trainees, issues of feasibility would again have to be navigated to implement this principle in many contexts where access to such technology may be limited.
In summary, then, several significant principles emerge from this brief discussion on models and principles of teacher education and support. Programme planners and teacher educators need to bear these principles in mind when planning professional development activities for MTB-MLE teachers. Recurring themes include the importance of ongoing opportunities to critically reflect on past practice and experiences, constructive mentoring from experienced trainers or teachers and structured exchange with teaching colleagues in similar contexts. Some practical issues to consider include optimum group size, modelling and observation of effective methods, sufficient and authentic opportunities to practise new learning and the appropriate use of technology.

2.3 Emerging issues

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides a broad picture of the competencies teachers require in multilingual learning situations and how these competencies can be nurtured. Of central importance are teachers’ linguistic and pedagogical competencies, and their ability to embrace and incorporate learners’ cultural background and knowledge in the classroom. Teachers need practical and relevant training regarding adapting their understanding and practice to MTB-MLE contexts. In addition, they benefit from ongoing support to discuss and reflect as they seek to implement these innovations and integrate them into their existing beliefs and classroom practices.

More studies in francophone African countries would be useful, especially ones which address the messy details of this process of change and take into account common realities faced by teachers, such as large class size, lack of resources and little classroom support. Teachers themselves may come to the profession with a less-than-desirable level of education from traditional L2-submersion systems, a factor which exerts a huge influence on teachers’ practice. Giving teachers too much theory, for example, may be counter-productive and serve only to fill notebooks rather than inform reflective practice. Judging the right balance of theory and practice is a very pertinent issue and further studies could give useful guidance.

Likewise, more examples of successful models for training and support used in African MTB-MLE contexts to empower teachers to deliver a culturally appropriate curriculum would be helpful. This would be especially relevant for practitioners tackling the challenges involved in applying a reflective professional development model in situations where funding is limited. In such contexts, for example, how could adequate coaching and mentoring be facilitated and how could teachers be given opportunities to be involved in a transformative “community of practice?”
Chapter 3
Stakeholder Views, Practices and Experiences

3.1 Methodology and data collection

Before turning to the findings of this study, I will briefly discuss the research methodology. In order to address the third research objective to “explore stakeholder views, practices and experiences of training and support in the FAPLG preschool programme”, I adopted a case study strategy and gathered data from various sources to help create a “three-dimensional picture” (Biggam 2008:230) of the case under scrutiny. By using this multi-method and multi-source approach, I hoped to achieve effective triangulation by comparing and contrasting data from different angles, thus capturing a picture of teacher training and support with both depth and breadth.

As the focus for this study, I chose the Guerguiko Association for Language Development and Promotion (ADPLG), one of six community-based literacy associations running preschool within the regional FAPLG structure. The Guerguiko community of roughly 25,000 live in 20 rural villages surrounding the main mountain of the Guera region. Appendix C shows a map of the area. ADPLG started MT preschool classes in 2006 and now runs 15 classes. I gathered data from ADPLG’s preschool teachers and literacy support staff (3 teachers, one coordinator and two supervisors), seven regional (FAPLG/SIL) literacy support staff, and project documentation. I incorporated the views and experiences of local and regional staff in an attempt to gain insights from their breadth of experience and to form a well-rounded perspective of FAPLG preschool.

In early 2013 I undertook two research visits in order to gather data through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. During the first visit I spent a morning (8–11am) with each teacher observing lessons, followed by a semi-structured interview with the teacher, facilitated by an interpreter. I held individual interviews with local staff. On the second visit, I observed only two teachers, since the third teacher was absent. By returning to each class a month later, I could gauge children’s progress and scrutinise significant issues emerging from the first visit in greater depth. I held follow-up interviews with all three teachers, and a group discussion with the local staff. I conducted seven interviews with regional support staff between January and March 2013. I collected a range of project documentation, including teaching resources, training resources and project reports. Appendix D shows the ethics and background information form. Appendix E summarises data gathered and appendix G shows a sample interview schedule. A fuller discussion on the methodology used is provided in appendix F.

Data collection was constrained by factors such as the availability of time and resources, the need to work through an interpreter in interviews and observations, the availability of relevant staff and the challenges related to the geographical situation of the Guera region where the research was conducted. I made every effort to work constructively within these constraints.

The remainder of this chapter outlines the main findings of this research and evaluates the FAPLG training and support framework, as summarised in appendix H, as a means of accompanying teachers in improving their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

3.2 The value of previous experience

The three teachers in this study were in their third, fourth and seventh years of preschool teaching respectively. All teachers met the recommended selection criteria for teaching preschool: each had successfully completed four years of secondary education and taught L1 adult literacy in their community. One teacher had three years and the other two eight years of adult teaching experience prior to teaching preschool.
**Teachers’ views**

All teachers saw their previous teaching experience as helpful when transitioning to preschool teaching and cited knowledge of the L1 writing system, L1 literacy methodology and L1 numeracy methodology as the main advantages. Teachers considered themselves proficient enough in oral and written L2 skills to teach the limited L2 programme and to understand and apply information from the teacher’s guide.

**Staff views**

“There are teachers who are very limited by their level [of education]. It’s very evident when we give them training and they don’t have a sufficient level, they encounter challenges. But if the teacher has the right level, by the end of training, he can present a lesson that you give him or you can ask him questions and he can do it because he has achieved the right level. But the type of teacher who lacks a good level has deficiencies. But we come alongside him and oversee him from time to time”. EM, ADPLG Literacy Coordinator

Local and regional literacy support staff viewed educational level as a highly influential factor, especially to teachers’ L2 abilities. Lack of L2 abilities, in turn, were seen to impact teachers’ ability to understand the teacher’s guide and to teach the limited preschool L2 programme. During classroom observations, teachers generally demonstrated adequate competency for teaching beginner L2 skills and learners were observed to be making age-appropriate progress. One teacher did, however, make some basic grammatical errors.

Previous teaching experience was regarded as helpful, and even essential for preschool. As well as the advantages outlined by teachers above, staff explained that candidates who met the criteria were already competent in writing manuscript letters (as opposed to cursive for L2), L1 academic terms relating to maths and language and other organisational teaching skills such as taking the register.

There are exceptions to the rule, however. One supervisor described an exceptional case of a teacher who had never been to formal school but who had learned literacy and numeracy skills in adult L1 classes. She subsequently taught adult literacy for two years, was then trained as a preschool teacher and is now in her third year of teaching preschool. In the beginning she needed intensive supervision, but now appears to be managing it well. Another supervisor mentioned that he finds those who have never had formal schooling more natural at reading L1 than those who have learned literacy skills via L2.

One local supervisor viewed the accumulative nature of the training and supervision model positively. A teacher comes with a certain educational background and is trained by the literacy association as an adult literacy teacher. The teacher then gains experience teaching adults. Following that, the literacy association gives the teacher an orientation to preschool teaching and regular supervisory support. He noted that this accumulative process was reflected in his own education and experiences. In fact, all three local staff have a long history with the literacy project dating back to its inception in 1998. All previously taught adult literacy and two taught preschool during the experimental year. One supervisor felt that the experience of teaching preschool has made him a more effective supervisor because he had to master all the elements of the programme. Likewise, two regional staff felt it was invaluable for support staff to have practical teaching experience, to better help those they supervise and give more “authentic” advice.

**Discussion**

Both teaching and support staff felt that teachers’ level of formal education powerfully impacted current practice and grappled with the challenges of this reality. This reflects Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook’s acknowledgment of the key influence of teachers’ own school learning experiences (2011a:8), an influence whose power varies according to each context. While Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook were studying appropriately qualified primary teachers and teacher-trainees, who were, by definition, successful learners in their respective education systems, this is not the case in the FAPLG preschool programme. FAPLG preschool teachers are essentially community volunteers, who left formal education after, or often before, successfully completing the general secondary certificate. They could arguably be seen as products of a failing L2-submersion education system with all the associated
negative consequences: weaker literacy, numeracy and analytical skills and lower general academic achievement.

Under such circumstances, it seems reasonable to expect teachers to struggle with both L1 and L2 literacy skills and basic teaching competencies, and therefore, to require more extensive training and support. One way FAPLG responded to this challenge was to advise literacy associations to choose candidates who had already proven effective as adult literacy teachers. As well as the advantages cited above, this appears to help teachers simply by the fact that not all aspects of the preschool programme are new to them, and means that adapting their previous experience of L1 literacy teaching to young children is a less demanding process than if they were required to put into practice all subjects at once. This reality was reflected in observations of teachers, where all teachers demonstrated strongest skills in teaching letter-based L1 literacy employing the materials used for adult beginners. Likewise, staff reports of teachers with little or no formal schooling who succeed in gaining the basic teaching competencies necessary for early years teaching are encouraging given the shortage of formally trained teachers in Chad, especially in rural settings.

The FAPLG programme assumes that teachers who have reached a certain level of formal education have sufficient L2 skills for teaching preschool, and consequently L2 skills are not addressed directly during training. Perhaps the question of L2 skills needs to be re-evaluated in light of the challenges reported by stakeholders and shown by the limited observations in this study? Teachers with weak L2 skills are currently functioning as preschool teachers, demonstrating that literacy staff have adapted training and support to cater to this reality. Training is done locally, for example, so L1 can be used for maximum understanding.

3.3 Initial training

Adult teacher training generally lasts two weeks and trains teachers in L1 literacy skills and L1 literacy teaching. The two-week preschool training programme builds on this, providing training in all subjects, including additional modules on story-based L1 literacy, maths, oral L2 teaching, and classroom organisational skills. See appendices I and J for details.

**Teachers’ views**

“The [initial] training is like laying a foundation. It’s like the first step on a staircase or the first rung on a ladder”. BM, ADPLG Preschool teacher

All teachers reported attending two weeks of adult teacher training and two weeks of preschool training. They reported a range of positive outcomes from these training events, including learning to prepare lessons properly, learning to follow L1 literacy methodology, becoming competent in using the L1 writing system and becoming familiar with pedagogical and academic terms. One teacher felt it was helpful to be trained immediately before putting new learning into practice. In terms of challenges, one teacher felt training was too short, while another teacher felt there was insufficient time to master the L1 story-based activities and admitted to subsequently having difficulty putting these into practice.

Regarding the most effective training methods that teachers have experienced, they expressed great appreciation for practical simulated teaching sessions with feedback afterwards, which feature strongly in both initial and in-service training events. Teachers described how they are divided into small groups and each is given a lesson to prepare and deliver. Once presented, they are first asked to critique their own lesson and evaluate what went well and where they could improve. Then others in the group give their feedback. One teacher remarked that observing others can help improve his own practice by giving him new ideas.

Teachers reported that both L1 and L2 are used during training events for instruction. Participants are encouraged to express themselves in their preferred language. They reported that often L1 is used for discussions and explanations but that L2 is used for some key terms.
Staff views

All staff expressed concern regarding length of training and see the two weeks allocated for initial training courses as a “minimum”, too short for most teachers to assimilate all curricular areas, and insufficient for those with a low educational level or with little previous teaching experience. One staff member advocated for more opportunities for preschool teachers to practise new skills—at least two days per subject. Another suggested three weeks of initial training split over two sessions. The first session would take place before and the second during the first year of teaching, allowing trainers to tailor the second part to the specific needs of teachers following some real teaching experience.

Staff advocated that teacher training be as practical and participative as possible and cited the following as successful training methods: L1 reading and writing practice; lesson demonstrations and simulations followed by discussions; small group work and discussing scenarios they are likely to encounter in their everyday teaching. Regarding language of training, ADPLG staff reported using a mixture of L1 and L2, although they agreed that L1 was better for those with weaker L2 skills.

Discussion

FAPLG initial training, both for adult and preschool teachers, corresponds with Nunan and Lam’s “craft” model of teacher training (1998:134–139). Teachers learn practical skills from more experienced staff, with a minimum of theory. Content relates directly to the programme and teacher’s guide, and training aims to help teachers understand and apply the guide’s contents. Given the limited time allocated to training and teachers’ low educational level, this focus on practical skills seems appropriate in this context. Furthermore, it seems artificial to ask teachers to reflect in-depth on their practice before experiencing real classroom teaching. Perhaps critical observation would be more appropriate at this stage, either through watching staff demonstrate lessons with children enlisted for the occasion or through watching videos of classroom activities. This echoes the recommendation of several researchers to ensure observations and lesson practice is as authentic as possible (Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook 2011a; Malone 2004; Graham 2009).

FAPLG preschool teachers do have the advantage, however, of being trained in small groups, usually of no more than ten participants and with at least two trainers involved in each training event. This respects Vella’s “one-digit classroom” principle (2002:112–113) and allows for interactive groupwork, frequent practice opportunities and for developing “sound” relationships with colleagues. In addition, training respects Vella’s “immediacy” principle, with trainees knowing they will be using their skills to open a preschool class imminently. Training is held in the language community, allowing L1 to be used as much as possible for training, as recommended by Benson (2004) and Skutnabb-Kangas and Heugh (2012).

3.4 In-service workshops

Each year teachers attend a four-day in-service workshop, which is held locally before the start of the school year and facilitated by local literacy staff.
Teachers’ views

“The in-service training wakes us up and encourages us to start work. We get together and discuss things. We’re reminded of some things we have forgotten”. BM, FAPLG Preschool teacher
“We have in-service training each year. That gives us more experience, for example, on the [teaching] steps. Or there is perhaps something you can’t manage to do by yourself, but there [at in-service training], you find the solution and discover how to do it. By yourself, you are blocked, if the supervisor doesn’t come, but there, during the in-service days, you understand as the others give explanations”. KS, FAPLG Preschool teacher

Teachers were overwhelmingly positive about in-service workshops, viewing them as valuable opportunities to improve their understanding and teaching practice and interact with staff and colleagues. One teacher stated that these events serve to revive them after roughly six months of pursuing farming activities and helps them make a good start to the year. Another claimed they help remind him of things he may have forgotten from the initial training, such as L1 terms for numeracy or aspects of the L1 writing system. Teachers appreciated the encouragement gleaned from being with colleagues, exchanging ideas, discussing problems and seeking solutions together.

When asked about improvements to training and support that they would recommend, teachers expressed a strong desire for more frequent training. One viewed adding another three or four days per year as beneficial. When asked specifically about the idea of having in-service days during the teaching year, all were in favour and could see the benefit of discussing pertinent issues promptly with colleagues. However, they all cited transport and funding as potential obstacles to implementing this idea.

Staff views

Support staff concurred with teachers regarding the value of in-service workshops, citing similar advantages. They appreciated the opportunity to address challenges they have observed during supervision visits the previous year, and specifically teaching competencies that need to be addressed such as L1 literacy methodology, L1 story-based activities, L1 written skills, L1 academic terms, L2 skills and classroom management techniques.

One staff member regarded in-service workshops as an important opportunity for teachers to develop a “community of practice” for mutual encouragement and the exchange of ideas and experiences. Another described these events as an important time to “connect” with colleagues. Supervisors advocated increasing in-service provision, especially for simulated teaching practice and targeting problem areas. Several favoured the idea of in-service days during the school year, thus giving teachers immediate feedback regarding challenges facing them.

Discussion

All stakeholders considered in-service workshops to be invaluable to teachers’ professional development. Like initial training, in-service training has the advantages of small group size, a high ratio of trainers to participants and the possibility of maximum L1 use due to the decentralised approach adopted. While improving teaching skills is still a major focus, more emphasis is placed on creating a forum for exchange and cross-fertilisation among staff and teachers of varying lengths of service.

In-service events incorporate many of Vella’s adult learning principles (2002:213): needs assessment; dialogue; solid relationships; immediacy; teamwork and “praxis”. These workshops reflect several elements of Nunan and Lam’s professional development model (1998:135–136). Training builds on past experiences, encourages teachers to reflect on new skills they have been practising, allows for the fact that teachers are at different stages of development and fosters in teachers a motivation to develop professionally over the longer term. Training is based on actual teaching experience and helps teachers tackle problems arising, thus following the authors’ recommendation that training be as experiential and problem-centred as possible.

3.5 Supervision

Local literacy staff (one coordinator and two supervisors) conduct regular supervision visits to preschool teachers during the school year, either by bicycle or motorbike. A supervision timetable is established at the start of the year and communicated with FAPLG. Based on this, regional literacy staff undertake monitoring visits to each literacy programme.
**Teachers’ views**

Teachers reported receiving supervision visits once or twice a month from literacy staff, ranging in length from one teaching session to one morning. During visits, supervisors observe lessons, discuss progress, test children’s progress, give advice, help teachers solve problems, check the register and preparation notebook, fill in an evaluation sheet or write comments in the teacher’s notebook.

Teachers stated that they found visits extremely helpful and encouraging, and that they help them solve problems quickly. One teacher gave the example of being unsure how to follow the steps of a story activity. Her supervisor was able to explain things to her again and “put her back on track”. Another appreciated that the supervisor can demonstrate aspects of good practice. Another felt supervision was particularly beneficial during his first year of teaching when he needed more support. Teachers stated they would appreciate more frequent and longer visits if possible.

**Staff views**

“[The teachers] themselves know their strengths and weaknesses from their supervisors during supervision visits and from the supervision feedback sheets. The supervisor remarked on this, or this... So he [the teacher] knows which parts he has not done well. So then when we get together as a group, he knows which parts he missed and together we can look at that part and how to do it well”. EM, ADPLG Literacy Coordinator

Local staff perceived visiting teachers on a regular basis as central to their professional activities, enumerating the following advantages to supervision visits: checking teachers’ understanding of the programme; correcting mistakes; giving feedback and advice; answering questions; helping solve problems; giving opportunities to discuss challenges and evaluating learners’ progress. Visits early in the year allow supervisors to ensure teachers have started on time, gather statistical data for reporting purposes and ascertain which classes need extra support. Staff agreed that current provision for supervision was insufficient to meet the needs of in-service teachers and feel that currently teachers are not visited frequently enough, often only once a month for a short visit.

During the local staff group discussion, there was lengthy debate regarding frequency of visits. Ideally, they felt teachers should be visited twice to three times per month but in reality they admitted it was closer to once, maximum twice a month. While they felt this ratio appropriate for experienced and capable teachers, they saw it as insufficient for new or struggling teachers, who should benefit from intensive support. ADPLG supervisors felt that they had too many classes to supervise effectively and advocated the addition of a fourth supervisor to their team.

Two regional staff members felt strongly that teachers should be visited once a week, especially in their first year. However, lack of funding for additional supervisors’ salaries and transportation was cited as the main obstacle to improving support. Currently, FAPLG provides partial funding to the literacy associations for one supervisor for every 10–15 classes. Staff explained that this ratio rendered it impossible to visit classes more than twice a month, especially when classes were geographically distanced. One staff member advocated budgeting for five classes per supervisor to ensure a quality education programme, while another argued that additional supervisors would allow more flexibility regarding frequency and length of visits.

**Discussion**

All stakeholders consider supervision visits a key element in helping teachers grow professionally. Indeed, teachers and staff revealed an impressive openness to receiving ongoing input to improve skills. Graham (2009:189) recommends monitoring visits as a valuable means of supporting teachers as they implement changes in their classroom practice. While not explicitly mentioned, this practice fits Nunan and Lam’s professional development model well and reflects their emphasis that training be school-based, experiential, problem-centred, developmental and open-ended (1998:135–136).

Several researchers (Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook 2011a; Graham 2009; Vella 2002; Nunan and Lam 1998) highlight the need for adequate opportunities for reflection linked to actual practice. Supervision visits enable teachers to reflect on their current practice and provide immediate feedback...
From staff to help maximise this reflective process. If Vella’s “one-digit” classroom (2002) is beneficial in training events, how much more so one-to-one mentoring from qualified, experienced support staff in the classroom.

From this data, it is evident that the current FAPLG training and support framework provides teachers with helpful opportunities to grow professionally, especially through timely, practical training, yearly in-service meetings and regular supervision visits from experienced staff. These aspects are strengthened by good relationships among teachers and staff and the ability to use L1 for training purposes. However, the impact of these features is weakened by factors such as teachers’ low level of education, limited L2 skills, lack of time and resources for both initial and in-service training, and practical challenges affecting the frequency and quality of supervision. The following section focuses on three teaching competencies that emerged as significant from the data gathered, with the aim of discerning the impact of current training and support.

3.6 Teaching competencies

3.6.1 Skills in L1

“The fact that we use Guerguiko makes the work easier. It’s my mother-tongue, so I can talk and express myself easily and I don’t need to fear the children”. NT, FAPLG preschool teacher

All teachers use L1 as their first language and so have sound oral skills. Teachers’ use of the L1 writing system was generally adequate for using the literacy materials, which require them to read and copy the relevant controlled text onto the board. These materials, which introduce the letters of the language, have been carefully prepared beforehand, and text at beginner level is relatively short and simple. Appendix K shows two sample lessons. Nonetheless, some weaknesses were noted in teachers’ L1 written board skills, such as their lack of punctuation and their use of upper-case letters.

![Image of L1 board writing skills](image_url)

Figure 3. Example of L1 board writing skills. Photo by Caroline Tyler. Used with Permission.

Teachers are required to compose L1 texts in one literacy activity, during which teachers create an experience with the class by discussing an everyday object or an outing with learners. The teacher then guides the class in composing a short text reflecting the experience. Various reading and writing activities follow. Over the five days of classes observed, only one instance of L1 composition was recorded. After a discussion based on observing a man returning from the bush with his horse-cart, the
teacher wrote a sentence on the board, [Amane yi’tide inda ta pusse ki Jerbe. Aman is coming back from Jerbe with his horse-cart.]. Two words in this sentence indicate interference from the L2 writing system, [Amane] and [pusse], which should be written [Aman] and [pus] respectively.

Figure 4. Example of L1 composition skills. Photo by Caroline Tyler. Used with Permission.

Another activity involves reading a short story, written by the teacher, aloud to the class, with questions afterwards. One instance was observed where the teacher read directly from a book published by the literacy association. The teacher did not sound completely natural, but read with hesitation and stumbled over some words and phrases. The teacher may have been nervous or may not have prepared the activity well, but equally this could suggest a lack of fluency when reading L1 texts aloud spontaneously.

Teachers reported feeling confident in using oral and written L1 at preschool level. Staff felt it was easy for teachers to learn the L1 writing system relatively quickly but when probed some admitted that teachers do experience problems composing L1 texts. The ADPLG supervisor responsible for training teachers in L1 written skills explained his methods: he gives lots of reading practice to help teachers read naturally, explains special characters (ɓ, ɗ, ƴ, ŋ) that differ from L2, and demonstrates how to form manuscript letters. He reported they do not do much creative writing composition due to lack of time.

Discussion

These findings support researchers’ advice that teachers should be given extensive support in developing L1 written competencies (Jones and Barkhuizen 2011; Benson 2004). None give details, however, of what this entails specifically, or how to best proceed to train teachers in this domain. During their first week of initial training, FAPLG teachers are given 17 hours of orientation to L1 reading and writing skills then practise these skills through learning the L1 literacy methodology during the second week (FAPLG 2008a). This time-scale may be adequate for relatively well-educated individuals to succeed in transferring their existing literacy skills from L2 to L1. However, it seems inadequate for those whose existing literacy skills are weak. Observations, while limited, suggest that teachers are generally capable of using controlled text from the L1 instructional materials but displayed weaknesses when reading spontaneously or composing L1 texts. While “scripted” writing skills may be sufficient for teaching emerging literacy, there still appears to be a need for teachers to develop in this domain, especially if teaching L1 literacy beyond beginner level and where literacy activities require composition skills.

Another factor to bear in mind is the stage of development of the language in question. If a language community is in the early stages of using their language in written form, there will undoubtedly still be questions about the best conventions to use for writing the language. Teachers using the literacy materials may, therefore, need training to identify and report problems so these issues can be
remedied in an informed way. Properly trained teachers could be a valuable asset in the standardisation process necessary for MTB-MLE.

The Guerguiko community has been using a working orthography since 2000 in local literacy activities. Nonetheless, literacy, and in particular, L1 literacy is still a relatively new phenomenon in this community, which has a traditionally oral culture. Adopting L1 literacy as a value is a slow process, a fact which has implications for MTB-MLE. For example, there are still relatively few fluent and accurate L1 readers and writers, raising the problem of finding trainers who can model and mentor teachers in higher-level reading and writing skills.

3.6.2 Letter-based L1 literacy teaching

Teachers expressed confidence teaching L1 literacy using letter-based materials. These materials were originally designed for adult beginners, so teachers were already proficient in their use. However, teachers reported simplifying the materials for use with children and slowing the pace of delivery.

One staff member described how the literacy staff she advises use an incremental approach to training teachers in L1 literacy methodology with demonstrations and explanations of each step, then thorough practice as one large group, then in small groups with appropriate feedback. Progressively, participants gain experience teaching each step, then half a lesson, then a whole lesson. She advocated this step-by-step process which allows participants lots of observation and practice, while not overloading them with too much at once.

Four instances were observed of teachers introducing new letters and one instance of a review lesson. Children were generally noted to be making age-appropriate progress in identifying and forming letters and some key words. Teachers included the following activities in their lessons: short revision of the previous lesson; discussion of the picture poster; listening to a short oral story; discovery and reading of the key sentence, word(s) and letter; forming the letter in the air and on slates; capital letter; construction word(s); game to find and highlight all instances of the letter on the board; and writing practice (forming letters and words). Teachers followed the advice of the literacy association in omitting exercises on comparison words and grammar as these were judged too hard for small children. Teachers also omitted reading the short story at the end of each lesson.
All teachers used picture posters to introduce the lesson theme and help learners discover the key sentence. These simple, black-and-white drawings by a local artist convey everyday cultural scenes, generally familiar to the children. Children visibly enjoyed looking at and discussing these pictures.
Discussion

On the whole, the teachers observed taught this subject confidently and competently, perhaps surprisingly considering the many constraints within which they work. Teachers were at ease with the materials at their disposal and exploited them to learners’ advantage. They generally succeeded at adapting them for use with 5–6 year old children. Each lesson intentionally follows a set “formula” or sequence of teaching steps to make the methodology easy to learn and follow for teachers with limited education. Once the formula is mastered and familiarity with the materials gained, there is no need to plan lessons extensively. The training guide suggests 31 hours over five days for mastering the L1 literacy methodology with a further 8 hours during initial preschool training (FAPLG 2008b). The allocated time appears sufficient for those who meet the selection criteria, but again too short for those who do not.

This formulaic approach resonates with Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook’s observation that teachers they researched tended to view teaching literacy and numeracy as a series of procedural steps to follow, without much understanding of the dynamics behind the procedure (2011a). During initial training, FAPLG preschool teachers receive limited orientation to theories of literacy and early childhood development. The adult training guide allocates ten hours for theoretical aspects of literacy, while the preschool training guide integrates brief theoretical commentary into skills-based sessions (FAPLG 2008a, 2008b). Despite minimal theory content, teachers displayed the ability to reflect on their practice to some extent, for example, in explaining which activities help children learn or which they found difficult. One teacher was observed playing a word-matching game with flashcards on the board. Afterwards, the teacher explained that children enjoy this sort of activity and that it helps them learn for themselves rather than being told things by the teacher, revealing some awareness of the importance of discovery learning.

However, there was evidence suggesting teachers had limited understanding of the theory behind certain activities. During observations of the construction word exercise only one of the three teachers implemented this in a way which allowed learners to construct words from the letter components as intended. The others simply had learners look at the exercise and repeat after the teacher, not encouraging learners to work out the word for themselves.

Another weakness was revealed in the reading method that teachers employed to help children read text from the board. Two teachers displayed good practice in this regard, encouraging children to look at the text as they read, reading along with children and effectively supporting individual children’s reading by giving them sufficient thinking time. The other teacher did not insist that children look at the
text as they read and had them chorus words or phrases after him, with the result that children
memorised content rather than constructing meaning from written text.

The most striking aspect of these sessions was that teachers omitted the story exercise of the lesson. Each lesson has a short, simple text at the end for learners to read. During the second follow-up interview, teachers were asked about their reasons for this omission. None were able to explain why they left this out. One cited lack of time as the reason. Another said he preferred to do the story orally rather than take the time to write it on the board. Another admitted he had never tried this exercise with children.

These weaknesses not only suggest misunderstandings of the individual exercises, but perhaps also an underlying misunderstanding of how young children develop language and reading skills. More particularly, they call into question teachers’ understanding of the important role of constructing meaning from text in the process of acquiring literacy skills, a challenge highlighted by Akyeampong, Pryor and Westbrook (2011a), Graham (2009), Williams (2006), Benson (2004, 2000), and Dutcher (2003). In this regard, teachers’ own experience of learning L2 literacy skills in formal education appears to have a powerful influence on their current practice. The fact that support staff have not corrected these weaknesses implies that they too may not fully understand the important role of meaningful text in literacy activities.

Teachers and staff repeatedly talked of children’s literacy skills in terms of “knowing their letters” or at most a few simple words. Given that teachers would presumably have used the story successfully with adult learners, their current practice suggests a choice based on the young age of the learners. Rather than adapt the exercise for young children, teachers chose to omit it completely. Graham (2009) felt that teachers in her study held a rather linear view of the place of composition writing in acquiring literacy skills, following on after speaking, reading and writing (focused on form). Perhaps teachers also view children’s acquisition of reading skills as following a similar linear pattern – letters come first, followed by syllables, words, sentences with text in final position – rather than a holistic view incorporating meaningful text from the start.

3.6.3 Story-based L1 literacy teaching skills

“These stories give the children a lot of pleasure. Our generation no longer tells these stories to their children [at home]. But the children love hearing them in class. Then they go home and tell them to their brothers and sisters”. NT, FAPLG Preschool teacher

To achieve a more balanced L1 literacy programme for preschoolers, two story-based activities were included in the programme, the experience story and the listening story, as outlined in appendix L.

All teachers expressed appreciation of the “experience” aspect of the experience story activity and several interesting examples were reported: watching a woman prepare the local millet dish; discussing hunting equipment; singing local songs; visiting the local potter and discussing how pots are made; dissecting then eating local fruit; discussing how peanuts grow. Teachers were enthusiastic about children’s enjoyment of this activity and felt children benefited from discussing and discovering things for themselves. However, teachers reported differing experiences with the subsequent text-based activities. Only one teacher claimed to feel confident composing the text and doing the follow-up activities. Another teacher reported sometimes writing a short text of 2–3 lines for the children to read after the discussion, but admitted lacking confidence doing the follow-up activities.

Teachers observed that children enjoy listening to stories for understanding and enjoyment, and then discussing the stories. They reported telling children different sorts of stories, such as local folktales or stories about hygiene or safety, including stories collected from community members.

Three regional staff commented that teachers struggle to implement story-based activities due to insufficient practice and a limited ability to prepare these lessons. One staff member felt that teachers’ struggles were not just a question of misunderstanding the methodology of these activities or weak written L1 skills but that teachers did not understand the value of these activities for developing literacy skills in young children. She felt teachers viewed these activities as a “foreign” idea due to having no exposure to them during their own education or previous teaching experience, and recommended more...
training in these activities, not only in explaining how to do them, but also why, so that teachers could better understand their educational value.

Two sessions were observed of teachers undertaking experience stories with their classes. In one instance, the teacher created a spontaneous experience around traditional mat weaving. An old man had come to share the shade of the tree where the class was working and brought his mat-work to weave as he sat. The teacher asked the class to observe what the man was doing and asked the children various questions. The children participated well, answering questions and explaining what they saw. One interesting aspect to the discussion was that it included a maths problem. The teacher measured how many lengths the man had woven so far, asking the children to count as he measured the lengths with his arms. He then asked the children how many lengths the man would need to make a mat and together they worked out how many lengths were still needed to complete the mat. The teacher did not do any written follow-up exercises, however.

Another teacher, who had expressed confidence using this activity, asked his class to observe a man returning from the bush with his horse-cart. They briefly discussed who the man was, where he was coming from, what he was transporting, after which the teacher wrote a sentence on the board in L1 and proceeded with the reading and writing activities. He followed the steps as outlined in the teacher's guide but not in a detailed, consistent manner, revealing weaknesses in implementation and underlying misunderstandings of the purpose of each activity.

In terms of listening stories, three instances were observed of teachers telling folktales and one instance of a teacher telling a story about road safety. Learners obviously enjoyed these stories, interacted well and answered teachers' comprehension and predictive questions.

Discussion

FAPLG's preschool training programme allows 12 hours for introducing these story-based activities with very limited input on the theories underpinning them (FAPLG 2008b). Teachers receive ongoing supervision and opportunities at in-service events to develop these skills.

It was surprising to observe teachers attempting these activities at all and to hear their positive feedback regarding them. Perhaps teachers could have been expected to omit these activities, given the limited orientation they receive and the "foreignness" of such activities to teachers. Teachers appeared to master the oral components with ease, while implementing the written elements of these activities proved challenging. Reasons for this appreciation for the oral aspects of this activity may be because the activities are conducted in L1 and are based on cultural themes or stories, familiar to teachers and students alike.

The discussion element of the experience story, for example, is in itself an effective tool for discovery learning. Through dialogue, children develop listening, speaking and thinking skills, learning to express ideas coherently and broaden their language use. Discussions are based in children's everyday world, include maths, environmental science, thus respecting the principle of embedding learning in the child's familiar environment. This allows them to build on previous knowledge and move gradually from the known to the unknown. These advantages resonate with the cognitive development theories outlined by Malone (2012) and Baker's emphasis on children developing sound oral skills (2011).

In the listening story activity, children listen for meaning and pleasure, thinking about and discussing stories, thus developing language and analytical thinking skills. Teachers demonstrated initiative in finding appropriate stories for children, sometimes involving the wider community in this process. Sharing these stories at home was felt to preserve local culture and facilitate family literacy. In addition, both these activities are low-budget, requiring locally available and unsophisticated resources, thus ideal for remote, under-resourced educational settings. This reflects Trudell and Schroeder's concern that reading methodologies reflect the social realities of African settings (2007).

Nonetheless, this research suggests a chequered picture of implementation. Some gave pragmatic reasons for omitting or simplifying these activities: teachers do not feel confident composing text in L1; these activities take place during the last session of the morning when children are already tired or teachers have run out of time; and insufficient training and ongoing support to really master the follow-up language activities of the experience story and misunderstandings of the instructions in the teacher’s guide. Literacy staff themselves may have difficulty mentoring others in activities which are new or with
which they have had limited or no practical experience. While these pragmatic reasons may all be valid, another argument may be equally pertinent: written story-based work simply does not fit teachers’ existing conceptual framework of literacy development in young children and so such activities are rejected as inappropriate.

This begs the question why any teachers are implementing these activities at all? Perhaps, in the early days, our hypothetical teacher attempts them simply because they are part of the programme and figure in the teacher’s guide. The supervisor (or some researcher!) comes to visit and expects the teacher to conduct these activities. Perhaps reluctantly, he does so, thus exposing some areas of weakness. However, this provides an opportunity to reflect on and discuss the activity, receive advice or clarify how to improve next time. During subsequent attempts, the teacher notices how much children enjoy these activities and how enthusiastic they are about participating. Parents tell the teacher with appreciation how excited their child was explaining to his older siblings how clay jars are made, and that they themselves had forgotten how entertaining the story of the hyena and the lion is—a story heard in class. The teacher feels proud that children are learning and parents are pleased, thus providing “evidence” that these new activities are positively impacting learning outcomes (Guskey 1985). This encourages him and gives him further ideas and motivation to attempt more such activities. Later that year during in-service training, the teacher and his colleagues discuss the challenges they have encountered. One of his peers mentions that he found the reading method difficult. Another that he adapted one exercise slightly and feels it works better. Lively debate and exchange ensues. Another colleague demonstrates how he proceeds with one element. The teacher likes what he sees and hears and decides to make some changes over the next months. Gradually, his practice changes and improves, while at the same time, his conceptual framework of literacy development in children expands ever so slightly.

These findings support the view that using L1 cultural knowledge as the foundation of MTB-MLE programmes is a powerful educational tool (Taylor 2012; Baker 2011; Benson 2004). The teachers participating in this study displayed an enthusiastic “readiness and ability” to include L1 culture in their teaching programme (Nunan and Lam 1998:131), especially in language and literacy activities. Teachers felt empowered to tap into their own cultural background, exploiting their vast “Funds of Knowledge” (Moll, et al 1992), resulting in creativity in preparing engaging learning activities. Teachers and children alike were at ease and highly motivated during such activities, perhaps unsurprising given that their cultural heritage is an integral part of their individual and collective identity. Tapping into this cultural identity respects Vella’s principle of whole-person learning (2002:213) by encouraging learners to direct the strong emotions associated with cultural identity into learning events. For teachers with limited L2 education, use of L1 as MoI, together with a programme based on local cultural knowledge, undoubtedly facilitates their task as teacher, promotes effective learning and enables them to act as a two-way “bridge” between home and school life (Benson 2004:211).

From this short synthesis of findings regarding teachers’ L1 literacy skills and L1 language and literacy teaching competencies, it is apparent that current training and support is slowly but surely helping teachers change their beliefs regarding teaching young children and ultimately adapt their practices in the classroom, leading to better quality learning. Teachers are helped in this process by using a reading methodology that is suited to their environment and which relies on a simple, procedural method, requires limited resources and is based on familiar cultural themes. Challenges include breaking away from beliefs and practices related to literacy acquisition stemming from teachers’ own experiences of L2-medium literacy instruction, such as a limited focus on meaningful text and methods which emphasise chorus reading and memorising. Underpinning teachers’ development of effective language and literacy teaching competencies is teachers’ ability to read and write fluently in their L1.
Chapter 4

Conclusions and Recommendations on Teacher Preparation and Support

This chapter outlines conclusions and recommendations concerning teacher training and support, based on the research findings described in chapter 3. These conclusions aim to engender further dialogue among stakeholders and teacher educators to improve current and future MTB-MLE provision in the Guera region and beyond, and to give suggestions for further research. Several teaching competencies emerged as particularly significant in relation to FAPLG preschool, and critical evaluation of the FAPLG training and support framework highlighted several influential factors as summarised below.

**Teacher’s L1 literacy skills**

Concerning teachers’ L1 literacy skills, these findings demonstrate that it takes significant time for teachers to transfer and consolidate L1 reading and writing skills, especially if their L2 literacy skills are weak. Training in L1 writing skills tended to focus on copying controlled L1 text from literacy materials, rather than developing composition skills. This focus appears short-sighted, limiting teachers’ abilities to produce varied L1 reading materials and give feedback on problems encountered using the L1 writing system. Teachers and staff need ample opportunities to develop reading and higher-level composition skills, thus ensuring a more sustainable L1 education programme with a well-developed writing system and competent teachers, writers and materials developers.

**L1 academic and pedagogical vocabulary**

Equally, sufficient time should be dedicated to developing L1 academic and pedagogical vocabulary, appropriate to the teaching programme, ideally using a collegiate approach. Using L1 as much as possible in training events helps teachers develop such language. To enhance this competency, trainers should review the use of L1 in training events, consider translating all or the most relevant sections of the teacher’s guide into L1 and encourage teachers to prepare written lessons plans in L1.

**Letter-based L1 literacy teaching**

Letter-based L1 literacy teaching was arguably the strongest aspect of the preschool programme. Teachers adapted instructional materials for use with children, including omitting the story activity. A procedural approach to teaching L1 literacy was adopted, facilitating the task for teachers with limited formal education. However, this research revealed gaps in teachers’ understanding of certain activities and the theories underlying them. Teachers, and to a certain extent support staff, appeared to hold a linear view of learning to read and write and undervalued the place of meaningful text in children’s literacy development. To remedy this, programme leaders could consider including relevant theoretical aspects during in-service workshops, related to early childhood development and language and literacy acquisition. Teachers should be encouraged to expand their repertoire of L1 literacy methodologies by experimenting with story-based activities that could complement their current letter-based method.

**Story-based L1 literacy teaching**

Contrary to expectations, teachers in this study have been experimenting with story-based literacy activities. Oral components were appreciated by teachers and children and conducted effectively, promoting the development of children’s listening and speaking skills. However, teachers found the associated reading and writing exercises more challenging, perhaps due to lack of time or training, or because these activities are unfamiliar and do not fit their construct of children’s literacy development. Teachers undertaking such activities in this context can rightly be seen as “innovators” and reveal interesting insights into the innovation process. Changes in teachers’ conceptual framework happen slowly and gradually as teachers experiment with new activities, reflect on their practice and discuss
their experiences with support staff and colleagues. As well as providing teachers with more L1 story-based materials, trainers should focus more sharply on story-based literacy during in-service workshops and supervision visits, encouraging ongoing experimentation, reflection and dialogue.

**L1 cultural knowledge**

An interesting aspect to emerge from this research was the enthusiasm displayed by stakeholders, backed up by observations, regarding the inclusion of local cultural knowledge in the teaching programme. L1 culture lays the foundation for literacy and numeracy development, and benefits learners, teachers and the wider community. Stakeholders should discuss how to reinforce this powerful aspect of the programme to maximum benefit.

**Teachers’ prior learning and teaching experiences**

These findings show that teachers’ own learning experiences exert a powerful influence on current practice, especially where they exited formal education before attaining the general secondary certificate, and affect teachers’ literacy, numeracy and analytical skills. These experiences, positive or negative, have a big impact on teachers’ conceptual framework of formal education and their current practice. Teachers especially benefited from having previous experience teaching L1 in community literacy classes. These experiences allowed them to develop expertise in L1 literacy skills and using the L1 instructional materials. However, limited ability in L2 was seen by many as a significant, but not insurmountable, obstacle to teaching well as it impacted teachers’ ability to teach L2 skills and grasp L2 content in the teachers’ guide. Likewise, relevant previous experience is very helpful for support staff. Programme leaders should take trainees’ existing skills, knowledge and aptitudes into account during selection and training by conducting a thorough needs assessment (Vella 2002) to pinpoint candidates’ strengths and weaknesses, and by planning subsequent training and support accordingly.

Careful attention should be paid to teachers’ existing L2 skills, which often proved to be lower than expected, resulting in challenges in L2 teaching and accessing the teacher’s guide and training conducted via L2. A blended approach could be employed to tackle this challenge, including taking steps to attract more educated and experienced teachers and staff, delivering training via L1 as much as possible, providing training sessions designed to improve teachers’ L2 skills and making teaching resources more accessible to teachers by simplifying L2 content or translating relevant sections into L1.

**Initial training**

FAPLG initial training is skills-based, participative, practical and relevant to the curriculum teachers are expected to teach. Small group size and a high trainee-trainer ratio help ensure effectiveness. The decentralised approach gives trainers the flexibility to use L1 as much as possible to enhance understanding. While initial training does give teachers a foundation on which to build, time allocated for training is short, especially for those with a low educational level and little previous experience. Programme leaders should take steps to lengthen training to provide sufficient time for teachers to practise new skills. Developing a flexible programme, where training is split over two sessions before and during the first months of teaching would be worth pursuing. This would allow real practice between sessions and afford new teachers the opportunity to observe successful teachers with their classes during the second session.

**In-service training**

Annual in-service workshops were highly valued by all stakeholders, aiding teachers and support staff to reinforce prior learning, reflect on teaching experiences, solve problems together and build solid relationships. This regular gathering of teachers' community of practice deeply encourages all concerned and contributes greatly to teachers' continuing professional development. Consequently, investing in longer and/or more frequent in-service opportunities is recommended, including further research regarding the feasibility of holding localised in-service days during the school year.
Supervision visits

Regular supervision visits give teachers the benefits of one-to-one mentoring in the classroom. Such support is problem-centred, reflective and provides an excellent environment for professional growth. While there seemed to be some confusion among stakeholders over the extent of current provision and diverging views as to what constitutes adequate supervisory support, the general consensus was that current provision falls short of adequate, especially where teachers are new, struggling, or implementing innovations, whatever their educational and teaching background.

These findings present a strong case for reviewing and reinforcing supervisory support to FAPLG preschool teachers, especially given the reality that many do not meet the recommended selection criteria. More research and discussion is needed to ascertain an acceptable and realistic frequency of visits. However, one thing seems clear: the more an education programme can invest in quality supervision, the higher the return on that investment will be in terms of quality learning in the classroom. While a standard ratio of classes per supervisor can help programme leaders plan, some flexibility is required to cater for teachers’ specific needs. Other logistical obstacles such as geography, transport and staff availability should also be reviewed.

Quality matters

Several themes emerged pertaining to quality of training, especially the question of authenticity—observing real teachers teach real learners or practising teaching in a real classroom context wherever possible. While there are feasibility issues to consider, steps could be taken to improve this aspect of training, such as arranging for teachers to visit neighbouring classes to observe lessons taught by more experienced teachers. Teachers could be accompanied by a supervisor to facilitate critique and discussion after the observation lesson. Where possible, technology could be used to great advantage, recording teachers’ lessons for subsequent review and reflection.

Vella’s principles of adult learning (2002:213) and Nunan and Lam’s essential features of a professional development model (1998:135–136) are reflected in many ways in the FAPLG training and support framework as demonstrated by the case of Guerguiko preschool classes. The more these features are incorporated into training and support, the more effective children’s learning will be. Therefore, when reviewing training and support, attention should be paid, not only to quantitative improvements such as frequency of visits or length of training, but also to qualitative improvements such as authenticity, modeling new skills, making time for reflecting on practice, facilitating effective dialogue, and building nurturing relationships. Programme leaders should take seriously their responsibility to provide MTB-MLE teachers with a healthy environment in which to grow, especially when implementing innovations. In this respect, it is equally vital for support staff to belong to a community of practice, creating opportunities for reflective professional growth with others in a similar situation, thus enhancing their ability to mentor others.

Appendix M summarises these conclusions and recommendations. While many of these recommendations could be integrated into the current FAPLG teacher training and support framework as it stands, others would have considerable implications on staffing, time and finances and so may prove unrealistic. These recommendations are, therefore, presented with the understanding that stakeholder discussions will centre on identifying priorities and the need to balance these against available time, staff and funding.

Further research

Many issues related to teacher training and support in MTB-MLE contexts undoubtedly merit more in-depth research than this study affords them. A number of interesting avenues for future study could be pursued, including comparing ADPLG’s experiences with those of other literacy associations in the Guera or comparing and contrasting preschool to primary or community-based to state education ventures. Further research into other teaching areas such as numeracy or L2 skills would also be helpful. Investigating how other MTB-MLE projects have helped teachers develop and improve their teaching of literacy skills could equally be very illuminating.
Nonetheless, this research offers a number of valuable insights into the important domain of teacher training and support by giving a voice to Guerguiko preschool teachers and those who support them at the local and regional level. Their experiences, views and practices can help inform others in similar contexts who are seeking effective means of preparing and accompanying MTB-MLE teachers as they develop the new teaching skills necessary for ensuring quality learning outcomes in the classroom which maximise children’s linguistic heritage.
Appendix A: Languages of the Guera, Chad

LES LANGUES DU GUÉRA

Source: Fédération des Associations de Promotion des Langues du Guéra.
Used with permission.
Appendix B: FAPLG Preschool Programme Objectives and Summary of Content


Programme objectives

In the short term, the programme will enable children to:
• be introduced to school life and be well prepared for Grade 1,
• become familiar with reading and writing in their mother tongue,
• become familiar with basic maths notions,
• start learning French orally,
• get to know their own culture better.

In the long term, the programme will enable children to:
• integrate better into Grade 1,
• succeed in primary school and beyond.

The preschool programme aims to:
• address numerous problems in education in the Guera (low educational level, high drop-out and repetition rates),
• protect and promote the languages and cultures of the Guera for future generations.

Programme contents

The preschool programme lasts 5–6 months, or 17–20 weeks of teaching. The programme starts with an introductory week for children, then continues with a daily programme comprising the following elements:
• letter-based L1 literacy,
• maths,
• oral French,
• other activities in the mother tongue (stories, games, songs, hygiene etc.).

Objectives: letter-based L1 literacy

The children will learn to:
• identify each phoneme of their language,
• identify syllables, words and short phrases,
• reproduce each phoneme of their language,
• reproduce syllables, words and short phrases.

Objectives: maths

The children will learn to:
• read and write numbers 1–10,
• count in L2 from 1 to 20,
• add and subtract.
**Objectives: oral L2**

The children will learn:
- to understand and produce language related to the following themes: greetings and introductions; understanding instructions; useful phrases; the classroom; the body; the days of the week; clothes; colours; problems in class; family; market and friends,
- L2 language that will ease their integration into Grade 1,
- in an active, participatory way that will involve games, songs and dialogues.

**FAPLG preschool classes weekly plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.30–7.40</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Register</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.40–8.30</td>
<td>Letter-based L1 literacy</td>
<td>Letter-based L1 literacy</td>
<td>Letter-based L1 literacy</td>
<td>Letter-based L1 literacy</td>
<td>Letter-based L1 literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.30–8.45</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.45–9.30</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.30–10</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.45–11</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–11.30</td>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>Other activities</td>
<td>Other activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Guerguiko Villages Surrounding the Mount Guera Mountain Range

SIL Chad 1992
Appendix D: Ethics and Background Information Form

D.1 Introduction

Caroline Tyler, literacy specialist with SIL Chad (Guera region), is undertaking academic research for a Masters in Literacy Programmes Development.

She intends to collect information and views concerning teacher training and support in FAPLG preschool classes. This research will investigate preschool in the context of ADPLG (Guerguiko language association), allowing in-depth analysis of successes and challenges, and making recommendations for the future.

Initially, data will be gathered through a background questionnaire for teachers and literacy support staff. This questionnaire will be followed by individual interviews, group discussions and classroom observations. All interviews will be recorded and photos and video clips taken of lessons observed.

Any information or opinion you give, including your personal details, will be treated confidentially and securely and will not be used elsewhere without your consent. Your name does not need to be included in the final document; a pseudonym can be used instead.

Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary.

I have understood the points cited above and give my consent to participate in this research:

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

D.2 Personal information

2.1 Full name:
2.2 Telephone number:
2.3 Address:
2.4 Gender:
2.5 Date of birth:
2.6 School level and year obtained:
2.7 Higher or professional studies and year obtained:
2.8 Language abilities:
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1. very weak</th>
<th>2. weak</th>
<th>3. quite good</th>
<th>4. good</th>
<th>5. very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>oral Guerguiko</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written Guerguiko</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oral French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oral Chadian Arabic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written Chadian Arabic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written Chadian Arabic (Latin alphabet)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written Chadian Arabic (Arabic alphabet)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oral Standard Arabic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written Standard Arabic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D.3 Teaching experience

3.1 Preschool class:
3.2 Year you started teaching this class:
3.3 Tear this class started (if you know):
3.4 Name of your current supervisor:
3.5 How long has he been supervising you?
3.6 Names of previous supervisors:
3.7 Previous teaching experience (primary or preschool) with dates:
3.8 Previous experience of teaching in Guerguiko with dates:
3.9 FAPLG or ADPLG training:
   3.9.1 Initial training for adult literacy teachers:
   3.9.2 Initial training for preschool:
   3.9.3 In-service training events attended:
3.10 Other training or in-service events attended:
Appendix E: Details of Data Gathered

E.1 ADPLG preschool teacher details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Supervision Zone</th>
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<tr>
<td>01 BM</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 NT</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>&lt;40</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 KS</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>&gt;40</td>
<td>B</td>
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</table>

E.2 Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Lessons observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15/01/2013</td>
<td>01 BM</td>
<td>Moukoulou 3B</td>
<td>L1 letter-based literacy, maths, oral L2, singing game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/01/2013</td>
<td>01 NT</td>
<td>Moukoulou 1B2</td>
<td>L1 (letter-based) literacy, maths, oral L2, L1 story-based activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/01/2013</td>
<td>03 KS</td>
<td>Djerkatché</td>
<td>L1 letter-based literacy, maths, oral L2, L1 story-based activities, toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/02/2013</td>
<td>03 KS</td>
<td>Djerkatché</td>
<td>L1 letter-based literacy, maths, oral L2, L1 story-based activities, song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/02/2013</td>
<td>02 BM</td>
<td>Moukoulou 3B</td>
<td>L1 letter-based literacy, maths, oral L1, L1 story-based activities, songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/02/2013</td>
<td>01 NT</td>
<td>Moukoulou 1B2</td>
<td>Cancelled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.3 Project documentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guera Preschool Teacher’s Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guerguiko literacy materials, including A3 posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Maths book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Picture book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Teacher Training Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Literacy Teacher Training Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIL Chad reports to the Direction of NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAPLG literacy reports (beginning, middle and end of literacy campaign)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAPLG project funding reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAPLG project funding proposals</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## E.4 Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-BM</td>
<td>ADPLG Preschool teacher: Moukoulou 3B</td>
<td>15/01/2013, 10/02/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-NT</td>
<td>ADPLG Preschool teacher: Moukoulou 1B2</td>
<td>16/01/2013, 21/02/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-KS</td>
<td>ADPLG Preschool teacher: Djerkatche</td>
<td>17/01/2013, 19/02/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04-EM</td>
<td>ADPLG Literacy Coordinator</td>
<td>14/01/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05-AK</td>
<td>ADPLG Literacy Supervisor (Zone A)</td>
<td>16/01/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06-AB</td>
<td>ADPLG Literacy Supervisor (Zone B)</td>
<td>17/01/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-MK</td>
<td>FAPLG Administrator</td>
<td>28/01/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08-YAR</td>
<td>FAPLG Coordinator (Language Promotion)</td>
<td>25/01/2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>09-PD</td>
<td>FAPLG Coordinator (Preschool)</td>
<td>29/01/2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-MG</td>
<td>FAPLG Coordinator (Monitoring and Evaluation)</td>
<td>30/01/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-SR</td>
<td>On study leave (former FAPLG administrator/coordinator)</td>
<td>10/01/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-CT</td>
<td>Kenga literacy Advisor; FAPLG literacy Advisor</td>
<td>19/02/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-LW</td>
<td>SIL Guera Regional Coordinator</td>
<td>07/03/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-ADPLG staff</td>
<td>Group discussion</td>
<td>21/02/2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-FAPLG staff</td>
<td>Group discussion</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
Appendix F: Research Methodology

This appendix elucidates in more depth the methodology employed to investigate research aims, and specifically in relation to the third objective: (3) explore stakeholder views, practices and experiences of training and support in the FAPLG preschool programme. Care is taken to explain the research strategy adopted, the means of data collection, the approach to data and the limitations of this study.

Firstly, the general approach to research will be discussed. As I explore the ontological map, I find myself located firmly in the domain of interpretive, exploratory research, “grounded” in reality. Social research within the field of education, seeks not to discover one single objective truth that can be generalised to all educational contexts, but rather to carefully consider the intricate human and social interactions related to one educational context and to attempt an interpretation of those interactions. As Biggam observes, “For interpretative researchers, human participation and observation, and the context and time these occur, are fundamental to their research” (2008:93–94).

This phenomenological focus on people’s perception of events affords the researcher the opportunity not only to describe those events in rich detail, but also to offer some explanation of those events and people’s perceptions of them. To reflect this, this research aims to be more qualitative than quantitative in nature, seeking to understand the “why” questions related to stakeholder views, practices and experiences, rather than simply the “what” or “how.”

Research strategy

The overall research strategy is a case study, gathering data from documentation, observations and interviews. By focusing in-depth on one instance of a thing, the aim of a case study is “to illuminate the general by looking at the particular” (Denscombe 1998:30) thus allowing the researcher “to deal with the subtleties and intricacies of complex social situations” (Denscombe 1998:39). The case study encourages the researcher to avoid superficial treatment of data, to scratch below the surface and delve into the “interconnectedness” of human relationships and interactions by examining a case as it naturally occurs. Another advantage is the flexibility afforded the researcher in using “multiple sources and multiple methods” (Denscombe 1998:31) to provide “thick description” (Geertz 1973) of the situation and to create a “three-dimensional picture” (Biggam 2008:230) of the case under scrutiny. In addition, this multi-method approach facilitates effective triangulation, as the researcher seeks to gather data from several angles to compare and contrast different perspectives. The case study enables the researcher to “map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint” (Cohen and Manion 1995:106).

One limitation of case study research is the issue of the generalisability of the findings. This study does not aim to produce findings that can be generalised to other educational contexts. Rather, it hopes “to provide the reader with sufficient detail to judge for himself or herself whether the researcher’s interpretation of the phenomenon is justifiable and relevant for other circumstances” (Denscombe 1998:174). The case study seeks to “exploit the concept of relatability” (Biggam 2008:225), giving the reader clear information about the context and scope of the research undertaken, offering some explanations of the data gathered, and thus allowing the reader to reflect and make their own connections to other contexts.

Data collection

In keeping with “grounded” theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), “an emergent research design” (Denscombe 1998:176) was followed, which evolved over the course of the project. The case of FAPLG preschool was selected for convenience and ease of access to research participants due to the researcher’s history with the project. The Guerguiko Association for Language Development and Promotion (ADPLG), one of six community-based literacy associations running preschool within the regional FAPLG structure, was chosen as a focus. The Guerguiko community of roughly 25,000 live in 20 rural villages surrounding the main mountain of the region, Mount Guera. Data was gathered from ADPLG’s preschool teachers and literacy staff (15 teachers, one coordinator and two supervisors), seven regional (FAPLG/SIL) literacy staff, and project documentation. From the 15 teachers, three were chosen to study closely.
The views and experiences of local and regional staff were incorporated since local staff play an important role in training and supervising preschool teachers, while regional staff, in turn, supervise and train local staff and provide technical support in terms of planning, funding, and monitoring. In addition, the regional staff has a wider breadth of experience, supervising six preschool programmes, thus going beyond ADPLG’s experiences of preschool, and providing valuable data for cross-checking and building a well-rounded picture of FAPLG preschool.

ADPLG was chosen for this case study for the following reasons. ADPLG was one of two literacy associations who piloted preschool in 2006 and has gradually increased the number of classes over the past eight years from two to 15 classes. This means ADPLG staff have longer-term experience of training and supporting new teachers. ADPLG headquarters and villages are easily accessible by road, and it has had stable staff structures over the course of the project.

In November 2012 a meeting took place with the ADPLG literacy coordinator and president at their headquarters to discuss the research and ask for their input and agreement to participate. At their request, I attended the preschool teachers’ in-service workshop the following week to present the research project to teachers and staff. This afforded the opportunity to be introduced to the group, clearly explain research aims and the ethical issues involved. Teachers and staff were invited to read and sign a consent form and complete an initial questionnaire requesting background information. (See appendix D). Using information provided by teachers and staff, classes were selected that represented “typical” instances. Teachers who did not meet the basic criteria for becoming preschool teachers (4 years of secondary education and previous experience teaching L1 literacy) were disqualified. A range of factors were considered such as length of service, age, gender and geographical distribution of classes (i.e. classes from both supervision zones) before deciding on five classes, which, due to time restraints, were reduced to three.

Data was gathered through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. Two research visits of 4–5 days were undertaken in the Guerguiko community in January and February 2013. Preschool classes run in the mornings over four learning sessions from 8 to 11am. During the first visit a morning was spent with each teacher observing lessons. At the end of the morning, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the teacher, facilitated by an interpreter. Individual interviews were held with local staff, two at ADPLG headquarters and one at the supervisor’s home. On the second visit, only two teachers were observed, since the third teacher was absent. Follow-up interviews were held with all three teachers, and a group discussion with the ADPLG staff. Local staff interviews were conducted in French.

Seven interviews were conducted with regional staff between January and March 2013. French and English were used for these interviews according to the preference of the interviewee. A final FAPLG staff group discussion was planned, which was cancelled due to staff being unavailable. Interviews and discussions ranged in length from one to two hours. A range of project documentation was collected, including teaching resources, training resources and project reports. Appendix E summarises data gathered.

Observations

During observations, I sought to act as “participant as observer” (Denscombe 1998:150), making clear my role as observer, but seeking to preserve the naturalness of the learning environment. To reduce the “observer effect”, attempts were made to ensure my presence was as unobtrusive as possible, locating myself behind the children where possible and not initiating interaction with either teacher or children during learning sessions. Notes were taken during observations along with photos and video clips, in the hope of capturing particularly interesting or problematic elements. The interpreter was present during observations. After lessons, teachers were interviewed regarding their perceptions of their practice, the decisions they made and what they planned to do next. By returning to each class a month later, children’s progress could be gauged and significant issues emerging from the first visit scrutinised in greater depth.

My monitoring role within the project means that I frequently visit classes. These monitoring visits normally involve far more interaction with learners and teacher. A conscious effort was made to step back from this role and evaluate what was being observed at face value, seeking to form a holistic
picture of learning and teaching in each instance, rather than focus on the details of what the teacher was doing. Sometimes this change in role proved challenging and there were instances where I found myself giving input to the teacher without realising.

**Interviews**

As Yin (2003:89) states, “Interviews are essential sources of case study research”. A semi-structured framework for interviews and discussions was adopted, thus providing an unrestricted environment for interviewees to talk about the issues at the forefront of their minds. Open questions were grouped around themes that emerged from the literature review. Each interviewee was not asked every question, but questions were adapted to the flow of discussion. Due to the length of the interview schedule, interviews with teachers were conducted over two sessions. Appendix F shows a sample interview schedule. For literacy support staff, the framework was maintained but questions were adapted to their experience of preschool and available time. Interviews and discussions were recorded for reference and notes were taken during interviews, should the recording equipment fail. “Clean” notes were made as soon as possible after the interview, referring back to recordings where necessary. Some sections were transcribed for closer scrutiny.

**Approach to data analysis**

Analysis of quantitative data involves “working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others” (Bogdan and Biklen 1982:145). In light of this, an organised, structured approach was taken to coding, analysing and synthesising data in order to “convey the complexity of the situation” (Biggam 2008:226). Initially raw data was organised around the themes identified in the interview schedule, then a cyclical approach was adopted, stemming from the centre of the case—data gathered from the preschool teachers themselves—and working outwards to include data from the local, then regional staff. In this way, common threads and links were discovered on each “cycle”, capturing a picture with both depth and breadth. As this “iterative” process continued, emerging themes were cross-checked and possible explanations noted. These explanations were then compared with the results of the literature review, and findings and recommendations developed accordingly.

The data analysis process, and the subsequent writing up of findings, proved more challenging than anticipated and required making hard decisions about which leads to follow and which to disregard. For example, data concerning the maths and L2 skills teaching and teachers’ organisational skills was disregarded even though interesting aspects emerged. In retrospect, the data collection plan was perhaps overambitious and would have benefited from taking a more sharply focused approach. On the other hand, judging which data and themes are most relevant to research objectives must surely be part of successfully analysing data.

**Limitation**

As with all research, the issues of the objectivity of the researcher, the reliability of the research methods and the validity of the findings need to be addressed openly. In addition, some practical limitations had to be taken into consideration.

As outlined in the introduction, I have had extensive involvement in the implementation of the FAPLPG preschool project. To what extent an objective stance can be achieved under such circumstances is a valid question. However, the same question must be asked of all researchers, and in particular in qualitative research where inevitably “the researcher’s self (his or her social background, values, identity and beliefs) will have a significant bearing on the nature of the data collected and the interpretations of that data” (Denscombe 1998:176). To mitigate this, an attempt has been made to provide a “reflexive account” of “self” by providing enough background information to allow the reader to judge the potential impact of the researcher’s self on this present study. In addition, steps were taken to remain as detached and self-aware as possible for the duration of this research. One example was to enlist a “neutral” interpreter from outside the project to encourage interviewees to express themselves freely.
On the other hand, the researcher’s involvement with the project holds some advantages. I have extensive background knowledge of the technical aspects of the project, allowing teaching practices to be evaluated from an insider perspective. Existing, positive relationships exist with many staff involved, facilitating access and accelerating the process of building trust and rapport in interviews, which in turn encouraged participants to answer questions openly and honestly.

To mitigate against accusations of unreliable or invalid research, Yin’s advice was followed to proceed “as if someone were looking over your shoulder” (2003:38), and endeavouring to provide a transparent account of the research process and details of each step for scrutiny.

This study was constrained by factors such as the availability of time and resources, language issues, availability of relevant staff and the challenges related to the geographical situation of the Guera region where the research was conducted. The researcher sought to work constructively within these constraints.
Appendix G: Sample Interview Schedule
(Preschool Teacher Interviews)

G.1 Introduction

How long have you worked as a preschool teacher?
Why did you decide to do this work?
What do you think of the work in general?
Which aspects do you appreciate most? Least?

G.2 Teaching competencies

G.2.1 Language abilities

2.1.1 To what extent do you feel your L1 language abilities are good enough to teach the preschool programme?
2.1.2 Have you had any problems in relation your L1 ability? Examples?
2.1.3 How did you learn academic and pedagogical language in the L1? (e.g. maths terms, giving instructions to learners)
2.1.4 To what extent do you feel your L2 language abilities are good enough to teach L2 orally? Problems? Examples?
2.1.5 To what extent do you feel your L2 language abilities are good enough to understand and use the teacher’s guide? Problems? Examples?
2.1.6 How could ADPLG help you improve your L1 and/ or L2 language abilities?

G.2.2 Teaching abilities

2.2.1 Preschool teaching

2.2.1.1 From your experience, what are the main advantages to teaching preschool? For children? For you as a teacher?
2.2.1.2 What are the main difficulties?

2.2.2 The preschool programme

2.2.2.1 From your experience, which parts of the programme were the most difficult for you to learn to teach? Why? Examples?
2.2.2.2 Which parts of the programme were the easiest? Why? Examples?
2.2.2.3 Now I’d like to ask you some more about teaching reading and writing with the literacy materials.
Which activities do children like the best? The least?
Which activities help them the most in their learning?
What difficulties do you encounter in teaching this area?
How have you adapted the materials for teaching children?
What progress do the learners make with the literacy materials in preschool?
2.2.2.4 Now I’d like to discuss your experiences with experience stories.
How often do you do this activity?
How do the children like this activity?
How does it help them in their learning?
What difficulties have you had with this activity or the teacher's guide?

2.2.2.5 Now I’d like to discuss your views on listening stories.
Questions as 2.2.2.4 above.

2.2.2.6 I’d like to discuss your experiences regarding teaching maths.
Questions as 2.2.2.3 above.

2.2.2.7 I’d like to discuss your impressions of teaching L2 speaking and listening skills.
Questions as 2.2.2.3 above.

2.2.2.8 In which areas would you appreciate more training? Why?

G.2.3 Intercultural abilities

2.3.1 In what ways does the preschool programme help children get to know their own culture better?

2.3.2 In what ways do you use the local culture in teaching?

2.3.3 In what ways does incorporating the local culture into teaching activities help the children’s learning, or not?

2.3.4 In what ways does it help the wider community, or not?

2.3.5 How well do you rate your relationships with parents?
(for example, communication, support for the class, resolving problems, appreciation of the preschool class and teacher, learners’ progress)
Problems? Examples? How did you resolve that?

2.3.6 How well do you rate your relationships with the wider community? (community members, chiefs, primary school staff etc.)

2.3.7 How could ADPLG help you more in this domain?

G.2.4 Promotional and advocacy competencies

2.4.1 To what extent do the local communities understand the reasons behind MTB-MLE: that a child learns best if she starts her education in the language that she knows the best and not in a foreign language such as French?

2.4.2 How do you and APLK promote preschool classes in your community?

2.4.3 How have people’s attitudes (positive or negative) evolved regarding preschool since classes began?

2.4.4 What problems have you encountered with promoting preschool?

2.4.5 Regarding those who are not convinced of the benefits of preschool in L1, what are their principal reasons for being against this?

2.4.6 How could ADPLG better support you in this area?

2.4.7 At the international and national level, many educators are promoting MTB-MLE for at least the first 3 years of primary school with a gradual transition to the official language. What do you think of this idea?
How could this help children’s chances of success in school?
What problems do you see with this idea?
To what extent do you think it’s a valid option for the Guera region?
G.2.5 Organisational competencies

(lesson planning; classroom management; behaviour management; managing resources; taking the register every day; evaluating learners' progress; communicating with your supervisor; attending regularly and being punctual)

2.5.1 In which of the above competencies do you have the least difficulty? Examples?
2.5.2 In which of the above competencies do you have the most difficulty? Examples?
2.5.3 What are the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher's guide? How could it be improved?
2.5.4 What do you think of the teaching resources (literacy materials, big books, picture book, maths book etc.)?
2.5.5 What other resources could help you teach the children better?
2.5.6 How could ADPLG better support you in this area?

G.3 Evaluation of teacher training (initial and in-service) and supervision

G.3.1 Previous experience

3.1.1 Clarification questions from the background info questionnaire if necessary.
3.1.2 How much does your own experience of school influence how you teach preschool?
3.1.3 How much does your previous teaching experience (e.g. as a community teacher or adult literacy teacher) influence how you teach preschool? In what ways does your experience help you, or not?
3.1.4 What differences have you found between teaching preschool children and teaching adults?

G.3.2 Adult literacy teacher training

3.2.1 Where and when did you take adult literacy teacher training?
3.2.2 How long did it last?
3.2.3 Who trained you during this—FAPLG or ADPLG staff?
3.2.4 What did you learn during the training?
3.2.5 At the end of the training, did you feel well equipped to teach L1 literacy to adults?

G.3.3 Initial training for preschool literacy teachers

Questions as 3.2 above.

G.3.4 In-service training events

3.4.1 What advantages do you see in having yearly in-service training events?
3.4.2 How do these events help you?

G.3.5 General questions regarding training

3.5.1 What do you think about ADPLG training in general?
   (e.g. content, length, mentoring, hospitality)
3.5.2 Which aspects do you appreciate the most?
3.5.3 Which aspects do you appreciate the least?
3.5.4 How could training and in-service events be improved?
3.5.5 How well do you appreciate your trainers?
3.5.6 Training Methods/Techniques/Activities
(presentation to the whole group; discussions as one group; demonstrations; small-group work; practical sessions/simulations; getting feedback; individual work; case studies/scenarios; lectures)
Which methods, techniques and activities do staff use most/least during training events?
Which do you find the most/least effective?
Examples? Problems?
3.5.7 How do you rate your trainers’ abilities?
3.5.8 Which language do you prefer as the language of instruction in training? Why?

G.3.6 Supervision at the local level

3.6.1 How many times per month do you receive visits from a supervisor?
3.6.2 What do you appreciate about supervision visits? (Advantages, challenges, examples?)
3.6.3 How does supervision help you in your work? Examples?
3.6.4 Which aspects of supervision do you appreciate the most? The least? Why? Examples?
3.6.5 Describe a typical supervision visit to me. What does your supervisor do during his visit?
3.6.6 Have you ever had problems with your supervisors? If yes, can you explain the problem to me? How did you resolve the problem?
3.6.7 How could ADPLG improve supervision?

G.3.7 Do you have anything else to add regarding training, in-service training and supervision?
Appendix H: FAPLG Teacher Training and Support Framework

H.1 Previous experience

- trainee’s formal education: 6–10 years, ideally gaining general secondary certificate
- previous teaching experience, e.g. as a community primary teacher
- other relevant professional training

H.2 L1 adult literacy teacher training

- trained as adult L1 literacy teacher
- chosen by the community in conjunction with the literacy association
- 10 days of training, held locally, trained by local literacy staff (with help from regional staff if necessary)
- content of training: L1 reading and writing skills; L1 literacy teaching; limited theory on literacy acquisition and teaching adults; organisational aspects of running a literacy class

H.3 L1 adult teaching experience

- teacher gathers experience as L1 adult literacy teacher
- teaching of L1 literacy for beginners, followed by teaching of intermediate and advanced L1 literacy, L1 maths and L2 literacy
- regular supervision visits from literacy association staff, at least once a month during the literacy year (Jan–May)
- annual in-service training of 3–4 days before the next literacy year starts

H.4 Preschool teacher training

- trained as preschool teacher
- chosen by the community in conjunction with the literacy association
- 10 days of training held locally, trained by local literacy staff (with help from regional staff if necessary)
- training covers how to teach children L1 literacy skills, numeracy skills in L1 and L2, L2 speaking and listening skills, other preschool activities (stories, games, songs, etc.) and instruction on organisational aspects of preschool.

H.5 Preschool teaching experience

- teacher gathers experience as preschool teacher
- class of 25–30 children of 5–6 years of age
- teaching all aspects of the programme over 6 months (Dec–May)
- regular supervision visits from literacy staff, at least once a month during the school year
- annual in-service training of 3–4 days before the next school year starts
Appendix I: FAPLG Adult Teacher Training Schedule

(Translated from Notes d’encadreur: Formation des nouveaux alphabétiseurs (Niveau 1) [Training notes: training for new adult literacy teachers: Level 1], FAPLG 2008a:2–3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.45–8am</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong> (8–9.15am)</td>
<td>L1 writing system (1)</td>
<td>L1 writing system (3)</td>
<td>L1 writing system (5)</td>
<td>Assessment of L1 reading and writing skills</td>
<td>L1 writing system (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong> (9.15–10.30 am)</td>
<td>L1 writing system (2)</td>
<td>L1 writing system (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30–11 am</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11am–1pm</td>
<td>Stages of literacy development; Development of literacy materials</td>
<td>Teacher’s Guide; Lesson preparation</td>
<td>L1 writing system (7)</td>
<td>Introductory literacy lessons 2–4; Making teaching aids</td>
<td>Stages of literacy development; Development of literacy materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–3pm</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5pm</td>
<td>Practice: Writing clearly on the board</td>
<td>Practice: L1 reading and writing</td>
<td>Practice: L1 reading and writing</td>
<td>Practice: Introductory literacy lessons</td>
<td>Practice: Writing clearly on the board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.45–8am</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;(8–9.15 am)</td>
<td>Literacy letter lessons: Simulation and explanations</td>
<td>Literacy letter lessons: Steps 4–7</td>
<td>Practice of a complete literacy letter lesson (1)</td>
<td>Opening a literacy class; Supervision; Keeping the register; Evaluating learners’ progress</td>
<td>Final assessment (2): Each participant teaches a complete letter lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;(9.15–10.30 am)</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30–11 am</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11am–1pm</strong></td>
<td>Literacy letter lessons: Steps 1–3</td>
<td>Practice: literacy letter lessons, Steps 4–7</td>
<td>Practice of a complete literacy letter lesson (2)</td>
<td>Other questions and practical issues; Lesson preparation</td>
<td>Final assessment (3): Each participant teaches a complete letter lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1–3pm</strong></td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3–5pm</strong></td>
<td>Practice: Letter lessons, Steps 1–3</td>
<td>Literacy letter lessons: Steps 8–10; Explanations and practice</td>
<td>Literacy revision lessons</td>
<td>Final assessment (1): Each participant teaches a complete letter lesson</td>
<td>Closing ceremony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix J: FAPLG Preschool Teacher Training Schedule

(Translated from *Notes d’encadreur: Formation des nouveaux maîtres et maîtresses préscolaires* [Training notes: Training for new preschool teachers], FAPLG 2008b:30–31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.45–8am</td>
<td>Arrivals</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong> (8–9.15am)</td>
<td>Introductions; Preschool programme objectives and overview</td>
<td>Activities for the first week: discussion and practice</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Oral French; Making balls for games</td>
<td>Story activities: Experience stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong> (9.15–10.30 am)</td>
<td>Attributes of a good teacher</td>
<td>Oral French</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30–11 am</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11am–1pm</strong></td>
<td>Children’s characteristics and needs; How to organise your class; Class rules</td>
<td>L1 literacy introductory lessons</td>
<td>L1 literacy letter lessons and revision lessons</td>
<td>Story activities: Listening stories</td>
<td>Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–3pm</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5pm</td>
<td>Practice: L1 reading and writing</td>
<td>Practice: L1 literacy introductory lessons</td>
<td>Practice: L1 literacy letter lessons</td>
<td>Practice: Listening stories</td>
<td>Practice: Experience stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.45–8am</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 1</strong> (8–9.15am)</td>
<td>Oral French</td>
<td>How to use picture posters; Practice</td>
<td>Teaching resources; Keeping the register; Lesson preparation;</td>
<td>Supervision visits; Observation forms; Evaluating children's progress; Questions</td>
<td>Each participant teaches a lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session 2</strong> (9.15–10.30 am)</td>
<td>Making glove puppets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30–11 am</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11am–1pm</td>
<td>Practice: Oral French</td>
<td>Songs; Riddles and proverbs</td>
<td>L1 children's stories: Making a big book (1)</td>
<td>Making a big book (2)</td>
<td>Closing ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–3pm</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5pm</td>
<td>Flexible session</td>
<td>Practice: Maths</td>
<td>Practice: Board writing</td>
<td>Preparation of final lesson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Sample Letter Lessons from L1 Literacy Materials

(From Guerguiko Reading Book 1, ADPLG 2009 pp.14–15; 42–43)

Dooyiso 6

Saale yi boddiyo mudu ti
mansoono. Awildi an k’iido ye, yi-kakilsa
mudu maaye y’a t’iide.

![Image of a person harvesting corn]

Saale yi kakilsa mudu maaye y’a t’iide.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{yi} & \text{maaye} \\
\text{y} & \text{ye} \\
\text{y} & \text{y} \\
\end{array}
\]

1. \[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{m} & \text{aay} & \text{e} \\
\text{maaye} & \text{ye} & \text{eyye} \\
\end{array}
\]
2. ye  aaye  aaye  aayye  amme  aame
   me  aame  eyye  emme  

3. 
   y  yi kakilsa
   Y  Yi kakilsa

4. Awildi an iido ko?
   Aha, an k’iido ye.
   Saale eego sakire ko?
   Aha, Saale eego sakire ye.
   Yi kakilsa mudu.

   Awildi an k’iido ye, Saale yi-kakilsa
   mudu maaye y’a t’iide.

   y Y maaye
Dooyiso 20

Saale yi t’iide sara.
Yi sara t’otoro, meegi
yi baahu roggile.

Meeai adda k’otoro yi baahu roggile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>otoro</th>
<th>roggile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ro</td>
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<td>r</td>
<td>ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. otoro       roggile
   otoro       roggile

sara       darru       siraro
   sara       darru       siraro
2. raa laa daa baa
   moore moole moo te
   raaga kaaga

3. r roggile
   R Roggile

4. otoro otorado otorada otoradi otoratu
   roggile roggilayo roggilaya roggilayi roggilatu
   daabe daabayo daabaya daabayi daabatu

Saale yi sara t’otoro. Meegi yi baahu roggile.

r R raaga
Appendix L: Summary of L1 Story-based Activities

(Translated from Classes préscolaires au Guéra: Guíde d’enseignant [Guera preschool classes teacher’s guide] 33–37. FAPLG 2010.)

L.1 Listening story

Why listening stories?

- To help children understand that text has meaning
- To help children learn to listen and read for pleasure
- To encourage children to use their imagination

Story details

- The story should be interesting for children.
- The story should be composed by the teacher before class or by someone else.
- If the story is translated, it should sound natural in L1.
- The story should be about half a page of A4.
- The story and the questions should be written on a piece of paper before class.
- The teacher should practise reading the story out loud before class starts.
- The teacher can read the story again to the class another day but vary the questions.
- This activity should last 10–15 minutes.

Instructions

Read the story to the children from the piece of paper. Read clearly and naturally. Ask children questions during and after reading the story.

1 Stop reading during the story and ask, “What do you think will happen next?”
   The children should think before giving answers. Encourage them to participate and praise them for their answers. There are no right or wrong answers.

2 After reading the story, ask two sorts of questions.
   “What happened?” questions. These are comprehension questions which have a right or wrong answer, for example, “What did the child say to his father?”
   “What do you think happened?” These are questions to which the answer may not be in the story. Children should think before answering and use their imagination. For example, “Why do you think the child said that to his father?”

Ask children to tell the story in their own words or to imagine a new ending.

Sample Listening story

Hyena goes fishing

One day, Hyena was walking in the bush. During his walk, he found fish in a pond. Hyena stopped at the pond and took a good look. Then he said to himself, “I’ve found fish but what will I do now? OK, here’s what I will do. I will drink all the water and then only the fish will be left. Then I can eat all the fish”.

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Hyena started drinking the water. He drank and drank and drank and his stomach grew big like a balloon. He didn't know what to do next.

He put a fish in his mouth but he could not swallow it because his stomach was too full. He started thinking but could not find a solution to his problem. Hyena left crying.

This is the end of the tale. Hyena is always stupid. He left the fish where they were.

“What happened?” questions:
1. Where did Hyena go?
2. What did Hyena find in the pond?
3. What did Hyena want to do with the fish?
4. What did Hyena decide to do?
5. Did she succeed?
6. Why not?

“What do you think happened?” questions:
1. What do you think Hyena could have done to catch the fish?
2. And you, how do you catch fish?
3. Where do you think Hyena went afterwards?

**L.2 Experience story**

*Why experience stories?*

- To help children learn that text has meaning
- To help children learn how to compose a story
- To help children learn about and tell a story about a theme
- To encourage children to read and write for pleasure

*Daily programme (20–30 minutes a day)*

Day 1: Steps 1, 2, 3, 5
Day 2: Steps 3, 4 (2 activities), 5
Day 3: Steps 3, 4 (revision), 5

*Steps*

**Step 1: Create an interesting experience with the class**

- bring an object, an animal, or a person from the community to class
- take the class to visit somewhere or someone in the community
- do a game or activity the children enjoy
- perform a drama sketch
- discuss a picture from the picture book
Step 2: Write a story about the experience

Write 3–5 short, simple sentences on the board or a large sheet of paper. Let the children decide what to write. The teacher can encourage the children by asking, “Is that how you want to write it?”

Sample Experience story:

Today, Teacher brought us mangoes. He washed the mangoes with soap. He cut the mangoes with a knife. We ate the mangoes. Yum, yum!

Step 3: Read the story with the reading plan

The teacher reads the story:
• to the children
• with all the children
• with individual children
• The children read the story without the teacher.
• The teacher reads with all the children.

Step 4: Activities

Choose 2 activities from:
1. Hiding words activity
2. Matching words activity
3. Make the sentence activity
4. Make the story activity
5. Letter game

Step 5: Drawing and creative writing activity

• Ask the children to draw a picture on their slate related to the story today.
• After a few weeks, ask the children to write their own story related to the theme to go with their drawing. This activity is about encouraging creativity and not accuracy. Therefore, even if the children write gibberish, do not correct them, but give them praise.
• Ask a few children to show their picture to the class and read their story.
## Appendix M: Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

### M.1 Teacher competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. L1 literacy skills               | • Teachers and staff need ample training in L1 reading and writing skills, especially where L2 literacy skills are weak.  
• Training teachers in reading fluency and higher-level composition skills takes time, but helps promote sustainable language development.                                                                                                                  | • Invest in opportunities for teachers to develop reading fluency and higher-level composition skills.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2. L1 academic and pedagogical      | • Teachers need training in developing appropriate L1 academic and pedagogical language.  
• The use of L1 in training events helps teachers develop this.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | • Review the use of L1 as MoI in training events and teaching guides.  
• Encourage the use of L1 for lesson preparation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| language                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3. L2 skills                        | • Teachers encountered challenges pertaining to L2 skills: L2 teaching and accessing the teacher’s guide and training conducted via L2.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | • Review the assumption that preschool teacher candidates have sufficient L2 skills.  
• Deliver training via L1 as much as possible.  
• Simplify L2 content in teaching guides or translate relevant sections into L1.  
• Provide training sessions designed to improve teachers’ L2 skills.  
• Attract candidates with better L2 skills.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 4. Letter-based L1 literacy teaching | • Teachers displayed the strongest teaching skills in this domain and followed a procedural method based on printed literacy materials.  
• Teachers omitted the story activity in the literacy materials, revealing a lack of understanding of the value of meaningful text in children’s literacy development.                                                                                                                                                   | • Expose in-service teachers to relevant theories related to early childhood development and literacy acquisition.  
• Encourage teachers to experiment with story-based activities to complement letter-based activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
5. Story-based L1 literacy teaching

- Teachers experimented with story-based literacy activities and used oral components effectively, helping children develop age-appropriate L1 listening and speaking skills.
- Teachers encountered challenges with reading and writing components.
- Guided experimentation, reflection and dialogue help teachers as they try new teaching activities.
- Provide teachers with more age-appropriate L1 story-based materials.
- Focus on story-based literacy during in-service workshops and supervision visits.
- Encourage ongoing experimentation, reflection and dialogue related to these activities.

6. Use of L1 cultural knowledge

- All stakeholders appreciated the use of local cultural knowledge in the teaching programme.
- The inclusion of local cultural knowledge revealed benefits for learners, teachers and the wider community as well as improved community relations.
- Review how to strengthen this aspect of the teaching programme.
- Provide teachers with more culturally-appropriate materials.
- Give guidance on adapting local materials, such as stories, songs and games, for use in the classroom.

M.2 Evaluation of FAPLG training and support framework

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The value of prior learning and experience</td>
<td>Teachers' own learning experiences are a powerful influence on current practice, affecting positively or negatively their understanding of formal education. Relevant previous teaching experience, such as teaching L1 adult literacy, is very helpful.</td>
<td>Take trainees’ existing skills, knowledge and aptitudes into account during selection and training. Conduct a thorough needs assessment to pinpoint candidates’ strengths and weaknesses. Plan training and support accordingly.</td>
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<td>Initial training</td>
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<td>• Training is skills-based, participative, practical and relevant to the curriculum teachers are expected to teach.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Training benefits from a small group size and a high trainee-trainer ratio.</td>
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<td>• Training is generally held locally allowing trainers to use L1 to enhance understanding.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Training is too short, especially for those with a low educational level and little previous experience.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>In-service workshops</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>• Annual in-service workshops help teachers review learning, reflect on experiences, solve problems and develop skills further.</td>
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<td>• In-service workshops enable teachers to develop solid relationships and build a supportive community of practice for continuing professional development.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Supervision visits</td>
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<td>• Regular supervision visits provide teachers with one-to-one support, which is problem-centred, reflective and practical.</td>
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<td>• Frequency of supervision visits currently falls short of adequate.</td>
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<td>• Supervision visits enhance community relations by facilitating clear communication and timely problem solving between community, teacher and the literacy association.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Quality of training</td>
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<td>• Authentic observation and practice opportunities are helpful to teachers.</td>
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<td>• Vella’s principles of adult learning (2002:213) and Nunan and Lam’s professional development model (1998 pp.135–136) provide useful criteria for assessing current practices and making qualitative improvements to teachers’ training and support.</td>
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</table>
References


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