List of figures

[**Figure 4.1: Graphical representation of theme 1 and its sub-themes**](#_Toc86324038)

This graphical represents the first theme that emerged from the data, in understanding how and when hearing parents discovered their children's deafness. the information received from hearing parents such as the age discovery, seeking professional assistance as well as the denial they have encountered throughout the journey, assisted as the basic information in understanding deaf learners' challenges in sign language acquisition. In addition, this theme explores the deafness discovery and diagnosis journey experienced by the deaf children’s hearing parents. This is the first step for hearing parents in supporting their deaf children and it involves various difficulties that the family of the deaf child encounter.

**Hearing parents’ journey of discovery regarding their children’s deafness**

**The age of discovery of a child’s deafness**

**Seeking health professionals’ assistance**

**Denial of deafness**

[**Figure 4.2: Graphical representation of theme 2 and its sub-themes**](#_Toc86324039)

This graphical represents theme 2 where factors influencing the acquisition of South African Sign Language were discovered together with its sub-themes such as language and communication barriers, understanding the family background of deafness and South African Sign Language (SASL), and also on how social interaction occur to deaf learners using SASL. This theme aims to explain in detail the factors that deaf learners encounter in the process of sign language acquisition. These factors are regarded as the main causes and hindrances in sign language acquisition challenge.

**Factors influencing the acquisition of South African Sign Language (SASL)**

**Language and communications barriers**

**Family background of deafness and SASL**

**Social interaction using SASL**

[**Figure 4.3: Graphical representation of theme 3 and its sub-themes**](#_Toc86324040)

This third theme emerged from the inductive thematic data analysis in relation to what was investigated in the research. Hearing parents are responsible for raising their deaf children, therefore they are the first people in the child’s life to have an impact on the acquisition and development of sign language the sub-themes discovered such as parents' training in SASL by the school for the deaf in order for them to be able to use sign language at home with their children, discovering how hearing parents support their children with homework as well as television programmes and interpretation given by hearing parents to their children.

**Hearing parents’ support of their deaf children’s use and acquisition of SASL at home**

**Parents’ training in SASL by the school for the Deaf**

**Assisting deaf children with homework**

**Television programmes and interpretation support given by hearing parents**

[**Figure 4.4: Graphical representation of theme 4 and its sub-themes**](#_Toc86324041)

this graphical represents the theme 4 that emerged from the data which are barriers to effective learning of South African Sign Language (SASL) with its sub-themes such as teaching deaf learners without an SASL background and also teachers' barriers when teaching SASL, hence some teachers do not have an experience of SASL nor was part of their training which then affect the proper learning of SASL by deaf learners at home. Therefore, this theme focuses on what happens at school in the process of learning sign language. It discusses the barriers to effective support for deaf learners in learning SASL and the influence of teachers of the Deaf. Learning SASL for the first time at school with no prior background and teachers’ inability or inexperience to teach SASL to deaf learners are furthermore discussed, incorporating what was observed in the classroom.

**Barriers to the effective learning of SASL**

**Teaching deaf learners without an SASL background**

**Teachers’ barriers when teaching SASL**

[**Figure 4.5: Graphical representation of theme 5 and its sub-themes**](#_Toc86324042)

This final theme discusses and explain strategies used by teachers to support deaf learners in overcoming learning barriers to SASL. These strategies assist in improving SASL acquisition by deaf learners. Sub-themes such as the use of visuals and technological devices in teaching deaf learners, providing extra bridging classes, offering expanded opportunities and one-on-one sessions as well as the use of total communication according to a child's level of understanding. this data was collected from teachers in comprehending how deaf learners are supported at school in learning sign language.

**Providing extra bridging classes**

**Offering expanded opportunities and one-on-one sessions**

**Strategies used to support deaf learners to acquire SASL**

**The use of visuals and technological devices in teaching deaf learners**

**The use of total communication according to a child’s level of understanding**