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**REMEDIAL PROGRAM ON LEARNERS' PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH
SECOND LANGUAGE: A CASE OF TWO TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS IN KING
WILLIAM'S TOWN EDUCATION DISTRICT.**

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE:
FACULTY OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF EDUCATION**

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By

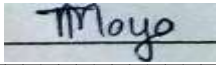
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DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare to the best of my knowledge that this is my original work and affirm that it has not been submitted to this or any other university in support of any application for a degree or any other qualification. All the sources from published or unpublished work of other scholars have been indicated and acknowledged in the list of references.

Signature : _____

Date 19/05/2020

Thembekile Moyo



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DEDICATION

To my husband and kids who remained supportive and endured loneliness and financial constraints when I was carrying out this project. I also dedicate this work to my parents whose encouragement and support will ever be cherished.



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work, as it is true for all significant efforts in life, is a collaborative achievement. Primarily, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Linake who laboured tirelessly throughout the research period providing immense guidance and direction to the accomplishment of this project. I also want to thank my fellow students and friends for their unwavering support during the research period. The principals, staff, and learners at the two schools who participated in the research study.

Lastly, I want to thank my husband and my parents who have supported me throughout years at university as I tried to balance family and university demands.



ABSTRACT

Literature indicates that there is a national crisis about learners who cannot read for comprehension at the primary level. However, there is limited literature that talks about effective remediation programmes in developing countries. This had a negative impact on the Matric results in the past years. Statistics have always shown the rural provinces such as Eastern Cape to be the most affected province with these poor results, due to the low levels of learners' reading skills. This study focused on the remedial programme on learners' proficiency in English second language, which was conducted in two township schools in King William's Town District. This explored the remedial programme that could be used to help learners become proficient readers who could be able to read for meaning and comprehension. A case study research design was used where two township schools were sampled. A qualitative approach located in the interpretive paradigm was used to carry out the study. The purposive and the sampling procedure were used to solicit information from principals, educators, and learners. The data was collected through interviews, observations and focus groups. Its focus was to establish a remedial programme to improve learners' proficiency in English second language. The findings revealed that a lack of English proficiency has a negative effect on the learners' performance. The findings also revealed that the repetition of concepts helps the learners to master and increase their vocabulary and comprehension. A need for learner teacher support materials (LTSM) was revealed to equip the educators with knowledge and skills for teaching diversity in the classroom. The study recommends provision for trained remedial educators in all schools to attend to the individual needs of learners appropriately. Universities should include a component of remedial education in the training of educators, as they are the ones expected to remediate the struggling learners. Parents should encourage their children to be actively involved in learning the language of teaching and learning.

KEYWORDS

Remedial program, English Second Language proficiency, Reading Comprehension, Qualitative Research.

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ACRONYMS

ESL – English Second Language

L1 – Home Language

L2 – Second Language

EL- English Language

LTSM – Learner Teacher Support Material

ANA – Annual National Assessment

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation

ELP – English Language Proficiency

MKO – More Knowledgeable Other

LAD- Language Acquisition Device



PIRLS- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

LoLT- Language of Learning and Teaching

DoE – Department of Education

NICHHD – National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

EGRA- Early Grade Reading Assessment

RTI – Research Triangle Institute

ASER – Annual Status of Education Report

CAPS – Continuous Assessment Policy Statement

SACMEQ- Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

Mastery of a second language is a complex and difficult skill for most people. Language learners must accept strategies that help them cope with difficulties of the task of learning the second language though it is impossible to fully participate globally without English, as it is a language of world communication. Thus, English as a second language refers to specialized approaches to language teaching designed for those whose primary language is not English. In this regard, low achievers tend to struggle with using a strategic approach to learning and accomplishing assignments. They function lower than their peers academically implying that they have learning difficulties, which need scaffolding. Hence, the remedial program needs to be designed to bring learners who are lagging behind up to the level of achievement realized by their peers to assist the average learners to succeed. In simple terms, a remedial program is for learners who have average or higher intellectual abilities but who are not performing well in school. The quality of the public examination results may even improve if the basic language skills are fully grasped.

In view of this, the researcher is challenged to explore a remedial program on the improvement of learners' proficiency in English as a second language at sixth grade low achievers in King William's Town Education district schools. Thus, the researcher chooses to remediate grade six learners to ascertain profound improvements in learner's performance at the intermediate phase, before learner deficits have become too high and have fallen too far behind. Van der Berg (2015) concurs with the researchers' intentions by stating that the remediation is most possible and most cost-effective when children are still young and to avoid repeated retention which might cause learners to drop out of school. Besides, the researcher chooses the township schools where the quality of education is poor as in rural areas. Maree (2012) asserts that the quality of education remains poor in these deprived socio-economic contexts. On the other hand, Spaull and Kotze (2015) argue that the uneven functioning of the South African schooling system further widens learning gaps. In this regard, the researcher was trying to explore how a remedial program could close the gap in the schooling system.

The remediation is a type of instruction through which errors are corrected and the repetition of earlier flows prevented. Through remediation, learners are cured against a defect Reuters (2011). Remedial teaching is regarded as a purposeful effect to reinforce the forgotten concept to upgrade underachievers by remedying their errors. Reuters (2011). He further avers that remediation offers interdisciplinary articles that bridge the gap between theory and practice involving the education of individuals for whom typical instruction is not effective. It also reinforces the parts or structures that are forgotten due to disuse.

Based on the discussion above, the researcher decided to focus on sixth-grade school learners in King William's Town Education District. These learners are close to high school whereby they are expected to work more independently. At this level, learners must be proficient in the language of learning and teaching to become competent during the academic work. Thus, the learners who have not reached proficiency in English struggle to learn grade-level content, take longer to graduate, and even at lower rates than English proficient peers Kim (2011) graduate.



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1.2 Background of the study

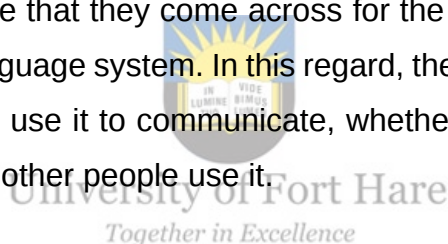
In the age of globalization, individuals with limited English skills are losing ground financially, and their employment opportunities suffer Carlo (2012). According to Murray and Christison (2010), low achievers are confronted with a series of obstacles in their attempts to meet academic, personal, and social success. Thus, teachers must respond to the needs by creating individual responsive learning that spotlights a variety of instructional practices. This would help to prevent further failure at schools.

Additionally, positive and solid foundations need to be established at an early stage of school. Huck (2007) maintains that the capacity of children to produce language has been shown to lag behind their ability to understand it. English is the single most important language, there is no one-size –fit all solution to those who struggle to keep up with their classes. Olsen (2010) asserts that English learners, as a group, tend to lag behind native English speakers in their rate of academic achievement.

These learners must get proper assistance at an early stage in life to be academically competent and become proficient in English as their Second Language.

Parker, Bustillos, and Behringer (2010) agree with Casazza and Silverman (1996) who indicated that in the last 150 years “remedial” is the term that was and continues to be used throughout higher education. It requires the need to remedy or correct “specific skill deficits”. Remediation rectifies the concepts dealt with in English that would have not been understood. In addition, remediation provides a correct and necessary foundation, which is useful for future learning.

Sorour (2009) points out that the language system is complex and the language teacher needs to know the language they are teaching. This would help the learners to understand the language that they come across for the first time, which they need to incorporate into their language system. In this regard, they need to understand what it means, how to form and use it to communicate, whether in spoken or written form and to understand it when other people use it.



Based on the discussion above, the researcher decided to identify different types of remedial programs that can be used or are already used in schools and check on the appropriate ones to assist the learners to become proficient in English. This would help them to be competent in their academic work as unfortunately, English is used as a medium of instruction. Thus, remedial programs are regarded as one of the educational programs that schools routinely use to bring low achieving learners' academic performance closer to the standards of their grades in school Melton (2010).

In view of this, remedial programs are usually offered during normal school hours; however, more and more schools offer after-school and during summer-school programs. These programs are reported to be more successful as learners do not have to miss the normal classroom instruction while attending the remedial course Allington (2009). In addition, the intensive program can bring learners up to speed

quickly. Based on the teaching materials and curriculum design, remedial programs include the following types: compensatory program, supplemental program, tutorial program, adaptive program, basic skills program, and learning strategies training program Tu (1993).

Thus, the researcher focused on the compensatory program, which provides necessary services to at-risk learners who are from disadvantaged backgrounds. This would help them to overcome learning problems and increase their academic performance to reduce high dropout from schools. The push-in method is administered through collaboration and co-teaching. This would assist the remedial learners to be served within the regular class setting.

Van der Berg (2015) reported academic and labour market prospects to be bleak for learners who are no longer on track by grade four. The supplemental remedial program which is a support program that aims to help learners to master content-oriented materials, improve study skills or test-taking strategies tailored to the specific needs of a class would also be considered. In this regard, the supplemental program is important because it would help to boost the learners' confidence in those who have low motivation, a lack of confidence, and a low sense of achievement in learning English. In this instance, the push-out method is relevant as remedial learners are given extra class after school as a small group. In addition, it is widely believed that learners lagging behind their peers benefits from small groups and individual instruction.

Christenbury (2011) contended that instructors are at their best when they are flexible, attending to the classroom context and learners' needs, instead of operating from a rigid teaching plan. Thus, these programs seem to be accommodative as all learners from all occupations including those from poor backgrounds who cannot afford remedial classes are included. Repeatedly retained learners are severely at risk of dropping out of school. This is witnessed by the Department of Basic Education (2017a) whereby approximately 60% of the learners that enter the schooling system complete Grade 12; while 40% of the learners drop out of the system after repeated failure.

To alleviate this, a remedial program on the improvement of English second language in township school is explored through in class-push in method and after school push out remedial methods.

Based on the discussion above, remediation in educational settings has become a primary service since the adoption of the UNESCO's Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education (UNESCO, 1994). Thus, remedial programs in developing countries are few and they have not been fully researched. In some low-income countries, the formal school system has planned for remedial activities at school to improve the quality of education overall. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone, 10 million children drop out of primary school every year (UNESCO, 2010). In view of this, the basic education curriculum in Mali allocates 25% of the weekly time for remedial activities, which could be delivered during school hours or by the means of projects. This was to improve the pass rate, which is always below 40%. Similarly, Botswana's curriculum permits 315 to 405 minutes per week to be dedicated to such activities from grades 1 to 4 of primary school Georgescu, Stabback, Jahn, Ag-Muphtah, and de Castro (2008). In addition, the analysis of Junior Certificate Results for 2014 shows the pass rate of 34,1% for English and 24, 5% for Maths.

According to the United Nations, Botswana spent 9% of its gap in education between 2005 and 2009 (UNESCO Institute for statistics 2016). This is what triggered the researcher to look at this program to assist the learners to increase their performance in schools. In this research, both in-class remedial programs (push-in) and remedial programs that take place after regular classes would be adopted. This would accommodate all the learners who need this intervention to catch up with the curriculum and lack of resources. Thus, class educators would conduct remedial programs. In some states in Brazil, public schools form a separate classroom to support low achieving learners in the first five years of schooling if there are at least fifteen learners identified as needing remediation by their educators. This assists the learners to return to their regular classes once they mastered the required skills, in particular, literacy Secretaria Municipal de Educação de São Paulo (2006) in English as their second language.

1.2.1 English language proficiency

‘English language proficiency’ (ELP) is English proficiency in four areas such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. English Language Proficiency is further regarded as an indicator measure of English Language (EL) ability to use the English language for communication and academic work. In this regard, this indicator is required to be included in the accountability system.

Thus, the ELP indicator was based on the results of an English proficiency assessment designed for students who are learning English as a second language. This was aligned with English-as-a-second-language standards. Taylor (2011) echoes this by highlighting that several types of research have demonstrated that most South African children in poor communities have accumulated large deficits in English proficiency in grade four. In this view, for the learners to be proficient and productive, they need various opportunities to interact in social and academic situations. Thus, effective educators encourage their learners' participation in classroom discussions, welcome their contributions, and motivate them by such practices (Cazden (2001); and Stipek (2002).



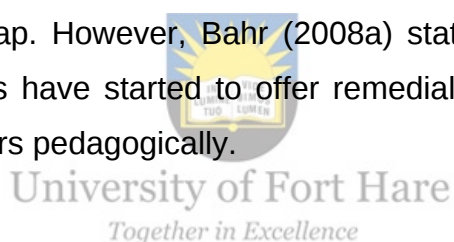
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Conversely, many educators often allow their less proficient learners to remain silent or to participate less than their English-fluent peers Contreras and Mohr (2004). The recently implemented Annual National Assessments (ANAs), which are annual, nationally -standardized tests of achievement for Grade 1, 6, and 9, are one of the most important policy developments in the last 10 years. In principle, they provide some standardized indication of learning at the primary grades allowing for the early identification and remediation of learning deficits. In the most recent round of SACMEQ (2007), South African pupils ranked 10th of the 14 education systems for reading, behind much poorer countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, and Swaziland. Based on this argument, the study found out that 27 percent of South African grade six pupils were illiterate since they could not read a short and simple text and extract meaning. This means that administering the assessment in English to learners who are currently learning English becomes a challenge, as most of the learners are weak in English proficiency skills Abedi and Herman (2010). Hence, there is a need for regular assessments in various learning areas to boost the learners to become

proficient in English. This would help them to excel pedagogically and reduce the high dropout from schools.

In contrast, American educational research shows that generally, English learners who enter school at the same English proficiency level tend to make greater year-to-year progress in English language proficiency and academic content knowledge in lower grades than they do in higher grades Kieffer (2011). According to the U.S Department of Education (2011), 11% of the children of immigrants born in 2009 who enrolled in U.S public schools needed to acquire English proficiency to succeed academically.

In this regard, in Europe, remedial programs are less common as a large part of the transitional problems is caused by differences among national secondary education programs, which are determined at a national level. Thus, learners are hindered to effectively start a bachelor's or master's program. Remedial or developmental courses can help to bridge this gap. However, Bahr (2008a) states that several European higher education institutes have started to offer remedial education programs long back to support the learners pedagogically.



In the United States, remediation comes up in the context of post-secondary education, which is designed to provide college students and adults with a basic skill Winerip (2011). He further adds that in October 2011, the governor of New Jersey established a 21-member task force through the state Department to determine how high school graduates can be better prepared for college and careers. In New York, a recent article focused on the increased percentage of high school graduates who need remediation as they enter the community college systems Winerip (2011). This article highlighted that the Start program was initiated in 2008 in the city university of New York Community colleges, and it was implemented to address the increased need for remediation Winerip (2011). Rana and Kausar (2011), concur with this by highlighting that, many learners fail because they do not have adequate study skills. Based on this argument, learners who have difficulty in college frequently do not have adequate study habits and this affects their academic achievement.

In addition, a central problem identified was that many of these learners had not learned how to take effective notes and manage time for studying Fazal (2012). He further alludes to the fact that learners with higher academic achievement used a wide range of study skills as compared to learners with lower academic achievement. This means that these types of learners had an opportunity to be exposed to the necessary skills required to be proficient.

In Taiwan, providing remedial programs was prevalent among elementary and junior high schools. In recent years; however, it has received increasing attention in higher education too. A study conducted by Lin and Su (2003) showed that 72.8% of the technological university students think English remedial programs are necessary, and an overwhelming 92% of students believe that the remedial programs will be able to improve their English proficiency and learning attitudes.

Sheu, Hsu, and Wang (2007) examined the effects of an English remedial course on low proficiency first-year students. In this regard, the eight-week course focused on pronunciation, basic grammar, and analysis of sentence structure. In addition, the results showed that the experimental group performed significantly better in the final exam, compared with the control group. Thus, the experimental group self-reported an improvement in their basic skills in English and had highly positive attitudes toward the remedial course. This means that their motivation and confidence were enhanced through the support they received in their first year of academics. Hence, they responded positively and this improved their achievement in schools. Thus, remedial programs are designed to help to give the learners the individual attention that they need to build their skills and their confidence so that they can live up to their potential.

In contrast to the developing countries, thousands of learners graduate from primary school while they are academically underprepared Bettinger and Long (2008). There is a large disparity between native English speakers and African learners speaking English as a second language on international test scores. This shows that only English native speakers score above average on reading tests of each language, and native speakers above other language speakers in English writing tests Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse and Zimmerman (2012).

In 2005, the South African department of education released the results of the grade six systemic evaluation. Based on the results of the analysis of the academic performance of a sample of 34 015 learners tested in 2003, in language, only 28 percent of grade six school children were at 'achieved 'or above-achieved standard required by the curriculum (Department of Education, 2005).

That is more than two-thirds of South Africa Grade Six learners performed below the level expected Fleisch (2008:7). Zimmerman and Smit (2014) point out that the reading comprehension of primary school learners in South Africa is below standard. In addition, a survey project report on the learning achievement of standard four (4) pupils produced by the Botswana Ministry of Education (2001) indicates that at the primary school level, only 21% of the pupils tested reached the competency level in literacy in English domains. In light of this, remedial programs are designed to close the gap between what a learner knows and what he is expected to know. Thus, the average and underperformers should be turned around through remedial teaching. This is the only way proficiency, and the percentage pass rate could be boosted and improved.



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According to the South African Education policy from Grade 3 onwards, "all learners shall offer their language of learning and teaching and at least one additional approved language as subjects". The current language in education policy encourages the use of mother-tongue instruction in the first 3 years of primary school followed by the switch to English or Afrikaans in grade 4. In this regard, more learners are experiencing a transition from mother-tongue instruction to English instruction in grade 4. In addition, the education system changed a bit after the apartheid era and became compulsory instruction. During this new era of post-apartheid, the system of teaching in native languages was kept as the indigenous elementary school students now had a choice of which language to use in school. In this view, their native language, which actively promoted the use of indigenous languages in their home communities for the first years of primary education, is compulsory. After a few years of this implementation, the language of instruction often changes to either English or Afrikaans with a choice of the second language, which is required for all learners.

In addition, in English language schools, English is learned as a first language and another of various languages is taught secondarily, whereas in Afrikaans-language schools the second language choice is usually English. Although African language learners have the choice of being taught in their native language for the first few years, 80% of indigenous language students change their language to English or Afrikaans in grade 4 while continuing to learn their first language as well Howie et al. (2008).

In some of the schools where the study focused on, educators were assessing their learners' needs in their classes while other schools do remediation; a remedial educator is allocated to do remedial for the foundation and intermediate phases. Kasran, Toran, and MdAmin (2012) maintain that the remedial lessons are efforts in education to overcome the weak pupils learning problems in primary schools. The focus is on the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The special remedial educator who has received special training in the field should do all these.

Hence, remedial programs that offer learners special one-on-one attention are much more in demand. Huang (2010) concur with this by stating that the goal of remedial instruction is to provide low achieving learners with more chances to reinforce the basic knowledge in common subjects. This would assist them to meet minimum academic standards. In light of this, these educators have to make efforts to adapt instruction to learners' special needs. Thus, educators have to use supplementary materials to make lesson concepts clear and meaningful and adapting the content to the learners' linguistic level. Huang (2010) examined the effects of English remedial instruction on low achieving learners using a self-developed English textbook and with the intervention of teaching assistants. The results of this study showed that this English remedial instruction is effective and beneficial to low English achievers as learners made significant progress in grammar and vocabulary learning. This improved their self-perceived in their overall English competence.

Learner's academic performance occupies a very important place in education as well as in the learning process. It is considered as a key criterion to judge one's total potentialities and capacities Nuthana and Yenagi (2009) which is frequently measured by the examination results. In this view, the researcher managed to explore a remedial program in the improvement of English language proficiency as a second language.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Standardized tests and other markers showed that learners in the Eastern Cape Province are doing poorly in English as a second language, particularly in township schools. This resulted in low quality of learning, not in quantity as this underachievement problem is increasing in the context of English language teaching for non-native learners who need more effort to implement a standard success. Based on the argument above, learners have been left behind in some concepts they did not understand earlier on. In the rural and township schools, most educators and learners use the mother tongue during teaching and learning as English is supposedly their second language. In this regard, learners are faced with challenges during their examinations as they fail to interpret the instructions and comprehend as they lack proficiency in English. Thus, this affects their performance not in English only but other subjects as well as there is a lack of remediation to boost and improve their performance in English Language proficiency.



In South Africa, English is the home language of only 8, 2% of South Africans (statistics South Africa, 2001). By 2000, only 27% of learners who started school in grade 1 finished with a matriculation certificate (Heugh, 2000: 32). This relates to the argument posed by sociolinguists and applied linguists that cognitive development is negatively influenced by education through a language other than a child's home language. A paper by Taylor and Coetzee (2013) provides some empirical evidence from South Africa that home language instruction in grades 1 to 3 caused improved English literacy in grades 4 to 6 compared with children who were taught in English as the language of instruction. Thus, the learners have to conceptualize everything they are learning in their second language and this affects their academic performance because they do not understand the subject content. In addition, 65% of South African learners use English as a language of learning and teaching. In an attempt to minimize this problem, the researcher examined the implementation of a remedial program on the improvement of English language proficiency as a second language at sixth grade low achievers in King William's Town township schools.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Main research question

- What remedial program should be implemented for the improvement of learners' proficiency in English as a second language?

1.4.2 Sub research questions

- How can remedial work improve the learner's second language English proficiency?
- Is there any criterion used for selecting learners for remediation?
- What strategies do the educators use to encourage learners to become proficient in English as second language use?

Why does a lack of English proficiency affect the learners' performance in their examinations?

1.5 Objectives of the study



- To establish the improvement of learners' second language proficiency through remedial work.
- To identify the criteria used for the selection of learners for remediation.
- To show the strategies the educators can use to encourage learners' proficiency in English as a second language.
- To find out why the lack of English proficiency does affect learners' performance in examinations.

1.6 Purpose of the study

To explore a remedial program on the improvement of English language proficiency as a second language at sixth grade low achievers learners in King William's Town Education District township schools. However, remedial programs such as tutorial programs and adaptive programs cater only to learners from well up families who can afford extra costs for their children. In a tutorial program, the higher-achieving tutors could be hired to offer extra explanations to underachieving learners.

1.7 Significance of the study

This study might improve the learners' overall proficiency in the English language as the learners' Second Language. It might further offer educators many useful insights in remedial education, which is an indispensable part of the teaching process and offers a greater opportunity for the success of the remediation on low achievers to the entire community in King William's Town's township schools and all the affected schools globally and national. It might also be a revelation to the policymakers in all different countries to value remediation in the enrichment of learner's knowledge.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study focused on township schools in King William's Town. The grade six educators, grade six learners and the principals per school formed part of the study.

1.9 Definition of key terms

The following terms are defined as used within the context of the study.

Remedial program

A remedial program is an instructional program designed for learners in grades 6-12 who have identified deficiencies in reading, writing, and math. Georgia Department of Education (2015).

Operational definition

It caters to the needs of children who unable to keep pace with the teaching-learning process in a normal classroom. It is further regarded as a structured program designed to help learners who need extra attention to succeed academically.

English language proficiency

"A fully English proficient student can use English to ask a question, to understand teachers, and reading materials, to test ideas, and to challenge what is being asked in the classroom." The Chief State School Officers (1992:7).



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Operational definition

The learner can speak, understand, read, and write the language with enough suitable structure and vocabulary at his / her grade level to participate in conversation inside or outside the classroom.

Low achievers

These children have difficulty, even though they may be willing to work and have potential. Thus, their problem is a low potential or a lack of readiness rather than poor motivation. They usually have difficulty in completing work, display poor retention; progress slowly (Harb, 2007).

Operational definition

They are a normal student with a limited ability that prevents them to keep up with their classmates or to perform within their expectations, due to academic or nonacademic reasons.

English as a second language

It is a traditional term for the use or study of the English language by non-native speakers in an English- speaking environment (Fennell, 2001).



Operational definition

It refers to the teaching of English to learners with different native or home language.

Spelling

Lee (2010) views spelling as an integral part of the orthographic knowledge that underlies efficient, automatic generation of words during writing and perception of words during reading.

Operational definition

It refers to the set of conventions that regulate the way of using graphemes to represent a language in its written form.

Writing

Morrow (2005) says writing is a communicative act that requires a social context and medium. It is a generative and intellectual activity requiring motivation and a cognitive process and memory.

Operational definition

It is the process of using letters of the alphabet, punctuation, and spaces to communicate thoughts and ideas in a readable form.

Reading comprehension

Birsch (2011) defines reading comprehension as the ability to get meaning from what is read. It is viewed in terms of how much comprehension a learner could prove to have gained through reading a given passage.

Operational definition

Reading comprehension is the level of understanding of a text, and to integrate with what the reader already knows.



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1.10 Literature Review

Shank (2002: 27) refers to the literature review as the first and foremost tool in the contextualization of a study to argue a case. The literature review acts as the foundation of the study. In any research, both literature and theoretical framework are intrinsically linked. These could be developed harmoniously and used to support the data, interpret the findings, and bring the recommendations Mitchel (2011). This study is guided by Vygotsky's social constructivism theory for logically developing and understanding the different interconnected parts of literature. Mitchel (2011) defines social constructivism as the material world shapes and these shapes by human actions and interaction dependent on the dynamic normative and epistemic interpretation of the material world. This theory would be explained and properly unpacked in chapter 2.

1.11 Research methodology

The researcher adopted qualitative research in which the interpretive paradigm was used. According to Myers (2009), qualitative research is designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Thus, the researcher is considered the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. During data collection, semi-structured interviews were used with the principals and the educators whereas; focus groups were for learners and the observation of the teaching and learning of remedial work. A case study research design was also used in this study. The data analysis results were transcribed, triangulated, and interpreted to conclude. Purposively sampling was used to select the schools and all the relevant participants for the study. Schofield (2006) describes sampling as a method that considers whoever is available and willing to take part in the study as long as they fulfill the required attributes. The methodology and research instruments used for data collection in this study would be discussed in detail in chapter 3.

1.12 Ethical Considerations

Issues of confidentiality and anonymity are assured in the interviews carried out with the participants. Thus, the appropriate steps were taken to adhere to strict ethical guidelines to uphold participants' privacy, confidentiality, dignity, rights, and anonymity. All these would also be discussed fully in chapter 3.

1.13 Conclusion

The chapter has discussed the background of the study, the problem statement to be investigated, the significance of the study, the research questions to be answered. The aims and objectives of the study and the purpose of the study were also noted. The delimitations of the study and definition of terms were provided. In addition, it highlighted the methodology and design adopted and ethical considerations. The next chapter reviews related literature to a remedial program on learners' proficiency in English Second Language.

1.14 Chapter outline

Chapter: 1 Background

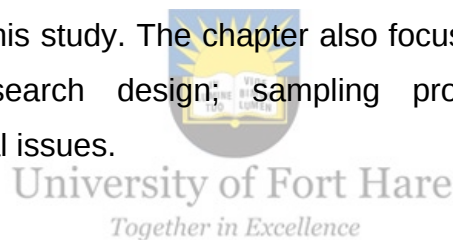
The chapter covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of study, research questions, the significance of the study, limitations of the study, and definition of terms.

Chapter 2: A literature review

This covers the theoretical framework and how the theory discussed informs the study. Literature related to the study was also reviewed aligning to the sub-research questions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter focuses on the research methodology and the research instruments used during data collection in this study. The chapter also focuses on research paradigm; research approach; research design; sampling procedures; data analysis; trustworthiness and ethical issues.



Chapter 4: Data presentation and interpretation

The findings of this study would be presented, analyzed, and interpreted. The experiences of the participants before and after the introduction to the study and the reflections of the teaching and learning process during the study would be discussed. In addition, the participants' responses would be presented according to the themes and the research questions formulated to address the research problem statement.

Chapter 5: Recommendations, summaries, and conclusions

This chapter deals with the discussion of the findings and the summary of the study including the recommendations for further studies to be taken.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the background of the study on the issues of the remedial program on Learners' Proficiency in English Second Language. It further discussed the statement of the problem, significance, purpose, and delimitations of the study. The research questions and the objectives of the study were also discussed. The current chapter focuses on the discussion of the theoretical framework and the literature review, which informed the study. They both focus on a remedial program in learners' proficiency in English second language at township schools. According to Oliver (2004), new studies should not be isolated, but exist within academic traditions, guided by similar studies. Thus, Usherwood (2019) posits that no research is undertaken in isolation from the work of others. In this regard, the researcher is better prepared to address the problem with deeper insight and complete knowledge. In this chapter, the researcher would compare and contrast a remedial program on learners' proficiency in English Second Language global, national, and in the South African context. This would assist the researcher to address the problem in this study, as she/he would have learned how other countries managed to overcome it if they have resolutions already. In addition, to identify the current approaches used and to detect what is not done and how that could be done in South Africa. This would help to improve the situation in the remedial program. Thus, the social constructivist theory by Vygotsky was interchangeably used with the relevant literature to address the problem identified in this research.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is a guide on which to build and support all the researchers' studies. It also provides the structure to define how one would philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically approach the dissertation or thesis as a whole. Thus, Eisenhart (1991:205) define a theoretical framework as "a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory...constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships". This

means that the theoretical framework consists of the selected theory that undergirds the researchers' thinking about how they understand and plan to research their topics. It is further measured as the concepts and definitions from those theories relevant to the topics. Thus, the theoretical framework of this study is positioned in the field of Education and anchored in literature based on the research topic. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2009: 26) indicate that a theoretical framework facilitates the dialogue between the literature and research study. In this regard, the research process involved continuous contemplative consideration of interrelated main concepts of this research study. Henning et al. (2009) further state that a theoretical framework leads to a specific conceptual framework, which could be described as an alignment of the key concepts of the study.

Based on the discussion above, a theoretical framework synthesizes existing theories, related concepts, and empirical research, to develop a function for new theory development Grant and Osanloo (2014). It also informs the research questions and methodology and helps to justify the research problem. In addition, a theoretical framework is derived from an existing theory in the literature that has already been tested and validated by others and is considered a generally accepted theory in the scholarly literature. For this study, a social constructivism theoretical framework was adopted as it was regarded as appropriate and relevant to the remedial program that deals with learners' language challenges. Vygotsky's theory sees the educator as the mediator in the construction of learning by the remedial learners. Thus, an appropriate context should be set up in the manner that the learners would become engaged in activities that interest and encourage them during the learning process. In the context of this study where the focus is on an ESL classroom, logical thought must be expressed through language practices as part of classroom activities.

In this regard, the learners must be encouraged to ask questions and explore all relevant topics freely Vygotsky (1978). There are four key concepts derived from Vygotsky's theory that apply to this study Monteith (2006).

- A Social Context;
- Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD);
- Scaffolding and;
- Cognitive apprenticeship.

2.2.1 Importance of a Theoretical framework

Maxwell (2005) highlights that the theoretical framework grounds the proposed study in the relevant previous work, and it gives the reader a clear sense of a theoretical approach to the phenomena that the researchers propose to their studies. He further indicates that the theoretical framework shows how the research fits into what is already known (relationship to existing theory and research) and how it contributes to the topic to the field (into intellectual goals). Thus, the theoretical framework is the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed (metaphorically and literally) for any research to make sense. Lysaght (2011) concurs with Maxwell (2005) by showing that the theoretical framework serves as the structure and support for the rationale for the study, the problem statement, the purpose, the significance, and the research questions. This means that the theoretical framework is important to any research as it provides a grounding base, or an anchor, for the literature review, and most importantly, the methods and analysis. In this regard, the researchers must identify the theoretical framework that is relevant to their studies.

In addition, the importance of theory-driven thinking and acting should be emphasized concerning the selection of a topic, development of research questions, focus of the literature review, the design approach, and analysis plan for the specific study. Sarter (2005:494) addressed the “limited usefulness of findings and conclusions” when a study is not justified by a theoretical framework. He further states that the evidence across disciplines is clear that the explicit identification and inclusion of a theoretical framework is a necessity of sound research. Correspondingly, a research plan that contains a theoretical framework allows the study to be strong and structured with an organized flow from one chapter to the next Sarter (2005). Thus, it is imperative that all four concepts such as the problem, purpose, significance, and research questions are tightly aligned and complexly linked. These would assist the theoretical framework to serve as the foundation for the research work and guide the researchers’ choice of research design and data analysis. Based on the discussion above, the researcher adopted the social constructivist theory under the umbrella of the theoretical framework.

2.3 Lev Vygotsky Social Constructivist Theory

A social constructivism perspective is a view that sees knowledge as actively constructed by individuals, groups, and society and not just simply being transferred Vygotsky (1978). He further added that one key concept, crucial in social constructivism, is the notion of mediation. This essentially means that learning and development take place through the interaction between the educator and the learner. The theoretical framework arises from this process of mediation, especially the key concepts of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) Vygotsky (1978). Hence, the researcher adopted Vygotsky's social constructivism theory that is based on social interaction, which refers to the process of cognitive development. This theory allows the learner to displays their function both on the social level and independently.

Consequently, Mitchel (2011) defines social constructivism as the material that the world shapes, and it is also shaped by human actions and interaction dependent on the dynamic normative and epistemic interpretation of the material world. He further states that social constructivism is a learning theory that emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning and the importance of cultural and social context. This means that all cognitive functions are believed to originate in, and are further explained as products of social interactions. In light of this, learning is more than the assimilation of new knowledge by learners and the process by which learners integrate into a knowledge community. Similarly, social constructivism stresses the importance of culture and context in the understanding of things that takes place in society and the construction of knowledge. It further views learning as a socially mediated cognitive activity that occurs in a hypothetical zone of proximal development Vygotsky (1978). In this study, the social constructivist theory helped the learners to integrate with their peers and open up to participate in the class discussions. The learners preferred to work in small groups. The learners were encouraged to socially interact with their peers and the educator. The learners lagging behind were guided by their peers in the given tasks and they also were in a position to participate in the work given to them. The learners could work on the activities known without assistance then benefit from their more knowledgeable peers and the educator.

His development theories emphasized the important role social interaction plays in the development of cognition. Vygotsky (1978) further argues that social interaction precedes development, consciousness, and cognition of the product of socialization and social behaviour. In this regard, Vygotsky's theory stresses that social Interactions are critical and that knowledge is constructed via interactions with the environment and the other people. Similarly, the learners first succeed in performing a new task with the help of another person and then internalize this task so that they can perform it on their own. In this way, social interaction is advocated to mediate learning. According to Ellis (2004), the theory goes further to say interactions that successfully mediate learning are those in which the learners scaffold the new tasks. However, one of the most important contributions of the theory is the distinction Vygotsky made between the child's actual and potential levels of development or what he calls Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Vygotsky (1978) further states that learners can learn much more in collaboration with others than they will be able to achieve on their own. Similarly, observations by Vygotsky revealed how higher mental functions developed individually through social interactions with significant people in a learner's life, particularly parents. In addition, he claims that via social interactions, a learner comes to learn the habits of his/her culture, speech patterns, written language, and other symbolic knowledge through which the learner derives meaning and which affects a learner's construction of her/his knowledge. His development theories emphasized the important role social interaction plays in the development of cognition. Thus, the researcher adopted this theory as it helped her/him to fully interact, identify, and select the remedial ones towards proficiency in English as a second language.

Based on this theory, it can be assumed that a remedial program should achieve ESL learners' proficiency through social interaction with the educator as well as among peers in the classroom. Accordingly, learning ought not to be an isolated unassisted effort of the learner Turuk (2008). In addition, development occurs within a range of activities, and learning in a social context takes place in zones of proximal development Goldhaber (2000).

According to social constructivists in the learning process meaning is constructed through dialogue. This suits this study in that learners are allowed to interact as they are encouraged to read the comprehension passage and give their inputs. Collaborative learning is essential as the learners feel to be part of the class. Learners are awarded the opportunity to elaborate on their initial responses. They can also freely ask questions from their peers. Given that learners come from different backgrounds they should be allowed to integrate their native language into their academic life but be encouraged to speak English more as the language in question.

2.3.1 The Zone of Proximal Development



Figure 1: Zone of proximal development

Vygotsky defines the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as “ the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” Vygotsky (1978, p.86) cited by

Schunk (2012). In the ZPD, an educator and a learner work together on a task that the learner could not perform independently as shown in figure 1 above. This is applicable in this study the learners lagging behind were identified through the given task which tested their level of knowledge and they continuously worked with the educator and their peers. In school A where learners were remediated in the mainstream class, they could benefit from their more knowledgeable other. However, there was a challenge whereby some learners would feel inferior and shy to seek help from their peers. In addition, it reflects the idea of collective activity, where those who know more or are more skilled share that knowledge and skill to accomplish a task with those who know less. Thus, a good deal of guided participation is required when working in the ZPD, and learners bring their understandings to social interactions and construct meanings by integrating those understandings with their experiences in the context. Vygotsky further believed that learning takes place within the Zone of Proximal Development. In this regard, learners can with help from adults or children who are more advanced, master concepts and ideas that they cannot understand on their own.

This model has two developmental levels:

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1. The level of actual development – This indicates that the learner has already reached & can problem-solve independently.
 2. The level of potential development (ZPD) – This one says that the learner is capable of reaching under the guidance of teachers or in collaboration with peers.

Consequently, the ZPD is the level at which learning takes place. It further comprises cognitive structures that are still in the process of maturing, but which can only mature under the guidance of or in collaboration with others. Vygotsky argues that learning occurs in the zone while focusing on the connection between the people and the social-cultural context in which they act and interact in shared experiences. Conversely, Vygotsky states that humans use tools such as speech and writing to facilitate learning and development in a social environment. The well-known notion of the Zone of Proximal Development by Vygotsky emphasizes social interaction to facilitate cognitive development and learning.

Wersh, (1994) cited in Noswu (2000) concurs with this by emphasizing that the Zone of Proximal Development is important and transits from inter-psychological function. On the question of how children appropriate these cultural and social heritages, Vygotsky (1978) cited in Wertsch, (1985) states that the child acquires knowledge through contacts and interactions with people as the first step (inter-psychological plane), then later assimilates and internalizes this knowledge adding his/her value to it.

In this regard, in schools, learners transform what educators offer them during the process of appropriation. This is a way of transforming what has been learned through interaction into personal value. According to Vygotsky (1978), ZPD helps in determining a child's mental functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that are currently in an embryonic state but will mature tomorrow. Shayer (2002) claims that a crucial feature of learning according to Vygotsky is that it creates a ZPD; that is to say, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that can operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and cooperation with his peers. In addition, once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement. Thus, Vygotsky advocates that ZPD is not the role of instruction alone, but developmental (biological) factors do have a role to play.

It is jointly determined by the child's level of development and the form of instruction involved. Vygotsky in Shayer (2002) postulates that good instruction should proceed ahead of development and should awaken and rouse to life an entire set of functions, which are in the stage of maturation and lie in the ZPD. This recommends that natural thinking provides children with new tools for thinking to meet the learning demands of the school. It also suggests that teachers are responsible for offering learning contexts in which the instruction marches ahead of the development and leads it. Vygotsky claims as Shayer (2002) reports, that good instruction must always be aimed not so much at the developed but the developing functions. In this study, the ZPD is one of the strategies that educators can employ on a remedial program to assist learners to become proficient in English as a second language.

This could be done by scaffolding the learners to be able to read and comprehend English as a second language. In this regard, Vygotsky sees the zone of proximal development as the area where the most sensitive instruction and guidance should be given to allow the children to develop skills. In this view, learners should be independent and use these skills on their own to develop higher mental purposes. Vygotsky also views interaction with peers as an effective way of developing skills and strategies. He then suggests that educators use co-operative learning exercises where less competent learners can develop their understanding with the support from more skillful peers – within the zone of proximal development Du Plessis, Conley and Du Plessis (2007).

Similarly, Du Plessis et.al. (2007) states that ZPD is regarded as the range of tasks that are too difficult for the learner to master alone, but that could be learned with guidance and assistance of more skilled peers or adults. Thus, the difference or gap could exist between what a learner can or cannot do by himself/herself. According to Vygotsky, there is a level of independent performance (what the learner can do alone), and a level of assisted performance (what the learner can do with support). The independent level is the actual level of development. At this level, the learner can work independently and has mastered the concept taught. The level of assisted performance is the potential level of development. This is whereby the learner does not have the ability and potential yet to achieve this level of development without the assistance of an educator. In this view, Vygotsky compared the learner's actual developmental level.

This means that this is the level whereby the learners are currently capable of doing things by themselves without any assistance. Additionally, Vygotsky's theory claims that what learners can achieve with help is more indicative of their mental developmental level, which is of their true potential and what they are capable of doing Vygotsky (1978). Referring to the classroom context, the ZPD captures the learners' cognitive skills that are maturing. This can only be accomplished with the assistance of a more skilled person, which is the educator/teacher as highlighted earlier on. In view of this, learners should be supported in the ZPD through dialogue and talking. This means that language usage is crucial in the classroom for the learning process as they learn better when hearing and imitating.

This is more relevant to this study as the development of cognitive processes by Vygotsky occurs within social situations, that is, structured play in the classroom. In addition, the structured play could provide the perfect setting for the teachers to guide learners through various stages of remedial skills. These stages are as follows: orally that is breaking up words into syllables or identifying words that rhyme aurally, and phoneme identification and manipulation Vygotsky (1978). Similarly, teachers should create opportunities in the classroom to allow learners to become aware and be involved with concepts of letter sounds and words to prepare them for reading proficiency.

2.3.2 Mediation

According to Vygotsky (1978), mediation refers to the part played by other significant people in the learners' lives who enhance their learning by selecting and shaping the learning experiences presented to them. Consequently, Vygotsky's theory stresses that for learners to fully develop, they must work with skillful partners who would assist them in solving more complex problems. Wertsch (1985) supports this idea by claiming that the secret of effective learning lies in the social interaction between two or more people with different levels of skills and knowledge. This involves helping the learner to move into and through the next layer of knowledge or understanding. Vygotsky further regard tools as mediators and one of the important tools is language. In this regard, language is an important tool through which communication occurs.

Jadal (2012) concurs with this indicating that remedial teaching can help less successful language learners improve in target language proficiency and self-efficacy. Thus, the use of language to help learners move into and through their ZPD is of great significance to sociocultural theory. Vygotsky (1934) emphasized the role of language and culture in cognitive development. In light of this, language is perceived as a tool that provides frameworks to experience, communicate, and understand reality. He further claims that language and the conceptual schemes that are transmitted employing language are essentially social phenomena. Snodgrass (2009) emphasizes the cultural importance of Language as an important tool for the development of the child.

Correspondingly, in his theory, Vygotsky talks about authentic learning and bringing the real-life situation of objects and experiences in class depending on the context of the child. According to Sekhukhune (2013), one of the teachers' role is that of a mediator. Fraser (2006) further explains that during mediation, the development of cognitive structures is more important than the content. Thus, the mediator of learning usually works with the learner in such a way that both teachers and learners would discover how the learner learns and how to improve the learner's learning process Niemann and Monyai (2006).

2.3.3 Scaffolding

In social interaction, a knowledgeable participant can create employing speech and supportive conditions in which the student (novice) can participate in and extend current skills and knowledge to a high level of competence. In an educational context, however, scaffolding is an instructional structure whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task then gradually shifts responsibility to the learners. This is adjusting the support offered during a teaching session to fit the learner's current level of performance. It captures the form of teaching interaction that occurs as individuals work on tasks such as academic assignments. According to Rogoff (1990) in Donato, (1994) scaffolding implies the expert's active stance towards continual revisions of the scaffolding in response to the emerging capabilities of the learner, and a learner's error or limited capabilities can be a signal for the educator to upgrade the scaffolding.

In this regard, once the learner begins to take on more responsibility for the task, the educator dismantles the scaffold indicating that the learner has benefited from the assisted performance and internalized the problem-solving processes provided by the previous scaffolder episode. Wertsch (1979a) cited in Donato (1994) claims that scaffolder performance is a dialogically constituted inter-psychological mechanism that promotes the learner's internalization of knowledge co-constructed in a shared activity. Donato (1994) further advocates that in an L2 classroom, collaborative work among language learners provides the same opportunity for the scaffolder to help as in expert-novice relationships in the everyday setting.

Van Lier (1988) cited in Donato (1994) states that L2 teaching methodology can benefit from a study of L1 scaffolding to understand how classroom activities already tacitly employ such tactics. Conversely, the study of scaffolding in L2 research according to Donato has focused exclusively on how language teachers provide guided assistance to learners. Hence, the teachers scaffold the learners by assisting them through reading comprehension and writing. This means that the teacher or more knowledgeable learners offer guided participation to the remedial learners.

Simultaneously, scaffolding in reading and writing is of great importance in that it is regarded as an integral part of reading and writing instruction. If we know that all readers and writers require scaffolding at some point, it is clear that ESL remedial learners would need it more. According to Brown and Broemmel (2011), there are two basic premises to the way we conceptualize deep scaffolding. Firstly, the core of deep scaffolding is to regard ESL learners as “glass half-full”, not “half-empty” by recognizing ESL learners’ potential as readers [and writers] because they are competent speakers of their L1. Respectively speaking, ESL learners are often perceived as learners who are deficient in language and skills. Thus, looking at the “glass-half-full” is to acknowledge ESL learners’ backgrounds and prior knowledge as strengths not as weaknesses because they have age-appropriate life experiences in their L1.

In this view, ESL learners’ linguistic and cultural knowledge in their L1 should be taken as a steppingstone to build success. Secondly, deep scaffolding benefits both L1 and L2 learners. It is important to note that L1 learners who read and write below grade level will also require more scaffolding than their proficient peers and even those learners who are reading and writing on or above grade level can gain from highly interactive discussions that arise from deep scaffolding. Consequently, Brown and Broemmel (2011), stress that teachers must not only provide more scaffolding but scaffolding that is more meaningful. This means that during scaffolding, the educator who is interacting with the learner should assume most of the responsibility in the classroom for guiding and problem-solving. Eventually, the responsibility is transferred to the learner Schunk (2008). Thus, scaffolding can, therefore, be described as adjusting the level of support given to the learner Vygotsky (1978); Ukrainetz (2006) and Schunk, (2008).

Schunk (2008) asserts that the scaffold allows learners to acquire skills they would unlikely to be able to acquire without assistance. The educator provides support to the learners during the learning process through scaffolds. Additionally, the educator will need to give scaffolds to the learners with limited knowledge to provide more guidance to enable the learners to improve their reading skills. For instance, the educator first isolates and emphasizes the beginning sound without distorting the correct sound and pronunciation. This would assist the educator to model the correct sound and pronunciation for the learners to follow. In this light, a moderate scaffolding is required when learners require less support. The educator may repeat the first sound before completing the rest of the word. Systematically, the educator may ask learners to watch his/her mouth, although the correct response is not provided to the learners with as intense scaffolding as before. In minimum scaffolding, the educator merely stresses the first sound while saying the word. Once learners are successful at isolating and pronouncing the first phoneme with minimum support, the educator then continues to ask the learners to accomplish the task without scaffolding.

Throughout a lesson, and in subsequent lessons, as a learner begins to succeed at tasks with one level of scaffolding, educators reduce the amount of support they provide from intense to moderate to minimal scaffolding until each learner can perform isolated tasks without scaffolding McGee and Ukrainetz (2009).

4 ITS

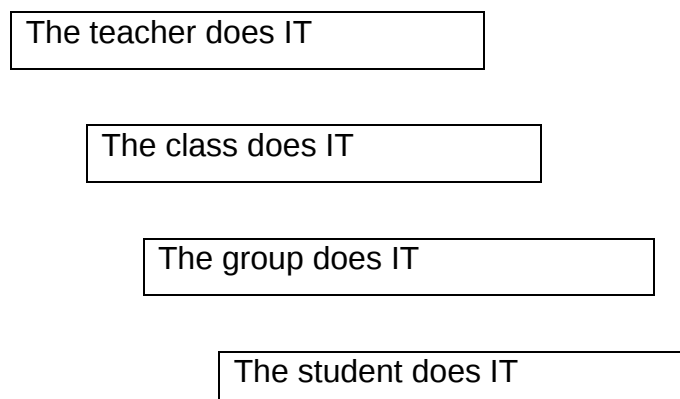


Figure 2: The process of scaffolding (Roe & Wink, 2012)

2.3.4 Cognitive Apprenticeship

The goal of the cognitive apprenticeship is to help the learners to learn the cognitive processes that experts use to handle complex tasks Watson (2002). He further views cognitive apprenticeship as the process through which a learner gradually masters a new skill by watching and learning from a more skilled adult or more skilled peer. Concurrently, Vygotsky (1976) claims that the learner is an apprentice who actively learns by interacting with an adult mentor who provides knowledge and cognitive tools to the learner. Based on the methods of cognitive apprenticeship modelling, coaching, and scaffolding are considered the three main methods, which help with the cognitive and metacognitive development in learners Watson (2002).

In this regard, educators act as role models who demonstrate the task explicitly so that the learners can experience and build a conceptual model of the task. This means that certain actions should be explained and demonstrated while modelling puts their thoughts and reasons into words. Schunk (2008) asserts that if this is not done, learners will not be able to monitor their thinking process. Additionally, the educator has to observe the learners' performance and offer feedback to the learners. Simultaneously, the educator has to assist struggling learners to ensure learners' development in the given task. Moreover, it is also the educators' responsibility to apply different strategies and methods to support the learning process for the best results.

Similarly, aloud strategies allow learners to build a conceptual model and acquire cognitive and metacognitive skills that are integrated through the process of observation. In this view, the learners are also expected to reflect on past performances indicating that they have gained some knowledge. This can only be done through exploration using different strategies at their disposal. Correspondingly, learners are expected to assume the leading roles in cooperative activities so that they can be of assistance to their peers. Hence, they acquire and learn cognitive processes in realistic contexts so that their thoughts may be processed accordingly in actual situations Schunk (2008).

Concerning this study, learners can acquire an understanding of reading comprehension, which will help them with second language proficiency in the target language. Simultaneously, the learners may develop the answering skill, which they model after their educator or the more knowledgeable peers. This means that listening attentively to the reading of the passage will assist them to gain the correct pronunciation of words. Equally, learners can be asked to retell the story or identify the characters in the story to check whether they were following and understood the text or passage. Concurrently, this method teaches the learners to listen attentively to the story as they are expected to answer the questions with the correct language.

In this regard, educator mediation involves facilitating, modelling, and coaching to become an effective facilitator. This means that they should be able to intervene and assist in the problem-solving process, and assess group interactions and monitor how learners are developing their language skills, which allows them to adjust their procedures to enhance teaching Chen (1998). Hence, educators need to create a safe, non-threatening, and learner-centered environment. This further encourages all the learners to fully participate in the classroom due to the conducive environment created which is a sign of inclusivity and diversity.



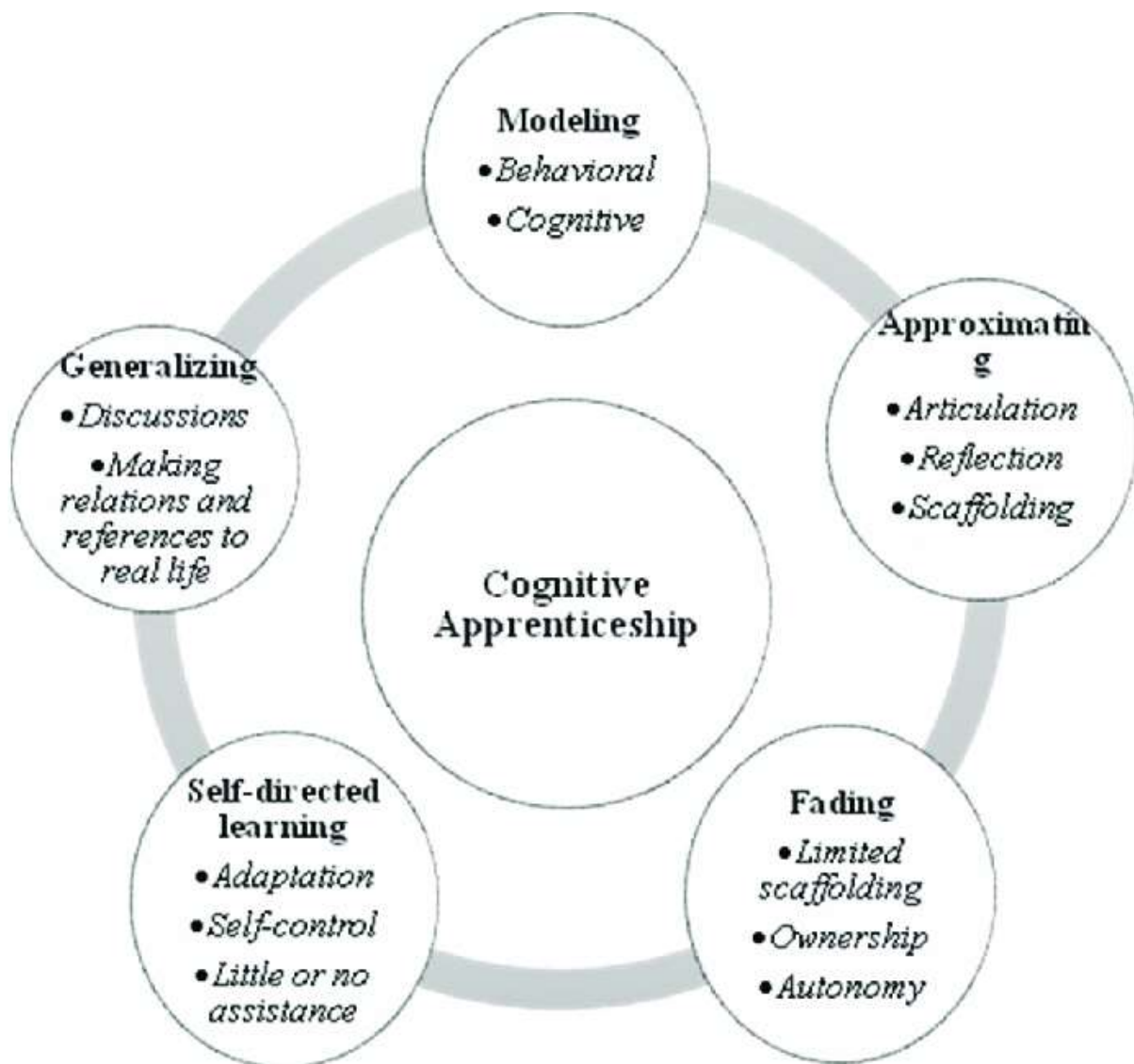


Figure 3: Methods of cognitive apprenticeship

2.4 Peer Relationships

Peers or age mates are people who are more or less the same age as each other. Friendship can be defined as a “close shared bond between peers that withstand the test of time” Littlefield and Cook (2005: 424). Peers become learners’ daily partners for most of the experiences and activities that form a fundamental part of their development. Saracho and Spodek (2007) when considering social learning in the peer context, propose three components of the “social learning hypothesis”:

- Peer interactions and relationships provide learners with social information about their behavior and peer behavior.

- Learners interpret and make meaning of the information obtained from their peer relationships.
- Learners draw on the information gained from their peer interactions as a lead for future social interaction Saracho and Spodek (2007); Barbarin and Wasik (2009).

Accordingly, learning to get along with peers is one of the most essential tasks of childhood. Thus, a learner's emotional bonds with caregivers form the foundation for the development of good peer relations. Hence, learners who experience secure attachments have more success fitting in and getting along with others. Additionally, they are more compassionate and make friends more easily. Subsequently, the quality of peer relationships in early childhood predicts later success in intellectual growth, self-esteem, mental health, and school performance Saracho and Spodek (2007); Barbarin and Wasik (2009).

In this regard, researchers have found that learners who had stable peer relationships with fellow pre-schoolers continued to do so during adolescence and they benefit from their peers. Alternatively, it was noted that learners who have had poor peer interaction during this time, experience continual problems as they grow older. Although the results do not suggest that a learner's social life is fully determined at an early age, they do suggest that without timely intervention to change the learner's path, the learner tends to continue down the path established in its pre-school years Kiss (2013).

Since learners spend much of their daily lives interacting with peers, a big part of their learning and development occurs within these relationships. Conversely, peer relationships assist learners with the shift to adult status. Likewise, friends provide social stability for learners hence there is a need for friendship as this assists them to work closely and help each other to deal with new situations. Concurrently, friends help fellow learners to learn to get along with others and help each other academically too. Thus, peers contribute to the development of a learner's self-concept, acting as a social mirror of acceptable and unacceptable behavior Pentimont and Justice (2010).

Based on the discussion above, numerous researches have demonstrated that the interactions of friends are marked by happier and more positive exchanges, more dialogue, support, and negotiation Dowling (2010); Saracho and Spodek (2007). The contrary has also been shown in studies where peer rejection causes learners to avoid school, evade involvement in activities, and attain poor academic achievement in general Barbarin and Wasik (2009). Friendships help foster learners' pre-social behaviors and humane values. Friendships may essentially be the building blocks for learners to learn how to truly understand and care about others' thoughts and feelings Mcdevitt et al. (2010); Littlefield and Cook (2005). Friendships are prone to form between learners of similar gender, age, race, values, and attitudes. In addition, a study was done by Bigelow (1977) as quoted in Littlefield and Cook (2005: 428) revealed that close friendships during middle childhood are characterized by "loyalty, faithfulness, and generosity" Littlefield and Cook (2005: 428); Dowling (2010: 38).

2.5 In the Social Constructivism Classroom



Vygotsky emphasized that both the teacher and a learner are seen as active agents in children's learning. The teacher's intervention in children's learning is necessary, but it is the quality of the teacher-learner interaction, which is seen as crucial in that learning. In this regard, a social constructivist classroom places a great emphasis on learning through social interaction, and the value placed on cultural background. According to Vygotsky (1978), culture gives the child the cognitive tools needed for development. Simultaneously, adults in the learner's environment channel the tools of the culture, which include language, cultural history, social context, and more recently, electronic forms of information access.

There is also reciprocal teaching involving interactive dialogues between the teacher and small groups of learners whereby the teacher first models the activities. Hence, the teacher's role is to ensure that learning activities arouse the learner's curiosity, minimize the risk of failure, and are relevant to the learner (Du Plessis, Conley, and Du Plessis, 2007). In view of this, the teacher organizes information around big ideas that engage the learners' interest, to assist learners in developing new insights, and to connect them with their previous learning.

The activities are learner-centered, and learners are encouraged to ask their questions, make their analogies, and come up with their own conclusions. In social constructivist classrooms, collaborative learning is a process of peer interaction that is mediated and structured by the educator. Peers work on given tasks cooperatively. Discussions can be promoted by the presentation of specific concepts, problems or scenarios, and is guided employing effectively directed questions, the introduction, and clarification of concepts and information, and references to previously learned material. Chen (2012) summarized the constructivist classroom by explaining that the instructor does more than simply assign tasks. The educator is an integral part of how learners learn; encouraging learners to look at problems critically. According to Vygotsky (1978), knowledge must be discovered and constructed through the learner's activities. He further argues that learners learn from concrete experience because by nature, learners are continually active and therefore must find out about and make sense of the world and as they do so, they construct the mental structures that permit them to deal with ever more complex information.



2.5.1 The learner as a Unique Individual

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Social constructivism views each learner as a unique individual with unique needs and backgrounds. Additionally, the learner is also seen as complex and multi-dimensional. Furthermore, it is argued that the responsibility of learning should reside increasingly with the learner. Subsequent to this, social constructivism emphasizes the importance of the learner being actively involved in the learning process. In this regard, it is clear that learners construct their understanding and those they do not simply mirror and reflect on what they read. Respectively speaking, learners look for meaning and will try to find regularity and order in the events of the world even in the absence of full or complete information. Hence, learners with different skills and backgrounds should collaborate in tasks and discussions to arrive at a shared understanding of the truth in a specific field. Thus, the socio-cultural framework supports the view that some learners may be more successful than others because of their levels of access to or participation in a learning community, or because of the amount of mediation they receive from experts or peers, and because of how well they make use of that help Saville-Troike (2012).

2.5.2 The Importance of the Background and Culture of the Learner

Similarly, social constructivism encourages the learner to arrive at his or her version of understanding, influenced by his or her background, culture, or embedded worldview. This means that the learner as a member of a particular culture inherits historical developments and symbol systems, such as language, logic, and mathematical systems. These are learned throughout the learner's life. In addition, the learner's cultural background can provide the necessary context for effective mediation Nieman and Monyai (2006). This also stresses the importance of the nature of the learner's social interaction with knowledgeable members of society. This means that there are people who are more knowledgeable within society than social interaction. It is impossible to acquire the social meaning of important symbol systems and learn how to utilize them. Thus, learners develop their thinking abilities by interacting with other learners, adults, and the physical world. Nieman and Monyai (2006) concur with this by explaining that the educator broadens the learner's environment and connects it with previous experiences and cultural backgrounds in this mediation process. In this way, learners can link divergent aspects of an experience together in a meaningful way.

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2.6 Implications of Theory on Remediation and Second Language Teaching

In second language (L2) classes, the theory asserts that learning is a collaborative achievement and not an isolated individual's effort, where the learner works unassisted and unmediated. The theory emphasizes that during instruction, awareness of the structure and function of language is developed by using it socially. In addition, second language learners need coaching and explicit instruction to appropriate the fundamental skills of L2 Vygotsky (1978). The importance of meaning construction in the act of learning is fundamental in L2 classroom interactions. The rise of approaches such as integrative teaching of reading and writing is nothing but a recognition of the importance of meaningful interaction of L2 students with texts in classrooms. Zimmerman (1997) argues that enhancing learners' competency in L2 should not be seen to be located in mastering skills. These results to too much concentration on skills could deprive learners of engaging with what he refers to as aspects of literacy such as meaning construction, competency, fluency, and flexibility in dealing with texts as readers and writers.

The theory regards instruction as crucial to L2 development in the classroom. Instruction should be geared to the zone of proximal development that is beyond the learner's actual development level.

2.7 Central Ideas in Vygotsky's Theory

The following are key elements in a child's cognitive development:

- Some cognitive processes are seen as a diversity of species; others are unique to human beings. Vygotsky differentiates between lower mental functions and higher mental functions, where lower mental functions refer to certain basic ways of learning and responding to the environment and higher mental functions point to purposeful, decisive cognitive functions that improve learning, memory, and logical reasoning.
- Educators communicate to learners on how their culture makes meaning of the world and employing informal exchanges and formal schooling.
- Every culture contains physical and cognitive tools that make daily living more valuable and efficient.
- Thought and language become progressively interdependent in the first few years of life. Vygotsky views thought and language as two detached tasks for the learners. He states that in learners, language is mainly used as a means of communication and an instrument for thought. Thought and language merge from about the age of two whereby, the phenomenon of self-talk occurs. This is what is referred to as thinking aloud when learners talk to themselves.
- Multifaceted mental processes start as social activities and slowly progress into internal mental activities that learners can use independently. Learners obtain their culture's tools in their manner. Learners interpret and convert ideas and approaches in their unique way.
- Learners can perform more demanding tasks when assisted by more sophisticated and proficient individuals. This is also referred to as scaffolding, wherein "support is given to a child as he or she learns to master a new intellectual function or achieve a specific task" Littlefield and Cook (2005: 196).
- Difficult tasks encourage the greatest cognitive growth.
- Play allows learners to extend themselves cognitively and also encourages social skills, aids learners in experimenting with new groupings of objects,

helps them identify cause and effect associations and to learn more about other people's viewpoints Littlefield and Cook (2005); Mcdevitt et al (2010); Dowling (2010).

"In the play, a learner always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behavior; in play, it is as though he were a head taller than himself" Vygotsky, (1978:102) as quoted in Mcdevitt, et al. (2010: 214).

2.8 Criticism of the Theory

A social constructivist theory classroom sometimes provides more support than needed for the children Kelly (1963). Even though this approach helps in building their social skills, the provision of more knowledgeable other (MKO) also prevents them to be independent in their learning. It is also commented that 'a social classroom can be a difficult place for learners with some needs' Pritchard and Woollard (2010, p.65). For example, an autistic learner may find the social constructivism approach much more difficult to handle than a classroom with no such distractions. Unfortunately, this does not cater to deaf learners. Conversely, too much emphasis on language does not work for non-verbal areas of activity such as music. Piaget (1970) believes that the most important source of cognition is the learners themselves. However, Vygotsky (1978), argues that the social environment could help the learner's cognitive development. To him, the social environment is an important factor, which helps the learner culturally adapt to new situations when needed. Bereiter (2002) argues that constructivism in schools is usually reduced to project-based learning, and advocates very inefficient learning and assessment procedures.

2.9 Literature Review

The literature review is designed to demonstrate the researcher's knowledge of a particular subject area, field, and discipline. Often, the literature review act as the foundation of the study.

Hart (1998:27) asserted that the literature review plays a role in discovering important variables relevant to the topic; synthesizing and gaining new perspective; identifying the relationship between ideas and practice; establishing the context of the topic or problem; rationalizing the significance of the problem; understanding the structure of the subject, and relating ideas and theory to applications. In this view, the literature review can also identify the gaps of information relevant to specific areas in which the researcher can significantly contribute to the literature and field.

There is limited literature that talks about effective remediation programs in developing countries. Thus, a small but growing body of literature addresses interventions for “learners who struggle academically” Richards – Tutor et.al. (2015), and only a handful of studies are in lower – middle income and low-income countries that provide an important base on which to build policy and program insights. This is in line with a review of studies on the effectiveness of remedial programs for English language learners. Cheng and Slavin (2012) found out that programs that showed consistently positive results had in common the use of extensive professional development, coaching, and cooperative learning. Respectively speaking, the theoretical framework and the literature are intrinsically linked as they are both used as a guide for logically developing and understanding the different. Simultaneously, the theoretical framework and literature can then be developed harmoniously, and then be used to support the data, interpret the findings, and underlying the recommendations.

2.9.1 Language Comprehension

Tompkins (2011) expressed that comprehension is a creative process that hinges on four skills that are phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. The difference between language comprehension and language production is also referred to as receptive and expressive language. Frequently, young learners’ ability to comprehend spoken language surpasses their capacity to produce grammatical speech Littlefield and Cook (2005); Mcdevitt et al.(2010). For effective communication, learners need to master the following rule systems, which are:

- Phonology refers to the speech sounds of a language and the rules for combining these sounds into larger components.

- Morphology, which includes the rules for joining the smaller units of meaning in a language into words. A morpheme can consist of one or more syllables.
- Syntax, which is the way language, merges to create phrases and sentences.
- Semantics, which denote the meaning, coupled with the words in a language.
- Pragmatics concerning the use of language to convey thoughts and feelings and communicate efficiently with other people Mcdevitt et.al. (2010).

2.9.2 Semantic development

Learners attain lexical words before grammatical words. Lexical words refer to words that are in some way, in an abstract or concrete sense linked to items or incidents in people's physical, social, and psychological milieu. Nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are categorized as lexical words. Grammatical or function words do not make sense in a solitary state but influence the meaning of other words or the interconnection between words or phrases. They refer to auxiliary verbs (e.g., have), articles (e.g., a the), prepositions (e.g., before), and conjunctions such as "but" and "although" Mcdevitt et al. (2010); Littlefield and Cook (2005).

In this regard, research has shown that learners have trouble with the use of grammatical words throughout the primary school phase. Learners' comprehension of abstract words develops later than that of concrete words. Studies recognize the following strategies to assist children's semantic progress:

- they should be exposed to regular conversations in their home language
- they should be taught the precise meaning of words and the inaccurate use of words should be corrected
- they must be encouraged to become keen readers
- examples should be used to clarifying the meaning of words Mcdevitt et al. (2010); Littlefield and Cook, 2005).

2.9.3 Syntactic Development

Even though syntax rules, which are used to join words into meaningful sentences, are difficult, children can acquire them fast. At first, children use only single words to communicate their thoughts. Words used in this way are referred to as “holophrases”. Learners frequently use telegraphic speech, which contains words that are indispensable to convey meaning and omit words that are not as important. When they begin school, most children are skilled in basic sentence construction but deficiencies in their syntactic ability are manifested throughout the primary as well as the secondary school phase. An increase in the extent of sentences is accompanied by an increase in syntactic intricacy. Children’s syntactic development can be promoted by:

- improving their telegraphic communication by repeating their sentences in a more complete form
- teaching them unusual forms of verbs and comparative adjectives
- explaining different sentence formations and allowing ample practice
- making them aware of the importance of applying grammatical rules in informal writing and public speaking Littlefield and Cook (2005); Mcdevitt, et al. (2010).



2.9.4 Morphological Development

Morphemes are also barriers to learning English as a second language in that they impact learners’ writing and speaking skills. However, this study did not look at morphemes as linguistic components on their own rather at whether learners lack the skill to apply it in writing and speaking in English second language. Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003) define morphology as the study of word formation and the internal structure of words. Fromkin et al. (2003) describe a morpheme as the minimal unit of linguistic meaning or grammatical function. According to Fromkin et al. (2003) morphemes combine according to the morphological rules of the language, i.e. words that can be analyzed into smaller parts. Morphology looks at how the smallest linguistic units (morphemes) are formed into complete words. Hamawand (2011) states that morphology is an essential subfield of linguistics, and further describes the structure and patterns of word formation in a language.

According to Yule (2010), two sets make up the category of bound morphemes and they are called derivational and inflectional morphemes. The derivational morphemes include suffixes and prefixes. Suffixes and prefixes are linguistic units that are added to a root word at either the beginning or the end of the word. For example, the word 'undressed' prefix un and suffix ed. Inflectional morphemes serve as grammatical markers that indicate tense, number, possession, or comparison, for example, the suffixes -s (or -es); 's (or s'); -ed; -en; -er; -est; and -ing. This study aimed at investigating whether learners use derivational and inflectional morphemes when answering their language comprehension.

According to Lieber (2010), there are different reasons why morphology is used. One reason is to form new words, for example, turning verbs into nouns or adjectives, for example, the verb amuse can be turned into the noun amusement and the adjective amusing. The other reason is that morphology is used when new words are not needed. For example, the word walk has many forms such as walk, walks, walked, walking. These different types of forms can be used in different grammatical contexts. When the word form is changed to fit in a particular grammatical context, this process is called inflection. According to Lieber (2010), inflectional word formation is word-formation that expresses grammatical distinctions like number (singular vs. plural), tense, (present vs. past), the person (first, second or third), and case (subject, object, possessive) and so on.

2.9.5 Development of Pragmatics

Pragmatics has to do with the verbal and nonverbal cues used for effective communication with other people. Learners start to attain pragmatic skills in their preschool years. Educators should be aware of cultural differences in sociolinguistic behavior to avoid misunderstandings. Some examples include the following: displaying of dispassionate facial expressions contradicting intense emotion; some cultures value silence and some associate too much talking with low intellectual ability; in some cultures, children are allowed to voice their opinions freely and in others the principle of "speak when you are spoken to" applies Littlefield and Cook (2005). Some learners have been taught that looking an adult in the eye is disrespectful; whereas some educators could interpret a learner's cast down look as insolence.

At the age of 12, most learners have sufficiently mastered the language to be able to converse with the people around them. The learning theory is founded on the behaviorist principles of Skinner's operant conditioning and Alfred Bandura's perception of learning through imitation. It perceives language as a trained behavior, which learners can learn employing operant conditioning, imitation, and modelling Littlefield and Cook (2005). Parents and caregivers shape or reinforce sounds that are similar to real words used in the home language and disregard sounds that do not resemble real words. They also provide a model of language that is more developed than the expressions that the learner used. Critics of the learning theory argue that the shaping of the learner's language by parents is inconsistent and that most of the language that learners are exposed to in daily life is deficient, badly formed, and rife with inaccuracies. It is also argued that the rate at which learners learn a language is simply too rapid to be clarified by reinforcement, shaping, and imitation Littlefield and Cook (2005).

Chomsky postulated a nativist theory, which views language as an instinctive human capacity, which is prompted into further development by another inborn human trait, the language acquisition device (LAD). According to Chomsky (1981) as quoted in Littlefield and Cook (2005:292), the LAD is a brain mechanism with the specific function of identifying and learning the rules of language. A minimal amount of language input and cognitive skill is required to activate the (LAD). Nativists propose that the level of complexity, abstraction, or grammatical accuracy of this minimal language input is not a deciding factor in the development of normal language proficiency. Critics of this theory counter that learners whose only language experience or input is obtained from television, for instance, do not develop normal language proficiency. Another critique is that the nativist theory advocates a biologically programmed universal grammar, yet has not successfully discovered one common set of language rules that can be used in all languages Littlefield and Cook (2005) ; Mcdevitt et. al. (2010).

According to Tokoro, in comparison with and unlike views of linguists such as Chomsky, language is not a completely rule-governed static system; to a certain extent, it is a system we all create together. Therefore, every time you talk, you create new meanings or you may change the meaning of the words (Tokoro and Mogi, 2007).

Piaget's cognitive developmental theory proposes that language is but one of a number of varying skills and appropriate language development depends on general cognitive maturity. This observation is related to Piaget's stages of cognitive development. The reasoning behind this view is based on the rationale that only when learners reach a particular level of cognitive maturity where they need symbols to represent things, do they need to use words and develops language. The cognitive ability then interacts with the milieu demands and language experience to produce progressively more mature language proficiency Tokoro and Mogi (2007).

In addition, the social interactionist theory postulates that language development is dependent on children's social contact and communication with other people. Such language socialization entails direct language instruction as well as more indirect ways of expressing proper language interaction. This is a particular form of speech used when conversing with young children that vary from a normal speech in tone, pitch and includes more questions than when directed at adults. Learners then internalize the language, whereby they first use words in their dealings with other people and then steadily integrates it into their daily thought patterns. The language also has a functional aspect for the human species. Through language, learners increase their knowledge, procure meaningful interpersonal relationships, manage their behavior, and manipulate the behavior of other people Mcdevitt et al. (2010); Littlefield and Cook (2005).

Most township learners speak only their home language with parents and siblings. Out of a group of two hundred Grade 6 learners (at the two township schools understudy), only three learners spoke English as a home language. Generally, township learners have difficulty in understanding more advanced and abstract terms and phrases. This means that an educator can never assume that learners understand all words in written text because township learners display several difficulties in verbal and written English communication. They often confuse tenses and gender, and sometimes they refer boys to as "she" and vice versa. They also struggle with the pronunciation of several English words. Sometimes parents of ESL learners are not proficient in English and are unable to assist these learners with homework tasks.

In general, instructions have to be repeated and explained to quite a several learners during a lesson period. The more confident learners tend to raise their hands, while the more timid learners tend to walk up to her desk to enquire. Some learners are unsure but do not ask for help. They turn up the next day without homework. Very often, the researcher has to rely on code-switching, where he translates instructions in the home language of a learner who has difficulty understanding instructions in English Second Language. Long or complicated tasks usually have to be explained further in groups with the assistance of their peers to cater for the remedial learners who would otherwise get confused.

2.10 Remedial Programme on the Improvement of Learners' Proficiency in

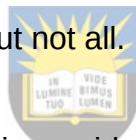
English Second Language.

Sharples, Slavin, and Chambers (2011) aver that practicing reading at an early age minimizes the percentage of low achievers, that is, the earlier learners read the fewer the number of low achievers. A supplemental reading program will be adopted as the remedial reading program for the improvement of English proficiency as a second language. This program consists of rereading unfamiliar text until a satisfactory level of fluency is reached. Lesaux (2012) postulates that reading is a dynamic and multifaceted process that requires continued development if learners are to keep pace with the increasing demands of school texts and tasks. However, learners from Grade 4 onwards are reading to learn. This implies that these learners begin to reach higher levels of reading competencies. These levels include reading for meaning, interpretive reading, inferential reading, analytical reading, and critical reading Hungi et al. (2010).

Reading and writing are structured and purposive arts Olajide (2010: 195). This means that how a text is written affects how it will be read. Thus, both skills are fundamental to intellectual development. It has been argued that interventions in the learning process, such as remedial teaching, can help less successful language learners improve, not only in the target language proficiency but also in motivation Yang (2010); Jadal (2012) and Cheng (2014). Remedial reading is a strategy that implements assisted reading, reading while listening, and paired reading. The approach implements the factors and instructional strategies mentioned above.

Literature has shown that remedial reading is an evidence-based strategy designed to increase reading fluency and comprehension Therrien (2004). It has also indicated to achieve comprehension; learners should read the provided material three to four times. This will not only improve their proficiency but also give them an understanding of the material read.

It is important that learners have access to programs that meet their requirements and that remedial teaching has content that helps them to “consolidate basic knowledge, master their learning strategies, strengthen their confidence and increase the effectiveness of their learning” Cheng (2014:862). Learners are better equipped with basic skills to improve their communication and writing skills. Typically, remedial learners are not struggling because of their intellectual abilities but instead because they are struggling with one subject area like reading, writing, or mathematics. This implies that learners should be taught how to create, adjust their strategies, and assimilate learning activities into their world. When learners perform an activity, they can do some part of it on their own, but not all.



They need an educator to scaffold their new ideas by assisting them in completing the task. Educators need to keep tasks within learners' zone of proximal development slightly higher than the level of independent functioning to provide challenge and for learning to occur. Teaching methods that are based on learner-centered instruction accord with constructivist learning theory which has the most popular and dominant perspective in remedial education for learners with difficulties Ken (2006). The educator breaks down the task into smaller segments for learners to learn and complete the task easily. These techniques are more helpful to the low achievers who need more care than normal learners due to their learning difficulties need.

Intervention programs involving comprehension-building skills, like remedial reading, strengthen vocabulary McCardle et al. (2001). This method of practice increases language skills and builds general knowledge setting a foundation for basic life skills. Basic skills in the use of English as a second language can only be instilled in the minds of learners if they are exposed to prolonged periods of studying the language. Therefore, both educators and learners should be willing to go the extra mile in improving learners' language proficiency.

It is evident from studies carried out on learners receiving remedial teaching that they had better motivational levels and were more likely to succeed academically than those who did not take advantage of such an intervention Jadal (2012). In this way, the researcher is hoping for an improvement in the learner's proficiency outcomes by engaging the low achievers in remediation.

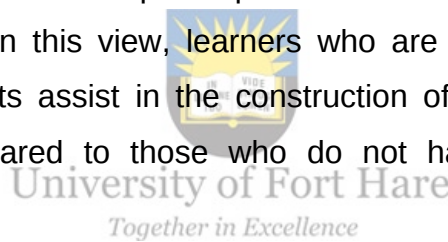
2.11 Lack of English Proficiency Affects the Learners' Performance in their

Examinations

When learners' proficiency in the English language is high, it will improve the academic performance of such learners positively. Nevertheless, where proficiency in English is lacking in any academic setting, it will lower the academic performance of such learners. To support this, Sclebusch (2000, 28) states that the high failure rate at schools is caused by, among other factors, a lack in English proficiency of learners before entering the senior phase (Grade 7-9). Alarming, in the Eastern Cape, only 20 percent of Grade 2 pupils from the 2001 cohort went on to pass the NSC exam in 2011. This implies that because learners normally fail to understand the target language in the lower grades, they are unlikely to master that language at secondary and university levels. Hence, McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2013) maintain that educators and learners should use the second language rather than the first language in the classrooms. Educators may, therefore, need specific teaching strategies to help learners with poor English proficiency to perform better in English as a subject.

Thus, the researchers observed that the performance of learners in Mathematics examinations at the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) is poor due to reading ability. This indicates that lack of or low proficiency in the English Language is one of the factors contributing to poor academic performance. Although reading fluency and comprehension are important skills to acquire, as they are essential skills for success in both schools and later in life, many children do not acquire the necessary skills for achieving proficiency. According to a recent study, 40% of fourth-graders do not have the skills and knowledge to adequately perform the necessary grade-level work Bursuck et al. (2004). Similarly, Calhoon (2005) found 59% of fourth-grade learners are performing below a basic literacy level on standardized reading tests.

The research findings of two tertiary institutions in Oman show a strong, positive relationship between English Language performance and academic achievement Roche and Harrington (2013). Therefore, the researcher finds it important to ensure English proficiency at the primary level as it affects learners' performance at higher institutions and in every sphere of life. The pre-PIRLS (2011) showed that Grade 4 pupils from rural areas and townships are two to two and a half years behind urban children in reading (Howie and Van Staden, 2012). Educators should focus their teaching on meaning construction where learners will be able to assimilate, internalize, and integrate the new information with the information they already possess. Seed house (2004) echoed the importance of meaning construction and fluency in L2 classrooms when he suggested the simultaneous dual focus on form and accuracy together with meaning and fluency in L2 classroom as the best way of enhancing learners' level of proficiency. Vygotsky encourages educators not to concentrate too much on teaching concrete facts, but to push their learners into an abstract world as a means of assisting them to develop multiple skills that will enable them to deal with complex learning tasks. In this view, learners who are exposed to rich language environments where adults assist in the construction of language, develop better language skills as compared to those who do not have a rich social context opportunity.



ESL learners often experience difficulties regarding assessment when they are expected to write academically, using the correct terminology about a specific subject they are assessed in (Nel and Booyesen (2015). Nel and Booyesen (2015) suggest that to accommodate limited language proficiency and provide ESL learners opportunities to demonstrate mastery of knowledge, it is important to use various kinds of assessment strategies, such as practical application, besides written and oral tasks. Learners can be encouraged to speak in the second language all the time at school to familiarise themselves with the language to improve their proficiency in the target language.

2.11.1 Learning as an Active, Social Process

Social constructivists like Piaget and Vygotsky view learning as an active process in which learners should learn to discover principles, concepts, and facts for themselves. For the social constructivist, the reality is not something that we can discover because it does not pre-exist before our social invention of it. Kukla (2000) argues that reality is constructed by our activities and that people, together with other members of a society, invent the properties of the world. Other constructivist scholars agree with this and emphasize that individuals make meanings through interactions with each other, and with the environment, they live in. Knowledge is thus a product of humans and is socially and culturally constructed Kukla (2000). They all agree that meaningful learning occurs when individuals are engaged in social activities. Many black learners have very little, if any, exposure to English; in many situations, the educator is the only source of English input and exposure Murtin (2013).

2.11.2 Development of Social Understanding

Self is the qualities, emotions, and beliefs that people have about themselves. Psychologists differentiate between two features of the self. The I-self is the conscious awareness that you exist as a separate, unique person with your thoughts, ideas, feelings experiences, and actions. The Me-self is what you know about yourself. It pertains to classifications like gender and age. It also refers to objective knowledge that people have about their character traits, physical and intellectual characteristics Littlefield and Cook (2005).

From Grade 4, learners begin to view themselves in more complex, physical, and psychological terms. They start to distinguish between different aspects of themselves such as their academic accomplishments and personal popularity or lack of it. These learners are aware of the real self and the ideal or “supposed to be” self. They recognize and are aware of their capabilities. By Grade 6, learners already know the tasks that they excel at as well as the ones in which they are not so good. Learners in the intermediate phase become more aware of the difference between effort and aptitude and how they could determine whether they accomplish tasks or not.

They start to base their sense of self on how their achievements measure up to that of their peers. This social evaluation helps learners to be more realistic when

evaluating themselves. In general, most learners in the intermediate phase have good self-esteem. Learners vary in how they obtain their general sense of self-worth, in the sense that they decide which aspects are important to them, whether it be an academic success or athletic achievement. At this stage, girls start to appraise their physical appearance in a much more critical sense than boys do McDevitt et al. (2010); Littlefield and Cook (2005). In addition, in the intermediate phase, girls pay more attention to their appearance compared to previous grades. In this regard, the researcher observed learners who need remediation were boys than girls. This implies that girls have already familiarised themselves with the English Second Language at this stage due to their personalities that are different from boys.

2.11.3 Learners Attitude towards English Second Language

Attitudes toward the language are of particular importance because the greater the learner's interest in the language and its culture, the easier learning will be Mishan (2005). The attitude is linked to motivation as a positive attitude will imply motivation to act positively because what and how much is learned is influenced by the learner's motivation to act. Gardner and MacIntyre (1992) quoted in Mitchell & Myles (2004) explain motivation as the desire to reach a goal, the effort devoted towards the goal, and the satisfaction obtained in doing the activities needed to reach the goal. Conversely, low achievers can make better relationships with their peers and improve their attitude towards learning, as remedial teaching helps learners find a match between their characteristics and the school environment so that their academic and behavior demands can be met" Cheng (2014: 862). In a Spanish study, Valero and Jimenez (2015) examined the possible existence of a specific language learning difficulty.

They further interviewed educators and tutors to detect low performing learners and to determine if the difficulty existed only in the English class, or if it was generalizable to other subjects. The study showed that 79 % of the learners who failed English classes failed other subjects as well. Only 21 % of the cases found a specific difficulty in learning English as a second language. Many linguists argue that when it comes to learning a second language it is crucial to first have a solid foundation in one's first language Taylor and Coetzee (2013).

Consequently, to adequately express their experiences through reading and writing and articulate their knowledge, children require an environment that uses the language they speak Gacheche (2010). In addition, learners' age, data shows proficiency levels are still a concern. To curb this, proficiency of the mother tongue should be encouraged as it influences positively on second language learning. Hence, Lightbown, Spada (2013) articulate that the proficiency of the mother tongue also has an impact on second language learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), language plays two critical roles in cognitive development, namely: it is the main means by which adults transmit information to children, and language itself becomes a powerful tool of intellectual adaptation. In addition, Vygotsky further sees "private speech" as a means for learners to plan activities and strategies and therefore aid their development.

Therefore, language is considered an accelerator to thinking/understanding. Gardner cited by Lightbown and Spada (2000: 33) indicate... "... the positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in second language learning". This implies that sustaining motivation to learn is dependent on the learner's confidence in his or her potential to learn. This links with Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" Vygotsky (1978). In this regard, learners gain confidence and motivation to embark on challenges that are more complex by experiencing the successful completion of challenging tasks. Instrumental and integrative motivation are both important in that learners use L2 language for enhancing cultural immersion and social intercourse and to pass their examinations Gardner and Lambert (1972) cited in Brown (2007).

Ushioda (2008) describes intrinsic motivation as about self-fulfillment in terms of satisfaction acquired through personal concepts of reward, which might include the attainment of knowledge. Similarly, the motivation that comes from the individual and the learning situation yields a positive attitude towards successful learning. It might then follow that the reasons for a learner's motivation, or lack thereof, can affect the learning strategies that are chosen, and the extent to which they are used – the learner's motivation can affect not only what is studied, but how it is studied Leaver et al. (2005). Vygotsky further believes that young children are curious and actively involved in their learning and the discovery and development of new understandings/schema.

2.11.4 Development of a Second Language

Learners must be exposed to a second language as early as possible to enable them to communicate effectively by mastering the five rule systems that language consists of. This means that early exposure to a second language is essential to attain sound pronunciation and to master the syntactic composition of the second language even though research indicates that there is no ideal time to start learning a second language. Other benefits of getting an early start on second language learning include better reading and vocabulary skills. This also makes learners aware of the world as a global community with a multicultural character.

Different social and cultural backgrounds contribute to two approaches in second language acquisition: additive bilingualism and subtractive bilingualism. In additive bilingualism, a person learns a second language while maintaining the first language; in subtractive bilingualism, acquisition of a second language is to the detriment and loss of the first language. In addition, the value placed on the second language by the family and the community, influences, which approach will gain the upper hand in a learner's acquisition of the second language. This implies that learners are more prone to show subtractive bilingualism where the second language is thought of as superior to the first one. Of equal value is placed on both languages, learners may demonstrate an additive acquisition in their language learning (Moreno, 2007).

In this light, they can acquire both languages at the same time or start learning the second after they have acquired the first language. This can only be possible if learners start to learn the second language at the age of three because they can attain fluency in both languages. In this regard, numerous studies reflect that when learners are confident in both languages, they are more likely to accomplish creative and cognitive tasks Mcdevitt et al. (2010). Thus, educators of ESL learners should acknowledge that acquiring a second language is a multifaceted process, which takes time and ample practice. Simultaneously, other researches indicate that it could take seven to ten years to gain academic proficiency in a second language Moreno (2007).

In particular, those township learners who come from families where their home languages are languages other than English, yet the language of learning and teaching at the school is English. Hence, most of the township learners are not adequately proficient to understand curriculum content exclusively presented in English. In most cases, parents and other family members also have difficulty speaking and understanding English, as they are illiterate. Similarly, these learners have insufficient exposure to English in their home environment and this affects them academically as English is the language of learning and teaching. Thus, impoverished circumstances have far-reaching effects on factors such as emergent literacy, where media or reading material is not readily available. Consequently, there is the danger of subtractive bilingualism where learners may lose proficiency in their home languages and yet still not be proficient in English.

Learners who have challenges in English as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) have difficulty with their receptive and expressive ability. Decoding and understanding written instructions prove to be a challenge to them, hence the need to translate written instructions into simple English for learners to understand what they should do. Hence, a small percentage of township learners can read instructions and then complete activities independently. Simultaneously, many township learners have difficulty in expressing themselves using complete English sentences. They tend to use simple one-word answers or just do not answer any questions at all. Alternatively, educators usually assist learners to complete sentences - using the words given by the learner and allowing the learner to repeat and complete the sentence on his or her own. Some learners whose home language is English are proficient in spoken English, but sometimes make grave grammatical and spelling errors. Examples of errors include:

- the frequent omission of prepositions like “a” and “in”
- leaving out the “s” in plural words
- confusing the gender prepositions “he” and “she”
- omitting the “i” in the double sound “ie” resulting in words like a friend being written as “frend”
- leaving sentences and words incomplete, especially words such as “someone(e)”.

Grammatical and spelling errors sometimes devoid meaning written work. Where this occurs, the learner has to be asked to explain the intended meaning of the sentence. This will help the learner to gain proficiency in both spoken and written activities.

2.11.5 Barriers to Learning a Second Language

There are numerous barriers to learning a second language, for example, environment (such as poverty, socio-linguistic, underdevelopment, place, and attitudes towards learning), age, motivation, phonetics, and semantic concepts, general exposure to English, poor foundation skills/early English exposure and cognitive academic writing. Additionally, there is an important aspect that can also be considered as a barrier to learning a second language that is “mother tongue”, which affects second language learning negatively. In contrast, Krashen (2004) means a second language learner may transfer what he/she wants to say from the mother tongue to the second language especially in grammar, which does not always have the same meaning in one’s mother tongue and the target second language.

Davidson (2012) talks of “motivation”, which according to him is a key part of learning a language. Davidson (2012) argues that the more time one spends during the day speaking his or her second language, the better at it she or he is going to be. On the other hand, Bibi, Bilal, Nawaz, Rehman, and Sheikh (2014) define motivation as an aspect that is considered as an integral part in the achievement of any goal, a process that influences the success of second language learning. According to Bibi et al. (2014) motivation is an important factor that has a positive influence in any educational learning process especially in learning a second language.

Since learning a second language is usually a challenge for most learners Kaweera (2013) all language activities must occur in a warm accommodating, accepting, and relaxed environment for the learners. Teaching should be stimulating and fun to ensure active participation and interaction. In addition to this, teachers should be very aware of the possible barriers learners experience to remediate accordingly. Moats and Hancock (2012) explain difficulties experienced by ESL learners in more depth. ESL learners have challenges with language comprehension, as they do not understand the meaning of the words they hear.

This could be because of difficulties when distinguishing between sounds and/or discriminating between similar sounds, due to the English language having an irregular system of the letter and sound correspondence, such as the sound /f/ is represented by /ph/. Nel, Nel, and Hugo (2012) further explain that ESL learners struggle with the fluency of speech as the ability to decode words in a second language is often hampered. Learning to read a transparent orthography is simpler because there is a stronger relationship between each letter and its corresponding sound than in a more opaque orthography. Some linguistic units are more important in some languages than others are whilst in English.

Broom (2004) and Le Roux (2005) found that the influence of a different grammatical, morphological and semantic structure of an African Language might cause ESL learners to have lower language proficiency levels in English, resulting in learners' poor application of skills required for reading.

2.11.6 Mediation and the Importance of Language.

The emphasis here is on the learner as an active "maker of meanings". The role of the educator is to enter into a dialogue with the learner, in an attempt to understand the meaning that the learners attached to the material to be learned and to help them then to refine the understanding until it corresponds with understanding the educator, as the more knowledgeable one in this particular situation, holds Atherton (2005). The learner is involved in making sense as an active individual, the role of the active environment, as well as the culture and background of the learner, cannot be denied to play a role in the process of finding new meaning. Rajabi and Ketabi (2012:707) affirm that learners who are said to have acquired a language are those who can align themselves with the culture of the target language.

To have full mastery of a language, individuals need to be competent in reading, speaking, listening, and writing. These four skills, as they are referred to, are interrelated because using a language generally requires using more than one skill at a time. Yet the four skills do not exist as separate entities within the language. However, learners can be more competent in one skill than another.

Language educators must teach learners in a way that encourages mastery of all four skills. Learners from different language backgrounds have trouble in different skills, for instance, reading and writing in English might not be a problem for a certain learner, but find the sounds of the language more difficult to produce. On the other hand, learners from orally based cultures may find it easier to speak than to write. Some learners can speak a lot, but cannot understand much of what they hear. The task for the language educator is to provide instruction that facilitates the development of all four skills.

2.12 Micro and Macro skills of Language Proficiency

According to Grocer (2010:131) listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills must be taught together when teaching learners to use the language as a communication tool. These skills are very crucial for the remedial program as they are the main skills and some learners may not have had opportunities to acquire them. They may need ample time to use them to fully participate in the classroom. Additionally, language proficiency is generally defined as the ability to speak, read, write, and comprehend a language. This implies that academic language proficiency refers to the ability to speak, read, write and comprehend academic language, which entails content-specific vocabulary related to subject area knowledge and terminology, interpretation and analysis of academic data or text, and using and applying complex sentence structures Jordaan (2015).

2.12.1 Listening

According to Brown (2001), a good listener should be able to retain chunks of language in short-term memory as well as to discriminate between the distinctive sounds of English and manage to recognize reduced forms of words. Consequently, the learner who has good listening skills should be able to process speech at different levels of delivery and process speech containing pauses, errors, corrections, and other performance variables. This learner should further be able to recognize grammatical word classes, (for example, nouns and verbs), systems (for example tense, agreement, and pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms. Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) posit that learners should be able to recognize cohesive devices in spoken discourse and be able to identify the communicative functions of utterances,

according to situations, participants, and goals. This could only be possible from events and ideas described where learners are expected to predict outcomes, infer links and connections between events, deduce causes and effects, and detect such relations as main ideas, supporting ideas, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification. Thus, good listeners should be able to distinguish between literal and implied meaning and should be able to develop a means of retaining information Corbett (2003).

2.12.2 Development of Listening Skills

During their first year, infants learn to distinguish between the speech sounds that are crucial for understanding their home language. This ability continues to be developed throughout early and middle childhood. This implies that young children are more intent on the context of what a speaker is uttering than on every single sound or word. Occasionally, this overdependence on context leads to a misunderstanding of the spoken message, as learners do not listen carefully enough. Hence, older children are aware that good listening also requires an understanding of the spoken message. In this view, primary school children are not always sure of what to do if they do not understand a spoken instruction or explanation. For instance, when children get older, they recognize that some spoken messages are ambiguous and could have various possible meanings (Dowling, 2010).

The following strategies can be applied to promote learners' listening skills:

- Limit the quantity of information presented at one time in recognition that the attention span of young learners is very short.
- Encourage learners to ask questions if they did not understand
- Teach critical listening skills (Dowling, 2010).

In general, for too many learners, instructions have to be repeated and explained during a lesson period. The more confident learners tend to raise their hands, the more timid learners tend to walk up to her desk to enquire. This indicates that some learners are unsure but do not ask for help. They turn up the next day without homework. The MKO learners could translate the instructions in the home language of a learner who had difficulty understanding instructions in English.

Long or complicated tasks usually have to be explained and completed in pairs or groups, because most of the Grade 6 learners would otherwise get confused.

2.12.3 Speaking

Brown (2007) defines speaking as the productive process of turning thoughts into meaningful language. The meaningful language construction is, therefore, the main purpose of the interactive phenomenon, which involves first receiving and processing pieces of information and then producing a reactive response to the received information and properly forming that response according to the context in which communication takes place. For a learner to have acquired the speaking skill they should be able to produce chunks of the language of different lengths as well as English stress patterns. Corbett (2003) posits that they must be able to use an adequate number of words to accomplish the purpose.

Another important micro skill is to be able to monitor oral production and use strategic devices, for example, pauses, fillers, self-corrections, and backtracking, to enhance the clarity of the message. A good speaker should be able to use grammatical word classes (for example, nouns and verbs), systems (for example, tense agreements and pluralization), word order, patterns, and rules. Learners should also be able to use cohesive devices and should be able to accomplish appropriately communicative functions according to situations, participants, and goals. Everson (2009) suggests that registers and conventions should be used appropriately in conversations.

In this regard, the learner should be able to convey links between events and communicate relations such as the main idea, supporting details, new and given information, generalizations, and exemplification. Additionally, the learner should be able to use facial features and body language along with verbal language to convey meaning. Kayi (2006) argues that today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve learners' communicative skills, because, only in that way can learners express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriately in each communicative situation.

In this view, to develop second language proficiency in learners' spoken language, some speaking activities can be applied to L2 classroom settings. Hence, this study looks at the remedial program to encourage learners' second language proficiency. To break the barriers to oral communication, Kayi (2006) further advises educators to use "interacting" to teach speaking to English Second Language learners. This includes communicative language teaching and collaborative learning. In addition to this, Hui (2011) believes that educators should reduce their speaking time in class while increasing learners' speaking time so that collaborative learning takes place.

Interventions in speaking skills:

- If a learner does not use appropriate grammar such as subject and verb tenses, the educator should make sure learners understands that sentences express thoughts about a subject and what the verb is or does (e.g he/she/it add 's' to the verb, you/we/they do not add 's' to the verb).

Make sure the learners understand the concept of a plurality (e.g. Cat, cats) Make sure the learners understand the concept of verb tenses by demonstrating Present Continuous (what "is happening,"), Simple past tense (what "has already happened"), and Future Simple (what "will happen"), through the use of objects, pictures, and/or written sentences.

- If a learner mispronounces certain speech sounds in conversation. Identify the auditory, tactile, or visual cue that stimulates the correct production of the target phoneme. The educator should provide this cue during oral reading when the learner needs a reminder.

Learners should also be encouraged to take note of the difficult words encountered in class and practice them with peers regularly to improve their second language proficiency in spoken language. During the oral reading, the educator is encouraged to underline targeted words and reinforce the learners for correct production. Learners should receive enough attention so that they feel the need to complete their reading.

- If a learner has difficulty in learning new vocabulary, the educator should produce new vocabulary words with definitions that are understandable to the learners. Pictures, objects, and new words should be provided together to

lighten the burden for remedial learners. The educator should also sort new vocabulary by feature, category, function, comparison, and association. Break down root words, prefixes, and suffixes (morphology) and present them on flashcards.

- Learners should also be able to identify the synonyms and antonyms for new words. Select a limited number of vocabulary words; and have learners develop a vocabulary log that contains word, simple, and explanatory sentences to illustrate the word's meaning.

2.12.4 Development of Speaking Skills

The length and detail of learners' conversation increase with age. This implies that many preschool learners usually struggle with the pronunciation of *r* and *th*. At the age of six, they are likely to have accomplished this but may still have some difficulty with consonant combinations such as *spl* and *thr*. Thus, learners become progressively able to match their language to the requirements of the occasion and the character traits of their listeners Dowling (2010). Consequently, at the approximate age of three, children can scale down or simplify their speech when addressing younger children. This needs enough time for them to become more adept at delivering narratives as their creative use of language expands during primary school years. This growing skill in spoken language can be attributed to better control of the lips and tongue, the advancement of semantic and syntactic knowledge, abstract reasoning capacity, and definitely repetition and practice. To encourage speaking skills, educators should regularly have verbal interactions with learners in the target language. Creativity in spoken language should be encouraged through stories, poems, etc Dowling (2010).

2.12.5 Reading

Reading, in general, is a complex cognitive skill, involving many sub-skills, processes, and knowledge sources ranging from the basic lower-level processes involved in decoding the print to higher-level skills involving syntax, semantics, and discourse, and even to skills of text representation and integration of ideas with the reader's global knowledge Nassaji (2011:173). According to Nel, Nel & Hugo (2012:89), being a proficient reader is a fundamental requirement to succeed in life and since reading is

a basic skill for all academic subjects failure in school can be traced back to inadequate reading skills. In a school's setups, most learning takes place in the form of reading, and being a proficient reader is fundamental in life. Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) assert that a good reader should be able to distinguish between the distinctive graphemes and orthographic patterns of English. He or she should also be able to retain chunks of the language of different lengths in short-term memory and should process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose. Corbett (2003) purports that the pupil should also be able to recognize a core of words and interpret word order patterns and their significance.

In this view, learners should manage to recognize grammatical word classes (for example nouns and verbs), systems (for example tense, agreement, and pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms. They should further be capable of recognizing cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among clauses. Recognizing the rhetorical forms of written discourse and their significance for interpretation is another micro skill that should be possessed by a good reader. This means that a good reader should also be able to infer context that is not explicit by using world knowledge and should recognize the communicative function of written text, according to form and purpose. After reading, Corbett (2003) maintains that a good reader should be able to distinguish between literal and implied meaning.

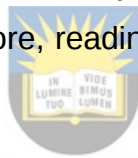
Similarly, there is no doubt that reading is an integral part of literacy and a pillar to the communication of information. In countries where literacy is highly valued, it is almost impossible for people to live without the ability to read. Hence, second language learners, teachers, and researchers would eventually recognize the critical role of reading in second language learning (Anderson, 1999; Lee, 2007; Renandya, 2007). Simultaneously, like one is reading ability in his L1, efficient L2 reading aids learners to gain language skills very fast (Anderson, 1999)

2.12.6 Writing

According to Brown (2001), a learner who has developed the writing skill should be able to produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order patterns.

They should further be able to use acceptable grammatical systems as well as cohesive devices in written discourse. In this regard, learners should be able to use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse. In addition, they should be able to appropriately accomplish the communicative function of written texts according to form and purpose, Everson (2009). Based on these arguments, these learners should manage to convey links and connections between events and communicate relations such as the main idea, supporting details, new and given information, generalizations, and exemplification as they would have enough exposure and guidance from their educators.

Jhingran (2011:17) affirms that reading is a foundational skill on which all formal education depends. Good reading skills assist learners to access the curriculum. Reading with comprehension leads to learning. This means that reading forms the basis of all language skills, particularly writing because the ability to write depends on the ability to read, and what is written can only be meaningful if it can be read (Stahl in Phajane & Mokhele 2013). Therefore, reading and writing are mutually supportive and intertwined.



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2.12.7 The development of Language Skills in Grade 6 Learners

According to (Stahl in Phajane & Mokhele 2013), at the age of twelve, the learner's receptive vocabulary is approximately 50 000 words and it increases to about 80 000 words by secondary school level. Thus, an increase in cognitive ability enables learners to use more abstract words and phrases in their communication. Hence, different meanings associated with intonation remain a challenge for remedial learners. Thus, learners struggle with passive full sentences right up to the adolescence stage. Additionally, pragmatic language aptitude continues to develop, enabling learners to correct ambiguity in their language use and that of others. This makes learners of this age understand the social rules of communication and they know when it is acceptable to adhere to or overstep social boundaries, such as repeating what someone said to show either interest or disrespect (Littlefield & Cook, 2005).

Simultaneously, learners in the intermediate phase show progressive understanding of chronological words such as “before” and “after”, as well as expressions of comparison such as “smaller than” or “as cold as” than those at the foundation phase. Respectively speaking, they still need formal instruction in irregular forms of verbs and adjectives - especially those in the past tense, such as “lie” and “lay”, as they tend to have difficulty in discerning which of these should be “lay” and “laid” in the past tense to guide them. Hence, it is common for learners in this phase to interpret messages literally. Thus, pronunciation dexterity is achieved at about age eight. They take a listener’s knowledge and viewpoints into consideration during conversations. In the intermediate phase, learners can conduct prolonged conversations about concrete issues. They further display linguistic creativity and are skilled in word games and rhymes (Mcdevitt, et al, 2010).

Additionally, the language that boys use during play contains more vocal conflict, slang, and swear words than that of girls. Girls’ communication with other girls is comprised of talk concerning emotions, more questions, and efforts to handle and control interactions employing vocal persuasion. At this stage, learners can use language to articulate their personal experiences (Mcdevitt, et al, 2010). Therefore, learners’ level of language development is an important factor in their ability to read. Generally, language skills are directly related to achievement at school and are divided into the following categories: vocabulary, language comprehension, correct language usage, correct sentence construction, reading, and spelling.

2.13 Methods to Learn English as a Second Language

2.13.1 The Communicative Approach

The Communicative Approach as discussed by Chomsky in Lighthouse (2012) earlier on encompasses all types of learning behaviors with varied forms of teaching. This emphasizes that the communication within the classroom embraces discussion and expression either in pairs or in groups. In this view, learners’ needs are being responded to through the communicative process as opposed to the will of the lecturer. The correction of errors is very subtle through this approach. For example, if a learner cannot pronounce a word, instead of the educator asking the learner to repeat and repeat until correct, the entire class is involved in repeating the word.

Thus, this creates a bond within the classroom, and the learner with the difficulty is not singled out. This action raises the confidence of all the learners as they can express themselves without fear of ridicule and promotes unity among the learners as they work collectively.

In this regard, the good thing about the communicative approach is that it makes learners speak the language even at a beginner level and they are usually enthusiastic about this. One negative aspect is that the study of grammar is somewhat pushed to the side and pupils find it increasingly difficult to be aware of how a language works as it is the case at these institutions. In English, a communicative approach comprises of grammatical, sociolinguistics, and strategic competences. Canale and Swain in Shawer (2010:1) suggest that grammatical competence involves developing learners' knowledge of language features, which include vocabulary, word and sentence formation, and spelling.

Likewise, sociolinguistic competence suggests developing the ability to use appropriate spoken and written language, whereas strategic competence involves developing learners' communication strategies to overcome their communication problems. Wenden in Shawer (2010:2) believes that learning strategies in the communicative approach are steps or mental operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials to store, retrieve and use knowledge, whereas communication strategies are the techniques learners use when there is a gap between their knowledge of the language and their communicative intent. Alternatively, the communicative approach implies that learners learn and discover on their own and at their own pace.

Based on the Cognitive Approach, Chomsky in Lighthouse (2012) believes that language acquisition is a gradual build-up of knowledge that increases competence within the language. In Chomsky's view, a very important factor in language learning emerged, and that was allowing students to make errors in the language. This, in turn, empowered the students to create their own rules, and most importantly learn from their mistakes.

Chomsky in Lighthouse (2012) further highlights that it is also a ground-breaking approach that turns the attention of the classroom from the teacher to the students. Rather than simply recite what the educator wants to hear, the learners are free to make errors and by these errors, they understand more of the language and where they went wrong.

2.13.2 The Language Experience Approach

The Language Experience Approach is one of the most efficient ways to initiate reading. It is child-centered and shows that the learner's thoughts and language are valued. Field (2008) posits that learners will generate and learn to read material that stems from their own experience as the approach uses the learner's own words as the basis for beginning reading. Ideally, this material will be predictable and readable as the learner will begin to read words, they already know and use. According to Sugiyono (2011), the Language Experience Approach demonstrates to learners the link between what they say and its written form. Edhitin (2000) concurs with advocates of language experience that the central principle is to use the learner's vocabulary, language patterns, and background of experiences to create reading texts, making reading an especially meaningful and enjoyable process.

For many learners, learning to read their own words, in the meaningful context of their own dictated accounts, is easier than grappling with the unfamiliar language and contexts of a published reading program. Brown (2001) proposes that although dictated accounts and the selections in a published reader may be similar in some ways, learners will invariably perceive the dictated accounts to be more relevant, significant, and engaging. This is because they are connected to the learner's own experiences and because they are created while the learner watches.

According to Edhitin (2000), the flexible nature of the Language Experience Approach allows each educator to tailor instruction to the specific interests and needs of the individual learner. For example, learners' personal and cultural backgrounds are readily reflected in their dictated accounts, especially when they are encouraged to base their accounts on their experiences outside of school.

This individualization occurs within a structure that is the same for everyone. Lightbrown and Spada (2006) maintain that reading is easier when the text matches the learner's oral language patterns and is aligned with the learner's experiences.

Sugiyano (2011) posits that the Language Experience Approach recognizes the importance of the language the learner brings to school. He further highlights that it is a 'total process' that involves thinking, speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and it requires more personal involvement from the learner than merely reading a storybook. In this regard, the non-competitiveness of the Language Experience Approach, according to Edhitin (2000) means that there is a positive impact on the learner's self-esteem. This is essential for all learners, and particularly, learners who are new to the English language. Brown (2001) contends that the Language Experience Approach requires a significant time input from the educator. It is particularly suitable for a small group of learners. He further alluded that educators must use modelling and re-casting sufficiently to help learners progress their language skills. Therefore, the content of the story is dictated by the learner's experience, and if this is limited then it may restrict the material available to work with.



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2.13.3 Phonic Method of Teaching Reading

The phonic method is a way of teaching reading that stresses the acquisition of letter-sound correspondences and their use in reading and spelling. The primary focus of phonics instruction is to help beginning readers understand how letters are linked to sounds (phonemes) to form letter-sound correspondence and spelling patterns and to help them learn how to apply this knowledge in their reading. The instruction may be provided systematically or incidentally. Brown (2001) posits that the phonic method relies on learners being taught the alphabet first as they learn the names of the letters and the sounds they make. Once they have learned the letter sounds they will begin to blend the two letters to make simple words, three letters, and so on. Conversely, the educator has to see that learners on a remedial program can blend letters to make simple words.

Clay (2002) contends that the phonic method emphasizes decoding and encoding skills and helps the learner become an independent reader because they can attack new words. The phonic method stresses one's ability to work out the pronunciation of written words, hence they teach how to read because they foster word attack skills in a learner. According to Rose (2006), the phonic method is the systematic teaching of the sounds conveyed by letters and groups of letters. It includes teaching learners to combine and blend these to read words.

Brown (2001) also supports this where he propounds that phonics refers to associating letters or letter groups with the sound they represent. In addition, he says that phonics is the system of teaching reading that builds on the alphabet principle, a system of which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations. It further involves teaching how to connect the sounds of spoken English with letters or groups of letters and teaching how to blend the sounds of letters to produce approximate pronunciations of unknown words.



Hence, the phonic method is of crucial importance because the majority of the information is conveyed by letters concerning sounds. This implies that letters tell us more than any other source of information, even when we have to interpret the information they provide. Rose (2006) posits that we cannot read fluently until we read accurately, and this depends on the accurate use of the information conveyed by letters. Skilled, fluent readers do not guess. Rose (2006) adds that once we have learned what the letters are telling us in a word, we can store it in our memory and retrieve it more quickly than if we had to work it out. Practically, all weak readers have difficulty blending sounds from letters to make words. Hence the need for a remedial program on learner's second language proficiency'.

Reading difficulties experienced by Grade 6 ESL learners include slow, word-by-word reading, without connecting words grammatically to make sense of words that were read. These learners will be unable to process information. Some learners cannot make visual and auditory differentiation between the same letter shapes like "b" and "d" Theron and Nel (2005). Additionally, The Department of Basic Education compiled a report, which summarised the learners' performance in the 2012 Annual National

Assessment (ANA). In reference to literacy, the report findings were that: Learners could not read with comprehension; they wrote sentences and words that were completely incoherent and they struggled to spell frequently used words correctly. The most striking weakness is the inability of learners to read with understanding (DoE, 2012:5).

Generally, ESL learners, who experience specific phonic difficulty in reading, also display a spelling difficulty because they have to process phonic data. Hence, a learner has to say or hear sounds in his head and then convert them in the correct sequence into written letters and words. In the letter, the same sound is more often than not, spelled with the same letters in all words, thus enabling learners to sound out and spell most words (Donald, et al., 2006: 311). In English, the sounding-out technique becomes more difficult. An example of this difficulty is the difference in the spelling of similarly pronounced words such as “heir” and “hair” and between “there” and “their”. Several English words must be memorized as visual wholes and learners who experience visual and auditory difficulty struggle with this task (Donald, et al., 2006).

Conversely, ESL learners generally have a limited vocabulary that they understand and can use constructively either orally or in written form Theron and Nel (2005). Theron points out that this can be attributed to poor literacy skills, general linguistic deprivation, lack of English resources, and inadequate English literary culture. Most ESL learners at township schools hail from extremely poor home environments where they have no access to the internet, magazines, newspapers, or books. Crucial support in gaining sufficient proficiency in English sorely lacks, as these learners grow up in neighborhoods where parents and their community mostly communicate in a language other than English (Theron and Nel, 2005).

South African schools are not well resourced with libraries and most are without books. Pretorius and Mampuru (2007) claim that only 27% of schools have libraries and the Department of Education has noted that some learners are enrolled in schools that are ill-equipped, overcrowded, and in desperate need of renovation. Crowded and dilapidated classrooms hinder the implementation of the individual attention to learners experiencing reading problems.

High learner-teacher ratios with poor physical conditions and inadequate facilities for teaching and learning, schools with neither library nor print-rich environments will make reading a difficult task for learners (DoE, 2008).

2.14 Models of Reading Comprehension

Prominent models such as the top-down process, bottom-up process, and the interactive model have won considerable attention. The researcher decided to execute her remedial program to second language proficiency with the interaction method, as it is more encompassing of different types of reading i.e L1 and L2 reading. Yazdanpanah (2007) suggested that language comprehension happens through the interaction of both the top-down and bottom-up processes. This model is also compatible with L2 reading in that it recognizes language factors and agrees with the variable ignored by the other variable. It is considered as the unifier of the two models as the top-down process is based on the prior knowledge and the bottom-up relating to the reading and analyzing the text. Bilikozen (2014) asserts that research has proven that reading is a complex process, which involves different variables such as the reader, the text, and the interaction between the two.



2.14.1 Essential Components of Reading

It is important to ensure that learners are good readers in the primary grades. This implies that remedial reading instruction can be implemented to the learners lagging behind their peers. Hence, the educator needs to better understand how the following five essential components of effective reading instruction can be implemented in the classroom.

Essential Components of Reading

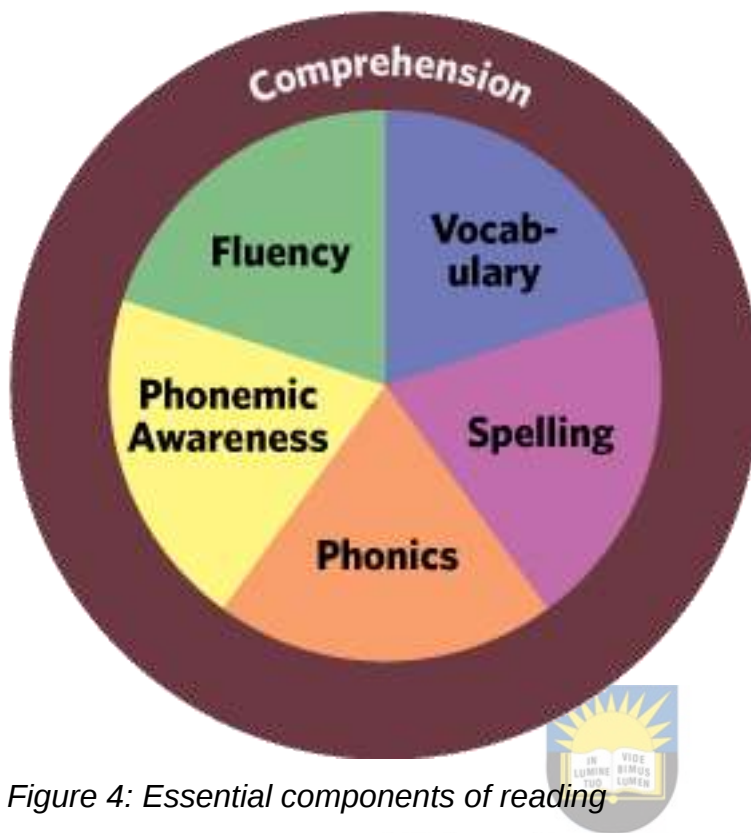


Figure 4: Essential components of reading

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As an essential part of learning to read and a strong predictor of reading success, phonemic awareness is a concept every reading educator should understand and be able to teach proficiently Adams¹(990) hearing and saying that the word cat has three sounds, phonemes /k//a//t/ is an example of phonemic awareness skill. Phonemic awareness, which is defined as the ability to “focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words (NICHD, 2000) is important in predicting how well learners will learn to read.

In this view, vocabulary implies comprehension of word meanings. Hirsch (2003) emphasizes the critical importance of vocabulary, stating that the reader must be able to recognize 90-95% of the words to comprehend the meaning of a text. Familiar vocabulary words are read automatically, as “sight” words, contributing to reading fluency Ehri (2005). Simultaneously, vocabulary plays an important role in comprehension and it is important for reading to learn as well as learning to read.

This means that fluency involves grouping words within a sentence into phrases that make what is read easier to comprehend. Therefore, we now understand that fluency is recognizing the words in a text rapidly and accurately *and* using phrasing and emphasis in a way that makes what is read sound like spoken language. Learners who were low in fluency also showed difficulty comprehending what they read. Repeated reading and guided reading have shown evidence of improving fluency (NICHD, 2000). In studies of the effects of repeated reading, learners have been required to reread a story a certain number of times or until a specified level of fluency was reached. In a classroom setting, learners alternate their repeated readings with activities that allow them to respond to what they have read. This is part of the improvement in fluency produced by repeated reading that may result from a shift in the reader's emphasis from word recognition to comprehension.

Similarly, during initial readings, the reader may be required to devote more working memory to the task of decoding unfamiliar words. Hence, educators need to build each learner's vocabulary and the ability to learn the meanings of new words through a variety of word-learning strategies. Educators should help the learners to apply appropriate comprehension strategies as they read. Based on comprehension, this involves constructing meaning that is reasonable and accurate by connecting what has been read to what the reader already knows and thinking about all of this information until it is understood. Therefore, comprehension is the final goal of reading instruction as the learners are expected to read it for understanding and be able to answer questions accordingly.

2.15 The criterion used to Select Learners for Remediation

Attwell, Lavin, Domina, and Levey (2006) stated that learners for remediation are those who risk poor terminal performance in Mathematics, reading, and comprehension. The criteria will usually vary from school to school depending upon the number of learners who need help and the number of remedial specialists. Usually, the number of learners who may be referred to in each school must be held to a minimum due to the lack of needed remedial personnel. Thus, the remedial program should be based on the proper identification of its recipients, failure to do this may

produce psychological trauma to both the child and the parents Asim, Kaln, Idaka, and Bassey, (2011). In this regard, the school administrators and remedial teachers indicate that the selection and identification of remedial learners are chiefly based on the teacher's observation of a learner's risk of failure. For instance, in India, remediation is aimed at the laggard, Attwell et al. (2006). This means that Indian learners are assessed at the end of each stage based on standardized national examination Stone and Jacobs (2006). Based on this criterion, one can say that the learners selected for remedial education are identified and recommended by the teacher on their performance. Therefore, the classroom teacher must refer disabled learners for remediation with discreet selection. Dakwa et al. (2010) identified the remedial child as the pupil of average or above-average ability, not a slow learner.

He further assimilates the missed concept and relates it to the rest of the topic or study area. Thus, some school administrators indicated that most of their subject teachers used daily written exercises to determine learners who needed remediation. However, some of the remedial teachers and school administrators indicated that the selection of remedial learners was based on school placement tests. This means that early detection and assistance by remedial education teachers are required for these learners to grab a chance to develop their potentialities. These learners are usually given an assessment test to determine their level of competence (Chakuchichi, and Badza, 2004). Based on test results, the learners are placed in inclusive classes where remedial teachers are most likely to assist them in achieving their full potential.

Mpofu and Oakland (2010) point out those tests should take into consideration the culture and environment of the test taker. Norm-referenced tests provide information about where an individual lies in terms of their ability. Thus, a child is placed on a continuum where they are compared to their peers in terms of the product of their learning. In another study, some of the remedial teachers and school administrators indicated that they used on-the-spot remediation to help their remedial learners at least once a month not twice a week because they have no time for remediation during the lessons otherwise they would not finish the syllabus. As a result, identifying learners for remediation gives learners a chance to grasp the concept (Chakuchichi et al., 2003).

2.15.1 Diagnostic Assessment

This is a type of assessment conducted to find out what a learner knows and can do prior to the commencement of a learning program. It aims to identify a problem so that a solution can be provided (Boston, 2009). Conversely, educators need to identify learning barriers and challenges learners may have, therefore it must be carried out to assist and support learners. The DoE (2002) indicates that this assessment leads to intervention, remedial action, or program. In this light, the diagnostic assessment helps to identify a learner's needs, abilities, and state of readiness to achieve the goals outlined in the curriculum. A study by Brock (2005) states that the selection of learners for remediation in Canada was based on the educator's assessment of the learner's risk of failure. He states that learners with difficulties are given a diagnostic test at the beginning of the year. The results of this assessment help the teachers to determine the needs of individual learners so that instruction is personalized and tailored to provide appropriate steps for learning and teaching (James, 2013).

Correspondingly, the classroom educator in a regular classroom setting can give learners with minor disabilities corrective instruction. Through keen observation and well-planned instruction, the educator can diagnose and correct these minor weaknesses as he carries on his daily instruction. Similarly, children who have a mild reading disability can be brought up to their reading potential in a short time and should be given immediate consideration in the classroom. This displays that a diagnostic test is a test designed to locate specific learning deficiencies in the case of specific individuals at a specific stage of learning so that specific effort could be made to overcome those deficiencies (Jang and Wagner, 2012).

It further helps the teacher in identifying the status of the learner at the end of a particular lesson, unit, or course of learning as to what specific teaching or learning points have been properly grasped by the learner. If such a deficiency is located in several learners, it becomes obvious to the teacher to reflect upon whether something went wrong with his method of teaching. After administering a diagnostic test or battery test to learners, a teacher takes remedial measures to overcome the deficiencies thus discovered.

A diagnostic test thus requires a very careful analysis of the content and a detailed study of the common errors made by the learners. The diagnostic test is expected to indicate the specific skills with which the learner is deficient.

Diagnostic tests can indicate what learners' deficiencies are and why these deficiencies have occurred. A diagnostic test, however, is used to find a way to resolve the difficulty a learner is having. Therefore, a diagnostic test might identify important specific skills the learner has yet to achieve. It will not indicate why these skills have not yet been achieved or what action, if any, will help the learner to overcome these difficulties.

2.16 Strategies to Encourage Learners' Proficiency in English as a Second language

2.16.1 Cooperative Learning Strategy

In cooperative learning, small groups of learners who differ in ability work together as a group on an academic task. Gupta (2009) views cooperative learning as a process where learners work together on specific tasks and make meaning out of their experiences. For instance, everyone has to work to achieve a common goal. They assist each other with the given tasks for the best results instead of competing. Hence, social interaction helps to instill common values and beliefs. Cooperative learning emphasizes interaction, communication, and promotes the socio-linguistic competence of learners (Bolukbas, Keskin, and Polat, 2011). Thus, cooperative-learning activities such as the group work method represent social cohesion to unite the people, enabling the learners to share experiences, skills, and knowledge.

Correspondently, in social learning, learners interact with peers, friends, primary caregivers, and educators. This implies that during the cooperative learning method, a team's work is not completed until all learners in a team understand the material being studied and rewards are earned when the entire team achieves the goals set by the educator. Learners tutor one another so that everyone can succeed Sadker and Sadker (2005:98). According to Alerby (2003) relationships between friends are very important and can have positive and negative influences on childhood development

including the way they master concepts. Thus, the learner can understand the concept faster when interacting with others it can be in groups or as peers. Its use helps to bring about a common culture in class because if there is social interaction there is the existence of one common culture and learners learn to work collaboratively. Additionally, learners are expected to coordinate their efforts toward a common goal, provides a positive social context for learning. Practically, employed cooperative learning helps learners participate in reading lessons effectively, create an abundant and healthy English learning environment, make language learning more meaningful, and increase acquisition (Bolukbas, Keskin and Polat, 2011).

Referring back to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, it describes learning as a social process, wherein everything is learned first through integration with others and then by way of an individual's mental structure. This means that educators or more experienced peers can provide the learners with 'scaffolding' to support the learner's development of complex skills. The interaction with peers as an effective way of developing skills and strategies is recommended by Vygotsky (1978:57). In this view, the researcher believes that the effective use of a remedial program would drastically improve learners' proficiency in the second language. In addition, many early studies on collaborative or cooperative learning focused on content areas outside the field of language learning. In the past two decades, ESL researchers have turned their attention to the possible advantages cooperative learning may have in second language acquisition Farzaneh and Nejadansari (2014) and Haydan (2013.) Using cooperative learning enhances learning motivation, knowledge retention, and understanding Law (2011). This means that the success of cooperative learning in promoting learners' reading comprehension can attribute to the cognitive processes of cooperative learning. Hence, cooperative learning significantly promoted low-proficiency learners' English reading comprehension, but only offered limited benefits for high-proficiency learners.

According to Vygotsky's scaffold theory, peer interactions allow learners to enter the proximal development zone where a less able peer can enter a new area of potential development through problem-solving with someone more able Vygotsky (1978).

This explains why low-proficiency learners benefited from cooperative learning; they obtained help from higher-proficiency learners facilitating their study of reading and rendering it more effective.

2.16.2 Collaborative Learning Strategy

Collaborative learning is also known as organized group work Vygotsky (1978). Group work encourages social learning as in Vygotsky's theory that children learn through interaction with others. Social interaction motivates the child and develops them to the extent that they know what is best for them. Fordham and Stevenson-Hindle (1999) posited that social learning increases a person's self-worth. When learners are taking turns in groups to participate while others listen, it gives the learner something to be proud of and feeling worthy of. Hence, as a strategy it develops the learner's confidence which is an attribute to be imparted to remedial learners. Gove and Cvelich (2011) also posited that group work also encourages the learners to share and to have a feeling of responsibility and self-esteem. However, if educators plan to employ this strategy, the teacher must make sure that it is well planned and encourages learners to verbalize and participate. The method is appropriate for remedial learners if given activities for their ability. In Taiwan, collaborative learning was proved very effective in increasing language proficiency, enhancing social maturity, and improving effective growth (Liang, 2002).

In collaborative classrooms, the educator while having essential knowledge about content, skills, and instruction values and builds upon learners' knowledge and experiences. Learners get the chance to set specific goals, provide options for activities and assignments, and assess what their peers have learned. The role of the educator in collaborative learning is to mediate learning. Through successful mediation, the educator can help learners to connect new information to their experiences and learning in other areas. In addition, the educator can help learners figure out what they should do when they are stumped. Everyone is supposed to learn from everyone else. Thus, no learner is deprived of the opportunity to contribute or to appreciate the contribution of others.

In view of this, the learners are not segregated according to their abilities, achievements, and interests. Unsuccessful learners may learn from brighter learners; bright learners may learn from their average peers and sometimes, weaker learners can reveal some unexpected insights in a collaborative atmosphere.

According to Vygotsky (1978), group diversity in terms of knowledge and experience makes a positive contribution to the learning process. From a social constructivist perspective, the goal of education is to keep learners in their ZPD as much as possible by giving them challenging and meaningful tasks that would be difficult for them to complete on their own. As the learner accomplishes each task, the difference between what she or he can accomplish independently and what she or he can only accomplish with assistance decreases Shabani, Khatib, and Ebadi (2010). Vygotsky's theory promotes learning contexts in which learners play an active role in learning. The roles of the educator and learners are therefore shifted, as an educator should collaborate with his or her learners to help facilitate the construction of meaning. Therefore, learning becomes a reciprocal experience for learners and educators.

2.16.3 Metacognitive Factors

These are used to plan for learning, reflecting on the learning process, monitoring one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed (Purpura, 1997). Metacognitive strategies are the strategies involving an attempt to regulate learning through planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Several reading comprehension scholars agree that it could be beneficial for English as a second language (ESL) learners to have a framework of pre-reading while reading and post-reading learning activities (Grabe, 2001; Brown, 2001; Grabe and Stoller, 2001). Hence, pre-reading tasks draw learners' attention to a text and allow them to make predictions on the text content by activating their prior knowledge and schema. Simultaneously, reading activities help the learners to read strategically by focusing on decoding skills; and post-reading activities expand the knowledge learners have acquired through reading by allowing learners to discuss and critically analyze the text content. This deepened their understanding of the text. In addition, storytelling plays a significant role, as it is effective in helping learners with learning disabilities with their comprehension of the language (Lee, 2012).

Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive approach to L2 listening instruction assists learners in understanding the processes and strategies underlying successful listening by engaging "learners in listening and thinking about their listening through an active **interactive** process, while they practice listening skills, within an integrated holistic approach to learning" (p. xiii). Correspondently, listening is a complex skill that involves understanding the meaning of spoken messages and the language input received via listening plays a key role in language learning (Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari, 2010).

2.16.4 Social and Cognitive Factors

According to Ellis (2004), the differences in achievement among second language learners may stem from three general sets of factors including social, cognitive, and affective factors. These are concerned with social mediating activities in interactions with others. They are employed while learners carry out specific learning tasks. Since the cognitive and affective factors lie inside the language learner, the researchers have investigated them as individual learner differences. These differences are "enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 4). They are "factors specific to individual learners which may account for differences in the rate at which learners learn and their level of attainment" (Richards and Schmidt, 2010, p. 278). Facility or difficulty in learning a second language depends on affective factors and cognitive factors (Lightbown and Spada, 2013). The social context where language learning takes place is also important.

Cognitive factors include intelligence, aptitude, and learning strategy use. Persons with above-average intelligence, for example, tend to be better language learners, especially in the context of the classroom (Mitchell and Myles, 2004). The linguistic dimension, which is related to the cognitive aspects in learning a language, is an important factor to consider when acquiring an L2. No two learners will develop their reading skills in the same way, in the same time frame, but all readers will progress through a series of phases in reading development, some simultaneously (Gove and Cvelich, 2010:5).

Reading is the primary tool for learning anything in school and the classroom environment Morrow and Tracy (2012) asserts that reading is a complex process that involves cognitive processes and strategies such as the word reading or decoding, fluency vocabulary, and comprehension.

2.17 Cognitive Development

People who work with learners must have a firm understanding of cognitive development for them to build on learners' strengths, consider their limitations, and provide access to a challenging and inspiring academic environment. In this regard, research on cognitive development aims to explain these changes and centers on how learners think as well as their independent problem-solving skills (Dowling, 2010) and (Saracho and Spodek, 2007). Hence, Piaget and Vygotsky's theories share common themes and essential differences, which provide a significant foundation for the current understanding of how learners make sense of daily events on their own or with aid from adults. These commonalities and differences have allowed modern researchers to dig deeper into devices that lie beneath the thinking processes of learners.

In addition, Vygotsky suggests that learners do not merely absorb knowledge passively but rather that knowledge is acquired constructively. Reading skills are enhanced in a learning environment where learners interact and use language for socially constructing meaning (Zoghi, Mustapha, and Massum, 2010). According to Piaget, learners organize their thoughts as schemes and continue to apply these as operations in other circumstances, either on their own or with assistance from adults (Lee, 2000) and (Dowling, 2010). Both Piaget and Vygotsky propose that a learner is cognitively ready for some experiences but not for others, at any given time. They agree that a learner's brain maturation could limit the learner's capabilities at different stages of development. Furthermore, Piaget suggests that learners can accommodate new objects and incidents only when they can also incorporate the objects and incidents into existing schemes. He argues that learners are capable of logical thinking concerning new problems only once they have created (constructed) the appropriate logical operations.

Vygotsky proposes that once learners have mastered certain tasks, other more difficult tasks come to the fore to be coaxed into full maturity with adult aid and support. He refers to this as the zone of proximal development Mcdevitt, et al. (2010). “Horowitz, as cited in Mcdevitt, et al. (2010: 224), cautions educators about the interpretation of the ‘readiness’ perception and states that all learners are ready to learn something”. The concern is not whether a learner is ready, but what a learner is ready for and what would be the most beneficial way to assist the learner’s cognitive development. The notion of the challenge is contained in both theories. Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development argues that learners gain more from undertakings or tasks that they can master only with the assistance of adults Littlefield and Cook (2005). According to Piaget, children advance to more sophisticated knowledge and thought processes when they are faced with events that do not fit into or match their existing schemes or formats (Littlefield and Cook, 2005).

Both Vygotsky and Piaget consider social interaction as very influential in fostering logical thought processes and reasoning skills. Gauvain as cited in Saracho and Spodek (2007: 155) regards cognitive development as a social process. She states that cognitive development is socially constructed concerning what and how learners learn. Piaget is of the notion that through disagreement with others, learners realize that different viewpoints from their existence and this prompts steady abandonment of the egocentrism typical of preoperational thought (Dowling, 2010), (Saracho and Spodek, 2007) and (Morra, 2008).

Alternatively, Vygotsky proposes that cognitive development is vitally dependent on language. Concerning the kind of experiences, that facilitates cognitive development: Piaget promotes self-exploration while Vygotsky argues for more guided exploration and structured activities(Dowling, 2010); (Mcdevitt, et al., 2010); (Saracho and Spodek, 2007). Both Piaget and Vygotsky value the influence of social interaction on the cognitive development of the learner. However, Piaget places more emphasis on interactions with peers, while Vygotsky stresses the importance of interaction with adults who can assist the learner with more difficult tasks (Dowling, 2010); (Mcdevitt et al., 2010); (Saracho and Spodek, 2007). Piaget neglects the aspect of culture as a major influence in the course of cognitive development.

Vygotsky, however, viewed culture to be of vital importance in shaping the specific thinking skills that learners attain. It should be brought to the attention of educators and other experts that despite their varying instructional practices, almost all of the world's cultures have developed efficient strategies for helping learners gain the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful members of adult society. Several children can be midway between the changeovers from one stage to the next, thus demonstrating qualities of two bordering stages at the same time (Dowling, 2010). Developmental researchers believe that Piaget underrates the influence of the environment, as well as prior knowledge and experience in the mastering of certain tasks. Modern developmental researchers also contest the notion that the cognitive development of children can be compartmentalized into general stages.

2.18 Social and Emotional Development

Our feelings influence who we are and help shape our destiny Littlefield and Cook (2005); Mcdevitt et al. (2010); Dowling (2010); Saracho and Spodek (2007). They also affect our relationship with others and the world around us, as well as our ability to cope with life's challenges. This means that emotions can promote or discourage learners' learning. Systematically, numerous significant social forces shape the socialization of learners such as those found in the family, the peer group, and significant others, such as educators. In this research, neuroscience has proven that people are not born with emotional wellbeing and it is nurtured by the positive and healthy interaction of adults with learners and young adults (Littlefield and Cook, 2005); (Mcdevitt et al., 2010); (Dowling, 2010) and (Saracho and Spodek, 2007).

Based on this, schools are important agents for fostering emotional health and well-being. Hence, positive influence and reactions by parents and educators to learners' social and emotional development make for better learning. Additionally, schools have a critical role in developing learner's emotional competency, flexibility, and creativity - all of which contribute to establishing emotional well-being in the learner. This helps learners to manage their present lives, acts as a motivational agent for future ambitions, and equips them for adult life (Saracho and Spodek, 2007); (Littlefield and Cook, 2005) and (Mcdevitt et al., 2010).

2.19 Empirical Studies

An increasing number of recent publications and empirical studies have reassessed the positive contributions that educators make to their learners' motivation, and eventually overall academic performance (Kiany and Shayestefar, 2011). Educators play a crucial role, directly or indirectly in learners' learning outcomes. The provincial government in the Gauteng Province of South Africa developed an eleven-week system-wide remedial program targeted at Grade 4-6 learners in over 1000 schools aimed to reteach reading and writing in English as a second language. An internal evaluation of this system-wide initiative (Hellman, 2012) suggested that it was highly effective in helping the majority of underachieving Grade 4-6 learners improve their basic English – literacy proficiency.

Geetha (2002) also conducted a study to test the effectiveness of the remedial program to improve the word recognition skill and reading comprehension skills of achievers in California. The effectiveness of the remedial program was studied by the survey-cum-experimental method. Thus, the remedial program developed in the study was found to be more effective than the conventional lecture demo method. A study to develop a remedial package for learners in the 7th grade was conducted by Jadal (2000) in a primary school in India. The study aimed to observe the effectiveness of the teaching materials with low achievers in particular. The learners continually exhibited poor performance in all four language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Jadal further indicates that the third group was taught using the remedial package. In this regard, the control group and the group of average and above-average learners were taught using a traditional Grammar-Translation method for 30 days. Subsequently, the findings indicated that instruction using the remedial package was more effective than the traditional method and helped low achievers cope better with their peers in the average and above-average group.

Based on the aim of deepening understanding of how remedial teaching transformed low achievers' learning outcomes in English, Cheng (2014) interviewed 42 learners who were involved in a remedial teaching plan, their instructor, and their class mentor, in two phases for ten months. Correspondingly, the results suggested that individualized remedial teaching, direct supervision from teachers, and an appropriate

support system led to better academic and emotional self-efficacy. Hence, the teacher must identify the learner's weaknesses and appropriate intervention supplied to achieve the best results.

Richards – Tutor et al. (2015) undertook a research synthesis of intervention programs for English learners of English that are effective in improving reading performance. They found 12 peer-reviewed studies or remedial programs for “at-risk” learners, or learners of English. Seven of these studies found moderate to large effect sizes of early grade interventions, five studies showed similar effect size gains in comprehension only. Williams et al. (2012) in their study investigated the use of English Language proficiency to predict the future academic success of English learner (EL) students. Their study revealed that English Language proficiency is a factor of prediction for future academic success. In another related study, Shahragard et al. (2011) investigated the relationship between academic achievement and language proficiency of Iranian college students at Shiraz University in Iran; they revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement. Wille (2006) also examined the relationship between English Language proficiency and academic achievement of learners at the secondary level and found that there is a positive relationship between these two variables, which affirms the findings of previous studies. The findings of Orgunsiji (2009) supported the view that there is a significant impact of English Language proficiency on learners' overall academic achievement and that English Language proficiency of the learners has a significant positive relationship with their overall academic achievement.

Huang (2010) examined the effects of English remedial instruction on low achieving learners using a self-developed English textbook and with the intervention of teaching assistants. Participants were 30 low English proficiency students, who attended a five-week intensive English remedial course. The results of this study show that this English remedial instruction is effective and beneficial to low English achievers as learners made significant progress in grammar and vocabulary learning and their self-perceived improvement in their overall English competence. The self-developed textbook met learners' needs and the intervention of teaching assistants was effective in terms of assisting their pronunciation and fluency. Ultimately, learners' learning motivation was moderately enhanced.

Thus, EFL educators can teach effectively for low-achieving learners by designing suitable materials and involving teaching assistants, and perhaps applying some alternative innovative approaches.

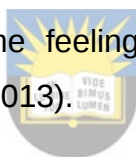
A study conducted by Chen, Shih-Jay, and Chu (2015) aimed at examining the effectiveness of an 11-week reading remedial program for 2nd and 3rd-grade underachieving aboriginal learners in Taiwan. Seventy-eight low achieving learners were divided into two groups, with 47 in the experimental group and 31 in the control group. The researchers provided seventy-five 40-minute sessions for a total of eleven weeks. The program was conducted in small groups. The four major findings are as follows:

1. The reading ability of the participants in the experimental group improved significantly as a whole; the 2nd-graders improved in the recognition of low-level characters, while the 3rd-graders improved in high-level dictation skills and reading comprehension.
2. The experimental group outperformed the control group concerning scores of all reading skills. However, when pre-tests were used as a covariate, the former significantly outperformed the latter only concerning high-level composition writing skills.
3. Subsequently, in the remedial program, 11 (23.4%) out of 47 experimental group learners achieved the reading level of their same-age peers. Furthermore, if children with disabilities were excluded from the experimental group, 40% of this group achieved the reading level of the same age group.
4. In this regard, a cost-effectiveness analysis revealed that, compared with the cost of referral to special education for these students, the pre-referral remedial reading program is feasible, and should be implemented as soon as possible to give much-needed help to these children.

Sheu, Hsu, and Wang (2007) examined the effects of an English remedial course on low proficiency first-year students. The eight-week course focused on pronunciation, basic grammar, and analysis of sentence structure. Results showed that the experimental group performed significantly better in the final exam, compared with the control group.

The experimental group self-reported an improvement in their basic skills in English and had highly positive attitudes toward the remedial course. In addition, their motivation and confidence were enhanced.

Huang (2009) cited in Huang (2010) investigated the possibility of applying a task-based method to implement English remedial instruction in normal class hours. The content of the remedial instruction consisted of basic vocabulary, grammar, and eight reading articles for self-studying. The participants were four classes of freshmen at a technological university. Results indicated that those who participated in the remedial course obtained higher scores on the reading and listening sections of the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) elementary level and their learning motivation was promoted. However, in some research, it has often been reported that remedial classes do not serve their intended purpose when learners felt stigmatized and demotivated. Very few learners showed significant improvement in their test results after going through the remedial sessions. This low achievement, coupled with low motivational levels, resulted in some feeling that remedial sessions should be eliminated (Al Othman and Shuqair, 2013).



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A study by Nel and Muller (2010) showed that phonological errors by learners occurred when English second language educators taught sound, intonation, and pronunciation, and language usage incorrectly. Their study found that incorrect spelling modelled by ESL educators was copied and learned by the learners. There is also evidence of the effect of inadequate language proficiency of ESL educators on the reading ability of learners (Howie, 2007). Besides teaching, educators need to assess, among other things, learners' knowledge of sounds, letters, and letter combinations. If educators lack language proficiency in English, their learner assessments could be unreliable (Howie, 2007).

2.19.1 Gender Differences among Learners

In Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) administrations across Sub-Saharan Africa, Research Triangle Institute (RTI) has found that in most instances, girls significantly outperformed boys on early reading tasks (Piper, 2010).

The EGRA assessment for Grade 3 learners in Egypt points to gender differences in reading proficiency (LaTowsky et al., 2013). Girls out-performed boys in their knowledge of letter sounds, reading non-words, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension.

For example, in Ethiopia, the EGRA study found out that across regions, there was a statistically significant difference between boys' and girls' achievements in almost all the reading tasks Piper (2010). Although rural boys out-performed rural girls on all the tasks except for listening comprehension, urban girls out-performed than urban boys on every task except for listening comprehension Piper (2010). This implies that in Ethiopia, rural girls have lower achievement than girls in urban areas and much lower than girls in other African countries (Piper, 2010:31).

Generally, these studies conducted in Africa found out that girls perform better than boys in reading. This is due to the several factors that contributed to these results that girls are more inclined and receptive to reading than boys. In this regard, educators need to take cognizance of these findings and provide appropriate and sufficient reading support to boys so that they can reduce this reading deficit or even catch up with their female counterparts as all learners have a right to be equally treated regardless of gender, age and race.

2.20 Comments on the Empirical Studies of Remedial Programmes and English Proficiency.

The studies above focused on improving the achievement of the low achieving learners in English second proficiency through using suggested remedial programs. This also supported the importance of the researcher's study that aimed at exploring a remedial program to improve the learners' proficiency of low achievers in the second language. Based on the previous studies' results, they revealed that there was considerable improvement in the low achievers in the concerned subjects due to the use of the various suggested remedial programs. Subsequently, the results of these studies also showed that English proficiency and academic success could never be separated.

For the learners to succeed academically, they must be proficient readers and writers. Hence, the researcher investigated a remedial program on learners' proficiency in English second language.

2.21 Summary

Remedial teaching is designed to cater to the needs of students who are unable to progress with the class in a normal classroom. These students typically function and perform at a lower than average level because of learning or learning-related problems. Thus, the major objective of remedial teaching is to ensure that low-achievers can attain learning competencies according to their capabilities and characteristics. As there is a growing consensus that effective interventions help at-risk students reconnect with their peers and learning, research Christenson and Thurlow (2004) pointed out that remedial teaching must assist students to find a match between their characteristics and the school environment so that their academic demands can be met. More importantly, individualized programs with intensive remedial sessions can be implemented to help learners consolidate basic knowledge, master their learning strategies, strengthen their confidence and increase the effectiveness of their learning because an appropriate education should help the learners to acquire skills and develop concepts that will be useful throughout their lives. Studies have shown that learners who received remedial teaching were more motivated and more likely to achieve academic success than their peers who did not take remedial teaching classes (Jadal, 2012) and Yang, 2010). With appropriate and additional help, low-achievers' learning difficulties can be identified to provide further scaffoldings.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and discussed the theory underpinning the study and relevant literature to the study. Thus, this chapter would present the methodology and the methods/tools adopted to collect data for the study on a remedial program on learners' proficiency in English second language for township schools. The structure of the chapter follows a discussion of the research paradigm, research approach, research design, methodology (research instruments and analysis), and negotiation of entry, trustworthiness, limitations, ethical considerations, and conclusion. It would further discuss steps followed before and during data collection. Mason (2002) described research methodology as referring to the type of data collection, either qualitative or quantitative, the type of sampling, people, choice of setting, and data collection methods that are to be employed such as observation or interview schedules, audio-visual devices and so on. Research methodology also includes choices regarding validity and ethical considerations. Numerous research methods can be used when researching scientific subjects. Among them, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) identify four categories of research design and methodologies. These are qualitative, quantitative, mixed-method, and the analytic approach.

3.2 Research Paradigm – Interpretivist

A research paradigm is the set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed (Myers, 2009). Similarly, Mertens (2010) defines a paradigm as a way of looking at the world, composed of philosophical assumptions that guide direct thinking and action. Creswell (2014: 6) sees a paradigm as "philosophical worldview assumptions" that are brought to the study. Furthermore, Creswell (2014) says paradigms are important because they guide the researcher about the designs that are specific to a particular worldview and the procedures that the research will apply in conducting the study. In this regard, the three authors above concur that paradigms serve as lens or organizing principles of the research to assist the researcher to interpret reality in a specific way.

In this regard, paradigms are comprehensive belief systems, worldviews, or frameworks that guide researches and practices in the field of study. Mertens (2010) and Creswell (2014) identified some of the paradigms used in research such as post-positivism, interpretivism, and critical paradigm, postmodern, and multi-pragmatic research. The paradigm emphasizes the involvement of the researcher and getting close to the subject being studied. This study is located in the interpretive paradigm because it is set and done in a natural setting. The best way to understand a phenomenon, according to interpretative research is to study it in a natural setting such as classrooms (Taylor, 2013). In addition, the natural setting allows individuals to understand their perceptions of context and activities. Linake (2015) supports the idea that reality could be explored and constructed through human interactions and meaningful actions to discover how people make sense of their social world in the natural setting employing daily routine, conversation, and writings while interacting with others around them by relating to the texts.

Consequently, this paradigm is concerned with understanding events through a mental process of interpretation, which is influenced by interactions within a social context. The purpose of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the world from its individual viewpoint and attempt to observe ongoing processes to better understand individual behavior (Linake, 2015) and (Mudziewelana, 2012). It further indicates that human interaction constructs meaning and realities within interpretivism (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, interpretivism argues that humans have subjective perceptions and subjective realities of their environment that influence human behavior (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

Based on the arguments above, the interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subjective experiences of individuals. It uses meaning oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects (Trafford and Leshem, 2011). There are specific characteristics that made interpretivism more relevant to this study. These are that qualitative methodology is dialectic and interpretive and that during the interaction between the researcher and research participants the world is discovered and interpreted employing the qualitative method (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

Concurrently, this research links with the interpretivism paradigm as the perceptions, knowledge, and skills of participants regarding remedial programs and second language proficiency are explored and interpreted.

3.3 Research Approaches

The study adopted a qualitative research approach where realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic (Creswell, 2003). Interpretive approaches rely heavily on naturalistic methods, that is, the researcher used qualitative methods as they are characterized by flexibility and freedom in terms of structure and order given to the researcher.

A qualitative study Design chart

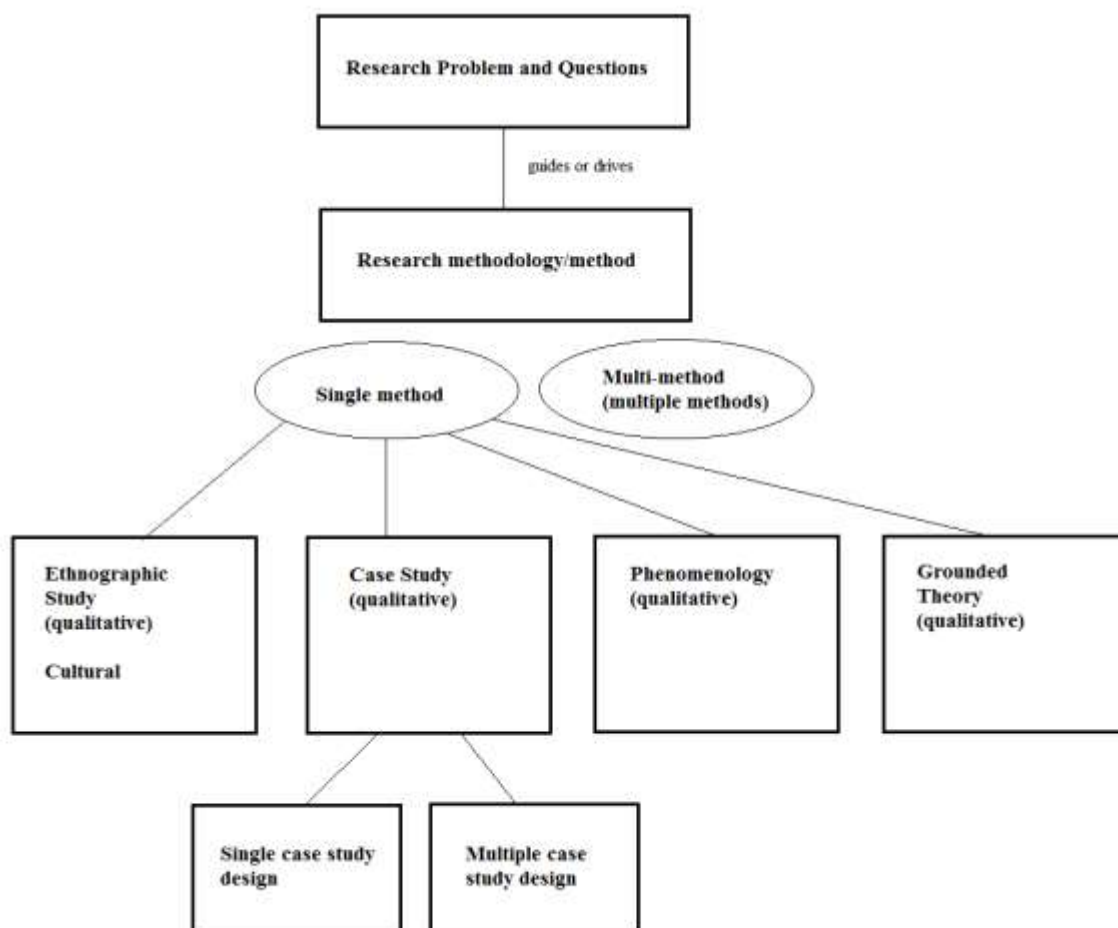


Figure 5: Selected qualitative methodology/design options for a qualitative study.

These methods ensure an adequate dialogue between the researcher and those with whom they interact to collaboratively construct a meaningful reality. Hence, qualitative research is an approach in which researchers are concerned with understanding the meaning, which people attach to their experiences or phenomena within their society (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). This study moved within the parameters of qualitative research in that it sought to determine a remedial program on learners' proficiency in English Second language: A case of two township schools in King William's Town Education District. Supported by the third option phenomenology, which is useful for learning about "exploring how human beings make sense of experiences and transform experiences into consciousness, both individually and as a shared meaning" (Bosmans, Hardonk, De Cuyper, and Vanroelen, 2016).

Qualitative research appears to be the most effective method for this study. Like the design in Bosmans et al. (2016) this study selected a sample of 10 learners, two educators, and two principals from the population and then collect information on the experiences of the participants primarily through in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observation. The information was sourced from the principals and educators through the semi-structured interview guides which would allow them to participate freely. Focus groups were used for the learners where they could work in small groups to ensure participation. The researcher also had the opportunity to observe the learners.

3.3.1 Advantages of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research according to Creswell (2009) produces social explanations and is good at dealing with issues of causality and prediction precisely due to its attention to details, complexity, and contextually, which does not seek cause and effect in any one straightforward fashion. Griffin (2000) posits that the qualitative design enables an in-depth investigation of behavior patterns. It further facilitates dialogue and understanding of more fully behavior determinants. In addition, the qualitative design is all about exploring issues, understanding phenomena, and answering questions. It is argued that qualitative research is considered an integral contributory factor to theory and practice.

It is strongly asserted that qualitative research leads to an accumulation of knowledge and wisdom through examining evidence that has been collected over several years. Furthermore, qualitative studies focus on enhancing the participants' understanding of their practice so that they can reflect on and improve that practice which the researcher is interested in (MacMillan and Schumacher, 2010). The principle of interpretivism and constructivism forms the basis on the assumption that reality is socially constructed and rather than a single objective reality, there are multiple realities, each related to the complexity of naturally occurring behavior, characterized by the perspectives of the participants (Macmillan, 2008).

This principle was acknowledged by this study as it aimed to bring the realities encompassed in various pedagogical practices teachers use to teach in under-resourced schools. The study had been conducted while teachers were in their natural setting, in the classroom, as well as their perspectives drawn through interviews. Leedy and Omrod (2005) maintain that qualitative approaches have two things in common. First, they focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings – that is the 'real world' and secondly, they involve studying those phenomena in all their complex narratives and observations rather than numbers. The researcher, as the investigator, had a direct role in obtaining information, as the interviewer, an observer, or the person who studies artifacts and documents (Macmillan, 2008).

This allowed a direct data collection approach, which was also another important principle of a qualitative study. This helped the researcher in getting and bringing first-hand information that was primarily raw from the teacher's narrative descriptions in the under-resourced schools which is the grassroots level of the study. Thus, qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions. In other words, qualitative research is concerned with the meaning of human behavior and experiences, and its social functions (Linake, 2015) and (Mudzielwana, 2012). In this regard, the researcher relied on the views of the participants, asked broad and general questions, collecting data, which consisted largely of words to describe their experiences. Qualitative research further focuses on subjective information such as feelings, experiences, or opinions and data that cannot be scientifically quantified (Johnson, 2005) and (Richie et al., 2013).

3.3.2 Disadvantages of Qualitative Research

Silverman (2006:44-46) claims that as much as the qualitative approach has a great input in the research field of the naturalistic world but it is criticized in various contexts. These indicate that qualitative research does not always show contextual sensitivity. The study responded to this limitation by taking field notes during interviews to note down any expression in any form that occurred during the session. Critics state that this approach has a problem of reliability and is criticized by anecdotalism, which questions the validity of the research. Hence, the researcher in responding to this limitation did a triangulation of doing interviews (both individual and focus group) and document analysis to validate the study.

Simultaneously, qualitative research methods were used to collect data about a selected group of participants. Data collected cannot be used to make assumptions beyond the specific group of participants. Thus, qualitative methods require a degree of control and manipulation of the phenomenon and this distorts the natural occurrence of the phenomenon. Creswell (2009) argues that qualitative methods lack uniformity that is two researchers who are studying a single setting may come up with very different findings but both findings might be reliable. According to Griffin (2000), qualitative research usually involves relatively small numbers of participants and this can mean that it is less likely to be taken seriously by other academic researchers or by practitioners and policymakers. Regardless of the disadvantages, the researcher continued to use a qualitative approach as she convinced herself that this is an accurate and pertinent research approach for this study.

3.4 Research Design

Creswell (2014) defines research design as a type of inquiry within a research paradigm, whose function is to give direction for the procedures in the research design. The design may reflect the entire research process, from conceptualizing the research problem to the literature review, research questions, methods, and conclusions. However, it also refers to the methodology of the study (Harwell, 2012). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) have aptly called research design strategies of inquiry. The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible.

Research design can be qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed approach, depending on the answers that the researcher wishes to provide (Creswell, 2014). A research design deals with a logical problem. In the qualitative approach, there are different designs such as action research, case study, grounded theory, Phenomenology, and historical research. They all differ according to the purpose of the study and the nature of the research questions and the resources available to the researcher. Consequently, research design maps the pathway that one has to follow when conducting a research project. In this study, the researcher decided to make use of a case study approach to address the issues of remedial programs and second language proficiency that were explored and interpreted.

3.4.1 Case Study

A case study is a research in which the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon within a specified space of time and using a variety of data collection procedures to gain detailed information about such an entity or phenomenon (Holloway and Wheeler, 2010) and (White, 2015).

Thus, a case study design is used in this research because it provided various answers to the questions being researched. Babbie and Mouton (2005) state that the case study is an intensive investigation of a single unit and is a method used for learning about a complex instance taken as a whole in its context and aim to describe and explain a phenomenon. In this regard, a qualitative case study is an approach used to research a phenomenon within its context or environment using different data collection sources (Evans and Lang, 2006). Thus, the research design also allowed the researcher to interact with the participants getting first-hand information through verbal discussions, observations, and other ways of data collection as highlighted earlier on. Subsequently, a case study sheds the light on the phenomenon of interest to the researcher, which may be a process, event, or person.

Linake (2015) posits that a case study is good in bringing an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. Consequently, the case study seeks in-depth information about the entity and offers detailed empirical investigations into a complex

issue (Linake, 2015). In this regard, the case study was a suitable plan to address the complex issue of remedial programs and second language proficiency explored and interpreted. Additionally, the case study provides an in-depth analysis of such a phenomenon (Richie et al., 2013). Hence, it is useful when the opportunity to learn is of primary importance. Qualitative studies focus on enhancing the participants' understanding of their practice so that they can reflect on and improve that practice which the researcher is interested in (MacMillan and Schumacher, 2010). A case study emphasizes and focuses attention on what can be learned from different cases Anderson (2008). In qualitative research, information is received from the participants (Thomas, 2011).

Likewise, the case study enables the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis. It is widely used in the social care and the social science field because it allows the researcher to study in detail, the relationships of individuals and small groups, in their natural setting and studied in depth over a defined period (Leedy et al. (2005).



Creswell as cited in McMillan (2014) refers to a case study as “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g. an activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection. This research study could also be referred to as a multisite case study because the phenomenon of learning support was investigated at two schools or settings (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014). In this view, two primary schools were identified in King William’s Town Education District as follows:

- a township school in an area with low-income levels and relatively higher unemployment than that of the other school. English is done as an additional language with IsiXhosa as a home language. This school serves the surrounding community, learners from outside the community, and learners from nearby townships and surrounding villages, where issues around English Second Language proficiency were likely to arise. This school has been identified as **School A** for research and confidentiality purposes.

- a township school located in a medium-density area serving the surrounding community with English as the Home Language. This school has been identified as **School B** for research and confidentiality purposes.

3.4.1.1 *Advantages of a Case Study*

Walsh (2001:53) has identified the following three:

A case study strategy is ideal for collecting data on subtle and complex social situations. This means that a case study is ideal in studying phenomena that involve the principle of interpretivism and Constructivism, which emanates from the complexity of social situations. You will not need to try to impose any control over events or variables, as you would if you used an experimental strategy. This underlines a point that data comes fluently as raw as it is given in its natural occurrence with no need of manipulating any of the variables. Additionally, case studies are generally manageable for people who wish to do small-scale project research, because their focus is limited to a defined setting, a group of people, or even an individual.

3.4.1.2 *Disadvantages of a Case Study*

Lack of generalizability: This relates to the fact of not being able to generalize those findings of a case study research as it specifies that particular case in that particular context. This study takes a stand of not being based on generalization, as the case studied in this research is uniquely around pedagogies of the two schools identified and are categorized as under-resourced in the specified area or context. As Punch (2005:146) suggests, the intention of the study is not to generalize, but rather to understand the case of these pedagogies in these schools in complexity and its entirety, as well as in its context. This serves a “situation where generalization would not be the objective” (Punch, 2005:146). Ambiguity: in the researcher’s understanding, this means a case study may give a different conclusion in a different study of a similar context. In this regard, the ambiguity will not arise out of this case, as it will be studied as a particular case in its own right, which will be building an in-depth understanding of the case specified in the study (Punch, 2005)

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Ado (2013) defines a sample as a subject of the whole population which is investigated by the researcher and whose characteristics will be generalized to represent the entire population. He further indicates that sampling is a set of elements extracted from a larger population. In the study, a sample is a subset, one that would allow generalization of the findings. This meant that the sample size is taken from a larger population to represent the particular population and to detect the unknown piece of information to answer a particular research question and it is related to the purpose of the study and the availability of information-rich participants (Singh and Masuku, 2014).

Based on the arguments above, the researcher used a sample size of 14 participants in this study as guided by the sampling rules. This consists of 2 principals, 2 grade 6 English educators, and 10 grade six learners with both male and female representatives from two schools. A small sample is easy to manage especially in the qualitative research design. In this view, most qualitative researchers prefer to select a purposive sample (Gorman and Clayton, 2008). Hence, the sampling technique that was employed in this study was purposive sampling to select schools and other participants.

The criteria that were used were those schools that were accessible and known to be having the potential to carry out remedial programs (Creswell, 2010; 2014 and Springer, 2010). Purposive sampling involves selecting subjects because of some characteristics they possess and their ability to provide rich information for the study (Creswell, 2006).

Purposive sampling was used, as Leedy and Ormrod (2010) state that in purposive sampling people who have been decided are typical of a group or those who represent a diverse perspective on an issue. For this study, purposive sampling helped the researcher to select representative township schools with qualified and experienced educators that have a piece of relevant and rich information about remediation. Thus, the purposeful selection of the schools is justified in this study as the researcher followed a set of criteria.

For instance, the researcher was interested in primary schools that provide remediation to learners who are lagging behind their peers. Taking note that there should be no learner retention in the phase for more than 4 years both schools selected learners who were three years in the intermediate phase. Most of the learners were of the correct age with only three out of ten learners having repeated once. In school A, four out of 5 learners were three years in the intermediate phase. In school B, four learners were in the correct phase by age.

In this regard, purposive sampling was used to select learners for the focus group discussion from two schools as highlighted above. The researcher selected five learners from each school, who took part in the focus group discussion. Similarly, purposeful sampling is a type of non-probability sampling (Strydom and Delport, 2005:328). According to McMillan and Schumacher, (2006:125) non-probability sampling is the most common type of sampling in educational research. In non-probability sampling, the researcher used subjects or participants who happen to be accessible or who may represent certain types of characteristics. Dörnyei (2011) reinforces that a well-designed qualitative study usually requires a relatively small number of participants to yield the saturated and rich data that is needed to understand even subtle meanings in the phenomenon under focus.

Contrarily, McMillan and Schumacher (2006) argue that purposeful samples can range from one to forty or more. The logic of sample size is related to the purpose, the collection strategy, and the availability of information-rich cases. In qualitative research, sampling occurs subsequent to establishing the circumstances of the study. Thus, sampling is undertaken after the investigation has commenced (Strydom and Delport, 2005). Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2006) emphasize that the insights generated from qualitative inquiry depend more on the information richness of the cases and the analytical capabilities of the researcher than on sample size.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection refers to the process of gathering information related to research, which involves identifying sources of data and selecting methods.

It consists of a variety of methods of data collection in quantitative research. This includes observations, textual, or visuals analysis (e.g. from textbooks or videos), and interviews (individual or group) (Gill, Steward, Treasure, and Chadwick, 2008). These are the fact-finding strategies. Essentially, the researcher must ensure that the instruments chosen are valid, reliable, and appropriate. The instruments normally used in case studies include observations, documentary analysis, and interviews. The researcher used interviews, focus group discussions, and observations to collect data for the study. For this study, open-ended interviews with educators and principals, focus group discussions with learners, and lesson observations were adopted to collect qualitative data. Mertens (2010) supports the use of multiple sources of data collection instruments saying they allow both triangulations of data as well as the opportunity for self-reflection. These are the fact-finding strategies. Essentially the researcher must ensure that the instruments chosen are valid and reliable.

3.6.1 The interview

Johnson and Christensen (2008) emphasize that qualitative interviews can be used to obtain in-depth information about a participant's thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations, and feelings about a topic. Saez (2010) mentions that in semi-structured interviews, the entire process is improvised and conversational, while key points and answers are recorded on a form designed to evaluate and sort answers. This gives the person being interviewed a chance to give a lot of good information while making the entire process seem more like a normal conversation than a question session. In this study, the researcher used a semi-structured one-to-one interview. Additionally, semi-structured interviews, give the researcher the freedom to decide the structure and content of questions to be asked of participants and questioning technique and sequencing of questions. During the interviews, the researcher designed the semi-structured interview questions for both principals and educators to get accurate and in-depth information. Researchers used semi-structured interviews to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic (Greeff, 2005).

The interview schedule or guide was constructed from the literature on the topic. The questions were carefully formulated, sequenced, and based on the research questions, aims, and objectives of the study. Simultaneously, the researcher used face-to-face interviews with key participants, which afforded a chance to probe the responses of participants to get clarification of some obscure points. More information was sought through personal contacts of the researcher and the participants as that enabled the researcher to read non-verbal gestures that were speaking a lot about the topic that was under investigation. That brought about the richness of the data, which the researcher was looking for, on the effectiveness of a remedial program on learners' proficiency in English second language.

To ensure accurate data, the interviews were tape-recorded and notes were taken as a back-up then transcription of data was made. In this view, the interviews allowed the participants to provide meaningful or important information about the subject that was under discussion to him or her using his or her own words rather than being restricted to predetermined categories. Certainly, participants asked for clarification of certain statements or questions during the interview process, something that could not have been possible if a questionnaire was the sole research instrument. Maree (2006) supports interviews by saying that they provide high credibility and face validity, and make intuitive sense to lay audiences. The type of interviews used in this study was semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews enable participants to project their ways of defining the world Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007). In light of this, the educators had the freedom to express their views and feelings about the remedial programs conducted at their schools. It permits flexibility rather than fixity of sequence of discussions and it enables participants to raise and pursue issues and matters that might not have been included in structured questions Denzin (1970) and Silverman (1993) as cited by (Cohen et al., 2000). In semi-structured interviews, the researcher asked informants a set of similar questions.

Mertens (2010) agrees to this by indicating that semi-structured interviews are based on an interview guide that is a list of questions and topics that have to be covered. In this regard, the interviewer covers each topic by asking one or more questions and using a variety of techniques to probe and decide when the conversation on a topic has satisfied the research objectives.

Additionally, he further states that the interview guide, and its instructions on where and how to probe, are essential when there is more than one interviewer on a project so that people are asked roughly the same questions.

In view of this, semi-structured interviews were appropriate in this study because the interviewer managed to modify the order and details of questions on how a remedial program affects learners' proficiency in English second language. Although interviews are an important instrument for obtaining first-hand information in research, some weaknesses were cited. This implies that data collection depends on the willingness of the participants to be interviewed (Cohen and Manion, 2005). Seale (2004) concurs with this by highlighting that interviews may also be affected by the personalities, moods, and interpersonal dynamics of the interviewer and the interviewee. He further indicates that the use of a recorder or videotape may make the participants withdraw, as some would feel unsafe with the information that will depict the participants. They further feel threatened when they are aware that their words are preserved. Respectively speaking, the researcher experienced that some participants that were not at ease with being video recorded. Certainly, this had some sensitive implications to the findings, so the researcher made use of the clarification technique to make participants not suspecting that there was something sinister. Each time such instances were occurring, the researcher employed manual recordings to obtain the trust of the participants. In any case, the limitations that the researcher encountered were minor to affect the objective of the research because there was always an alternative.

Creswell (2013) also identified bias as another weakness of interviews. For instance, he noted that qualitative interviews are more subjective than quantitative interviews in that, the researcher decides which quotes or specific examples to report. The participant might respond to give the impression that what he is saying is critical to the research can also cause bias. Whenever the researcher felt that there was a possibility of falling into such a trap the researcher was quick to approach the same aspect from a different angle to cross-check the response. Hence, the use of interviews requires considerable skill and experience, especially when interviewees feel uncomfortable responding to sensitive issues (Mertens, 2010).

Although interviewing is time-consuming, it has the potential of providing rich and highly illuminating material.

3.6.1.1 Advantages of Interviews

Interviews allow for a high degree of standardization of questions and answers. Reason and Bradbury (2008) note that interviews are important for the researcher to probe deeply to uncover new clues, open new dimensions of a problem, and secure vivid, accurate, inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience. Meyers (2006) notes that the advantage of open-ended questions is that they give room for probing more information, which is an important element for the study to enable respondents to think outside the box and express their feelings.

Creswell (2009) notes that there is a greater response since the interview is more personal. Educational experience level has less effect because the interviewer explains questions. Meyers (2006) adds that an interview tries to yield more complete data since the interviewer can encourage and note comments. In this regard, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to gather information from Grade 6 English educators and school principals. Saez (2010) identifies that semi-structured interviews carry a series of advantages, which are of being not as invasive as a structured interview, as instead of being forced to answer questions directly; the interviewee can expand and question the interviewer. This allowed the researcher in the study to probe and expand more on the questions that were asked to get a richer response. Being useful not just for confirming the same information, but also for learning more and giving the reason and context of the answer; making it easier for candidates to talk about sensitive subjects and issues. In this view, since it was free and two-way communication, a lot of information, which would have been difficult and sensitive to share, was explored.

The researcher prepares the questions well ahead of time to allow the interviewer to be prepared and appear competent during the interview. This allowed the researcher to be calm and collected, providing motivation and support to the participants, as they tend to fear interviews.

In addition, the researcher noticed that the preparation also minimized cases of having a boring and repetitive interview process. This further allows the participants the freedom to express their views in their terms and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data. In light of the above advantages of a semi-structured interview, the following are the limitations to this kind of interview: since the interview is conversational, it could bring up a lot of unnecessary information. Focus and probing more on responses responded to this limitation. In a group interview, candidates could end up assisting each other or speak out of turn.

Subsequently, this might cause them to lose focus on the topic. Hence, each participant was advised and informed beforehand to share his or her views as they may differ from others. In this view, this helped a lot in avoiding this limitation in the focus group interviews as it required training since many problems can arise, such as leading questions, poor listening skills, not asking probing questions, repeating questions, not judging the answers or asking questions that are insensitive or not specific. This implies that the question guide was prepared beforehand and piloted on a few people before used to overcome such challenges. Consequently, the interview sessions for each selected school were done on the same day for the participants in each school during their break time. Thus, a voice recorder was used and further supplemented with field notes taken during the session. During the interviews, pseudo names were used for both schools and all the participants.

3.6.1.2 *Disadvantages of Interviews*

Conducting an interview is time-consuming because the participants are given extra time to think outside the box (Creswell, 2009). The additional, disadvantage of an interview is that the interview may influence the participants or cause tension, as they may end up giving responses they think, are expected by the interviewer instead of providing genuine information. Hence, the researcher employed observation as another method of gathering data to accommodate these inadequacies.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion

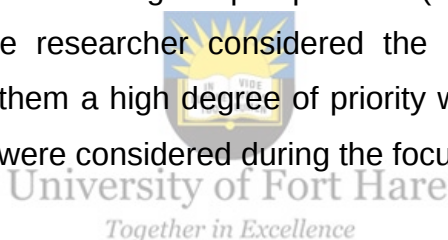
In focus groups, the researcher has the freedom to raise issues or ask questions to stimulate discussion among members of the group. The researcher also has the freedom to select a group of people he/she deems best for his exploration. In focus groups, the issues discussed are more specific and focused (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). The Focus group involves a discussion between four to ten people on a specific research topic (Ritchie and Lewis, 2010). This technique could be efficient because the researcher could gather information about several people in one session. Thus, the researcher employed focus group discussion to gather data from learners purposively selected for this study. Focus groups are similar to group interviews, with the exception that focus groups do not rely on the question and answer format, as is the case with group interviews, rather they rely on the interaction within the group (Nieuwenhuis, 2010) and (Maree, 2010). In this case, the researcher selected learners who were lagging behind their peers. Krueger and Casey (2009: 2) point out that a focus group discussion is “a carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive and non-threatening environment”. Simultaneously, the researcher selected learners from two purposively selected schools through the assistance of the class educators. Each focus group had five learners who participated in in-group discussions in township schools.

Krueger and Casey (2009) further say in a focus group discussion, the researcher has to pay attention to what participants say and should be non-judgmental. Given that the focus group discussions were primarily made-up of learners with difficulties, all participants were delighted to have their perceptions known. Finally, the researcher felt that each member was left feeling good about having been heard, as their interactions during focus group discussions were very productive because they came up with deep and insightful responses. The researcher audio recorded the various group discussions, which she then had to transcribe before the final write-up.

Maree (2007) highlights that although focus group discussions have the limitation of being biased, and sometimes running out of control when some members dominate the discussions, most of the researchers still find this method valuable in giving important and reliable information.

This means that the participants are continuously encouraged to contribute to the debate in a very natural manner and to maintain focus on the topic. Scott and Morrison (2006) proposed, focus groups are useful in learning why participants hold the opinions they do, and Hatch (2002) recommends them as providing different information from individual interviews due to their interactive nature.

However, focus groups are not without their pitfalls, and these had to be considered along with other issues that could negatively affect their validity and reliability. Scott and Morrison (2006) further mention the possibility of focus groups being in danger of being negatively affected by reluctant or overbearing participants. Cohen, et al. (2000) state that more than one focus group must be undertaken to ensure that the results of the discussion are not unique to that particular group. It is also preferable that the participants should share similar characteristics and experiences Hatch (2002) and be of a size that allows all participants a chance to partake in the discussion while being large enough to provide a useful range of perspectives (Ary, et al., 2002). Based on the arguments above, the researcher considered the issues highlighted by the scholars above and gave them a high degree of priority whereby two groups of five learners from two schools were considered during the focus group process.



3.6.3 Observation

Observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioral patterns of participants, objects, and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). As a qualitative data-gathering technique, observation enabled the researcher to gain a deeper insight and understanding of how remedial programs accommodate children lagging behind their peers. Specifically, the researcher observed the interactions that occur between learner-to-learner and educators with learners too during the lessons. Thus, the observations gathered data on whether town schools in King William's Town have reasonable facilities that promote the development of English proficiency, language, and social skills in the learners lagging behind their peers. This method allowed the researcher to have first-hand information on exact behavioral patterns, including attitudes of stakeholders to learners lagging behind their peers academically.

Subsequently, it allowed the researcher to observe those salient attitudinal issues missed by other data collection instruments such as interviews, and focus group discussions. Respectively, the observations enabled the researcher to discover some of the things that participants are not at ease to talk or write about in other situations during data gathering techniques. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) note that during the observation process, the behavior of participants is recorded as it occurs and this assists the researcher to have a full picture of the real feelings of the participant. This implies that the observer being an outsider can see phenomena in which the participants are involved which, however, often taken for granted (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005) and (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Consequently, this enabled the researcher to have unobtrusive observations, as she took note of all the actions that were taking place, ensuring that she was getting the best for the study.

Additionally, the observation technique, like any other technique has its limitations. In a study such as this, the problem of using the observation method is that individuals might be conscious of being under scrutiny especially from the researcher who in each case was a stranger. Thus, the participants might have been tempted to behave in a manner that is likely to portray a different life experience in their everyday life. This is a case in point in situations where the researcher is looking at issues to do with relationships. In such cases, participants behave in ways that are, culturally and approved following the observer's expectations (Springer, 2010).

Springer (2010) also notes that another limitation is that during observation, the researcher might miss other important things because he/she may be writing about other things he/she may have noticed first. In the process, she/he might also miss things, which are equally important to the study. Hence, the researcher used the observation schedules to minimize these limitations, by recording information about the learning materials and equipment including the general security of the learners in the school learning environment, taking note of how they support the weak learners. In this view, these observation schedules assisted the researcher to concentrate on the fundamental issues of the study. In this regard, the data collection tool offered meaningful and rich information expected for the study. Springer (2010) further warns that non-participant observation has negative effects, which include observer effects.

Thus, it is highly recommended that the researcher used this data collection tool to crosscheck the data that had been collected through other research tools such as focus groups and interviews.

3.6.3.1 Advantages of Observation

Observations, according to Hughes (2008) provide researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other, and check for how much time is spent on various activities. Validity is stronger with the use of additional strategies used with observation such as interviewing, document analysis, focus groups, and other qualitative methods.

According to Creswell (2009), the main strength of observation is that it provides direct access to the social phenomena under consideration. Instead of relying on some kind of self-report such as asking people, the researcher observes and records behaviour. This in principle avoids the wide range of problems associated with self-report.

Additionally, diversity, flexibility, and applicability are highly encouraged. Hughes (2008) contends that observation can take diverse forms, from informal and unstructured approaches through to tightly structured, standardized procedures, and can yield associated diverse types of data, both qualitative and quantitative. Therefore, the observation is more applicable in a wide range of contexts as it provides a permanent record. The fact that all observation entails some form of recording means that it provides a permanent record of such events or behavior, thus allowing further analysis or subsequent comparisons across time or location to be carried out (Creswell, 2009). Conversely, the researchers should use more than one technique during data collection. Hence, triangulation is perceived as an overarching research strategy as the research strategies can effectively complement each other and enhance the quality of evidence available to the researcher.

3.6.3.2 Disadvantages of Observation

One of the main disadvantages of observation according to Wolcott (2001) is that it can be very time-consuming and resource-intensive. In this view, observation may be a very desirable strategy to explore certain research questions, but it may simply not be feasible for the researcher with limited time and resources to carry out the observation and therefore alternative strategies would have to be pursued (Wolcott, 2001). Another fundamental weakness of observation is susceptible to observer bias, thus undermining the reliability and hence the validity of the data gathered. This is because, the observer records not what happens but what they wanted to see, either expected to see or merely thought they saw.

Kawulich (2005) argues that observation is susceptible to the 'hawthorne effect,' that is people usually perform better when they know that they are being observed. Creswell (2009) adds more by stating that the observer effect is a disadvantage of observation, whereby the presence of an observer in some way influences the behavior of those being observed. To avoid or minimize this, methods of observation sometimes attempt to be as unobtrusive as possible. Thus, observation is filtered through one's interpretive frames, and that the most accurate observations are shaped by the formative theoretical framework and scrupulous attention to detail. Although the observation method of gathering data has some disadvantages, the researcher utilized its advantages and incorporated them with the advantages of focus group discussions and interviews to come up with reliable data.

3.7 Data Analysis

Maree (2010) says data processing and analysis implies editing, coding, classification, and tabulation of collected data. Thus, the analysis of data in qualitative research projects involves the type of research strategy chosen for the procedures. It also includes summarizing the data collected and presenting the results in a way that communicates meaning to the reader (Creswell, 2006). In this study, qualitative data analysis was ongoing during the collection of data as supported by particularly for that data obtained from the interviews, observations, and focus group discussions.

During data collection, the researcher employed a concurrent embedded model, where she conducted interviews, focus groups, and observations (educators, learners, and school heads) to gather qualitative data.

Based on the issues that arose from the interviews, observations and focus group discussions were put together as findings for the study. Maree (2010) notes that qualitative data analysis is an interactive approach aimed at understanding how participants make meaning of the phenomenon under study. In this case, the stakeholders centered on the general meaning that they made on commitment. Hence, qualitative data from the interviews, focus groups, and observations were collected using tape-recording supplemented by handwritten notes in this study. For the handwritten notes, field editing involved completing, translating, and rewriting the handwritten notes immediately after coming back from the field to enable the researcher to have the full picture of what he was investigating. It also enabled the researcher to recall and relate to the meaning of the notes before he was overwhelmed with events. Tape-recorded data was field edited by listening to the tapes after recording each interviewee and transcribing the information to ensure audibility and clarity of voices and try to remember everything as said. Additionally, the researcher transcribed tape-recorded data and then stored it in three USB disks for security reasons.

Finally, the captured data results were condensed as the collected data was clustered into common themes as well as writing stories and tallying and ranking responses to uncover the main issues arising from the data. Subsequently, the researcher triangulated issues arising from the interviews, observations, and focus groups before condensing them as findings for the study. This helped to cluster the data into common and meaningful groups, which was then analyzed. According to Maree (2010), coding is the process of reading carefully through the researcher's transcribed data; line-by-line, and dividing it into meaningful analytic units. When the researcher located meaningful segments, she coded them by marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words, or unique identifying names/letters.

3.7.1 Establishing themes or categories

Maree (2010) says that after the data have been coded, one needs to move on to the next phase of the data analysis process where he/she organizes or combines related codes into themes or categories. In this study, after the researcher read through the identified codes to find the themes that recur in the data, she carefully went through descriptive responses given by participants on each question across all columns to understand the meaning they communicate. This approach allowed the researcher to establish emerging themes from the data. After establishing the themes, she labeled the data and grouped them into themes. This involved some form of cutting and sorting. This was a process of selecting sections of data that are similar and put them together in their appropriate themes.

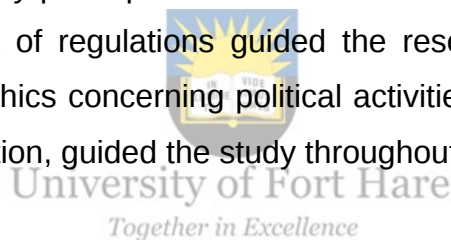
According to Maree (2010), a simple method is to cut text out of the printed hard copy and then sort it into different category piles. Each pile represented a category and had a label with a descriptor. This is an interactive process of moving back and forth through each category of data. To do this, it means the researcher had to work meticulously to ensure that he/she keeps the source of data so that he knows where the text came from (Maree, 2010). Kumar (2005) urges researchers to continue to categorize the data until one has identified and labeled all the coded data into relevant categories. He further suggests that having identified the themes, the researcher should go through the transcripts of all interviews and classify the responses under different themes. After identifying responses that fall within different themes, the researcher should then integrate them into the text of his/her report.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Water-Adams (2006) states that any research, which involves other people in some way, has ethical implications since education is a social action, data gathering and analysis within this study inevitably impacts on the lives of other people involved in the study. Similarly, Mouton (2001) echoes him by stating that ethical issues arise out of our interaction with other people and animals or the environment, especially where there is potential for a conflict of interests. Equally, ethical choices involving a trade-off or compromise between the interests and the rights of different parties cause some conflicts.

For example, while the researcher had the right to collect data through interviewing participants, this right was not at the expense of their privacy. In research studies, ethical considerations relate to morality issues as they also deal with matters of right and wrong. "What we regard as morality and ethics in day-to-day life is generally a matter of agreement among the members of a group" (Mouton, 2001: 523). The researcher did not force anyone to participate, making sure that the information each participant supplied was confidential. Simultaneously, the researcher guarded individual privacy as stipulated in ethical considerations involving any kind of research.

During this process, the researcher first asked permission from the school heads, participants, and parents of the participants. As emphasized by Babbie et al. (2005), informed consent guided the researcher as an important ethical norm. Therefore, all respondents/participants voluntarily took part in the study because the researcher explained to them that they were free to withdraw if they felt they could not proceed. The information provided by participants was confidential and private. As advocated by Creswell (2014) a set of regulations guided the researcher to govern various aspects of conduct and ethics concerning political activities, declaration of interests, and use of official information, guided the study throughout.



3.8.1 Informed consent

In every research discipline, it is unethical to collect information without the knowledge of participants, and their confirmed willingness (Kumar, 2005) and (Mertens, 2010). Thus, the researcher made sure that all the participants were aware of the intention of the study, the type of information the researcher wanted from them, and why the information was being sought, the purpose that information served, how participants would participate in the study, and how it directly or indirectly affected them. Hence, participants' consent was made voluntary and without coercion of any kind (Kumar, 2005) and (Creswell, 2014).

In line with Kumar (2005), the researcher should not breach the principle of informed consent. In this study, the researcher's first step was to seek permission from the Department of Education and the participating schools. She met these participants in person and held briefings to minimize any misrepresentations of information.

Simultaneously, she furnished the participants with full information on the aims and objectives of the study, the duration of their involvement, possible risks, benefits, and methods or procedures.

Subsequently, the researcher asked the participants if they would want to be tape-recorded during the interviews whereby some of the participants agreed while others rejected the proposal. In this view, the researcher did not take that as an offense; instead, she decided to take down notes, in situations where the participants could not agree to be tape-recorded. In this regard, the researcher respected participants' right to know that their involvement is voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time.

3.8.2 Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity

Kumar (2005) and Creswell (2014) state that sharing information obtained for purposes of research with other participants or any other person other than the purpose of the research is unethical. Thus, the researcher made sure that the information from participants was anonymous because it is unethical to identify an individual participant with the response. After collecting the data, the researcher made sure that her sources became unknown by changing specific details to protect identities. Correspondingly, the researcher used pseudonyms for both schools and all the participants to maintain anonymity. Finally, the researcher kept the recorded data and transcripts in a safe and secure container, allowing no one to temper with the information.

3.8.3 Avoiding harm or damage to participants

According to Kumar (2005) when the researcher collects data from participants, he/she needs to examine carefully whether his/her involvement is likely to harm participants. If it is, he/she must make sure that the risk is minimal. Minimum means that the extent of harm or discomfort to the study is less than that ordinarily encountered in daily life (Mertens, 2010). In trying to minimize the extent of harm, the researcher adhered to issues of confidentiality as discussed under the section on "right of confidentiality and anonymity".

In this study, the researcher protected the anonymity of individuals by assigning numbers to returned instruments and keeping the identity of individuals confidential. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that participants were working in their own offices.

Kumar (2005) notes that harm includes supports of the above procedure:

Not only hazardous medical experiments but also any social research that might involve such things as discomfort, anxiety, harassment, invasion of privacy, or demeaning or dehumanizing procedures. Kumar (2005) implies that if the information researched is likely to create anxiety or harassment, the researcher should take necessary steps to avert that even if it means discussing further with authorities. During data collection, the researcher ensured that the data is as confidential as much as possible. In an event where the participants refused to take part in the research, the researcher respected their wishes and had to select other people to replace them. However, in this study that never happened as all the participants agreed to take part.



3.9 Data Trustworthiness

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3.9.1 Credibility/trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Dörnyei (2011) propose four alternative constructs that more accurately reflect the assumptions of the qualitative paradigm. They are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. De Vos (2005) states that the goal of credibility is to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner that the participant was accurately identified and described. In this study, the credibility or truth-value of the study was enhanced by continuing data collection over a long period to ensure that the participants had become used to the researcher and were behaving naturally. Credibility or internal validity was achieved by carefully recording the interviews, transcribing the interviews verbatim, analyzing all the data gathered, and presenting the data in a fair and unbiased manner.

During this process, the researcher used the following strategies to enhance internal validity: prolonged and persistent fieldwork [this ensured match between findings and participant reality], verbatim accounts [literal statements of participants were obtained], multi-method strategies [data was collected using in-depth interviews and observation], mechanical recordings of data [interviews were recorded using a voice recorder], and participant review [educators were asked to review the researcher's synthesis of interviews for accuracy].

Additionally, transferability or internal validity refers to the degree to which the findings of the qualitative study can be applied to other contexts (McKay, 2006:13). De Vos (2005) affirms that the transferability of a qualitative study to other settings may be problematic. However, the degree of transferability depends largely on the similarity of the learning contexts being examined. For the readers to determine the transferability of this study, the researcher provided a complete description of the participants and the context of the research so that readers can determine to what extent the findings might apply to other contexts. This implies that transferability, or applicability of the results to other contexts, was achieved by reporting "thick descriptions". "Thick descriptions" refer to the process of using multiple perspectives to explain the insights gleaned from the study (Mackey and Gass, 2008:180). Confirmability, or neutrality of the findings, was achieved since full details of the data on which claims or interpretations are based were made available. In this view, this would allow other researchers to be able to examine the data and confirm, modify, or reject the researcher's interpretations.

3.9.2 Validity and Reliability

McKay (2006) emphasizes validity and reliability as two qualities that are essential for sound research. She further stresses that these terms are defined differently in qualitative research because there are far less control and structure in qualitative research. In this view, validity in qualitative research is the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006).

Thus, the researcher and participants agreed on the description or composition of events, especially the meanings of these events. In qualitative research, internal validity refers to credibility and external validity refers to transferability (McKay, 2006) and (De Vos, 2005).

Additionally, the reliability of qualitative research depends on what is termed dependability (McKay, 2006). McKay (2006) defines dependability as the degree to which the results reported in the study can be trusted or are reliable. Dependability, or consistency of the findings, was achieved since the interviews were recorded. In this regard, the electronically recorded data helped the researcher to make use of all interpretive cues to draw inferences and evaluate the dependability of the inferences that had been drawn. Additionally, in reporting the qualitative study, the researcher provided a rich description of the participants involved in the study, the context for the study, and most importantly, all the steps that were taken to carry out the study.

In qualitative research, reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record and what occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, that is, a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage (Cohen et al., 2000). For reliability, the researcher recorded the responses as they occur using a tape recorder and made a backup by noting what the participants were saying immediately during the interview with each participant. The researcher also recorded all necessary information as she was making the observations. Simultaneously, the triangulation of the different forms of data collected added to the reliability and validity of the research process and the findings. In light of this, Creswell (2014) advocates for the use of at least three different data sources to complement the validity and reliability of the data collected.

Reliability refers to “the consistency of measurement - the extent to which the results are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasion of data collection, it is the extent to which measures are free from error” (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014:195). In this study, reliability was ensured by giving participants the same instructions and the same amount of time to complete identical research items: the standardized test for learners and semi-structured interviews for educators and principals. In this regard, the researcher considered the concentration spun of learners for focus group discussions.

3.10 Triangulation

The triangulation of different data sources is important in case study analysis (Creswell, 1998). Thus, triangulation is defined as “the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behavior” (Cohen and Manion, 1994 p. 233). Accordingly, the trustworthiness of information collected is triangulated by taking several measures on the same subject to ensure that the information from various sources is cross-tabulated and yields the same research findings (Paton, 2002). Triangulation in qualitative research attempts to map out more fully the richness and complexity of human behavior Cohen and Manion (2003) by studying it from more than one standpoint. It increases the validity of the study and its data is different because it does not so integrate results that show more validity; instead, it helps give you a better understanding while you make sense of data and information (Bell, 1995). Hence, the process of the triangulation of data strengthens the information by increasing the overall validity and credibility of the data sets and information used.

Accordingly, the researcher compared different sources, situations, and methods to see if there were recurring patterns in this study. At times, it happens that people see things from the same perspective but on certain occasions view them from different perspectives. Hence, the researchers should use triangulation as it increases the validity of the study (Bell, 1995). In this regard, triangulation remained a strategy to ensure trustworthiness in this study and to demonstrate a clear awareness of the ethical issues. Hence, the researcher adopted the interviews, observation, and focus group methods during data collection to make sure that the collected data were triangulated to limit the problems of construct validity within this study.

3.11 Summary

This chapter has outlined various methods that were used in the collection of data from the field of study. The chapter has encompassed the research design, data collection techniques, data analysis sampling technique, and procedures. Data gathering instruments that were used in the research study were also discussed in the chapter. The tools adopted assisted the researcher to understand how the remedial program affects learners' proficiency in English Second Language.

In addition, the triangulation of instruments helped the researcher to get rich information through interviews, observations, and focus groups. The researcher also presented and fully discussed the Ethical considerations, showing their relevancy to the study of this nature. The next chapter deals with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered in the research. The study was qualitative research that considers the views of the participants. A case study research design was adopted and two townships identified as school A and school B constituted the study. The semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and observation were identified as the data collection instruments in this study. Based on the issues from interviews, observations, and focus group discussions, the findings of the study were sorted accordingly.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with methodology, research instruments, and ethical considerations such as negotiation of entry, trustworthiness, and limitations. This chapter presents and discusses the data obtained from two selected township primary schools in King William's Town Education District that formed the sample of this research. The researcher conducted the study by using semi-structured individual interviews, focus group discussions, and observation. Pseudo names, considering the principle of anonymity, have been used to profile the schools as well as the participants used in the study. During data collection, four participants were interviewed that is one principal and one teacher from each school. Additionally, two groups of focus group discussions were also used simultaneously during data collection and each comprised of five learners per school. Consequently, the participants were interviewed to produce a balanced presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data. In this regard, the data collected from these different tools would be presented and analyzed in this chapter. The transcripts were studied and the themes were identified, analyzed, and interpreted. Thus, the data would be presented accordingly per the tools used and supported with verbatim where is necessary. According to Flick (2009), this is necessary in a case study as part of triangulation as the intention is to answer the research questions posed, to come up with the assessment model for identifying remedial learners and assist accordingly.

4.2 Data Presentation

As indicated in the introduction, the data for the study was collected by using three research instruments, semi-structured individual interviews, focus group discussions, and observation. Thus, the data presented here reflect what is happening in the schools citing a remedial program as an intervention model being implemented in two King William's Town Township Schools. It also indicates the assessment instruments used in selecting learners for remediation and the effectiveness of educators' views in identifying learners for this intervention program.

The section that follows presents what the participants have revealed during interview sessions as well as during the observations and focus group discussions. For ethical reasons, the schools under study were referred to as school A and school B, and pseudonyms were used for learners as participants. The data would be presented according to themes.

Consequently, the biographical data on participants in the study are discussed in Section A while section “B” of the chapter presents data on sector programs that are dominant in the improvement of English second language through a remedial program. The involvement of other stakeholders in educational programs is a crucial step that ensures effective implementation of the remedial program, especially where there are minority groups of children such as learners who are lagging behind their peers who come from a poor background with no exposure to English as a Home language.

4.2.1 Information about Schools and Participants

Section A

Basic education provides a foundation for a learner’s lifetime learning and work opportunities. To equip the learners with quality knowledge and widen the employment opportunities, learners must be proficient in English Second Language, which turns to be the language of teaching and learning. In this view, the South African Act says that the child is supposed to be taught in the mother tongue in the first years of his/her primary education, which is Foundation Phase (Nel, and Hugo, 2012). However, this might have a negative impact on the learners’ proficiency in English as they have to use it as a medium of instruction at a later stage. Hence, the researcher used a township school that uses English as Second Language and one that uses it as a Home language.

Accordingly, the government declared that all mainstream schools become inclusive to allow every learner to have access to early stimulation opportunities to alleviate the situation. However, the policy has its challenges, which include shortages of learning materials and unqualified human personnel in schools and those who should monitor the program.

4.2.1.1 *The characteristics of the participating schools*

According to the Department of Basic Education (2010), in South Africa, the class size norm is 40 learners in a primary school. This large class and limited time in the intermediate phase complicates the task of providing individual reading and writing instruction to learners. With the participating schools have 62 and 68 learners in a class, these classes exceed the national learner – educator ratio at ordinary schools. In this view, the schools comprise of the SMT and SGB, educators and non-educator staff, and the learners. For instance, **School A** is a big school starting from Grade R up to Grade 12 and most of the grades have more than 60 learners. Additionally, English as a Second Language is used as a language of instruction from Grade 4 upwards. This becomes a challenge especially in grade 4, as it is a transition from the learners' mother tongue to English as their second language.

In this study, the Grade 6 learners from two schools formed part whereby five learners were selected out of 68 learners from **School A**. In this school, most of the staff members are Xhosa speaking as the local community is Xhosa. In this view, the staff comprises of one Principal, 2 departmental heads, and 18 educators without a remedial teacher per school. This is a Quintile 1 school where learners do not pay school fees. Additionally, most of the learners at this school are from the township with a poor background. Moreover, there is a feeding scheme at the school by the government to support the poor learners who might not have enough food from home. The school comprises 1265 learners against 18 educators. There is no library at the school and the learners depend on the community library in the township. Learners are provided with the basic learner support material (workbook) supplied by the Department of Education and there is no academic support in the form of remedial class to the learners lagging. The basic extramural activities such as soccer, netball, and music are operational as well as The National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP).

School B

Relatively, school B is big with Grade R to Grade 12 just like School A. The school comprises of 1 principal, 3 departmental heads, 23 educators, and no trained remedial teacher. The school is located in Quintile 4, which suggests that parents are working and can afford to pay school fees. The number of learners is 1347 against 23 educators. This school has some additional teachers paid by the SGB (School Governing Body). The Grade 6 class comprises 62 learners from which the five learners were selected. The numbers are a bit more compared to School A. All the learners have access to the departmental support material in the form of workbooks. There is a remedial class for struggling learners but no trained remedial teacher. Extra and Co-curricular activities include soccer, netball, rugby, hockey, music, and debate, and they are functioning well. There is no National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). At this school, English is used as a Home Language and the school is located close to town. The township is a mixed community of Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers, which use English as a language of instruction from Grade R. In this school, IsiXhosa and Afrikaans are used as second languages.



4.2.2 Biographical Information of Participants

The biographical details of the participants that were gathered for the study included learners' and educators' ages, qualifications, length of teaching experience, and subject specialization. According to UNESCO (2014), it is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that the learner's needs are met in classrooms; hence, they become part of the participants. Thus, the data about the professional qualifications of the educators was important because it enabled the researcher to conclude that all the educators at least qualify for teaching.

4.2.2.1 Biographical Information of Educators and Principals

The participating principals and educators' ages range from 30 – 60 indicating that all of them are adults who should be able to understand the learners as their children as they have sufficient experience needed in schools to guide the learners. This widespread of educators' ages ensures that the school system benefits from the experience of the older educators. The class educators for both schools happen to be

females and both principals are males. According to the Department of Basic Education (2010), in South Africa, the majority of primary school educators are females. This might be beneficial to the learners as women are often seen as mothers who might be patient with struggling learners. The educators' age groups of 30-45 years are proof enough to be mothers and experienced who are expected to identify the learners' problems and provide the best assistance to the learners. Hence, women are believed to be tender caregivers who are expected to nurture the learners and cultivate young learners, as they are still fragile at the primary level.

Table 1: Principals and educators profiles

Participant	School	Qualification	Specialization	Age	Gender	Teaching experience
Principal A	School A	Master's Degree	Mathematics	50 - 55	M	21-25
Principal B	School B	Honour's Degree	Afrikaans	55 - 60	M	25-30
Teacher A	School A	Bachelor's degree	Social sciences	30 - 35	F	10-15
Teacher B	School B	Bachelor's degree	English	40 - 45	F	21-25

4.2.2.2 Highest Professional Qualifications of the Principals and Educators.

The results indicated that all the four adult participants are qualified personnel, with the Bachelor's Degree qualification. Academically, qualified educators and principals could better assist learners in a remedial program. This implies that all the educators and principals indicate to be well-qualified persons. However, the ASER study in rural India revealed that educator characteristics such as qualification, length of training, and a number of years of teaching experience made little difference to children's learning (Bhattacharjea et al., 2011). It is of uttermost importance that the educators have love and passion for the learners and the subject matter.

Regarding the length of teaching experience of the educators in both schools, all the participants for the study varied. The result showed that one educator had 10-15 years of teaching experience. A principal and one other educator fell in the 21-25 years category of teaching experience. The most experienced being a principal within the range of 25-30 years' experience. Educators must be appropriately trained so that they could be able to provide quality education to learners and give them enough support when it is needed.

4.2.2.3 Educators' Subject Specialization

It was noted that only one of the participants specialized in English and the other 3 specialize in other subject areas. In addition, none of the educators has remedial training. This implies that the lack of remedial training among the educators could have an impact on how they implement a remedial program to the learners nor identifying remedial learners. In this view, the person might not even value the implementation of a remedial program, as they might not be able to identify the best strategies to apply taking into account that they are not English specialists.



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4.2.2.4 Learners Profiles

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants, it is important to provide a profile for the learners too as they form part of the participants in this study. In both **schools A and B**, the majority of the learners who participated in the study were boys as the researcher was targeting learners who were lagging academically. Moreover, most of them are from Xhosa speaking communities. This is implying that they speak IsiXhosa at home and only come across English at school, which deems it very necessary to have a remedial program on the improvement of English as a Second Language to familiarize them with the language and to master it since it is a medium of instructions.

Table 1 Respondents learner profiles

School A	Gender	Age	Years in the phase	School B	Gender	Age	Years in the phase
Siphosethu	M	11	3	Onika	M	11	3
Millisa	F	11	3	Azanako	F	11	3
Lutho	M	12	4	Vicky	F	11	3
Kungawo	F	11	3	Junior	M	12	4
Imange	M	12	3	Sange	F	11	3

In school A, four out of five learners who participated in the study were three years in the intermediate phase. Only one learner seems to have repeated a grade in this phase. Moreover, only one learner is still in the same grade at the age of twelve. This implies that this learner might have started school late or repeated a grade in the foundation phase. Comparatively, in school B, four learners are in the correct phase as compare to their age. Only, one learner seemed to have repeated a Grade in the intermediate phase as he was 12 years old. Relatively, the National Protocol for Assessment Grade R-12 DoE (2010) states that promotion requirements from grade to grade through the foundation phase should be within the appropriate age cohort, and there should be no learner retention in the phase for more than four years. In these two schools, most of the learners are at the correct level of education according to their years and the phases. Only three learners have repeated a grade in this phase or previous phase. All the names used in this study are false names to protect the participants.

4.3 Types of Remedial Programs In Two King William's Township Schools.

The study was confined to two remedial programs namely the Classroom Remedial and the Extra Lessons Remedial Program. Convenient sampling was used to select schools, which are perceived to be offering these types of remedial programs to find out if remediation can produce better results in the improvement of English Second Language to learners lagging in township schools. In this regard, both schools indicated that they had a way of engaging learners in remediation although they do not have qualified personnel for remedial classes.

According to the Department of Basic Education (2010), South Africa has developed a comprehensive teacher development strategy to meet the needs in the demand, supply, and utilization of educators in the system. This implies that any qualified educator should be in a position to remediate learners through teacher development.

4.3.1 Diagnostic Assessment for Remediation

A diagnostic assessment was conducted to identify a problem so that a solution can be provided through remedial work. The DoE (2002) indicates that a diagnostic assessment will lead to some form of remedial program. This helps educators to identify a learner's needs, abilities, and state of readiness to achieve the goals of the curriculum. According to James (2013) through a diagnostic assessment, the educators can determine the needs of individual learners, so that instruction can be personalized and tailored to provide the appropriate steps for learning and provide the necessary intervention. Thus, during assessments, some learners are disadvantaged since some forms of assessment tend to favor a certain type of learner. Pillay (2011) echoes this by stating that, it was found out that the educators were not assessing all the assessment standards set in the documents, which may be contributing to learners' poor performance.



4.3.2 Identified Assessment Models in King William's Township Schools

School A indicated that they used classroom remediation whereby the educators had to attend to the class of learners who were lagging behind their peers. The educators used In-class identification when identifying the struggling learners and address their difficulties within the mainstream class. Consequently, the learners identified for remedial were grouped and given much attention by the educator in their small group. After remediating them in class, they were always given some take-home tasks. According to the educators, the remedial learners depended on their parents to assist at home. However, most of the parents lacked interest and supervision of their learners' schoolwork and homework whereas, other parents are illiterate and do not know how to help the learners with the schoolwork. This becomes a challenge even though the educators tried to assist the remedial learners. Based on **School B**, they found the extra class to be the most convenient for them to attend to the learners lagging behind their peers.

During the class, the educator identified the struggling learners and dedicated at least 30 mins to an hour after school to attend to these learners. They found this working as all learners were attended to and helped based on their needs.

4.3.3 In Class Identification Model

In classroom-based identification, the educators mentioned that they focus on all the learners in the classroom. The educators' used educator made tests and observations during teaching to identify learners lagging behind their peers.

Steps followed in the In-Class Identification

The teacher observation in-class discussion and written exercises for error analysis

- Reading activities;
- Records and anecdotal notes;
- Class, school cluster tests;
- Parent concern identification is through patterns of errors in daily work.



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An analysis of the items would indicate the learner's reading problems rendering them suitable for remediation. Classroom identification is based on educator made tests. They are based on what the educator would have taught. In some schools, grade educators made monthly tests, which were given across the grades. Thus, learners who scored badly were then included in the classroom remedial group. These results would be augmented by classroom records on reading. In addition, the educators claimed that this type of identification comprised of around 90% of the learners falling into the remedial group. Research has shown that test development is a crucial aspect of assessing learners for special programs (Asim et al., 2011), (Chireshe, 2011), and (Owoyele and Kareem, 2011). Hence, educators must be equipped with techniques in which they can identify learners for remedial in their classrooms. Such educators would feel confident to identify, teach, and refer struggling learners with learning disabilities to specialists.

Extra Lessons in or Outside the School

The nomination model for extra class and the steps followed:

- Parent-teacher meeting;
- School report and workbook;
- Teach according to perceived difficulties;
- Feedback to parents only;
- No transfer to class.

During the interviews with the school B educator, the findings revealed that extra classes were used as an extension classroom remediation. This implies that during the extra classes, the educator contends that no new topics are introduced but a revision of what was done in the mainstream class to assist those who failed to understand.

4.4 Data Presentation and Discussion of the Findings

This section would present, analyze, and discuss the findings of the study. The researcher would present the responses from all the participants below concerning the questions raised during the interviews and focus group interviews. The pseudo names were used for learners and schools that participated in the study. Respectively, all ten learners who participated in the study are learners lagging behind their peers academically. The grade involved in the study is considered as the exit point of the intermediate phase where learners should be ready for high school. Hence, the researcher deemed it necessary to employ a remedial program for these learners to avoid learner dropouts. Subsequently, the responses would be interpreted and analyze thereafter by using the relevant codes according to different themes. Thus, the following themes were adopted: the remedial learners' proficiency in English Second language, the remedial work, the criterion used for remediation, and the teaching strategies. The researcher used the outlined coding system throughout the dissertation for easy reference to all the participants as follow: **School A Educator (SAE) and School B Educator (SBE), Principal in School A (PA), Principal in School B (PB), and Focus Groups in Schools A & B (FGSA & FGSB)**. In this regard, the following findings were put under different themes and were presented and discussed below.

4.4.1 Theme 1: Remedial Learners' Proficiency in English Second language

This part sought to find out if the participants in both schools used the remedial programs to assist the remedial learners who lack proficiency in English second language. Both schools seemed to be fully engaged in some form of a remedial program to improve the learners' English Second Language Proficiency. In this case, the participants gave an account of how they instill English proficiency in their learners differently. For example, the School A Educator (SAE) whose school uses English as a second language indicated that she always encourages the learners to communicate in the target language during their English lessons and listen to the news and report to the class the following day. On the other hand, School B Educator (SBE) whose school uses English as a Home language highlighted that she always encourages the learners to narrate the stories to the class daily to be more familiar with the language structures and tenses.

To triangulate this, during the learners' interviews through a focus group, they indicated that their class teacher punishes them when they communicate in any other language during the English lessons. The practice makes perfect rule is followed to keep the learners on track with the language of learning and teaching. Singh (2014) asserts that exposure to a language at home, and not only at school, will improve the proficiency in that language. In support of this assertion, The ASER study in rural India revealed that learners whose home language differs from the language of instruction performed substantially worse in baseline and end-line assessments than learners, whose home language matched the school's language of instruction (Bhattacharjea, Wadhwa, and Banerji, 2011). This is evident in the performance and participation of learners in school B as learners are familiar with the target language already.

How often educators conducted reading.

According to both the learner and educator respondents, in school A, reading was conducted only twice a week. In school B, all respondents both the educator and learners agreed that reading was done daily. The daily reading was convenient to school B as the learners were doing their remediation after school.

Early grade reading assessment surveys found that educators lack basic knowledge and support for how to teach reading (Gove and Cvelich, 2010). Both educators affirmed that they use the phonic approach to teach reading to English second language. Remedial reading interventions, when implemented correctly, can have an impact on learners' attitudes, achievement, and confidence to progress well. This affirms that if educators were trained properly and had relevant resources, they were able to teach remediation effectively, despite themselves struggling with language proficiency. Therefore, if the educators acquire competent teaching skills in the second language, it would result in the development of language competency in learners (Ebersohn et al, 2014) and (Howie et al., 2008).

Learners' performance in comprehension writing.

Most learners in school A performed badly in comprehension writing. Only one of the five learners could answer the comprehension passage meaningfully. They had a challenge in formulating sentences in the second language as it was foreign to them and only used during English time. In school B where learners were familiar with the target language, the majority of the learners were at an average level of comprehension writing with only one learner struggling to comprehend. Comparatively, learners from school B performed better than learners from school A as they were somehow familiar with the language of teaching and learning. These learners could make effective use of reading materials they came across at school or at home to improve on their second language proficiency. The educators gave scaffolds to learners with limited knowledge to provide more guidance to enable learners to improve their reading and writing skills. According to Nel and Booysen (2015), English Second Language learners often experienced difficulties regarding assessment when they were expected to write academically. The educator had the responsibility to give scaffolds to the learners with limited knowledge to provide more guidance to enable the learners to improve their writing skills.

Observation checklist for Grade 6 Learners.

In the first week in school A, 2 learners participated in shared reading and participated in the story discussion to show understanding of the story.

The other 3 learners had challenges in reading and speaking in the foreign language as they are not familiar with English. These learners could not give positive verbal responses to the writing prompt. They could not use the second language correctly except for 2 learners who tried to answer the questions appropriately in full sentences. In school B, three learners participated in the shared reading and the story discussion. The other two lacked the confidence to express themselves. In the second week, the results of observation from both schools showed some improvement as most learners could participate in the activities given. In the first week, half of the total learners from both schools participated in reading comprehension. In the second week, there was a great improvement as all the ten learners' participation was noted. They all tried to give positive verbal responses to the writing prompt. There was interaction with peers to generate writing ideas. They could freely share their writing with their peers.

According to the South African Demographics Profile of 2016, only 9,6 % of the South African population has English as a home language (Index Mundi, 2016), yet English is the Medium of Instruction in more than 80% of the South African schools. School A that comprised of sixty- eight learners in a class of Grade six learners used classroom remediation whereby the class educator addresses the individual learners' needs in the mainstream class. In this regard, this particular school, English is regarded as the Second Language. This implies that learners only start to use it as a medium of instruction from Grade 4. This is a challenging grade as the learners' transit from being taught in their mother tongue to English full time. Hence, a remedial program must be offered to the learners who are lagging to familiarize them with English as their Second language. Probyn (2006) found that the language of learning and teaching might affect the learner who does not use this language at home to such an extent that there may be barriers to learner proficiency. According to the class educator, this remedial program allows the learners to benefit from their peers in class. In this case, target learners are served within their regular classroom setting through collaboration and co-teaching. However, this setting delays the learning process for the above-average learners as the educator pays much attention to the remedial group.

School B comprised of sixty-two Grade 6 learners in a class and an extra class remedial program was used for the selected remedial learners. This school uses English as a home language. This implies that learners are familiar with the language of learning and teaching. Thus, the class educator dedicates thirty minutes to an hour of her time to attend to the learners lagging in her class to improve their English proficiency in the second language. In addition, the target learners are moved from the regular classroom and working in a small group. According to Schlebusch and Thobedi 2004 learners who do not have the opportunity to speak English outside the classroom struggle to concentrate and cope with the tasks given. In this view, during the remedial program sessions, learners get an opportunity to participate freely. However, according to the educator, there might be a lack of concentration from learners as young learners have a short concentration span. Hence, the educator dedicates about 30 minutes to an hour only to remedial.

4.4.2 Theme 2: The Remedial Work.

This part was to check the educators' and learners' responses towards their improvement and proficiency in English Second Language through the remedial work. In response to how the educators felt about implementing a remedial program, they seemed to be positive about remedial and strongly felt that if they were well equipped with remedial training; the positive results would be achieved in the improvement of English Second Language. Educators from both schools expressed the same sentiments that lack of resources and training was making them lose confidence in themselves as they were depending on their understanding and maybe using the wrong strategies in implementing remediation. Lerner and Johns (2009) supported this by stating that repeated failures make learners more conscious of their poor performance, which ultimately results in emotional, social self-concept problems.

Moreover, the educators felt that maybe if time was allocated for remedial lessons and trained personnel assigned, remedial work would be fruitful. Trudell et al. (2012) highlighted the fact that when educators are well trained, mentored, and supported, and they could help make the difference between failure and success of learners' second language proficiency through remedial work. For example, **SAE** further explained:

I feel that a properly trained remedial educator would make time for individual learners and give them what they require about improving their second language English proficiency. Unfortunately, none of us educators has been trained for this.

The attitude of learners towards reading

In school A, only 2 learners showed a positive attitude towards reading during the focus group. This means that majority at this school was very negative about English as they claimed that it was not used as a language of teaching and learning.

Further, FGSA added,

Most of us are not familiar with the language and we are failing to read in English as a targeted language. This makes us completely lose interest and develop a negative attitude towards English.

In addition, FGSA continues,

We are even scared to try to read as we might have a wrong pronunciation of English words. Our educators also give us many home works and we still have challenges, as our parents cannot help us, as they are illiterate too.



Generally, the majority seemed to have the main problem with the English language as their Second language. Thus, the research findings of this study also agree with Fleisch (2008) who states that South African studies of academic achievement find a strong and positive correlation between socio-economic background and academic performance. This shows that a full 25% of achievement is explainable in terms of the social background of learners. In addition, some studies indicate that there is a strong relationship between poverty and performance and that poverty is linked to underperformance. Respectively speaking, poverty was one factor that affected learners reading levels and indicated that some learners got exposure to reading books only at school and only got the opportunity to read at the school only as there was no library in the area and this limited the learners' exploration and reading practice. According to Pflapson (2011), it is easier for parents to support their children in a language they are proficient in not in another language especially English as most of the parents are no educated.

This contributed to the employed remediation not yielding good results compared to the one employed in school B. The lack of resources exacerbated reading difficulties for the learners.

Comparatively, in school B, English was used as a language of teaching and learning. In this regard, the majority of the learners displayed a positive attitude towards reading in English. Davidson (2012) argued that the more time one spends during the day speaking the second language, the better he/she was going to be at it. Thus, more learners showed positive traits towards reading because they were familiar with the language. Generally, the remedial learners were not happy with participating in remediation, as they were tired from the mainstream class activities. They felt overworked and therefore develop a negative attitude towards the language. On the other hand, considering that learners' concentration span was limited, remedial learners were not given very long passages to read. Taking note that the learners dealt with were the already struggling learners therefore, whatever was given was to be short and exciting. This yielded good results in the improvement of learners' language proficiency.



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4.4.3 Theme 3: The Criterion for Remediation.

In this section, the SAE instituted that due to large numbers of learners in a class, learners were identified through class tests and observation as they participated in oral activities. Similarly, SBE said they also used the class tests for the remedial classes. For example, SAE said,

We used in-class remediation which we thought would benefit all the learners in the class as more intelligent learners would assist the weak ones.

SBE added,

At our school, we used the extra class remediation done after school though learners might not be able to concentrate as we were in class for the whole day.

Based on the information above provided by the educators from both schools, they used more or less the same criterion to select the learners for the remedial classes.

Asin Kaln, Idaka, and Bassey (2011) asserted that a remedial program was to be based on the proper identification of its recipients, failure to do so might produce psychological trauma for both learners and the parents. This implies that the class educators as they are the ones who know the learners, who need to go through this, selected the remedial learners. In addition, the principals from both schools highlighted that the educators are the ones accountable for the selection of the learners for the remedial classes they deal directly with the learners. The principal from school A **(PA)** further added,

I only permit educators to remain behind after school to attend to the remedial learners. I also inform the parents of the learners who were identified for the remedial class to be aware that learners will remain behind for another 30 minutes after the school ended.

During the focus group discussion from both schools, the majority of the learners felt that they were selected due to difficulties in expressing themselves in English Second Language and failure to pass the given activities. FGSA member added,



I cannot speak in English and I always struggle with my school activities. I understand this is the reason I was selected for remediation.

Additionally, FGSB member said,

My teacher explained to me about the remedial work and I understood why I was selected as I always struggle with the activities done in class.

The other member from FGSB further added,

I cannot respond well to the written work given to me in class.

FGSA added,

I cannot express myself in English and I find it difficult to answer the given activities in English. I believe that is the reason I was selected for remediation.

This shows that the majority of the learners understood the criterion used by educators when selecting remedial learners. In this view, this gave the researcher hope that they would try their level best to achieve the best results and improve academically with a clear understanding.

4.4.4 Theme 4: The Teaching Strategies.

In this section, the educators for both schools highlighted the strategies they are using to assist the learners to be proficient in English Second language. The results revealed that the educators from both schools encouraged the remedial learners to share ideas in their small groups although they do it differently. For instance, the educator in school B (SBE) explained,

I read the comprehension passage aloud three times while the learners are also reading silently using English as a medium of instruction and discussed it thoroughly thereafter. Later on, I encourage learners to read the passage on their own and discuss with their peers in groups and share ideas with the rest of the class on what it is that they have understood. I found this interesting as all the learners are fully engaged and participate. I then, give them a few minutes to ask the questions and then answer the questions from the comprehension. I then, give the remedial learners extra work to do as homework to assist them to understand better while working as individuals.

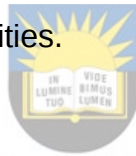
In addition, school A Educator (SAE) reiterated and elaborated that,

I read the comprehension passage for the learners, discussed it as a class, and then allow them to answer the questions in their small groups. The small group discussions instilled an interest in the learners and they were encouraged to participate. I further use the extra class remedial, after school repeating what was done in class with the other learners to try to assist the learners lagging.

The above responses from both educators showed the determination and keenness to assist remedial learners. This still showed that the majority of the learners are still struggling to read and cannot comprehend what they read.

A predominant reason for this reading deficit was that they could not yet read words with enough fluency to facilitate comprehension and lack of knowledge of reading strategies to reduce this deficit. Hence, educators should be able to reintroduce the text once learners were taught reading comprehension strategies. In addition to the comprehension strategies taught, the learners gained greater confidence in themselves. Ning (2011) argued that creating a safe, non-threatening, and learner-centered environment was also important for educators to ensure that all learners had opportunities to contribute to their group as they work better with their peers. According to the Department for Education and Skills (2014), children learn to write through, amongst other things, reading with an adult, individually or in a group.

During the focus group in school A, all five learners believed that what they learned as remediation was the same as what they did during the class with other learners. They could not see that extra attention was given to them to try to match them with the other learners in the class. However, the researcher saw an improvement in their participation in class and written activities.



During the Focus group in school B, 4 learners realized that in the remedial class they did the same concept as the one done in class. Only 1 learner had no idea whether the concept done in the remedial class was the one done in class. He then reiterated,

When we are in the remedial class our teacher gives us activities very similar to the ones we did in class but these were much easier as the teacher explained them again to us. FGSB member also added,

I noticed that the work we do in the remedial class is no different from the work we did earlier in class though the questions were different the concept was the same.

Generally, the learners said in a remedial program they did what they learned in class but in simpler terms. Both educators' responses aligned with the learners' responses that no new concepts were taught to the remedial learners.

Only one learner had no idea what was done in the remedial program. The learner and educator responses showed that regardless of learner difficulties, they were able to tell that the concepts were repeated in remediation classes to build on their language proficiency.

Responses by learners on activities done

Township learners display several difficulties in verbal and written second language communication. In this regard, learners were to read the provided material three to four times to understand comprehension and be able to answer the questions as expected. This improved the learners' proficiency and understanding of the material read in English Second Language.

In school A, three learners participated actively in the reading activities. All five learners participated in the writing activities and three of them participated actively in the group activities. The two who were not active in the reading and group activities had challenges with language communication. Hence, Shaw and Masuhara (2013) maintained that educators and learners should use the second language rather than the first language in the classrooms. Respectively, the educators were encouraged to focus their teaching on meaning construction where learners would be able to assimilate, internalize, and integrate the new information with the information they already possess.

Additionally, in school B, four learners participated in the reading activities, all five learners participated in the writing activities and three participated in the group activities. The two inactive learners lacked confidence in their language communication skills. It was the educators' responsibility to apply different strategies and methods to support the learning process for the best results. The educators were to model the correct sound and pronunciation for the learners to follow.

This means that seven learners participated in reading activities and all the 10 learners responded in the written activities. Only six of the ten learners' participated in group work. This implies that learners required individual attention to participate in the activities given to them. Group work recorded the least number of participation, as the learners were not free to express themselves in the second language. Learners were expected to assume the leading roles in cooperative activities so that they could be of assistance to their peers.

Responses by teachers on challenges encountered in the implementation of remediation.

All the two principals from different schools and two participating educators from both schools in the study indicated that there is a need for further training and support to support learners who are lagging behind their peers. This was very essential, as all of them had no proper training to deal with remediation. They only depended on teaching knowledge, which might not be beneficial to remedial learners. In both School A and School B, learners showed a negative attitude towards a remedial program. Learners did not put all their concentration into the remedial program especially in School B as the activities were done after school when their peers were free to go home or went for sporting activities. In school A, learners could not concentrate much as they thought they were being overloaded with work than their peers. This means that learners are believed to have a limited concentration span. In addition, their parents' participation at home was minimal as most of them are illiterate.

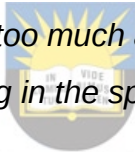
Simultaneously, the educators' responses were triangulated with responses from their principals and learners. With all the participating educators and principals being ESL educators, Howie (2007) claims that explaining concepts to learners as well as providing the necessary support can be a challenging task for the ESL educators due to their limited language proficiency Nel, Nel, and Hugo (2012) support the above assertion as they explain that ESL learners struggle with the fluency of speech as the ability to decode word in a second language is often hampered.

Responses by learners on the challenges encountered when implementing remediation.

The English Second Language learners had challenges with language comprehension, as they did not understand the meaning of the words they heard. According to (Child: The Sunday Times, July 2, 2013: 5) “Many pupils cannot read with understanding; they write sentences and words that are completely incoherent and they struggle to spell frequently used words”. A total of eight out of ten learners complained of too much work for them as they were given extra for remedial. Five learners complained that remediation was depriving them of the sporting activities, which are supposedly done after school. On the other hand, learners complained of a lack of concentration, as they would be tired after school. Those in school A who did their remedial in class during normal school time were also forced to take extra work home, as their time was limited during normal class lessons. FGSB reiterated,

I love the remedial, it is exciting and I understand the work as we would have done it in class, however, it becomes too much as it adds on to our homework and it also deprives me of participating in the sporting activities.

FGSA further says,


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I do not like the remedial class because we are given more work than the other learners are and my parents are not helping me with that homework. It is always a struggle for me to get the homework right.

FGSB added,

It is difficult for me to concentrate on the remedial class as we go for the class after school. I am already tired when we are supposed to go for the extra class. It is boring to continue with schoolwork when others are doing sporting activities after school.

4.5 Analysis, Interpretation, and Discussion of Findings

4.5.1 Theme 1: The remedial learners' proficiency in English Second

language.

The researcher agrees with Bhattacharjea et al. (2011) that learners whose home language is different from the school language of instruction learn less. The analysis of second language reading in the two schools is conducted differently with the school using the target language as a Home language participating more than those who use it as an additional language. The analysis of second language reading in the two schools is conducted differently with the school using the target language as a Home language participating more than those who use it as an additional language. The results of the learners' performance in comprehension varied with more learners in School B performing better than the learners from School A. Learners from School A are showing more challenges in responding to the questions as they are failing to construct sentences in the target language. In this regard, some of their responses are a direct translation of their home language, which is not English. Some of the learners were copying the questions instead of answering the questions. In school B, the learners could at least understand the passage though they might be unable to give the correct responses, hence their performance seemed better than those from School A. This study concurs with The Ghanaian EGRA study which revealed that less than a third of the schools had a library (Kochetkova and Brombacher 2013). This situation is evident in the poor reading results for learners lagging behind their peers in school A.

4.5.2 Theme 2: The Remedial Work.

Jansen, Taylor, and Coetzee (2013) found that the introduction of English as early as possible is ideal to become fluent in English. The researcher strongly agrees that the findings by Taylor and Coetzee will potentially increase the learner's confidence in the second language. With fluent learners, this might also give them a positive attitude towards their reading. Bettinger and Long (2004) suggest that remediation should be timetabled for a session of an hour duration for at least two hours a week. In this view, the educators from both schools adhered to the above requirement somehow.

The educator in school B conducted remediation at least 30 minutes for four days a week whereas; the educator from school A conducted it almost every day in the mainstream class. This showed the researcher that educators are trying their best to help the learners though the department is not giving them full support regarding remediation. From the educators' response, 50% did their remediation after school. These findings were contrary to a suggestion from Wilkinson (1990), that in schools where the study period was offered, this should be the ideal time for remediation, as it would give the impression that the learners were being assisted during the normal learning time. However, the findings indicated that if remediation was done during the study period, the learners would not have time to do their homework, and the educators would not be able to complete their marking and preparation for the next lesson.

4.5.3 Theme 3: The Criterion for Remediation.

Mpofu (2000) revealed that the remedial education program does not cater for learners above or below a mean in a subject. A learner who is to be selected for remediation is one who is average or above average. In light of the findings of Mpofu (2000), all school principals, nine learners, and both educators indicated that learners selected for remediation were learners with difficulties. Responses given by the learners indicated that some learners did not like the idea of remedial work as they complained that they are not able to do sport if they attend remediation. This is likely to contribute to the lack of concentration as they are deprived of something they like. This showed that learners were not clear as to who was supposed to go for remedial classes because each time they went; they were grouped with different people. This showed that learners were not sure of those who were supposed to go for remediation.

Chakuchichi et al. (2003) contend that learners selected were the ones who were recommended by the educator as learners with difficulties in a particular subject. Such learners would display a low performance in reading; they are unable to write meaningful sentences and their inability to verbally express ideas. The specification given by the authors cited above shows the type of learner to be selected for remediation, and these views tally with the responses given by both the school educators and the learners.

4.5.4 Theme 4: The Teaching Strategies.

The researcher noted that educators need knowledge and skills for teaching diversity in the classroom to reach all the levels of different learners. This follows a realisation that learners coming from deprived environments and have little foundation knowledge on which to build concepts need adequate resources. Saide (2010) argues that learners from poor communities arrive at formal schools with many developmental needs. Hence, the teacher has a responsibility to create activities that suit the different levels and needs of learners. Storytelling has been established to be quite effective in helping learners with learning difficulties with their comprehension of Language Lee (2012). Learners were expected to read the story and retell it to their peers in their own words to show their understanding of the story. Ball (2011) emphasizes that providing remedial programs in a second language is sufficient to prepare learners for academic success in that language. Hence, the researcher finds it important to provide a remedial program to improve the learners' proficiency in English Second language.



4.6 Reading and Writing Observations

The observation was used as a corroborative data collection strategy. The researcher conducted observations from School A and School B in the Grade six classrooms. Several reading lessons and two writing lessons were observed at the two schools.

4.6.1 Reading observations

Reading observations were conducted in two grade six classes from school A and School B. During the reading observations, it was noted that the educators from Schools A and B teach reading similarly. The phonic and language experience approaches were used to teach reading. Learners were taught letter-sound correspondences, synthesis, and segmentation. This helped the learners to apply the phonics rules to pronounce or spell out the words. Through pronouncing words, the learners were reading the texts in groups and individually. With the help of the educators, the learners could receive immediate feedback if mispronunciation happened. However, it was noticed that the phonic approach appeared to be the more dominant approach.

Thus, the findings from the educator interviews complement the researcher's observations concerning the approaches used to teach reading to L2 learners.

Additionally, the learners were taught remedial reading in ability groups. Thus, the remedial reading lessons observed included shared reading. The educators used flashcards, which consisted of all the difficult words that were extracted from the graded readers. The educators taught each word, explained the words, orally constructed sentences using the words, and tested each learner in the group. The educator briefly referred to the phonics rules and showed learners how to use the rules and patterns to decode or encode words. The learners repeated the new words after the educator in their group and the mispronounced words were corrected at once. These activities aimed to help learners get better word retention, which helped, in expanding the learners' vocabulary in the language. It also served as a scaffold for comprehension.

Grammar knowledge was also enforced through reading knowledge and to build fluency. The learners were encouraged to apply the learned grammar rules to analyze the sentence structures in the articles and further translate the sentences by themselves. In addition, repeated reading was employed to let learners apply the phonics skills to new texts and eventually develop reading fluency. First, learners repeated after educator modelling. In doing so, learners could practice their pronunciation and fluency in English, and they would be able to comprehend and memorize the contents better as well. Fluency in reading gave learners confidence in themselves and felt successful and empowered. Subsequently, each learner in the group had a turn to read. The educators encouraged the learners to read with expression and asked the learners questions. Thus, educators paid attention to the important notion of understanding when reading.

4.6.2 Writing observations

Writing observations were conducted in two different classes at Schools A and School B. In school A the five learners who participated in the study were among the sixty-eight learners who composed the Grade, six class. The researcher observed only those five participants work among the group.

In school B the five remedial learners were observed in their grouping in an extra class. In both schools, a comprehension passage was provided and the learners were expected to read and answer the comprehension questions appropriately. Grammar serves as a crucial part of English learning for the learners. Often, incorrect grammar may result in misunderstanding or inability to convey one's true thoughts. Therefore, during remedial classes, time was allocated to strengthen and develop learners' grammatical foundation. Hopefully, learners could become familiar with basic grammar rules and further apply them to analyze and translate sentences and express themselves clearly.

4.7 Sample of a Grade 6 Learner's Comprehension

Learners from school A are from a school that uses IsiXhosa as a Home language and English is only learned as a language. It was observed that the learners in school A were not able to construct sentences individually. Thus, these learners could not even read the passage on their own. In this view, the educator had to read the passage first and they discussed it as a group and discussed how questions should be answered. This was necessary, as the learners at this particular school were not familiar with English Second Language. The learners' limited knowledge of English made them fail to construct meaningful sentences and to spell the words correctly. Without the basic skills and knowledge of phonics and word building, learners are bound to experience difficulty in answering a comprehension passage. Davidson (2012) believes that depending on an individual's learning style, one might enjoy a traditional class environment, which provides consistent interaction with an instructor and can be helpful for learners who may seek out extra guidance from class materials. From the following comprehension passage, it is evident that the learner is proficient in the Home language other than English. He/she spells the word "because" using the direct translation from the Home language " bekose". The researcher has much hope that with much practice of the language the learner has the potential to become proficient in the second language, (see appendix 8: a sample of comprehension of a Grade 6 learner in School B).

Figure illustrating the comprehension of a Grade 6 learner in Educator B's class

A Grade 6 learner in School B attempted to construct sentences when answering the comprehension passage. This learner from school B encountered less difficulty when constructing the sentences. Davidson (2012) says that classroom-based learning provides learners with the opportunity to form peer groups with other learners to study and work with. In this way, learners benefit from their peers through interaction with each other. The learners from school A faced many challenges in sentence construction and word spellings as English was an Additional language. How they are answering questions at School B differs considerably from the way it was done in school A. Educator B used an approach where she wrote the difficult or new words on flashcards and they discussed as a group with the educator's assistance.

The learners were encouraged to use complete sentences when answering questions and it was easy for the learners to formulate sentences as they are familiar with the language. At this school, English was used as a language of teaching and learning. Learners could provide wrong answers but sentence construction was meaningful. This method helped learners with opportunities to pronounce and spell the words correctly.

4.8 Factors Related to English Second Language Learners' Reading and Writing Achievements.

Many learners in South African schools are taught through the medium of English, which is not their home language and in which they have a limited proficiency Department of Education (1997), Donald et al. (2006) and Theron and Nel, (2005). English second language learners are generally confronted with a multiplicity of challenges when they enter English medium schools. Apart from receiving instruction and content knowledge in the L2, they encounter other difficulties. Thus, it is expedient to acknowledge that ESL learners who are not proficient in the home language will most likely experience reading and writing difficulties.

The fact that reading and writing in a second language is more complex than reading and writing in a primary language poses a major challenge to these learners. To provide appropriate support for these learners, educators must be aware of the factors that could be related to the ESL learners' reading and writing achievements.

The home environment

The learners' linguistic landscape in the home plays a critical role in developing learners' literacy skills. Vast differences exist in ESL learners' opportunities they have had to develop high-level language and literacy in the L1 and L2. Hence, learners vary in the availability of learning support outside of school. A study conducted with Grade 2 and Grade 4 learners in five states in rural India showed that across both grades, close to 10% of the sampled learners came from families whose home language is different from the school's medium of instruction (Annual Status of Education Report, 2011:2). More than 60 % came from families where no adult woman has ever been to school. Less than half of the learners have any print materials available at home. Although parents understand the importance of schooling, most are unable to provide effective support for learning at home. Mahlobo reasons that the full development of a learner's potential depends on, among others, the learning environment, the learner, as well as the learners' understanding of the language of learning and teaching, which for most South Africans is English (Mahlobo, 1999).

4.9 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher presented a synopsis of the empirical research done through semi-structured interviews with principals, educators, observations, and focus group interviews with learners. The collected data was sorted, presented in a narrative form, analyzed, and interpreted to allow initial research questions to be answered. The discussion was also carried out to establish a remedial program in the improvement of English second language proficiency in two King William's Town township schools. The next chapter gives a summary of the findings of the research project, conclusions are drawn and recommendations for the improvement of practice, and further research will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented data, analyzed it, and discussed the findings. The current chapter provides a summary of the research study on a remedial program to improve learners' proficiency in English Second language at two King William's Town township schools. Conclusions made, provide answers to the research problem. Finally, recommendations are given for further research. This chapter sets out the central arguments that have been developed in the study. In addition, recommendations are developed based on the findings. The areas for conducting further research are identified. The following discussion is based on the findings and recommendations of these findings.

5.2 Summary of Chapters



The study was concerned with the implementation of a remedial program to improve learners' proficiency in English Second Language at two King William's Town township schools. Chapter one gave a brief background of the study and highlighted remedial programs and their levels of implementation in other countries. The chapter noted that in the United States, remediation is administered to the students going to colleges and universities. It was also noted that Zimbabwe remedial education was conducted at a primary level before it was introduced to secondary schools in 2008. All the countries do remediation mainly in English and Mathematics. A systemic evaluation of language competence of intermediate phase learners in South Africa in 2005 reflected that 63% of the learners were below the required competence for their age level. South Africa's Grade 6 learner performance in SACMEQ 2 and SACMEQ 3 also revealed unacceptably low levels of reading competence.

The statement of the problem, which revealed that the performance of learners in the English language was poor suggesting remediation to improve their second language proficiency, followed this.

The study sought to examine how remediation is being implemented in the teaching of English Second language in township schools of King William's Town. The significance of the study was outlined stating that the researcher would be equipped with skills to motivate learners to acquire language skills. Delimitations of the study were stated, which are two township schools in King William's Town. The study concentrated on a remedial program on the improvement of English second language in Grade six township schools. Limitations of the study, which included time factor and large numbers of learners in a class, lack of remedial educators, were looked at. Definition of terms such as remedial program, learners, reading, and strategies were given. Finally, the chapter was wrapped up with a summary.

Chapter two was a presentation of the review of related literature. This involved the interpretation of other studies related to the implementation of remediation in English second language. The literature revealed the policy on remediation that learners with difficulties in English and Mathematics should be identified at the early stages of their education and be remediated. The selection of learners for the remedial program was revealed and it was noted that there were no specialist educators for remediation. The chapter brought to light that learners with difficulties were selected for the remedial program. On issues of administering remediation, it was revealed that remediation should be timetabled, the duration of the program per week was stated, and an approximate number of learners per class was stated. Strategies used for remediation were also discussed and lack of commitment on the part of learners was highlighted. The summary of the chapter was presented.

Chapter three focused on the research methodology that assisted the researcher in researching a remedial program to improve learners' proficiency in English Second Language. The research design used for this study was qualitative in the form of a case study, which was further described and justified for its appropriateness for the study. The target population, sample, and sampling procedures were discussed. Purposive sampling methods were used in the selection of a total sample of 14 respondents from two schools. The chapter also described and justified the research instruments used, which are the interview, observation, and focus groups. Data presentation and analysis procedures were given followed by the summary of the chapter.

Chapter four dealt with the findings, data presentation, analysis, and discussions. Data gathered was presented in narrative form, as the research approach adopted is qualitative. The analysis was made and the discussion of the findings was outlined. Finally, a summary of the chapters was presented.

5.3 Limitations of the Research

Learners needing remedial support and their levels of reading ability limit the study. Given the findings of the research and the nature of the study, it will only be possible to make assumptions about the individual learners participating in the study. The research design of the study required selecting learners lagging behind their peers from two schools. To a remedial educator, the knowledge growth of each individual rather than the change in group averages is the criterion of success. Hence, the educator needs a background in child psychology and educational diagnosis to successfully tackle the variety of individual problems that the learners have.

Thus, many educators who attempt remedial instruction are faced with unusually large classes or with a large percentage of children in the class who are educationally backward. The educator with a large number of pupils in need of remedial instruction has to limit one's work to four or five learners whose needs are greatest. As the educator gains experience in the program, he or she will be able to extend remedial instruction to all the learners who need it.

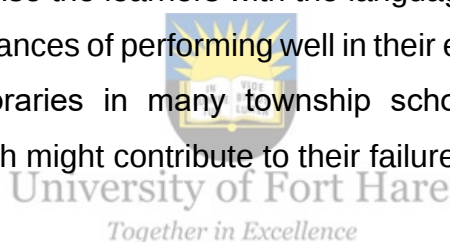
5.4 Summary of Research Findings

5.4.1 The impact of the lack of English proficiency on the learners' performance in the examination.

The findings of the study revealed that a lack of English proficiency has a negative effect on the learners' performance as they have very limited knowledge of the language. Ball (2011) emphasizes that providing remedial programs in a second language is sufficient to prepare learners for academic success in that language. In low-income countries, there is a shortage of qualified remedial educators. In this regard, the researcher concurs with this assertion as it was evident in the two schools

under study. Both schools had no qualified remedial educators they used their own knowledge to try and assist the learners lagging behind their peers. Ohta and Nakaone (2004) found that a considerable number of educators cannot cope and do not have knowledge or experience and time to assist and encourage learners who have limited English proficiency. The second finding of this study showed that educators do not integrate the learning outcomes.

A statement on the release of the ANA results by the Minister of Basic Education in South Africa (2011) reports that results show that learners struggle with tasks related to writing and language use. McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2013) maintain that educators and learners should use the second language rather than the first language in the classrooms, in this context, the second language is English. The researcher realised that learners in School A could not communicate in the second language. The educator always read the questions and explained them to the learners in the first language. This will familiarise the learners with the language of teaching and learning thereby increasing their chances of performing well in their examinations. The absence of resources such as libraries in many township schools may hinder learners' proficiency in English which might contribute to their failure in the examinations.



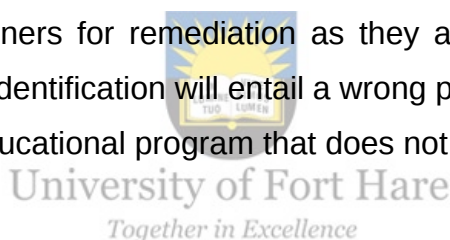
5.4.2 The improvement of the learners' second language proficiency through remedial work.

The findings revealed that the repetition of concepts helps the learners to master and increase their vocabulary and comprehension. Remedial work familiarises the learners with the language and as they are a small group everyone is forced to make an effort to participate in the given tasks. Most English learners do not struggle to reach proficiency in speaking and listening. However, much time is required to reach proficiency in reading and writing. Well-targeted and well-implemented remedial interventions can allow low performing learners to catch up with their peers and possibly avoid grade repetition. Recent longitudinal work examining English learner students' time to English proficiency as measured by an English language proficiency assessment estimated that 90% of kindergarten English learner students reached proficiency in speaking and listening in English by the end of Grade 2 whereas it took

until Grade 6 for the same percentage of the cohort to demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing Umansky and Reardon, (2014). Conversely, the remedial program is believed to help speed up the development of reading and writing skills as reading is considered the primary tool for learning in the school or classroom environment.

5.4.3 The criterion used in the selection of learners for remediation.

The study revealed that learners with learning difficulties were chosen for remediation. This led to the conclusion that educators targeted the right group for remediation. The sooner reading difficulties are addressed the faster reading outcomes will improve. Learners needing remedial programs may be identified by their educators, informally selected among learners with low test scores. In selected Malawi schools, 95% of tested second-grade learners scored zero in fluency, accuracy, and comprehension before the implementation of the Literacy Boost program by Save the Children (Save the Children, 2010). Therefore, people who spend much time with learners must be allowed to select the learners for remediation as they are aware of the individual learners' needs. A wrong identification will entail a wrong placement which might lead to a distorted individual educational program that does not benefit the learner.



5.4.4 The strategies used by the teachers to encourage learners to become proficient in English as a second language.

Findings revealed that there is a need for the learner teacher support materials (LTSM) as the educators needed knowledge and skills for teaching diversity in the classroom to meet different learners' needs. Learners who come from deprived environments such as townships have little foundation knowledge on which to build concepts. Thus, need adequate resources to help them learn. The Grade six learners selected for remedial programs were remediated during school hours at School A and after school at School B. The child-centered methods such as storytelling were used after reading the comprehension text. According to Gafu and Badea (2011), storytelling methods develop learners holistically: listening, vocabulary, communication skills, creativity, concentration, and physical skills to the development of young learners. Educators need to develop skills in designing different learning activities that support individual learners in reaching a higher thinking order. Strong, Torgerson, and Hulme (2011)

assert that during storytelling, the learners get to learn the sentence construction rules in English. Educators need to create a learner-centered environment so that learners could actively engage in the learning process and result in positive production.

Collaborative teaching which allows learners to work in small groups was also emphasized. Due to large numbers of learners exceeding sixty in a class, the educator in school A trained the learners who performed better to be responsible for helping their peers with learning difficulties in group teachings and outside class. Peer support groupings helped learners to reinforce their knowledge, develop communication skills, and to also develop interpersonal relationships. According to Knestrict (2013), collaborative learning requires mutual goals, voluntary participation, and shared resources. The CAPS document stipulates that each learner must be assessed for shared reading, independent reading, and group reading. Therefore, learners needed to work in small groups so that they get to value and appreciate each other. They should also be able to learn from their peers.

Research by Cihon et al. (2008) found that phonics instruction was necessary for improved performance for readers requiring intervention. Educators from both schools A and B affirmed that they used the phonic approach to teach reading to L2 learners. Slavin et al. (2010) suggest that programs providing on one, phonetic tutoring to learners who continue to experience reading difficulties can result in positive effects and improve reading performance. However, these programs are not feasible in low-income countries like South Africa. This means that in developing countries like South Africa disadvantaged learners, like the township learners who are struggling academically can only rely on support that does not incur costs. Public school systems in low-income countries also have scarce resources to implement programs outside the regular class delivery.

5.5 Recommendations

The researcher deemed it necessary to share the findings and recommendations with the department of education at the district level to influence the policy-makers to adopt a policy of remediation in schools.

Comprehensive in-service training should be provided to educators to ensure that they are well equipped to conduct effective remedial programs at schools.

Use collaborative learning, pair work, and group work techniques in the writing lessons to help learners exchange their ideas and help each other.

Encourage learners to practice the reading and writing skills inside and outside the classroom, which leads to proficiency.

Universities should include a component of remedial education in the training of educators.

Educators' workloads need to be reduced for educators to have enough time to conduct remediation effectively.

All schools need to have a remedial educator adequately trained on learners with special educational needs to provide sufficient support systems in remedial education and learning support.



Learners should be motivated to acquire confidence whenever they make language mistakes in classrooms.

Parents should try to encourage their children to be actively involved in learning the English language at home and in schools.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Study

The researcher offers the following suggestions for further studies:

Examine the attitudes of teachers towards the implementation of remedial education. Further research should investigate the parents' level of education, socio-economic status, and residential environments, and reading and writing achievements of their children.

Parental attitudes and involvement towards learners' reading and writing on ESL should be explored. Investigate the impact of age and gender on L2 learners' reading and writing achievements.

5.7 Conclusions

The purpose of the research was to explore a remedial program to improve learners' proficiency in English Second Language at two King William's Town township schools. The study explored two remedial programs used in two different township schools in King William's Town township schools. This study was a result of learners lagging behind their peers due to a lack of English proficiency in reading and writing. In addition, the study found that educators teach learners who cannot express themselves in writing because of language barriers and the lack of appropriate reading skills. A systemic evaluation of language competence of intermediate phase learners in South Africa in 2005 reflected that 63% of the learners were below the required competence for their age level.



In this regard, South Africa's Grade 6 learner performance in SACMEQ 2 and SACMEQ 3 also revealed unacceptably low levels of reading competence. Hence, the developing proficient readers and writers of English second language is the major emphasis of remedial work. This highlights that when learners fail to develop effective reading and writing strategies, classroom educators seek effective remedial interventions to improve a learner's ability to read and write proficiently. Thus, the main effective remedial reading and writing instruction is an approach emphasizing developing comprehension and phonemic awareness.

Correspondingly, the extra class remedial program that was implemented after school by School B provided the remedial learners with efficient and precious time with their educator to ask and to express themselves without tension or any embarrassment. This means that the remedial programs that were implemented after school are reported to be more successful as learners do not have to miss the normal classroom instruction while attending the remedial program (Allington, 2009).

To prevent grade repetition, the PARI program in Senegal selects at-risk learners from grade 1 and Grade 5 and provides summer remedial programs that deliver academic support to learners at risk of repeating a grade can have a chance to master the content necessary to progress to the next grade (PARI Senegal, 2011).

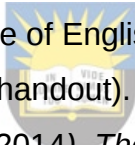


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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRINCIPALS

Biographical Information of Participants

1. Please state your age _____

2. Gender: Male [] or Female []

3. What qualifications do you have?

Diploma in education []

Bachelor's degree in Education []

Honour's Degree in Education []

Master's Degree in Education []

Doctorate in Education []

Other : specify _____

Participants Teaching History

1. How long have you been teaching? _____

2. How long have you been teaching in this school? _____

1. What subjects are you teaching? _____

How does a lack of English proficiency affect the learners' performance in their examinations?

1. How do you think learners' performance can be improved?

-
-
2. How can English proficiency be instilled in learners?

-
-
3. What has your school done to encourage learners' second language proficiency?

How can remedial work improve the learner's second language English proficiency?

1. What type of remedial programme is implemented at your school?

-
-
2. How do you feel about your school implementing a remedial programme?

-
-
3. Could you mention the challenges that learners and teachers are facing on the implementation of a remedial programme?

What is the criterion used in the selection of learners for remediation

1. How are the learners identified for a remedial programme at your school?

-
-
2. In your opinion how best do you think learners should be identified for a remedial programme?

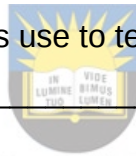
-
-
3. Comment on the effectiveness of the selection criteria at your school.

What strategies do the teachers use to encourage learners to become proficient in English as second language use?

1. What learning and teaching strategies are implemented at your school?

2. How effective are the strategies implemented towards learners' proficiency in second language use?

3. What approaches do educators use to teach reading in a second language



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APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Biographical Information of Participants

1. Please state your age _____

2. Gender: Male [] or Female []

3. What qualifications do you have?

Diploma in Education []

Bachelor's Degree in Education []

Honour's Degree in education []

Master's Degree in Education []

Doctorate Degree in Education []



Other : specify _____

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Participants Teaching History

1. How long have you been teaching? _____

2. How long have you been teaching in this school? _____

3. What subjects are you teaching?

How does a lack of English proficiency affect the learners' performance in their examinations?

1. How do you think learners' performance can be improved?

2. How can English proficiency be instilled on learners?

3. What has your school done to encourage learners' second language proficiency?

4. Do you have a library corner in your classroom? Yes [] No []

How can remedial work improve the learner's second language English proficiency?

1. What type of remedial programme is implemented at your school?

2. How do you feel about implementing a remedial programme?

3. Could you mention the challenges that you and learners are facing on the use of a remedial programme for proficiency.

What is the criterion used in the selection of learners for remediation

1. How are the learners identified for a remedial programme at your school?

2. In your opinion how best do you think learners should be identified for a remedial programme?

3. Comment on the effectiveness of the selection criteria used.

What strategies do the teachers use to encourage learners to become proficient in English as second language use?

1. What learning and teaching strategies are implemented at your school?

2. How effective are the strategies implemented towards learners proficiency in second language use?



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3. What approaches do you use to teach reading to second language learners?

4. Do teaching strategies determine learners' performance? Yes [] No []

Explain your answer :

APPENDIX 3

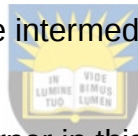
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR LEARNERS

Biographical Information of Participants

1. Please state your age _____
2. Gender: Male [] or Female []
3. What class are you? _____

Participants Schooling History

2. How long have you been a learner? _____
3. How many years are you in the intermediate phase? _____
4. How long have you been a learner in this school? _____



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How does a lack of English proficiency affect the learners' performance in their examinations?

1. How do you think learners' performance can be improved?

2. How can English proficiency be instilled in learners?

3. What has your school done to encourage learners' second language proficiency?

4. Is there a library corner in your classroom? Yes [] No []

How can remedial work improve the learner's second language English proficiency?

1. What type of remedial programme is implemented at your school?

2. How do you feel about participating in a remedial programme?

3. Could you mention the challenges that learners are facing on the use of a remedial programme for proficiency.



What is the criterion used in the selection of learners for remediation

1. How are the learners identified for a remedial programme at your school?

2. In your opinion how best do you think learners should be identified for a remedial programme?

3. Comment on the effectiveness of the selection criteria.

What strategies do the teachers use to encourage learners to become proficient in English as second language use

1. What learning and teaching strategies are implemented at your school?

2. How effective are the strategies implemented towards learners proficiency in second language?

3. What approaches does your educator use to teach reading in a second language?



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APPENDIX 4

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST FOR LEARNERS

1. Are the remedial learners participating freely in the activities given?
2. What is the learners' attitude towards the remedial programme?
3. Are the learners showing any signs of benefit from peer assistance?
4. Are the learning materials suitable for the development of skills for remedial learners?
5. Do all the learners participate in group activities?
6. Are the learners communicating in a target language?
7. Do teachers demonstrate appropriate skills to assist remedial learners?
8. Are remedial learners engaging independently with learning materials?
9. Are the educators using a variety of strategies in a remedial programme?



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APPENDIX 5

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Fort Hare
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ETHICS CLEARANCE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Project Number:	LIN011SMOY01
Project title:	Remedial programme on learners' proficiency in English second language: A case of two King William's Town township schools.
Qualification:	Masters in Education
Principal Researcher:	Thembekile Moyo
Supervisor:	Dr M. A Linake
Co-supervisor:	N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby grant ethics approval for LIN011SMOY01. This approval is valid for 12 months from the date of approval. Renewal of approval must be applied for BEFORE termination of this approval period. Renewal is subject to receipt of a satisfactory progress report. The approval covers the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). The research may commence as from the 13/11/19, using the reference number indicated above.

Note that should any other instruments be required or amendments become necessary, these require separate authorisation.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material changes in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document;

- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research.

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

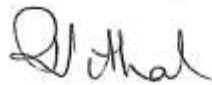
The UREC retains the right to

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

Your compliance with DoH 2015 guidelines and other regulatory instruments and with UREC ethics requirements as contained in the UREC terms of reference and standard operating procedures, is implied.

The UREC wishes you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Renuka Vithal
UREC-Chairperson
 13 November 2019

APPENDIX 6

PARENT/CHILD CONSENT FORM



This study is done by Miss Thembekile Moyo. I am a Masters of Education student. The aim of the study is to determine a remedial program on learners' proficiency in English Second language in King William's Town primary schools.

I _____ will participate in the study where I will have to attend to the in-class remedial lessons or after school remedial lessons and complete remedial activities. This information will be used only for educational purposes.

I understand that no risks/ harm are involved if I agree to participate in the study. I also understand that there are possible academic benefits if I participate in the study.

I understand that my parents / guardian have given permission for me to take part in the study.

Date

Signature of parent / guardian

Date

Signature of learner

Date

Signature of researcher

APPENDIX 7

READING COMPREHENSION FOR GRADE SIX LEARNERS

ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE

Read the following story and answer questions 1–8.

TSELANE AND THE GIANT

Her mother wanted Tselane to be safe, so every morning when she left home for work, she reminded Tselane never to open the door for anyone. Every time she came home, she sang this song to her, "Tselane, my child, come and open the door!"



One day, a horrible, greedy giant heard the two singing to each other. He licked his lips "That child would make a delicious, tender snack!", he said.

A few days later he wandered off to Tselane's house and at the front door he took a deep breath, and sang, "Tselane, my child, open the door!"

Tselane just laughed. "Go away!" she said. "Your rough, ugly voice is nothing like my mama's sweet voice!"

The giant ate a magical plant to make his voice sound less rough.

The next day, when the giant sang to Tselane, his voice sounded sweet and beautiful. Thinking that her mother was home, she opened the door. As quick as lightning, the evil giant seized her, threw her into a sack and stomped off.

When he passed his neighbour's house, he decided to take a break to celebrate. His neighbour heard a sweet, sad voice coming from his sack. "There's someone in there!" she thought to herself. "I must help her!" She asked the giant to fetch water at the stream, giving him a leaking bucket.

The woman quickly helped Tselane out of the sack, and hid her in the house. She filled the sack with snakes, bees and lizards.

The giant came back with a little bit of water. He flung the leaking bucket down, grabbed his food and the sack and stormed off.

At home, he opened his sack. Guess what? All the horrible creatures shot out and started stinging and biting him at the same time. He leapt up and ran screaming to the river where he plunged his head into the muddy river bank. Here he got stuck, and turned into a tree.

Look out for a tree with two trunks on the river bank – it is still there to this day. Tselane returned home safely to her mother.

[Retold by Joanne Bloch Illustrations by Jiggs Snaddon-Wood]

[Adapted from Nalibali.com]

6. Why did Tsafane's mother leave her at home alone every day? (1)

7. What did Tsafane's mother want her to do first? (1)

8. How did Tsafane know that it was her mother knocking at the door? (1)

9. Describe the giant in the story. (1)

10. Place a tick (✓) for correct & cross (✗) for incorrect. (1)

Tsafane opened the door the first time when she heard the song.

True

False

Mark as correct for your answer. (1)

11. Explain in your own words how the giant changed his attitude towards her. (1)

12. Complete the following sentence. (1)

The woman tricked the giant by giving him a _____.

13. What do you think the lesson of the story is? (1)



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APPENDIX 8

A SAMPLE OF A GRADE 6 LEARNER'S COMPREHENSION FRPM SCHOOL B

1. Why did Tselane 's mother leave her at home alone every day? (1)

Safe so every morning

2. What did Tselane 's mother warn her never to do? (1)

open the door

3. How did Tselane know that it was her mother knocking at the door? (1)

his voice sounded sweet and beautiful

4. Describe the giant in the story. (1)

That child would make a delicious

5. Place a tick in the correct box. (1)

Tselane opened the door the first time when the giant sang the song.

True	☐
False	☒

Give a reason for your answer. (1)

BEKOSÉ your rough ugly voice

ate a mgical plant

6. Explain in your own words how the giant changed his voice to sound sweeter. (1)

ate a mgical plant

7. Complete the following sentence. (1)

The woman tricked the giant by giving him a He leaking bucket d

8. What lesson may be learnt from the story? (2)

tuBE SE OBEHEnwa

APPENDIX 9

REQUEST LETTER FOR DATA COLLECT

2670 Lipota
Ginsberg
King William's Town
5600
15 Nov 2019

The District Director
King William's Town Education District
5600

Dear Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a Master of Education student at the University of Fort Hare. My topic is "A remedial program on learners proficiency in English Second Language. I hereby request permission to conduct a research in two township schools in your district. (Charles Morgan and Westbank sss).

Your consideration is appreciated.

Yours faithfully



T. Moyo

APPENDIX 10

PERMISSION LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES

Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape
Private Bag X0032 • Bhisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4691/4773 • Fax: +27 (0)86 742 4942 • Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Enquiries: B Pamla

Email: babalwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za

Date: 20 November 2019

Mrs. Thembekile Mguni (nee Moyo)

2670 Lipota

Ginsberg

5601

Dear Mrs. T. Mguni nee Moyo

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE MASTERS STUDY: A REMEDIAL PROGRAM ON LEARNERS PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE: A CASE OF TWO TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS IN KING WILLIAMS TOWN EDUCATION DISCRICT.

1. Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research involving 2 schools, 10 learners, 2 educators and 2 principals in the jurisdiction of Buffalo City District in the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
 - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
 - b. you will make all necessary arrangement concerning your research;
 - c. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
 - d. all ethical considerations are adhered to;
 - e. you seek parents' consent for minors;
 - f. it is not going to interrupt educators' time and task;
 - g. the research may not be conducted during official contact time, including school breaks, but an arrangement to do research at the school after school hours may be arranged and agreed upon in writing with the Principal and the affected teacher/s;
 - h. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;



- i. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
 - j. your research will be limited to those institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
 - k. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 – 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis.
 - l. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary.
 - m. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation upon completion of your research.
 - n. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoe document duly completed by you.
 - o. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form)
 - p. You submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation
2. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoe.
 3. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
 4. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Ms. NY Kanjana on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email nelisa.kanjana@ecdoe.gov.za should you need any assistance.



NY KANJANA
DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY AND RESEARCH
FOR SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION

APPENDIX 11

THE LETTER FROM EDITOR

Alexa Barnby
Language Specialist

Editing, copywriting, indexing, formatting, translation

BA Hons Translation Studies; APed (SATI) Accredited Professional Text Editor, SATI

Contact Details: Mobile: 071 872 1334

Tel: 012 361 6347

Email: alexabarnby@gmail.com

21 March 2020

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that I, Alexa Kirsten Barnby, an English editor accredited by the South African Translators' Institute, have edited the masters dissertation titled "Remedial Program on Learners' Proficiency in English Second Language: A case of two township schools in King William's Town Education District" by Thembekile Moyo: student no: 201716773.

The onus is on the author, however, to make the changes and address the comments made.

