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Factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. A case of three primary schools in the Cookhouse and Somerset East area.



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by

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5 February 2019

DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis entitled “Factors affecting the learners’ reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. A case study” is my original work. It has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for the award of any other degree or qualification. Where I have used information from the published or unpublished work of other scholars, I have acknowledged such sources both in the text and in the list of references



J.M.Snyers



5 February 2019

Date

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language at grade 5 level in the Cookhouse and Somerset area. The sample consisted of 3 teachers, 3 principals, 18 learners and 3 SGB chairpersons from three different schools. The study focused on three primary schools in the Blue Crane District, which were selected through a purposive sampling technique. Qualitative research was chosen as the research method with a case study as the research design. Data collection instruments consisted of unstandardized in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and documents. Interviews were conducted with the teachers, principals and the chairpersons of the respective schools. The focus group discussions were conducted with learners. In this study, the researcher has analysed data systematically whereby he built through recording procedures during interviews and focus group discussions. The findings highlighted factors, which cause learners' reading problems. The factors include various physical factors, emotional factors, and little attention to reading skills, lack of motivation, insufficient reading time and material. Educators were of the view that repeated curriculum changes within a short period of time without proper training of educators has an effect on learners' reading performance. The study revealed that reading is adversely affected by the poor learning conditions in which learners find themselves in because there was a strong relationship between socio-economic factors and reading ability. On that account, the implication is that reading will not improve. The study recommends that the Department of Education pay more attention to pre-service and in-service training of educators so that educators are more knowledgeable in all reading components.

KEY WORDS: English First Additional Language (FAL); Reading Culture' Reading Strategies; Factors; Phonemic Awareness.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The reading ability of the learners in South African schools is a cause for concern, especially in Somerset East and Cookhouse in the Blue Crane Municipality where research was conducted in. Lerner (2006:3) argues that reading difficulties are not only problematic for learners as individuals, but also has an impact on nations and societies. Thus, low reading levels lead to poor performance, high rates of school dropouts, unemployment and crime. Since 2001, the Department of Education (DoE) has measured performance in Literacy and Numeracy at Grade 3 and 6, in the Annual National Assessment (ANA), resulting in an evaluation that revealed poor performance in these areas. The minister of education stated that the performance of South African learners was significantly worse than those of their peers in other countries (Government Gazette, 2008:4).



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Lerner (2006:7), furthermore argue that reading problems may be rooted in both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, the former being within the learner, such as attitude, auditory and visual perceptual problems and language development, the latter within the home and school environment. These factors and others that are hampering the learners reading ability and culture would be discussed further in the literature review. In this light, the researcher decided to focus on grade 5 as a suitable option since grade 4 is the transitional stage from the Foundation Phase to the INTERSEN Phase where learners still struggle to cope with the many learning areas in relation to the four learning areas of grade 3. Grade 6 is the exit grade for the Intermediate Phase and it is expected from the said learners in this grade to be able to read and write at a satisfactory level.

1.1.1. Historical Background

Most international countries would agree that one of the most important goals of education has always been that all students should learn to read and write with adequate proficiency. It is surprising, given the information, skills and resources available to schools today that a significant number of learners do not achieve this basic goal. In countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America, at least 30 to 35 percent of school students have difficulties with reading and writing (Blanton, Wood, & Taylor, 2007; and National Council of Teacher Quality, 2006). It is also reported that many students drop out of high school, in large numbers because they lack the literacy skills to cope with the secondary curriculum (American Federation of Teachers). The percentage of learners with literacy difficulties seems to increase as learners get older. Secondary schools in the United States of America have reported that some 70 percent of older readers require some form of remediation or additional support when dealing with expository texts (Biancrosa & Snow, 2006). This thus affects universities and colleges whereby it is reported that many undergraduates have difficulties coping with the literacy demands of their courses due to the poor foundation from secondary schools as indicated above (Lietz, 1996 and Perin, 2006).

Hempenstall (2005) suggests that in Australian Schools between 20 and 40 percent of students do not make optimum progress in learning to read. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2006) provides data revealing that in 2006, approximately 46 percent of the population had some difficulties with “prose reading” (narrative text, newspapers, brochures) and 47 percent had difficulties with “document reading” (forms, schedules, tables). These figures are identification that approximately 7million Australians are experiencing problems with everyday literacy. Of these weak readers, approximately 18 percent perform at an extremely low level of competence (ABS, 2006).

The Australian National School English literacy Survey (Masters & Forster, 1997a) found that 27 percent of students in Year 3, and 29 percent of students in Year 5 did not reach the required standard in writing, spelling and reading. In Australia, as a whole, in the top 10 percent of reading achievement in Year 3 and 5 are working about 5 years ahead of the weakest 10 percent (Masters & Forster, 1997b). The testing in 2006 revealed that some 12 percent of students in Year 5 and 13 percent in Year 7, failed to achieve even the minimum standard required in reading. (MCEETYA, 2008). The department of education in all states and territories in Australia have acknowledged that a problem exists and have included priorities for early identification and intervention within their action plans for literacy. The South Australian Government confirms that while many learners achieve at a high standard, there are too many at-risk students consistently performing below acceptable levels in literacy and numeracy. The challenge is to close the achievement gap (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006).



There are many possible reasons why learners may have trouble in learning to read, write and spell in the early years of schooling. Some of these problems may be due to factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic motivation plays a very significant role to the learners as learners may be born with factors that enhance literacy learning in individual learners. Such factors include cognitive ability (general intelligence), deficiencies in relevant psychological processes (such as working memory and visual or auditory perception) and attitudinal and behavioral aspects (such as motivation, concentration span and attention to task).

- **Teaching method**

A lot of national reports conclude that certain teaching methods are far more effective than others in teaching children to read (e.g., DEST, 2005; House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, UK, 2005; National Reading Panel, US, 2000; Rose, 2006).

These reports also conclude that these effective methods are not always used in schools, which might lead to learners experiencing reading difficulties in these said schools where effective reading teaching are lacking.

Research studies indicate further that children need to be taught the principles explicitly for applying phonic knowledge (letter-to-sound) correspondences in order to decode and spell unfamiliar words (Adams, 1990; Coltheart & Prior, 2006).

- **Time allocated for learning**

The amount of time devoted to instruction and practice in reading and writing is an important influence on literacy development (Biancrosa & Snow, 2006). A daily “literacy hour” was introduced in the United Kingdom and in Australian schools to ensure that at least that amount of time is spent in every primary classroom on focused literacy activities. In some of the schools where the research was, conducted reading does not even appear on the timetable. Some of the schools through which the research was conducted, did not have reading time allocated on their timetables.



- **Language ability**

The language environment at home in which young children spend their early formative years may also influence the reading and writing ability negatively, depending on stimulation level at home.

Their language ability is not stimulated adequately in some environments and children come to school lacking the vocabulary knowledge that is necessary for understanding the teaching language of instruction. It is well known that language ability i.e. vocabulary knowledge, is one of the strongest predictors of successful entry into reading (Hay & Fielding-Barnsley, 2006), stated that there is a wide variation in children’s abilities and readiness to learn when they first enter school, and the input of these differences are evident throughout the first three years of schooling.

- **Phonological awareness**

Learning and using phonic skills, (the ability to associate letters with sounds for decoding words relies totally upon good phonemic awareness and good teaching (Eldredge, 2005). It has been reported that over one third of beginner readers have a past level of phonemic awareness (National Council of Teacher Quality, 2006); and that there is sufficient evidence to show that the lack of phonemic awareness plays a big role in learning difficulties of reading and spelling (e.g., Adams, 1990).

- **Social or cultural disadvantage**

Based on the environmental influences such as lower socio-economic backgrounds and indigenous students, it is evident that certain races are over-represented among the population of students with literacy problems (Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training, 2002; MCEETYA, 2008; Masters & Forster, 1997b). Learning to read and write becomes a big problem for such learners. With this being said, it also widens the achievement gap between those with good literacy skills and those without (Teale et al., 2008).



1.1.2. African Perspective

There are certain constraints on the reading culture in African countries. Libraries as well as learning and reading play a fundamental role in the changing of lives and they have a role to play in determining the future of societies in Africa. Libraries are vital to education; and research has shown that current lower levels of proficiency in reading are due to underfunding of libraries and their services (Eyo, 2007).

In the words of Nssien, (2008:94) poor reading skills, which have been identified as the problem of African students, are because of the following:

Slow comprehension rate, slow reading rate, difficulty in distinguishing main ideas from irrelevant details, inadequate vocabulary or word power, inadequate reading interest and habits, distractions in the form of television and film viewing, lack of interest as well as relevant reading materials.

The low level of reading habits and reading culture amongst Africans are caused by various factors. Per Gbadamosi (2007:45), it includes:

- The quest for material wealth has eroded the interest for the search of knowledge.
- Most parents manage to pay their children's school fees and forget about buying books for them.
- High prices of books and other information materials have put them out of the reach of the masses. Coupled with this is poor availability of indigenous books owing to the fact that local authors are not encouraged to write books.
- The cost of publishing books is very high. Indigenous writers are not motivated as they may not be able to finance the high cost of book publishing.
- Advent of video rentals, film houses and other electronic gadgets.

The bookshop owners in Africa tend to shelf foreign authors' books rather than African authors' books. This has made most of the authors sell their books by themselves.

It is upon all stakeholders of African countries (parents, teachers, librarians, philanthropists, the media, religious bodies, non-government organizations, government etc.) to improve the reading culture. There are certain strategies that could be implemented to improve Reading Culture in Africa. The strategies include:

- Giving Education priority attention in national human capital development.
- Instituting the National Commission of Libraries (NCL).

- Establishment of State Commission for Libraries (SCL) throughout all African countries. Libraries should be established in all the local government areas of the respective countries.

In Nigeria, Governor Peter Obi of Anambra State pledged recently to establish libraries in the 21 Local Government Areas of the state in order to improve reading culture (Vanguard Newspaper, November 18, 2008).

- To integrate Information Literacy Education in the curriculum of secondary schools and in tertiary institutions as an independent general studies course with credits allotted to it.
- Creation of library periods in School Timetables. Library periods should be included in the timetable of primary and secondary schools.
- State Government should establish state-of-the-art publishing firms. These firms should encourage scholarships and creativity by charging less in publishing of materials.
- Establishment of family libraries. Parents play an important role in the development of the reading habit of their children. Eyo (2007) revealed that 70 percent of the problem associated with the poor reading culture of our children is traceable to many social and environmental factors, including parents.
- Philanthropists and other spiritual individuals should establish non-governmental organizations to promote a reading culture. NGO's like African Centre for Reading and Development Port Harcourt etc. should provide mobile libraries and increase reading awareness in public schools. Spiritual individuals can also donate books to schools and public libraries to encourage reading habits.
- Radio and television stations, newspapers and publishing firms can also play a major role in this course.



- Radio and television stations can promote reading habits and newspaper houses can advertise content that could stimulate reading.
- Scholarship Schemes by State Governments. The presidents of the different African countries should implement scholarships in the secondary and tertiary levels of education.
- To formulate and implement a viable National Information Policy (NIP).

Gbaje (2007) states that the Nigerian government approved a national information technology policy in March 2001. Per Uhegbu (2007:250), a national information policy is a road map to sustainable and balanced flow of information in all sectors of the economy, proper development of our information infrastructure, appropriate and reliable information packaging for human resource development. This is what triggered the researcher to carry on with this study as he felt this would play a significant role in fighting illiteracy and would encourage reading habits among Africans if all the factors highlighted above could be addressed properly to benefit the learners in schools.



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1.1.3 South African Perspective.

Education has developed a lot over the past two decades and it would be advisable to examine these developments to understand the nature of the education system. In response to Colonialism in South Africa, many social groups have emerged (van Zyl, 2002).

People were classified on colour and class and this had a direct effect on the education received. White people received free compulsory education, while Blacks were left at the faith of the missionaries who constantly experienced a lack of financial aid. This brought about inequality and segregation in terms of education.

During the apartheid era, the Bantu Education Act was introduced and was aimed to marginalize and subjugate the Blacks by reducing English language in Black schools; imposing the use of Afrikaans and English as equal based on the medium of instruction in schools and extending mother tongue education. The apartheid government had the backing of the churches when it came to mother tongue education. This policy was reversed on 16 June 1976 with the Soweto Uprisings. This also brought about that English received more recognition at the faith of both Afrikaans and the other African Languages. Since June 1976, mother tongue education became stigmatized in South Africa. This stigma lingers on to today (Kamwangandu, 2004:136).

According to Blaunstein & Lyon (2006) a general assumption is made by language teachers, that reading is a naturally learnt act. Why do so many learners struggle to read if reading is a naturally learnt act? To contradict this assumption, Moats (2004) argues that reading is an acquired skill that is not natural or easy for most children. She further elaborates that reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends.  She also states that language is integrated in all learning areas therefore learners need to be able to read before they can comprehend.

In view of the above-mentioned arguments, the researcher detected that some of these reading problems affected the learners negatively as they were not able to read fluently and accurately due to the lack of word-recognition skills originating from weaknesses in phonological processing. Some learners had problems with the *speed* of word recognition and the automatic recall of word spelling and some appeared to decode words but they could not comprehend the meanings of passages. Per Moats (2004), one of the school's ultimate responsibilities should be to teach learners to read.

She further states that teachers should be well informed and familiar with the content they teach and be reflective teachers. The question that remains is whether the school is sufficient in its practice if more and more learners today are struggling with reading. Reading is the basic skill required for learning to take place and become successful. If a learner struggles to or cannot read properly, his/her academic progress will be hindered. The learner must also be able to read with comprehension. In this regard, this study aimed to give insight into the factors that affected the learners' reading culture and how the teachers perceived them where English First Additional Language is involved.

In South African societies, reading is regarded as a prior skill as it makes teaching and learning easier. In this light, all South African citizens are encouraged to master reading skills in order to be competent in all spheres of life and to be able to solve problems worldwide. Reading forms the basis of every educational platform.



Reading enables you to learn, understand, write and comprehend certain aspects of life, for example: Do Not Smoke – It will kill you; In a shopping mall you need to be able to read in order to find the items that you are looking for; To utilize a bathroom with instructions as Males or Females only; Driving in a place that you are not familiar with, you need to find direction to your destination; To keep abreast with world news; To save money you need to read what is on sale. These are just a few reading requirement activities occupy our daily lives.

It is much easier to read in your home language than in a foreign language that you have never heard of before. At the beginning of schooling for English speaking children, it is much easier, but when Xhosa speaking children start their schooling and hear a foreign language, for example, English, the child may experience huge problems.

This IsiXhosa speaking child now should learn through a foreign language (which now can be regarded as a learning barrier) as a medium of instruction (LOLT). Quite often most of these teachers are not literate in Xhosa and have little or no training in bilingual teaching. This is referred to as a second language to these Xhosa speaking children (L2), who are now in a disadvantage when it comes to the English-speaking children where English is their home language (mother tongue language L 1) in terms of teaching and learning.

The ability to read and write is fundamental to all areas of learning in the school curriculum. Only a few people would disagree that one of the most important goals of education has always been that all learners should acquire the skills to read and write with adequate proficiency. However, it was found that a significant number of learners in schools do not achieve this basic goal. The ability to read and write puts many demands on learners and their failure to not be able to read and write has an extremely detrimental effect on their self-esteem, confidence, attitude, motivation and their ability to learn across the curriculum.



Rose (2006) has observed that without the ability to communicate and learn effectively through reading and writing, individuals are severely disadvantaged for life. Based on the above discussion, Moats, (1999, p.5) remarks that:

Reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends on. Research now shows that a child who does not learn the reading basics early is unlikely to learn them at all. Any child who does not learn to read early and well will not easily master other skills and knowledge, and is unlikely to ever flourish in school or in life. In this view, there is a need to make sure that a reading culture is catered for and taken seriously to develop interest in the learners by exposing them to different reading activities, which will stimulate their reading ability.

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is common and human to shift blame and it is non-other when it comes to education. The researcher had been teaching in both primary and secondary schools and the problem with reading ability, or the lack thereof remained the same. The secondary schools had the tendency of blaming the primary schools. Furthermore, within the primary schools, the INTERSEN teachers blame the Foundation Phase teachers for the poor reading ability of the learners.

Reading is used worldwide as an index of how well an education system is delivering on its mandate. It has been said that the formal accomplishment of literacy does not happen easily for many learners in Africa.

The South African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) studied compared literacy and numeracy levels of grade 6 learners across 14 African countries between 2000 and 2002. Out of the 14 countries, South Africa came 8th with only 86.7% of our learners reaching minimum levels of mastery in reading at grade 6 levels (Mothibeli, 2005). An audit from the Department of Education in 2001 shows that across all nine provinces in South Africa, Grade 3 learners had a mean of 35% in a reading comprehension test in their home language (Education Library Information and Technology Services, 2003).

Literacy is usually first developed in the home language in Grade 1-3, with English being introduced as an additional language (most probably 1st additional language) in Grade 1 or 2. Various reports on the systemic evaluations conducted by the DoE and international research bodies on learners' reading levels indicated that South African learners are reading far below age-appropriate expected levels (DoE, 2008(a):2).

Hugo et al. (2005:201) point out that there is a growing concern nationally that South African learners lack the necessary language and reading abilities to achieve success in their academic years in schools and tertiary institutions.

Those who have experienced Outcome-Based Education (OBE) are either reading far below the average or cannot read at all. This is a growing concern in South Africa at large and specifically in the Blue Crane Area where the research has been done. To ensure improvement in reading performance the causes of the problem should be identified and addressed.

It is against this background that the researcher wished to understand and identify the factors that are affecting learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5 level in the Cookhouse and Somerset East Area.

1.3 Research Questions:

Main Research Question

The study sought to answer the following main question:

- What are the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language?



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Sub-research questions

- What are the challenges faced by both teachers and learners during the classroom where English as First Additional Language is involved?
- How are teachers trained to address learners' language barriers with literate language development?
- Which reading instruction strategies are promoted in teachers' training for Foundation Phase learners?

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to add new knowledge to the existing pool of information on reading culture where English as First Additional Language is involved. The study focused on reading culture in Grade 5 English First Additional Language teachers and learners in the Cookhouse and Somerset East area, in the Blue Crane Municipality.

1.5 Research Aims/Objectives

- To identify the challenges faced by both teachers and learners during English First Additional Language reading lessons in South African Schools.
- To investigate whether the teachers are well equipped to teach learners how to read fluently in English.
- To find out strategies that are promoted in teachers' training for Foundation Phase learners in order to combat the factors that are affecting the learners reading culture.

1.6 Significance of the study

International research indicates that in most developing countries, illiteracy is a severe problem and more than half the population in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have no literacy skills (Hugo, Le Roux, Muller & Nel, 2005:2010 and Abadzi, 2008:4). It has been important for the researcher to conduct this research, as a child's success at school and throughout life depends largely on the ability to read and understand the text. The findings from this research will be useful to prospective language teachers who are afraid to become Language teachers because of the stigma of children who are experiencing reading difficulties in English First Additional Language. This study will be of good use to teachers with an interest in helping learners to overcome their reading difficulties. The findings of the study will also be of great value to Institutions of Training for Intermediate Phase Language Teachers to help them equip teachers to be able to identify reading problems and learn the necessary scaffolding skills.

Subject Advisors will also find the study useful to assist school based teachers to become better in teaching learners to read. Kelly (2004) argues that the essence of good teaching is that one should constantly be attempting to gauge the levels of learner's learning to lead them to further development. The study will benefit the Department of Education in strengthening the support rendered to the Language teaching in their schools. The Department of Education might encourage teachers to further their studies in Languages through the bursaries that the Department is providing, so the teachers can be capacitated and become worthy Language teachers.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

Prince, James. H and Judy Murman (2004) describe delimitation of the study as follows:

The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the interpretation of the findings from your research. They are the constraints on generalizability, applications to practice, and/or utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which you initially chose to design the study or the method used to establish internal and external validity or the result of unanticipated challenges that emerged during the study.

The study was limited to three primary schools in the Cookhouse and Somerset East area, which is situated in the Blue Crane Municipality. The study targeted Grade 5 English First Additional teachers and learners. The three principals from three schools and SGB members were included for the additional relevant information required by the study.

1.8 Definition of terms

1.8.1 English First Additional Language (FAL)

English as an additional language-stressing children's accomplishment, rather than their lack of fluency in English (Levine, 1990:5). In the United States, English, as a secondary language is not used to describe children learning English while going through the education system (Adamson, 1993). Children learning English as an additional language are not a homogeneous group; they come from diverse regions and backgrounds. Thus, English First Additional Language assumes that learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language when they arrive at school (DoE 2005 (c):16). The curriculum is then designed in a way that they are being taught to understand and speak the language. The focus in English FAL is to make learners understand many words and structures, and to use this knowledge to check their use of language, especially when writing. They should develop confidence and read for enjoyment (DoE 2006: 47), and therefore be able to read fiction and non-fiction at the appropriate levels.



1.8.2 Reading Culture

A culture, broadly speaking, is an integrated pattern of behavior, practices, beliefs, and knowledge. These constitute the operating rules by which people organise themselves (Behrman, 2004). Reading is essential to full participation in modern society. It adds quality to life, provides access to culture and cultural heritage, empowers and emancipates citizens and brings people together. In this, Reading Culture can be defined as: "... a climate in which all members of the school [are] expected and encouraged to read" (Daniels & Steres, 2011).

1.8.3 Factors

The Oxford advance Learners Dictionary (2007) defines factors as "one of several things that causes or influences something". A factor can also be defined per the Dictionary.com as one of the elements contributing to a particular result or situation.

1.8.4 Reading Strategies

Reading strategies are approaches that good readers use while reading such as predicting, inferring, and summarizing, for instance, a reader might look at a title of a story and predict what the story will be about or they may activate their own knowledge about a topic they are reading. During reading instructions, teachers may explicitly teach strategies to increase a student's reading comprehension (i.e., summarizing, visualizing and asking questions). To substantiate this, The National Reading Strategy (NRS): launched in 2008, was intended to promote reading across the curriculum, to inculcate a reading culture amongst learners and teachers by providing support and resources, and to promote a nation of lifelong readers (DoE, 2008 a: 5).

1.8.5 Phonemic Awareness

Is the ability to aurally recognize and manipulate phonemes, which are the smallest units of sound within words (i.e., /f/, /a/, /t/) together makes the word “fat”. Students must rapidly manipulate these sounds, which allow learners to apply this knowledge when they begin phonics instructions. Phonemic awareness is the first and most important aspect of reading acquisition (Uhry, 2002).

1.9. Theoretical Framework

The term “theoretical framework” is defined by Radhakrishna, Yoder and Ewing (2007:692) as a conceptual model of how one makes logical sense of the relationship between several factors, been identified as the problem. It positions the research in the discipline or subject in which the researcher is working (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smith, and 2004:25). In this view, this study will adopt a constructivist theory.

1.9.1 Constructivist Theory

The study has been informed by the assumption that a learner is a social being that can learn to read and understand only if there is guidance from the more knowledgeable adult. Therefore, Constructivism is a theory of how people learn, based on the work of developmental psychologists, constructivism contends that people construct meaning through their interactions with and experience in their social environments (Slavin, 1994). It presumes that prior knowledge and experience play a significant role in learning and form the basis for subsequent activities. Per (Schunk & Dale 2006, P.236), learners enter school with a sense of self-efficacy for learning based on previous experience and personal qualities.

This implies that the meaning that individuals give to the text depends on their language(s), culture, personal experiences, and the particular social context in which reading occurs. If materials intended for learners' reading are not based on their culture and environment they may contribute to reading difficulties.



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The extent to which individuals learn to read is primarily demonstrated by cognitive theories. In view of this, this study was driven by the constructivist theory. Constructivist Theory shares with cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) on assumption that a person's behavior and environment interact in a reciprocal fashion. That view that is underpinning social cognitive theory is that learning to read is linked to one's social environment. For instance, some learners might learn well when they are in groups, which is in line with Namibian education systems' adoption of a learner-centered approach through interaction (MBESC, 2003).

Cummins (1976, in Barker, 2006) found that learning to read in a second language (L2) requires certain competencies already achieved in their first language (L1). Reading development in L1 helps to transfer reading skills to L2, but this is attained over a time because of maturation (Barker, 2006).

1.9.2 Piaget's theory of cognitive development

Piaget's theory is based on a number of assumptions, which underpin the way in which he believed children learn (Kail, 2001: 150-152). He maintained that children use schemes to organize, categorize and understand the world. As children grow older, these schemes become increasingly abstract as new experiences are assimilated into the existing schemes. Per Piaget, children's cognitive development progresses sequentially through a series of stages, which are, linked to certain age ranges. The transition from sensory motor stage through the preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational stages can be seen as a continuum on which children move from subject to subject realization (Gage & Berliner, 1992:105-116).

Piaget sees learning as a process of internal construction. Learners must construct knowledge in their own minds through the help and guidance of more knowledgeable others. In the context of this study, teachers must teach learners to acquire self-regulatory competence by observing and hearing their explanations, for example when the teacher is demonstrating the use of the strategy, giving constructive feedback and proper guidance the learners use self-directing, self-pacing and self-correcting strategies and learn how to adjust their skill to change personal, behavioral and contextual conditions to optimize their own learning during reading.

For this study, the focus has been on the concrete operational stage lasting from seven to eleven years of age (ten to eleven years – grade 5) as suggested by Piaget. During this stage, children start to use logical thought processes, such as reversal of concepts, multiple classifications and mental ordering, to begin to solve problems limited to real, observable objects. Centralization is no longer present during this stage as children begin to realize that there are many sides to a particular problem (Mwamwenda, 2004:95-100; Biehler & Snowman, 1993:61-66; Vasta, Haith & Miller, 1995:35).

Piaget's theory has implications for teaching reading, as each individual child's current stage of cognition development must be considered when the teacher plans learning activities. This theory has informed this study by helping teachers to understand that learners at this level have reached a new level of self-development that allows them to understand some of the ways in which they are related to people.

Interaction with the teacher and other people, and during play, learners are able to understand the physical and social world. In this regard, realistic fiction may encourage learners to interact with characters who are involved in a conflict situation, during reading. Knowledge about this stage will assist the teacher to understand that the learners are ready to listen to stories and to read about real-life heroes and stories, which move between the past and the present, such as legends.

1.10 Literature Review



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Literature review describes theoretical perspectives and previous research findings regarding the problem at hand (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Per Creswell (2003), Literature review provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as the benchmark for comparing the results of the study with other findings. Boote and Beile (2005) on the other hand believe that literature review sets no single factor or category can be seen as more crucial than others can, but can be equally responsible for reading failure amongst learners in the respective grades.

The broader context of the study, clearly demarcates what is and what is not within the scope of the investigation, and justifies these decisions. They further assert that literature review situates an existing literature in a broader scholarly and historical context.

International and national studies have been reviewed to determine the views of different authors about the studied phenomenon. Reading is one of the most complex tasks that humans are expected to perform (Rault-Smith 2009:15), and is complex both to learn and to teach. Per Smith and Read (2005:12), it is a process in which information from the text and the reader's background knowledge act together to produce meaning.

Teaching reading usually revolves around two components, namely recognizing and analyzing words (identification of words), and understanding words and ideas (comprehension) (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005:124). The literature review has been discussed in detail in chapter 2.

1.11 Research Methodology

1.11.1 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is a way of looking at the world from an individual's different perspective. Maree (2007) describes paradigms as "a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular worldview". Bobbie (2001:42) refers to paradigm as the fundamental frame of reference that is used to organize our observations and reasoning. The research paradigm that has been adopted in this study is interpretivism. Interpretive research has been suitable for the study, as the researcher has interacted with the respondents to get their views on factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English FAL in Grade 5. This has also helped the researcher in getting the views of both teachers and learners on the challenges faced in the classroom where English FAL is involved and be able to identify the possible strategies the teacher's intent to implement to overcome these challenges.

1.11.2 Research Approach

The researcher has adopted a qualitative approach for this study, recommended by McMillan & Schumacher (2006:315), to be followed in “an enquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their settings”.

Qualitative approach typically studies people or systems by interacting with or observing the participants in their natural environment and focus on their meanings and interpretations (Creswell, 2009 and Maree, 2011). This design describes and analyses people’s individual and collective beliefs, social actions, and the meaning that they assign to them. Creswell (2008:20), describes the research design as a specific procedure involved in the research process, whereas for De Vos (2005:268) it comprises the decisions a researcher makes in planning a study. This approach has been suitable for the study because it provided insight into how the participants viewed the factors affecting the learners’ reading culture, challenges faced by learners, teachers, and possible strategies to overcome these challenges.



In this regard, the perceptions of the respondents in this study have been captured in the form of narratives using thick description since qualitative research relies more on words than on figures and statistics. The research design and tools used to collect the data would be discussed in details in chapter 3.

1.12 Trustworthiness (Validity and reliability of the study)

Trustworthiness refers to findings that are worth paying attention to (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). Trustworthiness represents the measures built into the process of research by the researcher to ensure that the study is valid and that the results are reliable. The key principles of good qualitative research are found in the notion of trustworthiness and neutrality of its findings or decisions (Babbie & Mouton, 2005).

Dependability is related to reliability and is the criteria for consistency. Thus, the researcher has attempted to account for the changing conditions in the chosen phenomenon and the changes in the design. Therefore, the researcher -has used interviews and document analysis to ensure dependability of the study. "The validity of a measurement instrument is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure" (Leedy & Armrod, 2005:28). Validity refers to the accuracy references, which are based upon the outcome measures. The validity of the interview instrument has been tested by giving it to all the participants who have been involved in interviews prior to conducting the interviews. After the interviews, the principal gave feedback to make sure that the researcher captured their experiences correctly.

"Reliability is a necessary, but insufficient condition of validity" (Leed & Armrod, 2005:29). Reliability refers to the consistency of the outcome measures. A reliable measure should yield the same outcome if tested more than once. In qualitative studies the researcher is concerned with accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data (Rodolo, 2008:21).  At this point, the research has been regarded as trustworthy because he used participants from different schools and different methods of collecting data.

This is where the multi-data source has come into play. The raw data has been presented and analysed at the end of the research process as indicated earlier on. Conformability refers to the objectivity or neutrality of the research (De Vos et al., 2002). This means that no prejudice will be evident in the research process and results. Both the research process and research results have been audited by the supervisor to ensure the conformability of the study.

1.13 Ethical Consideration

In conducting a study, it is imperative to consider the ethics. Research ethics refers to rules of morally good conduct researchers (Gomm, 2005). The researcher has made sure that he protects the individuals' rights by observing the rights of participants, their values and desires when carrying out research. It was important that throughout the research process, the researcher followed and abided by the ethical guidelines. In this research, ethical consideration has been taken into cognizance. The identities of both the participants and the schools have been kept confidential, by using pseudonyms.

The participants have participated on a voluntary basis and they were made aware of their right not to answer questions should they feel uncomfortable. They were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the process at any time, should they wish to do so. The researcher will further make sure that no one will be harmed in any way during the course of the research in particular, children as they are vulnerable.



Ethical clearance to conduct this study has been applied for from all relevant stakeholders; the University of Fort Hare, Graaff-Reinet District Education Department and the principals from the sampled schools.

1.14 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter one provided a background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose, critical question and significance of the study, delimitation of the study and a definition of key terms will be presented.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, the findings from literature regarding the factors hampering reading were recorded. Some of these factors were the direct cause of reading failure. Physical conditions such as stunting, chronic fatigue, health problems, malnutrition, sleep deprivation etcetera are seen as a factor, which might hinder reading acquisition.

Chapter 3: Method

The third chapter dealt with the processes followed and theories applied to complete this Qualitative study. Phenomenology has been employed, as the study aims to establish what teachers view as causes to reading problems.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation

The data collected from focus group discussions and unstandardized interviews were introduced in Chapter four. These findings have been recorded, transcribed and then analysed thematically.



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Chapter 5: Summary of findings, recommendations and conclusion

This is the final chapter, which concludes the study. It highlights the other chapters and gives a summary of the findings from the data gathered.

1.15 Conclusion

The introduction, background, and the problem statement were discussed in details. The other issues that were looked at in this chapter are the aim and objectives of the study and the research questions. In addition, the research methodology, the significance of the study, the delimitation of the study and definition of key terms were also discussed. The next chapter would look into the literature reviewed and unpack it in details.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In chapter one, the researcher gave a small overview of the reading ability or the lack thereof, of learners in South African schools. The researcher briefly reported on the views of multiple scholars on the International, African and South African perspectives regarding the factors that are affecting the reading culture of learners in English First Additional Language (FAL) at grade 5 level. The statement of the problem was formulated and introduced which informs the background of the study. The main research question, sub-research questions, the purpose of the study and the research aims, which were linked to the sub-research questions, and the research methodology was also outlined and briefly discussed. This chapter has discussed in detail previous studies that were consulted to strengthen this research. Based on the argument above, this chapter has been concluded by a summary and will state what will be discussed in chapter three.



2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Theoretical framework and its importance in research

Researchers normally use their own knowledge and life experiences when they conduct a study, to structure the inquiry. It is thus important to note that research cannot be conducted in the absence of a theoretical framework. The term “theoretical framework” is defined by Radhakrishna, Yoder and Ewing (2007:692) as a conceptual model of how one makes logical sense of the relationship between several factors, been identified as the problem. It positions the research in the discipline or subject in which the researcher is working (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smith, and 2004:25).

Theoretical framework is used in qualitative research to provide a lens through which to view the study and interpret the data (Anafara & Mertz, 2014). This was the main reason the researcher adopted a constructivist theory.

2.2.2 Constructivist Theory

Constructivism is not a particular pedagogy, it is a theory describing how learning happens, regardless of whether learners are using their experiences to understand a lecture or merely following instructions to build a model (Kail, 2001: 150-152). In both cases, the theory of constructivism suggests that learners construct knowledge out of their own experiences. In this view, the study was informed by the assumption that a learner is a social being that can learn to read and understand only if there is guidance from the more knowledgeable adult. Thus, Constructivism is a theory of how people learn, based on the work of developmental psychologists, constructivism contends that people construct meaning through their interactions with and experience in their social environments (Slavin, 1994).



It presumes that prior knowledge and experience play a significant role in learning and form the basis for subsequent activities. Per (Schunk & Dale 2006, P.236), learners enter school with a sense of self-efficacy for learning based on previous experience and personal qualities. This implies that the meaning that individuals give to the text depends on their language(s), culture, personal experiences, and the particular social context in which reading occurs. If materials intended for learners' reading are not based on their culture and environment they may contribute to reading difficulties.

The extent to which individuals learn to read is primarily demonstrated by cognitive theories. In view of this, this study was driven by the constructivist theory because constructivist theory shares with cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), on assumption that a person's behavior and environment interact in a reciprocal fashion.

That is, underpinning social cognitive theory that indicates learning to read is linked to one's social environment.

For instance, some learners might learn well when they are in groups, which is in line with Namibian education systems' adoption of a learner-centered approach through interaction (MBESC, 2003). Cummins (1976, in Barker, 2006) found that learning to read in a second language (L2) requires certain competencies already achieved in their first language (L1). Reading development in L1 helps to transfer reading skills to L2, but this is attained over a time because of maturation (Barker, 2006).



In addition to the discussion above, the constructive reading theories are important because they indicate that teachers cannot provide learners with knowledge. In a learning situation, learners must be able to construct knowledge in their own minds (Slavin, 1994). In this research project, the factors affecting learners' reading culture were seen as both a cognitively and socially constructed process. This is the reason why the researcher decided to adopt this theory as it serves as an important part of this study. Constructivists encourage children to constantly use prior knowledge to understand new information.

In contrast with the above, the researcher also portrayed the disadvantages of constructivism. As per (Taber, 2013c), the constructivism theory suggests that knowledge cannot only be transferred from the mind of one child to another, but rather one individual (the teacher) has to represent his/her ideas in the form of (e.g. speech) that allows others, in this instance the learners to interpret and to make sense of these representations and in this manner, construct their own knowledge.

In the constructivism theory, teachers have to spend time getting to know each learner's strengths and limitations in order to customize and provide material within their zone of proximal development (Perkins, 1991 as cited in Driscoll, 2005). Clark (1982) said that students are not the best judges of their own learning needs (as cited in Driscoll, 2005). According to (Abadzi, 2006), discovering learning tools may require instructional tools that are not always available.

Per (Glaserfield, 2003), the constructivist learning area environment can present problems in many ways. One way is that learners may misbehave or not concentrate on the task when they are learning in groups. In order to counteract this problem, the teacher must establish new acceptable norms for behavior. The researcher being a teacher himself and in his professional opinion states that it would be easy for an uncommitted, unprepared or insufficiently trained teacher to give a class a subject/learning area, tell them to break into groups and learn about a said topic and discuss it for an hour, for this employs some constructivist techniques. Steffe and Wood (1991) point out that the teacher must know when to step in and redirect group's thinking, or add to a debate, which has stalled.

Constructivist learning and assessment leads quite easily to cheating. Sheard, Carbone, & Dick (2003) found that half of the students they have surveyed had cheated. However, it is worth noting that these students were first year college students and had little prior subject knowledge upon which to build, so in this instance the cheating could be attributed to using a constructivist approach with unprepared students (Lister & Leaney, 2003).

Per (Rensburg, Grobler, & Clarke, 2012), without the direct guidance of a teacher, there is the opportunity for individuals in a group to academically loaf and freeload, not pulling their weight and relying on others to come with ideas. This will only be a short-term gain for the freeloaders, as any individual assessment will expose them and highlight their lack of investment in learning. Lamal (1978), found that children will choose not to freeload if reinforces are readily available.

2.2.3 Piaget's theory of cognitive development

Piaget's theory is based on a number of assumptions, which underpin the way in which he believed children learn (Kail, 2001: 150-152). He maintained that children use schemes to organize, categorize and understand the world. As children grow older, these schemes become increasingly abstract as new experiences are assimilated into the existing schemes. Per Piaget, children's cognitive development progresses sequentially through a series of stages, which are linked to certain age ranges. The transition from sensory motor stage through the preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational stages can be seen as a continuum on which children move from subject to subject realization (Gage & Berliner, 1992:105-116).

Piaget sees learning as a process of internal construction. Learners must construct knowledge in their own minds through the help and guidance of more knowledgeable others. In the context of this study, teachers must teach learners to acquire self-regulatory competence by observing and hearing their explanations, for example when the teacher is demonstrating the use of the strategy, giving constructive feedback and proper guidance, the learners use self-directing, self-pacing and self-correcting strategy and learn how to adjust their skill to change personal, behavioral and contextual conditions to optimize their own learning during reading.

In order to better understand some of the things that happen during cognitive development, there is firstly a need to examine some of the important ideas and concepts introduced by Piaget. Below is an explanation of some of the factors that influence how children learn and grow:

Schemas

Piaget (1952, p.7) highlights a schema includes both a category of knowledge and the process of obtaining that knowledge. As experiences happen, this new information is used to modify, add to, or change previously existing schemas. For example, a child may have a schema about a type of animal, such as a dog. If the child's sole experience has been with small dogs, a child might believe that all dogs are small, furry, and have four legs. Suppose then that the child encounters an enormous dog. The child will take in this new information, modifying the previously existing schema to include these new observations.

Assimilation

The process of taking in new information into our already existing schemas is known as assimilation. The process is somewhat subjective because people tend to modify experiences and information slightly to fit in with their preexisting beliefs. In the example above, seeing a dog and labeling it "dog" is a case of assimilating the animal into the child's dog schema (J.Piaget, 1952 in Wadsworth, J.B. 2004).



Accommodation

Another part of adaptation involves changing or altering the existing schemas in light of new information, a process known as accommodation. Accommodation involves modifying existing schemas, or ideas, because of new information or new experiences. New schemas may also be developed during this process (Piaget, 1958).

Equilibration

Piaget believed that all children try to strike a balance between assimilation and accommodation, which is achieved through a mechanism Piaget called equilibration. As children progress through the stages of cognitive development, it is important to maintain a balance between applying previous knowledge (assimilation) and changing behavior to account for new knowledge (accommodation). Equilibration helps explain how children can move from one stage of thought into the next (Piaget, 1952).

In view of this, Piaget's theory of cognitive development helped add to the understanding of children's intellectual growth. It also stressed that children were not merely passive recipients of knowledge. Instead, kids are constantly investigating and experimenting as they build their understanding of how the world works. For this study, the focus has been on the concrete operational stage lasting from seven to eleven years of age (ten to eleven years – grade 5) as suggested by Piaget. During this stage, children start to use logical thought processes, such as reversal of concepts, multiple classifications and mental ordering, to begin to solve problems limited to real, observable objects. Centralization is no longer present during this stage as children begin to realize that there are many sides to a particular problem (Mwamwenda, 2004:95-100; Biehler & Snowman, 1993:61-66; Vasta, Haith & Miller, 1995:35).

In addition, Piaget's theory has implications for teaching reading, as each individual child's current stage of cognition development must be considered when the teacher plans learning activities. This theory informed this study by helping teachers to understand that learners at this level have reached a new level of self-development that allows them to understand some of the ways in which they are related to people. Through interaction with the teacher and other people as well as during play, learners are able to understand the physical and social world. In this regard, realistic fiction may encourage learners to interact with characters who are involved in a conflict situation during reading.

Knowledge about this stage would assist the teacher to understand that the learners are ready to listen to stories and to read about real-life heroes and stories, which move between the past and the present, such as legends.

Disadvantages of Piaget's Cognitive Development

As per (Wood, 2008), during the 1960's, researchers identified shortcomings in the theory of Piaget. These researchers' main argument was that Piaget described tasks with confusing and abstract terms and used overly difficult tasks. According to (Wood, 2008) Piaget underestimates children's ability and that young children are capable and can succeed on simpler forms of tasks requiring the same skills.

It is outlined by Edwards, Hopgood, & Rush, (2000) that Piaget overlooked the effects of students' cultural and social groups. They further stated it seems as if the stages of development that were constructed by Piaget are only representative of Western society and culture. In his work, scientific thinking and formal operations are regarded as worthy levels to be reached by children, however in other cultures the basic levels of concrete operations may be much higher regarded.

According to Edwards et al. (2000), the work of Piaget is characterized by lack of controls, small samples and the absence of statistical analysis in his research. Edwards further stated that much of these criticisms have originated from Empiricism and Logical Positivism, which was very popular at the time, hence Piaget was a structuralist and his scientific orientation was very different from traditional research being done in America at this time. Edwards (2000) Piaget attempted to identify universal features of cognitive development by observing children in specific situations.

He further believed that small samples of children and the methods he used were sufficient as long as he was able to identify the structures common to all individuals; however, it is reasonable to question the reliability of Piaget's work.

Weiten (1992) points out that Piaget may have underestimated the development of young children. He cites Bower, (1982) and Harris, (1983) who have conducted research and found that some children develop object-permanence earlier than Piaget thought. Psychologists such as Vygotsky and Bruner have noted that Piaget's theory does not make provision for the fact that social interaction with the world and language can influence cognitive development. Bruner places much emphasis on the importance of social factors such as language, social interaction and experience. Piaget considered language relatively unimportant, seeing it only as an expression of thought in contrast to Bruner who saw language as symbolic, logic and operational thought (Hill, 2001). According to Vygotsky, cognitive development is a combination of knowledge achieved between the child and society. It is true to say that, a child's intellectual potential is greater if they are working with support and input from adults than if they were working alone. This is called the "Zone of proximal development" (Hill, 2001, pp41).

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1. The Language Policy in South African Schools

South Africa is a multilingual country with eleven official languages. In all primary schools, Home Language (HL) instruction is encouraged in the first four years of formal education. Per the Language in Education Policy Act of 1996, all learners would have to choose at least one approved language as a learning area in Grades 1 and 2. From Grade 3 onwards, all learners would choose their language of learning and teaching (LOLT) and one approved additional language as a learning area (Matjila and Pretorius, 2004:1: Department of Education, DOE: 2004:1).

South African language in education policy tries to meet two demands. Firstly, maintaining multilingualism and gaining access to global markets, but learners are exposed to the language of instruction relatively late and for only a few hours a week. In grade four, learners are expected to learn in a foreign language that they have barely acquired and suddenly begin to teach them maths, science and other subjects in English (Dampier, 2012). The researcher is totally against this notion for he is of the opinion that learning should take place in the child's mother tongue from as early as possible throughout the child's learning career. A child learns better in a language that he/she is well acquainted with and such a child have the advantage on a child that must still acquire the language before he/she will be able to learn.

This “addictive bilingualism” relies on the notion that it is possible to accelerate the acquisition of a second language by falling back on mother tongue as a basis as per (Dampier, 2012), but it only worked in contexts in which the language shares a common origin, whereas English and African Languages are continents apart. He further highlighted that, South Africa either had to focus on “upgrading” our African Languages to include space for scientific descriptions, as English and Afrikaans had done over time, or we had to immerse our children in English from a younger age for a longer period. Mwepu (2012) concurs with this argument by indicating that the South African Schools Act gave too much power to schools' governing bodies to determine language policies. However, several case studies have showed that many African-Medium schools have evoked the act to refuse provincial governments' request to become dual-medium schools and cater for English speaking learners.

Howie (2012), of the University of Pretoria's Centre for Evaluation and Assessment, spelled out the role teachers need to play in negotiating these linguistic complexities in the classroom. “All teachers had to be reading teachers”, Howie said.

At the very least, all teachers should receive training in how to recognize reading difficulties and further develop literacy and comprehension for learners at the developmental stage they teach". The researcher concurs with Howie (2012) in that all teachers need to be reading teachers, because children tend to copy and do what they observe. The researcher, as an educator himself also experienced that children, especially at primary school level always like to imitate and believes that everything their educators are doing is right.

2.3.1.1 English First Additional Language vs. Mother Tongue Instruction

Jansen (2013) in his recent Percy Baneshik Memorial Lecture to the English Academy of South Africa, recommended the introduction of English as language of instruction as early as possible ("Wrest power from English tyranny", Mail & Guardian, 4 October 2013). The researcher concurs with this for it will lay the "battlefield" equal for all children, regardless of their background color or racial group. It is quite evident these days that everything is in English for it is the universal language. Most of the universities are making use of English as their language of teaching and learning. Jansen (2013) observed that many black parents recognize that English proficiency is important for successful participation in the economy, and therefore concludes that their children should be instructed in English.

This conclusion rests on a key assumption: "The best way to become fluent in English is the introduction to English from as early as possible". However, most linguistic theories do not agree as they argue that when it comes to learning a second language, it is crucial to first have a solid foundation in one's first language. These theories predict that several years of mother-tongue instruction will lead to better second language acquisition than being instructed in that second language from that first day of school. The researcher is of the opinion that when the learner has mastered his/her mother tongue language he/she will find it much easier to acquire a new language.

The goal is to optimize educational outcomes, which includes English fluency, mother-tongue fluency and skills in other subject areas, for learners whose first language is not English (Jansen, 2013).

2.3.1.2 School Language Policy (SLP)

Most schools that accommodate learners that speak Xhosa as their mother language use English as the second language. Xhosa is now used as the home language where English is used as the second language or FAL in these schools. Consistent with (CAPS, 2011) teachers are guided on all skills to be taught in all subjects. Moreover, reading was regarded as the most important skill for language and it was envisioned that a learner should be able to read English well when he/she gets to grade 3 (DBE, 2011). Singh (2009) outlines reading as a very important skill in mastering a language. Hence the researcher chose this topic of research for no formal learning can take place if a learner cannot read fluently in the language of teaching and learning.



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2.3.1.3 Language in Education Policy (LIEP)

This policy was published in 1997 and incorporated into the Revised National Curriculum Statement of 2002 (DOE, 2002). The aim of the policy was to give guidance as to how the official languages have to be introduced into our schools (LIEP, 1997). Mda (2000) also shared the importance of the LIEP and commended it for its determination in considering equivalency, independency and contribution to the nation. The LIEP's aim was also to promote multilingualism and the development of all eleven official languages (LIEP, 1997). Based on the National Language Policy which is subjected to the Constitution of South Africa, it envisaged that all learners should be introduced to at least two official languages (South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996), where the one language ought to be the First Language or Home Language and the other one FAL. Learners' home language was expected to lay the foundation for the acquisition of the FAL (LIEP, 1997).

2.3.1.4 Straight-for-English School vs. Mother-Tongue Schools

Per the researcher's own professional views as a principal, schools that decided that English should be their language of learning and teaching (LOLT) are more likely to charge school fees, have smaller classes and have access to more resources than mother-tongue schools. More importantly, the quality of teachers, their English background and certain other aspects of school quality are most probably stacked in favor of these "straight-for-English" schools. These children of "straight-for-English" schools are an average from richer families where they receive support that is more academic for these parents are better-educated or better caregivers. These children are less likely to go to bed hungry, have fewer siblings to share resources with and are more frequently exposed to English on television and in their homes.

2.3.2 Reading as an essential part of learning

At school, reading is integrated in  all learning areas; therefor it forms a very fundamental part of learning. Snow (2002:32) states that "because meaning does not exist in text, but must be constructed from the text by the reader, instruction on how to use reading strategies is necessary to improve reading comprehension". Learners need to be able to read and understand information and instructions and be able to interpret them, not only in languages, but also in all other learning areas such as Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Life Skills, etc. In other learning areas such as Social Sciences, it is expected from learners to memorize the information through learning. Learning can only takes place when you are able to read with comprehension. If you can't read you won't be able to learn.

Educational systems also rely more heavily upon text as students reach higher-grade levels. In early elementary grades, students do not typically have textbooks at home and they primarily work with decodable readers and short stories borrowed from the library.

However, at the beginning of third grade, textbooks are introduced to the home environment and students' abilities to pull and process information from textbooks becomes increasingly necessary for student achievement. By the time that students reach high school, many history teachers expect students to build their background knowledge by reading at home and then demonstrate their understanding during in-class discussions. Thus, if a learner hasn't acquire the skill of reading and reading with comprehension, such a learner is most likely not to show any progress in terms of learning. The textbooks that students utilize in science, mathematics and history are typically several hundred pages in length, featuring diagrams, pictures, and primarily, text to transmit knowledge about the subject to the reader.

In addition to this, English teachers also assign novels and stories for reading at home. Unfortunately, textbooks are challenging for students to access. Textbooks use advanced vocabulary, cover a vast number of topics, use direct language that does not engage the reader, and lack the structure that promotes reading comprehension (Bryce, 2011).  In primary school, students are still building their reading competence, but at the secondary level, they are expected to have the necessary skills. In this view, California schools are evaluated based on student performance on standardized tests and approximately forty percent of students going to public school are attending schools undergoing "program improvement" for failing to achieve the goals of "No Child Left Behind" (Crane, Huang, Derby, Makkonen, & Goel, 2008).

Students are not performing well in their tests; this could be because they are struggling to read and comprehend the test questions that they are being confronted with. Learners in South Africa, especially in the Somerset East and Cookhouse area are experiencing the same challenges, hence the reason for this study. Students need practice reading to develop their phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

The mastery of these skills would grant them access to increasingly complex knowledge in other academic subject areas. Rose (2006) has observed that without the ability to communicate and learn effectively through reading and writing, individuals are severely disadvantaged for life. Similarly, Moats (1999, p.5) remarks that:

Reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends. Research now shows that a child, who does not learn the reading basics early, is unlikely to learn them at all. Any child who does not learn to read early and well would not easily master other skills and knowledge, and is unlikely to ever flourish in school or in life. The researcher is concurring with Rose (2006) and Moats (1999, p.5) for the current society is expecting citizens to read and read well in order to communicate effectively and even to find directions as to where you must go (directions on the road, a menu at a restaurant, etc.).



2.3.3 Factors affecting the learners reading culture in English FAL

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There are several factors affecting the learners reading culture in English FAL at grade five level. The researcher will discuss some of the main factors such as: physical factors (malnutrition; asthmatic condition, foetal alcohol syndrome) and emotional factors (Values and attitude; Lack of prior knowledge; Motivation and unstable environment).

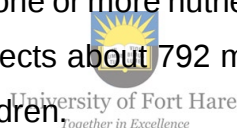
2.3.3.1. Physical factors

According to Burns (1998:5) learning to read is a complicated process whereby a learner who wants to become a successful reader must be alert, attentive, and able to concentrate and participate vigorously in the classroom reading activities. This would only be possible as Christenson & Reschly (2010:498) states that if there were any physical condition, which lowers a child's vitality to a continuous state of chronic fatigue, which might influence his attention in classroom activities. Some of these causes of fatigue could be malnutrition and lack of sleep.

In a South African context, however, stunting, micronutrient deficiencies and short term-hunger are classified as main nutritional problems facing scholars (Fleisch, 2008:32). In addition, Fleisch (2008:32) highlights another contributing factor that is, untreated asthmatic conditions for children in poorer communities of South Africa, which result in absenteeism. He further identifies foetal alcohol syndrome as a contributing factor to the development of reading problems in South Africa in the Intermediate Phase. That resulted to inattentiveness and them therefore struggle to master mathematics and reading particularly in English FAL. In this regard, the researcher will discuss some physical factors that affect the learners:

- **Malnutrition**

Joe King (2013), states that the effects of malnutrition on children are a dangerous condition that develops when your body does not get enough nutrients to function properly. This could be caused by a lack of food or an unbalanced diet with the absence of, or insufficient in one or more nutrients. The World Health Organization reported that malnutrition affects about 792 million people worldwide, whereby at least a third of these are children.



Diet has an impact on children's ability to think in the short- and long-term memory. A recent review of research on the effects of deficiencies in zinc, iodine, iron and folate on the cognitive development of school-aged children highlighted the significance of nutrition in the post-infancy period. For example, deficiencies in iron and zinc have been associated with impairment of neuropsychological function, retardation of growth and development, reduced immunity and increased vulnerability to infectious diseases (Sandstead, 2000). In this regard, learners are affected psychologically; as they experience dizziness and tiredness. All these affect their attention span in learning and teaching. Hence, they lose focus in the classroom during reading and writing.

Based on the discussion above, children should get a well-balanced diet with high protein in order to sharpen their cognitive skills, which would assist them to focus in their classroom especially where reading in English FAL is concerned as these deficiencies at an early age of childhood have the potential to impact upon cognitive outcomes in school-aged and adolescent children. Thus, appropriate early childhood diets that are well balanced are important, if not crucial, for later school outcomes. In the view of the researcher, main nutrition should not be a problem anymore in South African Schools, for the Department of Basic Education has made sure that each child in school is supplied with at least one healthy meal per day through the National School Nutrition Program (NSNP).

- **Asthmatic Conditions**

When it comes to chronic diseases and academic performance, Taras (2001), found an association between the child's health and school attendance, and in some cases, the diseases also affected academic achievement, which would not come as a surprise to most parents. In addition, from the 66 studies, which Taras reviewed on asthma and school attendance, the correlation between the disease and student absenteeism was quite evident.

He further strengthens this by indicating that: "Children with asthma are conceivably at risk for decreased school functioning due to acute aggravations of the disease, increased absenteeism secondary to symptoms, and effects of asthma medication,". "If there's any good news here it is that approximately two-thirds of the published studies demonstrate no difference in levels of academic achievement or ability in children with asthma. Among those showing a difference in academic performance, the problem was associated with severe and persistent symptoms or to other contributing social factors such as income."

Other diseases such as epilepsy, cancer, hemophilia, congenital heart conditions and HIV can also affect children's school attendance and achievement per Taras. "Difficulties with these chronic conditions may have direct effects on learning. Often, they make it hard for children to attend school regularly over long periods and that can have an impact on their ability to achieve academically. "Overall, we know that children need to be healthy to learn at their highest potential," says Taras. "Sometimes children suffer from a chronic disease that cannot be helped, and in those cases parents, teachers and children themselves can only do the best they can, considering the circumstances.

- **Foetal Alcohol Syndrome**

The researcher has tried to establish a relationship between foetal alcohol syndrome and the learners' reading and learning ability. Extreme expectations are placed on teachers to educate learner's at all different learning levels according to the inclusive education policies in South Africa (Walton, Avenant & Van Schalkwyk, 2016). Schools tend to be the first place where learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified claims (Miller, Thompson, Schwab, Hanlon – Dearman, Goodman, Koren & Massotti, 2017).

They further stated that it is commonly assumed that teachers are able to educate large numbers of learners with Foetal Alcohol Syndrome in the mainstream classrooms in the rural areas of South Africa. Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is an umbrella abbreviation used to classify many disabilities caused by prenatal alcohol exposure, which also includes physical, cognitive, emotional and behavioral deficits (Poth, Pei, Job & Wyper, 2014). Intellectual and learning disabilities, speech and language delays, emotional and behavioral difficulties, poor social skills, and motor deficits have been reported among people with FASD (Paley & O'Connor, 2009, 2011). Poth et al. (2014) stated that teachers are struggling to find effective strategies to deal with FASD learners in the classroom, which further leads to struggling to teach these learners how to read and write.

Causes on the brain

As per Jones & Smith, studies have shown that the IQ score of the majority of children and adults with Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) are between 40 and 80. Children with FAS also suffer from neuropsychological impairments such as deficits in memory, motor skills and learning (Olson et al., 1998; Riley & McGee, 2005). Children with FAS have more oral-motor deficits, articulation problems, and difficulties in comprehension and use of grammatical markers, which can make it very difficult for a child to learn to read (Becker, Warr-Leeper, and Leeper, 1990).

2.3.3.2 Emotional Factors

Learners bring different levels of motivation to learning and the intensity level of this motivation is a critical determination of learning. That includes, among others, values, attitudes, emotions, the ability to tolerate and overcome frustration and the willingness to take risks (Sadker & Sadker, 2005:36).



Ghaguru, Liang & Kit (2010:22) include the following as emotional factors that constitute barriers to effective reading Lack of prior knowledge, lack of confidence, poor motivation, bad reading habits and an unstable environment.

If learners are forced to read permanently, they may develop a negative attitude towards reading (Lerner & Johns, 2009:153).

Under emotional factors per Christenson & Reschly (201:145) sheer neglect or the lack of sympathetic understanding from the parents could make the child feel unloved or unwanted, which could be a contributing factor to the child being unmotivated to progress in school. This in turn could be the reason why the child struggles to learn to read. They furthermore state that prior personal and social problems may impede reading progress from the onset. They also declare that, saying a child with reading disability tends to present a personality problem, is to imply that the child is having difficulty in emotional adjustment. They argue that most children with reading difficulties manifest mild to severe signs of emotional disturbance.

Furthermore Christenson & Reschly (2010:146) points out that the observable symptoms of personal and social maladjustment typical of disabled readers might be displayed in the classroom in the form of shyness, inability to concentrate, habitual nail-biting, a tendency to stutter, a lack of self-confidence which shows up as discouragement, giving up easily, irritability or about any kind of aggressive compensatory behavior which often draws the attention of the other children and disrupts class activities.

- **Values and Attitude**

The recent emphasis placed on improving children's English Language Arts test scores often-lead teachers to ignore the role of learner's attitudes in the process of becoming literate. In order for students to develop into effective readers, they must process both the skills and the will to read. As noted by Guthrie and Wigfield (2000), "Motivation is what activates behavior". Students' attitude towards reading is a central factor affecting reading performance.



Factors related to student reading achievement are centered on reading motivation and reading-related self-perception. For children who experience initial or continued success or difficulty in reading, relationships between reading achievement and self-perception (referring to those perceptions, values, knowledge, and beliefs individuals have about themselves as students) arise within the first year of schooling. This timing means that the student's self-perception forms in response to emerging patterns of accomplishment or difficulty with learning tasks (Chapman & Tunmer, 2003:6); so, for example, students with a low sense of efficacy for completing reading tasks tend to give up more easily, engage in off-task activities or avoid the task altogether.

- **Lack of prior knowledge**

While the study of English becomes a common practice nowadays, especially in Taiwan, reading in English is becoming increasingly important for learners. They need to be able to read texts in English, not only for academic purposes, but also for their careers. Reading has many beneficial effects in language acquisition. Some researchers believe that reading facilitates language development (Martin-Chang & Gould, 2008).

The more a person reads, the more they will develop their vocabulary knowledge. Reading can also help students improve their spelling and writing skills (Harmer, 2007). When students are enrolled in an English class, they will always, at one point or another, be tested on their reading ability. When they fail an English reading test, they may feel disappointed and discouraged but it does not mean that they are poor readers. They fail the English reading test simply because they do not know enough words to understand texts.



As the background or content knowledge about a subject or theme, prior knowledge is an important aspect to successful reading. In second language research, there is evidence that having this prior knowledge plays a significant role in comprehension (Brantmeier, 2005; Hammadou, 1991, 2000; Johnson, 1982; Lee, 1986; Nassaji, 2003; Pulido, 2004, 2007). There are several studies that have shown the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension (Joshi, 2005; Joshi & Aaron, 2000; Manyak & Bauer, 2009; Martin-Chang & Gould, 2008; Ricketts, Nation, & Bishop, 2007). Joshi and Aaron (2000) find that vocabulary knowledge is a strong predictor of reading ability when factoring reading speed with decoding and comprehension.

Martin-Chang and Gould (2008) find a strong correlation both between vocabulary and reading comprehension and between reading rate and primary print knowledge. Vocabulary knowledge is essential in reading comprehension because it has a similar function to background knowledge in reading comprehension. Vocabulary knowledge helps students in decoding, which is an important part of reading (Qian, 2002).

It is assumed that students need to understand the meaning of the words in order to fully understand the reading passage in a foreign language. Students with high levels of vocabulary knowledge will be able to decode and understand the reading passage better than students with low levels of vocabulary (Nation, Clarke, Marshall, & Durand, 2004).

2.3.3.3 Motivation

Reading motivation encourages students to practice reading skills and advance their abilities. The primary years is the start to learning to read and has importance. Over the years, motivation of learners has been seen as the responsibility of the parents and the teachers. This in itself has changed. The onus has also shifted to the learners. A highly motivated learner develops positive self-esteem, which in turn improves academic performance. Research findings reveal that learners with higher self-esteem showed higher intrinsic motivation and better academic performance (Patil, Saraswathi & Padakannaya, and 2009:91).

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Reading Motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation contributes to reading motivation. McGeown, Norgrate, & Warhurst (2012) claim intrinsically motivated children engage in activities like reading for example because of personal interest or enjoyment. Extrinsically motivated children on the other hand engage in activities related to other outcomes like rewards and good grades.

McGeown, Norgrate, & Warhurst found that through studying children with mixed reading abilities, intrinsic motivation relates to reading skills whereas extrinsic motivation does not. Good readers had a strong correlation to extrinsic motivation and a weak correlation to intrinsic motivation.

It has been determined that no relationship exists between motivation and reading skills with students who were poor. This tells us that student achievement tied to motivation varies per ability to read. It was found in this study that most of the learners in the quintile one to three schools do not get the necessary motivation from their parents, hence the poor reading ability identified in these learners. In general, extrinsically motivating factors seemed to have a higher influence on reading skills and efficiency. The use of extrinsic motivation is not a favored practice by teachers nor do teachers want their students encumbered by working for rewards. Sweet, & Guthrie (1998) presented different opinions from that which the teachers studied. Overall, the intrinsically motivated students were the ones found to have more achievement related to their reading skills than the students who were extrinsically motivated to read.



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- **Unstable Environment**

Many families are experiencing changes at some point, whether it is due to divorce, family mobility, lack of a permanent dwelling, alcohol and drug abuse, health, domestic violence, working parents, illiteracy of parents' etcetera.

Some of these changes can be hazardous to learners' emotional and physical wellbeing and to their progress in school (Vaughn, Bos & Schumm, 2003:319-320; DoE, 2008:28). Learners from such environmental backgrounds who do not get enough support and guidance from their parents, who are not exposed to books and are not motivated to read, are unlikely to develop a positive attitude towards reading. Collaboration between parents and children in reading storybooks, having a home library and visiting a library together at a pre-school age already positively influences their reading levels (Geske & Ozola, 2008:72).

2.3.4. The challenges faced by both teachers and learners during English First Additional Language reading lessons’.

2.3.4.1 The Ugandan Perspective

Kateeba (2009), highlight that by 2009 there were about 35 languages approved by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) as Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in primary schools in Uganda. They have complexed multilingualism in the urban schools, so they use English as LOLT (Government of Uganda 1992; Kateeba 2009; NCDC 2006a). The ratio in private schools as per learner-teacher is lower compared to the ratio in government schools (Ssentanda 2013; Word Bank 2002). There is a general problem related to teacher education and support with regard to the teaching of reading in primary schools. Kyeyune (2012), state, “trainees reproduce the tutors’ approaches”. Teachers teach in the same way they were taught to teach at college.



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2.3.4.2 Nigerian Perspective

Kannan (2009:2), points out that students learn basic grammar at school level only for the passing of tests and examination and not to face real life situations. Kannan (2009) further states that students only read to pass English language, but are not fully committed to its mastery. According to Shu’ara (201:18), another problem that English learners are encountering is the shortage of teachers. English FAL learners are fearful to use English especially in the presence of affluent users, for it is humiliating to have to speak to a compatriot in a foreign language, especially in the presence of the owner of that language. Olowole (2014:123-124) support the above argument by stating that most schools and colleges lack essential equipment such as language laboratories and well – equipped libraries to strengthen learners’ reading skills.

2.3. 4.3 South African Perspective

Teacher Factors

Per Nel and Müller (2010:644), point out those teachers that are not proficient in English, have a negative influence on their learners' academic achievement and English language acquisition. This in itself is a challenge in our classrooms as many teachers use English as the LOLT of the school; however, English is the FAL of these teachers (Hugo & Nieman 2010:60). Lemmer and Manyike (2012:32) proposed more training opportunities for African mother tongue teachers to ensure improvement in their English proficiency. The researcher is further of the opinion that the Department of education must arrange workshop for such teachers in order to assist them to be proficient and confident in English. In doing this the learners will be taught by educators who are well vested in English as a language which will result in more affluent and confident learners when it comes to English reading.



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Teacher Training

According to Hugo (2010: 136), teaching reading in South African context can be a very complicated task due to the diversity of our cultures and backgrounds. Because many teachers in English FAL classrooms have very little knowledge of second language teaching, they do not implement multilingualism strategies during teaching (Klapwijk, 2012:201). The lack of teacher training force teachers to develop their own interpretations of policies, based on their personal experiences due to unclear governmental documentation (Kruizinga & Nathanson, 2010; Mather & Land, 2014).

Overcrowded Classrooms

Hugo (2010:148) refers to overcrowded classrooms as an added challenge faced by both teachers and learners. English FAL learners need a good English Vocabulary to ensure reading success (Kieffer, 2012; Scheepers, 2008; Scheffner Hammer, Hoff, Uchikoshi, Gillanders, Castro & Sandilos, 2014).

English FAL learners need individual attention to ensure progress under such challenging circumstances (Blunden – Greef & Motilal, 2014:120). The researcher, as a teacher himself concurs with the above said for the number of learners per class at his current school varies between 40-50 learners per class. This makes it very difficult for one on one interaction with learners whereby some of the struggling learners are getting left behind.

Lack of Resources

Per Hugo (2010:141), there are not sufficient resources such as readers and other appropriate reading materials in many of our schools across the country. According to Kruizinga and Nathanson (2010:73), a lack of Levelled Guided Reading books makes it very difficult for teachers to implement Guided reading correctly. Singh (2009:104) suggests that teachers in disadvantaged school communities have a big role to play in creating a stimulating reading environment. The researcher has also found, when conducting the study that most educators are using money from their own pockets to ensure that the ambience in the classroom is conducive for teaching and learning (making or buying posters, copying material from the internet, buying magazines and newspapers etc.)

Summary of South African Perspective

The majority of learners in South Africa is bilingual, and is enrolled in a language that is not their first language (Pan South African Language Board, 2000). English First Additional Language (FAL) learners are wrongly diagnosed as being LSEN learners because teachers may interpret language difference as deficiencies (Crago et.al., 1997). South Africa has eleven official languages that create logistical difficulties (Adler, 2001).

Veseley (2000) argues that these many languages and tendency for the preference for education in English, results in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), which emanates from the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the language policy only implemented partly.

Based on the approach of the language policy the first language is maintained and used as the basis for the learning of another language (Chick & McKay, 2001); the advisory Panel on Language Policy, 2000). Because the language policy is only partially implemented, South African teachers are facing the challenges of large numbers of English FAL learners in their classes (PANSALB, 2000).

Even though it may seem that learners are able to use English competently among peers and in their social environment, they may struggle in the type of language that is expected in the classroom (Cummins, 2000). Even though it takes the English FAL learners approximately two years to become competent in English Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), it takes those five to seven years to reach the same level as their English Home Language peers in terms of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Hall, 1996 and Cummins, 2000).

If a child struggles academically, it can lower the child's self-esteem and confidence, in turn also affecting other areas of learning (Dauber & Jordan, 1999). When teachers spend time resolving these problems, it can interrupt the flow of lessons (Pluddemann, Mati & Mahlahela and Thusi, 2000). Teachers are expressing concern that learners do not receive assistance in terms of English FAL at home (Du Plessis & Naudé, 2003). A need for more parent collaboration has been indicated, (O'Conner; Du Plessis & Naudé, 2003) as well as a request for parents to be informed about language acquisition and language stimulation (SASLHA Ethics and Standards Committee, 2003). Teachers in South Africa need training in bilingualism; second language acquisition and learning in a second language (O'Connor, 2003; Du Plessi and Louw, 2008; Du Plessis and Naudé, 2003).

Thus, O'Conner and Geiger (2009) indicate that lack of LTSM (Learner Teacher Support Material), insufficient books, computers and photocopiers, creates an uncondusive environment for effective teaching of reading for learners.

According to Naidoo, Dorasamy and Reddy (2012), teachers do not receive enough support from support teachers and there is a lack of reading specialists in schools. Another contributing factor is the very large class sizes and only a few teachers that are willing to teach English Naidoo et. al (2012).

Teacher factors can also influence the teaching of reading both positively and negatively. Chunga (2013) support this statement by highlighting that teachers' backgrounds influenced their practices in teaching reading. Mkhize (2013) also added by pointing out that poor language and poor literacy practices in most rural black schools were due to ineffective instructional practicing done by grade four teachers. Mudzielwana (2011), observed that teachers used inappropriate methods in teaching reading and that it was due to lack of training. Bharuthram (2012) also affirm that the poor literacy situation in South African Schools is due to inadequate teacher training and monitoring.

From the literature, it is evident that across the spectrum, teachers and learners are experiencing more or less the same challenges in terms of the teaching of reading in the classroom.

2.3.5. The strategies that are promoted in teacher training for Foundation Phase learners.

According to Goodwin (2005), literacy learning is still very much under debate, because teachers around the world were found to teach reading differently.

In Australia, it is important to understand the text you are reading. Dickinson and Tabors (2001), state that obtaining meaning through the development of vocabulary and comprehension is very important in the early reading process. Freebody and Freiberg 2001; Walsh and McDonald (2012) revealed the importance of exposing learners at a very early stage to books, even before the school going age.

According to Young, Walsh and McDonald (2012), when families and societies are involved in making reading possible, it is very likely that the learners' reading skills will develop. The researcher concurs with the notion that learning to read from a very early stage is very important. In conversation with some of the affluent parents in the community, it was found out that such parents are reading to the children even before they are born, while in the tummy of the mother.

2.3.5.1 The Chinese Perspective

Hu (2007) state that when teaching learners to read in China, more emphasis is placed on reading for understanding. Bao (2004) concurs with Hu (2000), that teaching learners in a way that they will understand develops other skills and that it is important. According to (Bao, 2004), learning to comprehend the text is important as it can assist in writing and speaking about the text.

In addition, the learners in China were competent in reading English, despite the many challenges they were facing (Valencia, Place, Martin and Grossman, 2006). (PIRLS, 2006) state that China was regarded as one of the top reading countries on the reading assessment. The learners in China were facing huge challenges in trying to read English FAL, such as shortages of teaching material as well as teachers (Valencia, Place, Martin and Grossman, 2006). The question of the researcher remains, "Why are South African learner's, especially learners in the Somerset East and Cookhouse area (where the research has been conducted), who are facing the same challenges as their peers in China, such as lack of teaching material and teachers are not well vested when it comes to reading in English.

Indian Perspective

English was viewed as the library language in India and was not used for daily interpersonal communication (Pal, 2005). Ramanathan (2008); Bhakta, Hackett and Hackett, (2000) point out that English was measured as an official language and serves as a link in India been a multilingual country.

In addition to the statement above, Ramanathan (2008) further state that parental support was very important in the learners' reading development in India. Countries such as Australia and India also believed in exposing children to books before the school age, even though parents were very poor and illiterate and could not manage to buy books for their children to read at home (Ramanathan, 2008). Ramanathan (2008), add by highlighting that Indian teachers were found reading while proper teaching methods were lacking.

Teachers were teaching without proper knowledge and used different methods that were suitable for them. Ramanathan (2008) also states that some teachers only teach what they know about teaching reading. He further states that was because the Department of India failed to provide proper support in terms of training teachers. According to Yeats (2011), large classes also affected the teaching of reading negatively. Thus, the teachers in South Africa, more specifically in the area where the research was conducted share the same sentiment where they also teach without proper knowledge. In this regard, the Department of Education also fails to provide training for such educators to equip them with the necessary skills on how to teach the learners to read.

The South African Approach

Many different approaches have been used, but the three that have been discussed are mainly used i.e. Phonics approach (synthetic phonics), whole language approach (analytic phonics) and interactive approaches.

Synthetic Phonic Approach

This approach requires learners to have knowledge of individual sounds and letters, and later to combine sounds to compose whole words (Davis 2012; National Reading Panel, 2000). Hugo (2010:135) also state that when using this approach, learners' need to recognize and read individual sounds first before they can approach diagraphs and attempt to read single words.

Tindall (2010:3), the instruction of phonics normally occurs in the beginning stages of reading when learners learn how sounds and letters interact with one another and how to use this knowledge to spell and to read. According to Quiroga et al. (2002:105), school psychologists enhanced student-learning outcomes of Spanish speaking English FAL students by organizing tutorials that are aimed at promoting phonological awareness in English. In this light, the South African schools are far behind in this regard whereby there are psychologists at school level. This must rely on psychologists who are based at the district office.

When identifying learners with learning barriers, it becomes a process, as teachers must fill in lengthy forms while they are already overloaded with other administrative duties and overcrowded classrooms. Taking this in consideration some teachers tend not to identify such learners because of the extra administrative work. There are also shortages of psychologists in some districts and in most instances they find it difficult to attend to all the schools.



Analytical Phonics Approach

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This approach introduces sight words first, followed by sounding and blending afterwards (Johnston, Mc Geown & Watson, 201:1382). Hugo, 2010:135) agree with the statement above and note that in this approach, learners first read single words, progress to sentences and finally read stories. According to Pillar & Skillings (2005:13), a school in New Delhi in India successfully used the analytical phonics approach through various techniques such as the look and say technique where learners follow the text and report after the teacher. Pillar & Skillings, (2005:16) also proposed strategies such as verbal illustrations, associations and questioning.

Whilst consulting relevant literature to the study, the researcher found contrasting facts of the two approaches. Davis (2012:567) say that analytical phonics is a more effective approach to use than synthetic phonics approach, as learners first begin with a word, associating it to meaning.

Blunden and Greef (2014:162), concur that with the above argument by saying that the words learned by the learners need to be within their vocabulary in order for them to understand the meaning. In addition Johnston (2012:1366) straighten this whereby he says that South African schools make use of both approaches where English-speaking countries tend to make use of a mixed method approach in teaching reading.

Interactive Approach

According to the Centre for Research on Education Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) report (1999:22), the best way to develop literacy skills is to combine direct and interactive approaches. Goldberg (2008:17) concur with the above statement by saying that England has a structured program called Jolly Phonics, which had a more positive impact on learners' phonological awareness and their alphabet knowledge than the Big Books. According to (Gunning, 2008), this reading takes place as a group where the teacher guides the learners. Thus, Elley & Cutting, (2001:193), say that teachers were trained across six provinces to master the shared reading methodology.

This approach has proven to be much more effective than the traditional textbook approach to teach reading (Elley & Cutting 2001:193). In addition, Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), currently used in South African schools, certain skills need to be taught such as listening and speaking, Reading, Phonics, and writing. All these skills are integrated components of a balanced reading program (DOBE 2011:18). CAPS proposed certain steps to present a group guided reading lesson (DOBE 2011:13-14):

- a) Selection: Teachers select an appropriate text based on the ability of the group.
- b) Introduction: The topic is discussed to connect the learners' personal life experiences to the book.
- c) Picture Talk.

- d) First reading: Each learner reads a section of the text individually while the teacher is listening.
- e) Discussion: To enhance comprehension.
- f) Second and subsequent reading: Learners read the text again as individuals or in pairs to improve their reading fluency.

Blunden – Greef and Motilal (2014:129) agree with some of these steps as outlined by CAPS where they recognized pre, during and post reading strategies for a guided reading lesson.

3. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the importance of a theoretical framework in research, where a constructivist theory was adopted and explained. Piaget's theory of cognitive development was deliberated and the disadvantages of the theory were discussed to show the contrast. Under the literature review the policy context in teaching language, especially reading was discussed. The factors that affect the learners' reading culture were also looked at. International, national and local trends in the teaching of reading were discussed and included in this chapter. Other countries' experiences in terms of reading and its challenges were also looked at as well as the methods and approaches used to teach reading.

Chapter 3

Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the literature was reviewed which is pertinent to this study. This chapter will describe the methodological procedures that were used to gain the data that was required to describe the challenges that were faced by both Intermediate Phase teachers and learners in the English FAL reading classroom in the Cookhouse and Somerset East Area in the Blue Crane Route Municipality.

This chapter deals with the following areas: the different research paradigms, the paradigm of this study, the research approaches and the approach of this study, the different research designs and the design of this study, population and sampling, data collection and data analysis, ethical issues and a brief summary.



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3.2 Research Paradigm

In all research, there are some underlying philosophical assumptions as to what constitutes valid research and also which research method or methods are appropriate to gain knowledge in a given study. In order to conduct any research, it is important to know and understand what these assumptions are. The researcher has closely analysed each paradigm by looking at the ontological and epistemological assumptions of each paradigm. The researcher has also analysed the advantages and disadvantages of each paradigm.

Ontology

According to Grix (2004, p.59), the definition of ontology is the study of claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other.

Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the nature and forms of knowledge (Cohen et al., 2007, p.7). Epistemological assumptions are concerned with how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated, in other words, what it means to know.

In addition, a research paradigm is a way of looking at the world from individual's different perspectives. Maree (2007) describe paradigms as "a set of assumptions or believes about fundamental aspects of reality which gives rise to a particular worldview." Johnson & Christensen (2012:13) explain paradigms as a "perspective about research held by a community of researchers that is based in a set of assumptions, concepts, values and practices". Bobbie (2001:42), as cited in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011:42) refer to paradigms as the fundamental frame of reference that is used to organize our observations and reasoning.



Babbie (2007:32) further highlight that a paradigm shapes both what we see and how we understand it and has major impact on the philosophy and methodology of social sciences.

Interpretive paradigm

Relativism is the ontological position of interpretivism. It is the view that reality is subjective and differs from person to person (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.110). Crotty (1998, p.185) state that language does not passively label objects, but actively moulds and shapes reality. Thus, reality is constructed through interaction between language and aspects of an independent world.

The interpretive epistemology is one of subjectivism, which is actually based on real world phenomena. According to (Grix, 2004, p.83), the word does not exist in independence of our knowledge of it. Crotty (1998, p.43) elaborate regarding threes in the following manner:

“We need to remind ourselves here that it is human beings who have constructed it as a tree, given it the name, and attributed to it the associations we make with trees”. Meaning is not discovered, but is constructed through the interactions between consciousness and the world, and therefore a tree is not a tree without someone calling it a tree. Crotty (1998, p.44), consciousness is always consciousness of something.

Crotty, 1998, p.9) further indicate that knowledge and meaningful reality are constructed in and out of interaction between humans and their world and are developed and transmitted in a social context. In the light of this, the social world can only be understood from the standpoint of individuals that are participating in it (Cohen et al., 2007, p.19).

The positive paradigm (Also known as the scientific paradigm)

The ontological position of positivism is one of realism. Realism views that objects exist independently of the knower (Cohen et al., 2007, p.7). Pring (2008a, p.59) also state that a discoverable reality exists independently of the research. According to Frowe (2001, p.116) language fulfills a representational role as it is connected to the world by some designative function; consequently, words owe their meaning to the objects, which they name or designate.

The positivist epistemology is one of objectivism. Positivist methodology is directed at explaining relationships. According to (Creswell, 2009, p.7), positivists attempt to identify causes which influence outcomes. They therefore aim to formulate laws, yielding a basis for prediction and generalization. In addition, Cohen et al., (2007, p.8), point out that an approach, which is characterized by procedure and methods, which are designed to discover general laws, is nomothetic. Thus, Shank & Brown, (2007, p.28) say that predictions could be correct due to random reasons. Berliner (2002, p.20) state further that no scientific explanation or human behavior is ever complete.

The critical paradigm

According to Cohen et al. (2007, p.26) the critical paradigm emanates from critical theory and the belief that research is conducted for “the emancipation of individuals and also groups in an egalitarian society.” In addition, the ontological position of the critical paradigm is historical realism. Frowe, 2001, p.185), states that language does not passively label objects, but actively shapes and molds reality.

In view of the above discussion, Critical epistemology is one of subjectivism, which is based on real world phenomena and linked with social ideology. Knowledge can be both socially constructed and influenced by power relations from within society. According to Cohen (2009, p.27), what counts as knowledge is determined by social and positional power of the advocates of that knowledge.

The paradigm of this study

The research paradigm that has been adopted in this study was interpretivism. Interpretive research is more interested in discovering and understanding how people perceive and experience the world as an internal subject basis (Rubin & Babbie, 2011).

Interpretivism allows the researcher to gain an understanding of participants' experiences through communicating with them, using interviews and observations to understand and experience another's point of view as an effective means of data collection (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2004:356).

According to Cohen, Morrison and Manion (2007) an interpretive paradigm is based on human performance, approach, thinking and insight. In addition, Bertram, Fotheringham and Harley (2003), highlighted that interpretivists believe that the world is unpredictable and people define the meaning of a particular situation in the way they experience it.

In addition, Maree (2010:102), found interpretive paradigm as a “social science that involves an empathetic, detailed study of people, everyday lived experiences in their specific, natural settings in order to elicit understanding and interpretations as how they create and maintain their social worlds.”

In this regard, interpretive research has been suitable for this study, as the researcher has interacted with the respondents to get their views on the factors affecting the learners’ reading culture in English FAL in grade 5. This has also helped the researcher to get the views of both teachers and learners on the challenges faced in the classroom where English FAL is involved and be able to identify the possible strategies the teachers intended to implement to overcome these challenges

Advantages and disadvantages of interpretivist paradigm in general.

Willis (1995) refers to interpretivists as anti-foundationalists that believe that there is no single correct route or particular method to knowledge. Walsham (1993) argues that in the interpretive tradition there are no “correct” or “incorrect” theories, but that they should rather be judged according to how “interesting” they are to the researcher as well as to those who are involved in the same areas. According to Gephart (1999), interpretivists assume that knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation; hence, there is no objective knowledge, which is independent thinking, reasoning humans.

Myers (2009) further argue that the premise of interpretive research is that access to reality is only through social constructions such as languages, consciousness and shared meaning. In this regard, Aikenhead (1997) say that the interpretive paradigm is underpinned by interpretation and observation, thus to observe is to collect information about events, hence to interpret, is to make meaning of information by drawing inferences or judging between information and abstract pattern. In this view, Deeds (996) says it attempts to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them.

The interpretive research approach does not predefine dependent and independent variables, but it focuses on the full complexity of humans, making sense as the situation emerges (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). The interest of interpretivists is not to generate new theory, but to judge or evaluate, and refine existing interpretive theories. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979), interpretivism cannot be looked at as a single paradigm, for it is regarded as a large family of diverse paradigms. Boland (1985) states that the philosophical base of interpretive research is hermeneutics and phenomenology.

Bleicher (1980) further point out that hermeneutics could be treated as both an underlying philosophy and a specific mode of analysis. As a philosophical approach to human understanding, it provides the philosophical grounding for interpretivism. In this regard, a mode of analysis suggests a way of understanding the meaning, or trying to make sense of data, which may be unclear in one way or another.



Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004) refer to the following three words, namely participation, collaborations and engagement as the key words to this methodology. In addition, Carr and Kemmis (1986, p.88) indicate that in the interpretive approach, the researcher does not stand above or outside, but is a participant observer, who engages in the activities and discerns the meanings of actions as they are expressed within a specific social context.

3.3 Research approach

What are research approaches?

Research approaches could be distinguished between the qualitative and the quantitative research approaches.

Reichard and Cock (1979, 232 in Nunan 1992, 3), argue that these two approaches are in many ways indistinguishable, hence each of these approaches is used to fulfill specific research aims and functions, as each approach has its own methodological ways of collecting and analyzing data.

McMillan & Schumacher (2006:315) recommended this, to be followed in an “enquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their settings.” Qualitative approach typically studies people or systems by interacting with or observing the participants in their natural environments and focus on their meanings and interpretations (Creswell, 2009 and Maree, 2011)”. This design describes and analyses people’s individual and collective beliefs, social actions, and meaning that they assign to them. Creswell (2008:20), further describes the research design as a specific procedure involved in the research process, whereas for De Vos (2005, 268), it comprises of the decisions a researcher makes in planning a study.

Denzil & Lincoln (2005) also state that qualitative methods enable researchers to study phenomena in their real form and to interpret the findings based on the different meanings people have on an idea, concept or phenomena. In addition, Creswell (2007) states that this approach recognizes the role of the researcher in interpreting and representing the information and it further recognizes the importance of discourse, issues of power, authority and domination.

Based on all the positive statements highlighted above, the researcher decided to adopt a qualitative approach for this study. This approach helped the researcher to get more in-depth, comprehensive information and be able to understand the entire situation during data collection. It further enabled the researcher to capture the richness of the data as it involves an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the motives that governs the behavior. Fisher (2005) supported this by bringing up the qualitative research approach advantage as an ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. Taylor and Medina (2013) concur with the above argument by indicating that a qualitative approach also provide information about the “humanitarian” side of an issue that often had contradictory behaviors, opinions, beliefs and relationships of individuals.

Likewise, the qualitative research approach has some disadvantages. According to McMillan & Schumacher (2001), the qualitative method follows no strict rules; however, researchers are cautioned that the research is not allowed to be mindlessly intensive. Denzil & Lincoln (2008) agree to the above statement by highlighting that qualitative research crosscuts disciplines, fields and subject matter. It puts the researcher in the local activity of the world under investigation, enables the use of a set of interpretative practices that makes the world visible. In addition, it is even difficult to prevent or detect whether the researcher included bias and the scope due to in-depth comprehensive data collection.

Nonetheless, the researcher decided to continue using this approach as he regardless of its disadvantages, as he/she discovered that it is suitable for the study because it would provide insight into how the participants view the factors affecting the learners’ reading culture, challenges faced by learners, teachers, and possible strategies to overcome these challenges.

The researcher is of the opinion that it would be advisable to firstly distinguish between a research design and a research approach. Khan (2018) defines a research approach and a research design as follows: A research method is a general framework guiding a research project. Different methods can be used to tackle different questions. Research design is a specific outline detailing how the chosen method would be applied to answer a particular research question.

Thus, research methods are generalized and established ways of approaching research questions (e.g., qualitative vs. quantitative methods). Not all methods can be applied to all research questions, so the choice of method is limited by the area of research that you wish to explore.

3.4 Research design

Research design involves determining how the chosen method would be applied to answer the research question. The design of the study could be thought of as a blueprint detailing what would be done and how this would be accomplished. Key aspects of research design include research methodology; participant/sample collection and assignment (if different conditions are being explored); and data collection procedures and instruments. In addition, research design is a procedure that a researcher employs to collect, analyse, interpret and present data. Thus, the research design depends on the choice of research approach since there are three basic types of research approach namely quantitative, qualitative, the mixed method (Creswell, 2009).

In this regard, the researcher identified that each research approach has its own research designs and different epistemological foundations, and they used different research strategies. The following are examples of the research designs per research approach:

- Qualitative research approach designs (action research Case; study; ethnography; grounded theory; phenomenology, and historical research);
- Quantitative research approach designs (action research; correlational research; experimental research;quasi experimental; survey, and ex post facto); and
- Mixed research approach design (explanatory sequential design; exploratory sequential design; embedded design; convergent parallel design, and concurrent triangulation design.

Bryman (2008) further states that a quantitative research design is more associated with the natural sciences model. The emphasis of this kind of research is to collect and analyze data that approach the relationship between theory and research in which the accent is placed on the testing theories. In contrary, Bryman (2008), state that a qualitative research design is normally emphasizes words, rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data.

Thus, this design focuses on the relationship between theory and research where the emphasis is placed on the generation of theories. Denzil & Lincol (2011), also see a qualitative research design is a situated activity through which a researcher chooses to study natural subjects in their own environment and then tries to understand them through interpretive naturalistic approaches. Yin (2009) disagree with the above argument by highlighting that a research design as a logical structure of an inquiry. It suggests the data that is required, from whom, and how it is going to answer the research questions. Yin (2009:27) further indicate that a research design deals with a logical problem and this proposes logical steps to answer the research question.

Based on the information discussed above, the researcher decided to use a case study design under a qualitative approach. Creswell (2008:465) defines as “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system based on extensive data collection”, and an important type of ethnography that provides insight into an issue or theme.

For De Vos (2005:273), it is the observation of a process, activity, event, program or individual bound within a specific time and setting. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004:41), a case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved.

Yin (2009) state that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear.

Noor (2008:1602) reiterates this view of a case study where he states that a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its context using multiple sources of evidence.

Creswell (2009) further argues in favor of a case study design where he states that a case study design allows the researcher to purposively select participants and sites that will help in understanding the research problem and question. According to (Yin, 1984), the researcher is also able to explore, describe and explain the phenomenon within its natural setting. (Yin, 2003), further states that participants are free to exercise their rights without being manipulated. According to (Cooper & Morgan, 2008), participants are also able to reflect best practice and effective organizations.

A case study design also has some weaknesses as any other designs. According to (Nisbet & Watt, as cited in Cohen et al., 2007), the results obtained from a case study cannot be generalized, except where other researchers see their applications.

To eliminate or minimize these possibilities, the researcher should remain vigilant in terms of choosing respondents that are knowledgeable and well vested with the topic under research and appropriate instruments to obtain data, which captures the meaning of what the data is all about.

Ragin (2000) explain that case studies allow for an in-depth exploration, investigation and understanding of complex phenomena. This case study takes the form of classroom-based research, in which the researcher sought to understand the teacher's perception towards factors that influenced difficulties in reading culture. In this regard, the researcher regarded reading ability or the lack thereof as complex phenomena.

Creswell (2007:73) further describes a case study as “a bounded system (for one case) or multiple bounded systems (for more than one case).” The research design employed was an instrumental case study, which according to De Vos (2005:273), aims at acquiring a better understanding of a social issue. It deals with a case that provides insight into theme or issue, studied with the purpose of illuminating it (Creswell, 2008:465). The issue in this study was factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English FAL in grade 5 in the Cookhouse and Somerset East area. Case studies have become very popular in educational settings to study pedagogical practices, teaching, and learning in depth. According to (Descombe, 2010), the case study design allows the use of a variety of methods depending on the circumstances and the needs of the situation.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sampling is the process whereby a small proportion or subgroup of a population is selected for analysis (Frey, Carl & Gary, 2000). Sampling is described as a fraction or subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about the target population (Creswell, 2014, De Vos at al., 2011). Non-probability methods are utilized and, in particular, purposive sampling techniques. “Purposive sampling is a strategy to choose individuals likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon of interest (MacMillan and Schumacher, 1997, p.433)”.

Convenience sampling “involves choosing the nearest willing individuals to serve as respondents as the researcher simply choose the sample from those whom they have easy access” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.114). In purposive sampling, a specific case is chosen because it illustrates a process that is of interest for a particular study (De Vos, 2003:374). Thus, the researcher adopted the purposive sampling technique in this study on the revelations by the Graaff-Reinet District Department of Education and from fellow colleagues at cluster meetings on the reading difficulties that learners are experiencing.

The researcher further made use of purposive sampling because educators, principals and SGB chairpersons seems to be knowledgeable about the phenomenon of interest, in this instance “The factors affecting the learners’ reading culture in English FAL at grade 5 level”. Three schools have been selected in the Blue Crane Municipality area, three teachers, three principals and 18 learners (6 from each school, three boys and three girls per school) who were participating in the study together with the members of School Governing Body. The researcher selected the three primary schools, which were accessible and reachable during data collection. The researcher is residing in Somerset East and is working in Cookhouse which is 25 kilometer from Somerset East.

Based on the above discussion, schools have been selected using convenience and purposive sampling. The teachers have also been selected according to the subjects that they taught which English First Additional Language was. The learners have been selected based on English being their FAL and the principals, because they are principals at the elected schools and for the fact that they are the curriculum managers of the school. They are also the heads of the institution, which means that they must approve everything at the school first.

3.6 Data collection methods

Data collection methods specify the mode of data collection. This includes whether qualitative or quantitative data is required, or mixed-method (Yin, 2009:27). According to Creswell (2005), in qualitative research, data collection consists of collecting data, using forms as well as general and emerging questions so that the participants can respond, to gather text or picture data and to collect information from a small number of individuals or sites. He also states that collecting data in a qualitative research cannot be performed with a pre-established instrument to measure variables as in quantitative research.

Creswell (2005), further state that the researcher must seek to learn from the study participants and develop an interview protocol, which consists of four to five questions. He further states that the researcher must take audio recordings and transcribe them to form a database composed of words. In this regard, the data collection methods that have been applied in this study are as follow: unstructured interviews, focus group discussions and documents. Thus, the researcher would discuss in details each of the data method used below and indicates how they were used and helpful during data collection.

3. 6.1 The Interviews

According to (Punch, 2009), the interview is the most prominent data collection tool to be used in qualitative research. It is used to get access to people's perceptions and meaning to develop understandings about their constructs of reality. The purpose of an interview is therefore to allow entry into another person's perspective. Punch, 2009) states qualitative interviewing starts with the assumption that the other person's perspective and meanings are important and can be made explicit. Cohen (2002:90) further indicate that interviews have an ethical dimension; they concern interpersonal interaction and produce information about the human condition.

In view of this, the researcher has conducted personal interviews with the three respective English FAL teachers per school, three principals and the SGB members (one participant per school). The interviews have been unstructured, since the researcher did not want to limit the participants to express their opinions or views freely, by imposing predetermined questions.

The interview could be distinguished between three kinds namely: structured, semi-structured or in depth interviews. Structured interview questions, require limited, pre-determined answers. Semi-structured interviews have open-ended questions where one can choose from the answers, having respondents select the most appropriate answer (Wilmot, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2007).

In this view, the interviews are regarded as in-depth have open-ended questions that give respondents a chance to freely express their views and/or opinions without any limitation.

In contrary to these, he identifies the following limitations of interviews such as: direct information filtered through the views of the interviewees; information is in a designated place rather than the natural field, the researcher's presence may bias responses; and not all people are equally articulate and perceptive.

Even though there are some disadvantages in unstructured interviews, the researcher decided to adopt it as it allows face-to-face interviews. The researcher's decision is supported by May (2002) who state that a face-to – face interview provides in-depth information and encourages full disclosure by both the researcher and the participants. Thus, the researcher used face to face interviews whereby open-ended questions were adopted to avoid getting “yes” or “no” answers and they are flexible and allow the interviewer to probe, as he/she needed in-depth information from the participants. In this regard, the researcher followed an interview protocol before conducting the interviews. The researcher started by introducing him/herself to the participants and informed them that their identity and the schools ones would not be revealed, as he/she would use pseudonyms.

He further requested the permission from the participants to record their responses during the interviews and to use the information in the research. Thus, the interviews were recorded as the researcher was granted permission from the participants, using voice recordings during the interviews to ensure that the researcher does not forget any information. In light of this, the researcher has adapted, developed and generated questions as the interview processed. The assumption was that the participants do not know in advance, what would be asked.

The questions asked to the participants were guided by the research questions to meet the objectives of this study. The researcher then transcribed the recorded information and analysed it anonymously in chapter four. The total number of all participants who were interviewed is nine. This total is made up of three teachers, three principals and three members of School Governing Body.

3.6.2 The Focus Group



According to Descombe (2007:115), focus groups consist of a small group of people, usually between six and nine in number, who are brought together by a trained moderator (the researcher) to explore attitudes and perceptions, feelings and ideas about a topic. In the light of this, the researcher used focus groups of six learners from each of the three schools, three boys and three girls. The researcher used focus group interviews in order to elicit data from a different group of learners from different schools in order to get the general overview on the issue of the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English FAL.

Krueger's (1994:16-20) state that multiple focus group interviews with similar participants are needed to detect patterns and trends across groups. The results obtained from a single group could be unreliable as a group can be unresponsive and reluctant to participate.

Mertens (1998:174) concurs with Krueger by saying that several focus group interviews are needed when the research is highly structured and exploratory. By bringing together small groups of grade 5 learners, the researcher managed to obtain information regarding the nature of the problem related to the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English FAL.

Moreover, Maree (2007) strengthens the researcher's choice of this technique whereby he views a focus group as a discussion that is carefully planned and designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment.

The specialty and uniqueness of focus group interviews is that it ...“activates forgotten details of experiences and releases inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information” (Maree, 2007:13). Thus, Focus group interviews have their own limitations in that some participants are reluctant to contribute, however, in the researcher's studies the participants willingly participated. The focus group interviews were valuable for this study because the participants interacted not only with the researcher, but also with each other. The total number that participated in focus group is eighteen whereby six learners from each school participated in the process of data collection.

3.6.3 Document Analysis

According to Maree (2007), document analysis is a data collection technique, which includes all types of written communication that may shed light on the phenomenon that the researcher is investigating. Creswell (2014) state that documents enable a researcher to obtain language and words of participants. He further highlight that documents represent data to which participants have given attention, and written evidence, they save a researcher the time and expense of transcribing. In view of this, the researcher used documents such as minutes of meetings concerning language, reports and tests scripts.

Documentary products can be especially important in qualitative research, providing a “rich vein for analysis” (Hammersly & Atkinson, 2007:173). Yanow (2007:411) indicate that documents may corroborate observational and interview data or they may refute them, in which case the researcher is “armed” with the evidence that can be used to clarify, or challenge what is being told. In this view, the researcher managed to get hold of professional input in terms of a grade 4 psychological evaluation report.

Schools always have these reports available, for it could be used as a yardstick when it comes to post provisioning and the application for additional teachers (LSEN learners). The researcher also used documents such as records of assessment, progression and retention schedules and intervention forms in order to understand the severity of their reading difficulties.

3.7 Data Analysis

Creswell (1998) describe data analysis as a spiral that is, in view, equally applicable to a variety of qualitative studies. Qualitative analysis is a non-numerical assessment of observation made through participant’s observation, document analysis, in-depth interviews and other qualitative research techniques (Babie & Mouton, 2001). According to McMillan & Schumacher, (2010:367), most qualitative analysis is a relatively systematic process of coding and categorizing data to provide explanations of a single phenomenon of interest.

Creswell (2009) further give the following useful steps when conducting qualitative data analysis: Organize and prepare the data for analysis; read through all the data; gain a general sense of information and reflect on the overall meaning; conduct analysis based on the specific theoretical approach and method (e.g. narrative, content, grounded theory, discourse, archival, semiotics and phonetic analysis techniques).

This process often involves coding or organizing related segments of data into categories; generate a description of the setting or people and identify themes from the coding; search for theme connections; represent the data within a research report; interpret the larger meaning of the data. In addition, Creswell (2013:199) indicate that the data analysis of a good case study starts with the description of the case. According to Tagin & Amoraso (2010:55), the analysis also consists of “breaking phenomena into their basic parts and viewing them in relation to the whole form.” Analysis of quantitative data is concerned with organizing and working with the data, breaking them into manageable units, coding and synthesizing them, and searching for patterns (Bodgan & Bilken, 2007).

During the data analysis, the researcher managed to analyze data systematically whereby he has built through recording procedures during interviews, and focus group discussions. The researcher further coded the data systematically according to specific themes and then analysed to address the main research question. This means that data has been analysed using inductive analysis. In order to make decisions regarding data collection and to identify emerging themes and recurring patterns in the middle of the process, interim analysis has been employed and the key information has been coded, identified and classified according to the main themes that would emerge in chapter four as indicated earlier on.

Thus, themes have been placed into appropriate categories and have been logically labelled according to the data collected.

In light of this, the researcher employed both content and thematic data analysis in this study. Bloor & Wood (2006) supported the researcher action of using content where he indicate that the purpose of content analysis is to describe the characteristics document content by examining who says what, to whom, and with what effect. In this research, documents were useful as a source of reference and comparison for what was gathered through the interview process.

Braun & Clarke (2006:79), add more by stating that thematic analysis is an independent qualitative descriptive approach, which can mainly be described as “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.”

Thematic analysis provides a pure qualitative, detailed and nuanced account of data, while content analysis allows the researcher to analyze the data qualitatively and, at the same time, quantify the data (Gbrich, 2007). Based on the arguments above from different scholars' perspectives, the researcher analysed the data in three phases. The first phase focused on identifying and analyzing areas that are similar and where interviewees had different views. This was followed by an analysis and examination of data and information collected from documents. The second phase involved analyzing patterns of data, which emerged from the three different schools.

In the final phase, data and collected information were re-examined to explore the relationship between the school's context, the perceived views of participants per the research questions and the challenges that they are facing.

Thus, five overarching themes, which emerged from the interview data, were presented, discussed and analysed. Interviews with the principals, teachers, learners and SGB chairpersons were analysed and discussed under each of the themes, which derived from the one-on-one interviews and Focus group. All the themes would be presented in chapter four during the data presentation and analysis.

3.8 Trustworthiness (Validity and reliability of the study)

Trustworthiness refers to the findings that are worth paying attention to (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). Trustworthiness in this study was achieved through the methods for the selection of participants (from different schools), depth, richness and scope of the data collection and the analysis of the data in the study.

The researcher ensured that the study conformed to the notion of trustworthiness, by applying credibility as a form of internal validity; transferability as a form of external validity; dependability as a form of reliability and conformability as a form of objectivity.

Macnee & McCabe (2008) claim that credibility refers to the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. According to Hesse-Biber (2010:76), credibility refers to the “extent to which the results approximate reality and are judged to be trustworthy and reasonable.” Members checking are one of the most critical techniques for establishing credibility (Creswell, 2007). The researcher asked the recipients’ views on the credibility of the data gathered and transcribed. This was done by returning preliminary data analysis, interpretations and conclusions back to the participants in order for them to judge the accuracy and credibility of the account (Creswell, 2007). When using thematic analysis extracts and quotations, the researcher used them in a smart way that they did not change the intended meaning.



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According to (Morrow 2005; Rolfe, 2004), transferability is a trustworthiness concept that is external validity. Transferability depends upon the degree of similarity between the contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). The researcher ensured transferability by making sure the findings of this research are transferred to other contexts. Transferability refers to the applicability of one set of findings to another setting. Clear descriptions of the research and developing a relationship based on the trust between the researcher and the participants further ensure transferability (Morrow, 2005).

“Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher says it did” (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002:64). According to Morrow (2005; Rolfe 2004), reliability is the extent to which a variable or a set of variables is consistent with what it is supposed to measure when repeated multiple of times (Straub, Boudreau & Gefen, 2004).

Dependability refers to the confirmation that the data represents in changing conditions of the phenomenon under study should be consistent across time, researchers and analysis techniques (Morrow, 2005).

Morrow (2005) and Rolfe (2004) add that dependability is a trustworthy concept that closely matches reliability. The researcher used interviews and document analysis to ensure the dependability of the study. During the interviews process, researcher visited all the identified schools in person. The researcher increased dependability by adopting different steps whereby he used good quality audio recording equipment and transcribing the audio recordings after he re-played it severally in order to get the information as it is.

The researcher further ensured confirmability by consistently transcribing the information from the participants' responses and analysed it. He then identified any themes relevant to the research questions and recorded them accordingly.



Thus, confirmation refers to the objectivity or neutrality of the research (De Vos et al., 2002). According to (Brown, Stevens, Troiane, & Schneider, 2002), conformability refers to whether another researcher confirms the findings if presented with the same data.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

In conducting research, it is imperative to consider the ethics issues. Research ethics refers to rules of morally good conduct researchers (Gomm, 2005). According to Neuman (2011:143), research ethics is the moral and professional obligation of the individual researcher to be ethical even when research participants are unaware of or unconcerned about ethics. McMillan and Schumacher (2010), concur with the above scholars, by pointing out that research ethics are focused on what is morally proper or improper when engaging with participants or accessing archival data.

In this view, the researcher considered ethical issues as follow: anonymity; by using pseudo names, confidentiality; by keeping sources of data confidential, voluntary participation through informed consent. The researcher made all the participants aware of their rights not to answer questions should they feel uncomfortable at any stage. They were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the process at any time, should they wish to do so. In addition, the researcher managed to get ethical clearance to conduct this study from all relevant stakeholders; the University of Fort Hare, the Department of Education through the Graaff-Reinet District and from the principals of the sampled schools. All these are attached in the appendixes section.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a description of the approach selected for the study and the justification for selecting the approach, the modes of inquiring that were used to obtain the data, i.e., interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis, data analysis procedures and ethical consideration. In the next chapter, the data collected would be presented and analysed.



Chapter 4

Data presentation and analysis

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methodology and the research techniques used for the data collection. This chapter would presents and analyses the data according to different methods used and themes. During the data collection, one-on-one semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews were adopted. The selected primary school principals, grade 5 English FAL teachers, grade 5 English FAL learners and SGB chairpersons from the three different schools in the Blue Crane Municipality in the Graaff-Reinet District formed part of participants. The researcher used a digital voice recorder to record all the participants' responses. During data collection and analysis, the researcher made use of documents such as policy documents, records of assessment and psychology reports. All these documents were analysed in order to understand the severity of the learners' reading difficulties in Additional Language and the language of medium of instructions.

This chapter commences with a descriptions of the schools which participated by briefly describing the characteristics of the three schools in comparison to one another. Below is table 1 that describes all the schools' conditions and characteristic in details for the clarity purpose.

4.2 Description of Schools

Table 1: Description of Schools

School Demographics And Governance	School A	School B	School C
Learner Numbers	379 Learners.	634 Learners.	805 Learners.
Number of Teachers	11 Teachers.	Departmental: 17 SGB: 7	25 Teachers.
School Management Team	Principal; 1 HOD; 2 other members.	Principal; Deputy; HOD's 2; Other 3.	Principal; Deputy; HOD's 2.
Number of SGB Members	9 Members.	9 Members.	12 Members.
Number of phases at the school	Three phases: Foundation, Intermediate, Senior.  University of Fort Hare Together in Excellence	Three phases: Foundation, Intermediate, Senior.	Three phases: Foundation, Intermediate, Senior.
Type and level of school	Quintile 3; Section 21 (No Fee)	Quintile 3; Section 21 (No Fee)	Quintile 3; Section 21 (No Fee)
RCL's/Prefects	Only Class monitors.	Class monitors and prefects.	Class monitors and prefects.
Infrastructure	School A.	School B.	School C.
Number of classrooms	8 Classrooms.	15 Classrooms.	26 Classrooms.
School Library	Yes (Not well resourced). Also used as staffroom.	No.	No.

Administrative Block	Only principal's office and a sick room.	No. Classroom converted into office for principal.	Principal's office; Deputy principal's office; Staffroom; Office for admin clerk also used for photo copy machines and computer lab.
Security/Fencing	School is well fenced.	School is well fenced.	School is well fenced.
Location/Site	Semi-Rural.	Urban.	Urban.
Environment	Neat and tidy with vegetable garden.  University of Fort Hare Together in Excellence	Neat and tidy. Conducive for teaching and learning.	Clean and tidy, has flower garden and is conducive for teaching and learning.
Transportation	Private taxis (Accessible).	Scholar transport and private taxis.	Scholar transport and private taxis.

Location/Site	Semi-Rural.	Urban.	Urban.
Environment	Neat and tidy with vegetable garden.	Neat and tidy. Conducive for teaching and learning.	Clean and tidy, has flower garden and is conducive for teaching and learning.
Transportation	Private taxis (Accessible).	Scholar transport and private taxis.	Scholar transport and private taxis.

Resources	School A	School B	School C
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LTSM	Most of the learners have access to learner support material, but there are shortages at times. Central procurement is taking place by DBE (Department of Basic Education).	Most of the learners have access to learner support material, but there are shortages at times. Central procurement is taking place by DBE (Department of Basic Education).	Most of the learners have access to learner support material, but there are shortages at times. Central procurement is taking place by DBE (Department of Basic Education).
Teaching and learning aids	Enough teaching and learning aids where teachers also make their own.  University of Fort Hare Together in Excellence	Enough teaching and learning aids where teachers also make their own.	Enough teaching and learning aids where teachers also make their own.

Resources	School A	School B	School C
Computers	Only one computer.	Three computers and some teachers have their own laptops.	One computer for admin clerk, Computer room with 25 computers and each educator have their own laptop.
School Furniture	Enough furniture.	Insufficient furniture.	Enough furniture.
Overhead projector	Two overhead projectors.	None	Yes, in all classes.

Learner support	School A	School B	School C
Extra- and Co-curricular activities	Rugby, netball, athletics, cross-country, choir.	Rugby, netball, athletics, cross-country, cricket, gymnastics, indigenous games, choir.	Rugby, netball, athletics, cross-country, cricket, tennis, chess, and choir.
Academic support	Extra classes, reading periods, mental maths activities.	Extra classes. Grade 6&7 reading program, Maths Olympiad.	Afternoon classes. Drop all and read program, maths day, Science day, spelling bee, public speaking.
National School Nutrition Program (NSNP)	Well functioned.  University of Fort Hare Together in Excellence	Well functioned.	Well functioned.

4.3 Comparison of the schools that participated in the study as per their characteristics.

All three schools selected for the study are primary schools, located in the Blue Crane Route municipality. They are situated in semi-rural and urban areas, not far from one another. One of the schools is an old building, where the other two are still in a good condition. All the three schools consist of three phases namely: Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase.

The three selected schools are all quintile schools (section 21; no-fee schools), because of the socio-economical background of the community members where the schools are situated.

All three schools do have an SMT (Senior Management Team), where one school's SMT is bigger than the other because of the difference in the enrollment (learner numbers). The schools also consist of teachers (in some schools' shortages), SGBs, non-teaching staff and learners where the numbers differ from school to school. Below are the descriptions of the location for all three schools that participated in the study.

4.3.1 Location of School A

The school A is situated in a semi-rural area in the Blue Crane Route Municipality in the Sarah Baartman District. The school has an enrolment of $\pm$ 380 learners; 1 principal, 1 HOD, 1 senior teacher and 7 teachers for post level 1. The school's medium of instruction is Afrikaans where most learners speak IsiXhosa at home. The school has nine SGB members.

4.3.2 Culture of teaching and learning: School A

The school has a sound culture of teaching and learning. The school commences at 7h45 for the learners where they assemble in front of their classrooms because the school does not have a hall. The learners sing hymns and the teachers read a message from the Bible. Another teacher says a prayer and the learners dismiss to their classes. Teachers report to their classes on time and ready to teach. They are expected to hand in their lesson books at the office at the beginning of each day.

The school dismisses for the Foundation Phase at 13h30 and for the intersen (Intermediate and Senior Phase) at 14h30. The teachers knock off at 15h00 on a daily basis.

4.3.3 Location of School B

School B is situated in an urban area, in the Blue Crane Route Municipality in the Sarah Baartman District. The school consists of ± 640 learners. There is 1 principal, 1 deputy principal, 2 HOD's (Head of Department), 13 teachers for post level one (departmental) and 7 SGB teachers. The school's medium of instruction is Afrikaans where most learners speak IsiXhosa at home like school A. The school has 7 SGB members.

4.3.4 Culture of teaching and learning: School B

The school has a sound culture of teaching and learning. The school commences at 7h45 with morning devotions at the assembly. The school invites local people to conduct these morning devotions on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The school has a strong leadership that promotes teaching and learning at all times. Structures such as phase heads, grade heads and learning area heads are in place to ensure quality teaching and learning.



The parents are very involved and volunteer to do menial jobs at the school. Teachers hand in their daily planning at the office, which ensures that they are prepared and ready to teach on a daily basis. The principal conducts class visits to ensure curriculum delivery, but also to give guidance and assistance to the teachers where and when needed.

4.3.5 Location of School C

School C is situated in an urban area in the Blue Crane Route Municipality in the Sarah Baartman District. The school has an enrolment of ± 810 learners, 1 principal, a1 deputy principal, 2 HOD's and 21 teachers for post level 1. This is a dual medium school with Afrikaans and English as mediums of instruction. Thirty percent of the learners speak IsiXhosa at home. The school has 12 members on the SGB.

4.3.6 Culture of teaching and learning: School C

The school has a sound culture of teaching and learning. The school is dual medium and always face challenges of teacher shortages because of the Morkel Model used by the department of education. The school has to make use of SGB teachers to ensure quality teaching and learning. Thus, the teachers plan and hand in their planning on a daily basis. The teachers are always on time and prepared to teach. All the relevant structures are in place to ensure quality and effective curriculum delivery these are structures such as phase heads, grade heads and learning area heads.

The school hosts a strong moral, value system, which is based on Christian, believes, and this is highly regarded by the parents. The school takes part in most if not all the programs that are offered by NGO's to further enrich the culture of teaching and learning at the school. Below is table 2 that presents all the participants 'profiles.



4.3.7 Profile of Participants

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Table 2: Profile of Participants

School Name	Participant	Gender	Age range	Post level	Qualification	Teaching experience	Subjects and grades
A	Principal 1	F	40-50	4	Bed Hon.	28 years	Afr.Gr.7 SS. Gr 5
	Teacher 1	F	40-50	1	BEd Hon	12 years	Eng. Gr.5-7 EMS Gr. 7
B	Principal 2	M	50-60	4	BEd Hon	35 years	Afr. Gr.5 LO&EMS Gr. 7
	Teacher 2	M	40-50	1	ACE (NS)	8 years	Eng. Gr.4-7

							LO. Gr. 7
C	Principal 3	M	50-60	4	BEd Hon	35 years	Life Skills Gr. 5 RE. Gr.5
	Teacher 3	F	20-30	1	Deg. in Education	3 years	Eng. HL Gr.4 Eng. FAL Gr.5

Subject that are offered and their codes in all the schools are as follow:

Afr. = Afrikaans

SS = Social Science

EFAL = English First Additional Language

EMS = Economics and Management Sciences

LO = Life Orientation

RE = Religious Education

Eng. HL = English Home Language



The total number of teachers who participated in the one on one semi-structured interviews were six, as indicated in the table. Out of the six participants, five teach grade five and grade seven. Only teacher 3 from School C teaches grade four and five. Concerning gender and age as shown in the table above, out of the six participants that were interviewed they were equal in terms of gender where there are three males and three females. The participants were selected on the basis that they were teaching English FAL at grade five level.

Their selection to take part in the study was therefore regardless of their gender status. Out of the six participants, it was evident that the principals of School B and School C were above fifty, close to sixty.

Three teachers are between forty and fifty and only one educator is between twenty and thirty years old. The fact that two out of the three principals are above fifty years suggest that they are well vested with the education system and the challenges that it might pose.

Concerning the post levels, qualifications and teaching experience, all the participants are qualified teachers with the highest qualification being a BEd Hon. Degree. Based on the study, there were three principals and three post level one teachers. All the teachers have more than ten years teaching experience except for the two teachers from School B and School C in the form of Teacher 2 and Teacher 3. Even though all three principals are very experienced teachers, their experience in terms of principal ship varies as well.

The principal of School A has ten years' experience as a principal. The principal of School B has seventeen years' experience as a principal and it is evident in the manner in which he runs the school as an instructional leader. This can also be noticed in the quality of learners that he produces to the high school, the functionality of the SGB and the parent involvement in terms of their attendance at the parent meetings.

The principal of School C has only been a principal for one year; he has however been an acting principal for six years at the high school and a deputy principal for fifteen years, which can also be noticed in the school's culture and the culture of teaching and learning of School C. In this view, all the participants are in possession of a degree with the exception of the teacher from School B who holds an ACE in Natural Science.

It is also important to note that all the participants were individually interviewed and that they were drawn from semi-rural and urban areas. The next discussion now takes to the findings that came up during the interviews and focus group interviews as well as the document analysis.

4.4 Data Presentation and Analysis

This section would presents and then analyses data. In this regard, all the participants' responses would be presented and address accordingly. The main research question would be properly ask and answered to identify the factors affecting the learners reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. To answer the research question, the researcher has formulated five themes and established sub-themes to assist in answering the main research question below.

4.4.1 The five main themes that emerged from the study

1. Factors affecting the learners' reading culture/level.
2. Causes of reading difficulties.
3. The effect of reading difficulties on the learners
4. Learner support measures in selected schools
5. Contribution of the Department of education, parents and NGO has to support English FAL Reading.



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4.4.1.1 Theme 1: Factors affecting learners' reading culture/level.

This section would discuss the teachers, principals and SGB chairperson's views on the factors that are affecting the learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5.

- **What do you think are the factors affecting the learners reading culture/level in English First Additional Language (EFAL)?**

All three teachers from the three different schools remarked that most parents do not show any interest in their children' education. They do not encourage and assist their children to read at home. They also stated that most of the parents are illiterate and are not in a position to assist their children at home especially in the second language that is English as most of them are Afrikaans and IsiXhosa speakers as their native language . The researcher also experienced the same behavior from the parents at his school. Most parents don't attend parent meetings;

don't come when you call them regarding their children's academic progress or for disciplinary problems, they don't even come to collect their children's report cards. This in contrast with the parents at the former Model C schools who attends all the programs regarding their children's school activities. You will find that these learners are performing much better than their peers at the so called Government Schools.

Teacher 1, Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 also highlighted the issue of poverty. They all agreed that poverty is one of the factors affecting the learners' reading culture/level; because most of the learners do not have reading, books as they only get them from school and expected to leave them when going home.

"They do not have books to practice while at home at all", **Teacher 1** added.

Teacher 1 further stated that due to poverty, most of the learners are not exposed to reading materials, since parents do not have money to buy newspapers and other supporting materials. These former Model C Schools are more likely to charge school fees. Based on this, the assumption can be made that they are well off and can buy books, newspapers, magazines and even establish a home library where their children are exposed to books on a daily basis. These parents also model reading to their children whereby the father maybe read the newspaper whiles the mother is reading a magazine.

Teacher 2 also stated that: *"... some teachers use ineffective teaching methods to teach reading in English First Additional Language and that reading should be taught like grammar". The researcher also concurs with this statement for the Department of Education does not provide workshops to teachers on how to teach learners to read.*

Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 also mentioned the gap between the Foundation Phase and the INTERSEN, where the INTERSEN is based on read to learn.

Teacher 1 added: *“... some teachers have social groupings in their classes where only those learners that can read well are asked to read. There is also a low expectation from some teachers of the learners where they underestimate what the learners can and cannot read”. The researcher’s opinion on this is that this might happens due to the big number of learners in each class and the teacher can’t reach all the learners. Such a teacher also might have four classes at times which make it very difficult to accommodate all the learners.*

Teacher 2 brought up the issue of the Department of Education’s policy on promotion and progression, which highlight that a learner cannot fail twice in the same phase; he or she should be promoted to the next level with or without pass.

“This is also a contributing factor that affecting the learners’ reading culture/level”, he added.



This means that even though the learner has not mastered certain skills in one grade and even if he failed, he/she cannot fail again in the next grade. He also said that most of the learners have IsiXhosa as their home language, but that they are enrolled in Afrikaans schools where classes are overcrowded and these results in teachers not being able to give personal attention to the learners. Due to this, some of the learners fall through the cracks and are lost forever.

Teacher 3 stated that: *“... most learners do not spend enough time reading and that they are therefore shy to read which results in them developing a low self-esteem”. This might be because the love for reading was not stimulated at a very early stage.*

Summary of theme 1

All the respondents are in agreement that a lack of parent involvement, illiterate parents and no motivation from parents plays a major role in the learner’s poor reading ability.

The teachers were further stating that the parents of the children who are attending quintile 1, 2 and 3 schools are most probably unemployed, and poverty is rival in these communities. Based on this, these parents cannot buy newspapers, magazines or books to stimulate their children's love for reading. It is also evident that teachers don't know how to teach learners to read and are therefore relying on their own methods in teaching learners to read. The DOE is also to be blamed for not arranging workshops for these teachers on how to teach reading in their classrooms.

The gap between the Foundation Phase and the INTERSEN is also a determining factor when it comes to the reading problems that the learners are experiencing. In the Foundation Phase, the learners must learn to read where as in the INTERSEN they read to learn. The fact that a learner can only fail once in a phase as per the Policy of the DOE is resulting in the poor reading ability of the learners. Furthermore, this also results in overcrowded classrooms, which makes it difficult for the teachers to reach all the children in the classroom.



Some learners only read that one period at school and therefor does not have a love for reading that leads in these learners to become shy and develop a low self-esteem.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Causes of reading difficulties.

What do you think are the causes of reading difficulties in your school?

The following sub-themes emerged from the data collected.

4.4.2.1 Educational Factors.

4.4.2.2 Lack of physical and human resources.

4.4.2.3 Factors intrinsic to the learner (impairment).

4.4.2.4 Curriculum Factors.

The schools are represented in the following sub-themes:

4.4.2.1 Educational Factors



Principal 3 from School C stated that most of the parents are not well educated and that they are not eager to buy books or newspapers because it is of no interest to them. Due to their low literacy level, they do not have fancy jobs with better income and will not be in a position to buy books or newspapers. They also highlighted that they are unable to model reading to their children.

Teacher 1 from School A concurred with this statement where she said that only those learners coming from more advanced families are exposed to books whereas their peers who are coming from poor backgrounds are not afforded the opportunity to have books and newspapers to their disposal on a daily basis.

Principal 2

Added, "...the learners' socio-economical background also plays a major role in the learners' inability to read, where parents do not motivate their children to read, whereas the teachers try everything that they can to assist and support them at schools". The researcher is of the meaning that when parents motivate their children and the children can see that their parents show interest in their school activities, they can achieve anything.

This is evident at the Former Model C Schools where the parents attend every sporting event of their children. These children are performing much better, knowing that their parents are present cheering them on.

Teacher 3: School C stated that some teachers and parents do not support the learners enough when it comes to reading. He further indicated that the Foundation Phase teachers, in some instances do not lay a strong reading foundation and then the problem is shifted to the Intermediate Phase.



Principal 1 indicated that there is a reading culture at school to a certain extent, but that it is not where it is supposed to be and the chairperson concurred with this statement. The principal further stated that each classroom must have a reading corner.

Principal 2 also stated that he is trying to establish a reading culture in the school. He said that he always talk to the parents at parent meetings to motivate their children to read more at home and to ensure that their children are affiliated at the local library.

The chairperson of School A alluded to the fact that there is no library at school.

Principal 3 indicated that they do have a reading culture in the school where they have different reading programs running such as "Drop all and read" from Monday to Thursday, doing all kinds of reading.

They are also in the process of establishing a library at the school. When conducting the research at School C, the researcher found that these learners are performing much better in terms of reading in relation with the other two schools. This might be the result of the reading culture that has been established at the school.

The chairperson of School C said that he could proudly state that they do have a reading culture at their school.

4.4.2.2 Lack of physical and human resources

All three chairpersons from the three respective schools each echo the same concern about the lack of resources in their schools to ensure that effective teaching and learning is taking place. The chairperson of School A said that parents do not buy books or newspapers at home, because if that were the case they would not have faced this reading problem in their schools. He further elaborated by saying that the Department of Education (DOE) does not supply sufficient books to schools.



The chairperson of School B concurs with the previous speaker in saying that the DOE “does not come to the party” as far as supporting reading is concerned and that schools are also understaffed in the form of teachers, which results in overcrowded classrooms that contributes to this problem. The chairperson of School C voiced the same concern. The researcher also concurs with the above said statements where the DOE does not supply the schools with sufficient books and reading material.

The so called Morkel Model also has a negative effect when it comes to allocation of teachers especially for School C that is dual medium. The Morkel Model does not take into consideration in a dual medium school that as much as you have Afrikaans classes you also have English classes.

According to this model you only supply teachers to the one medium of instruction. When you are dual medium it's almost as if you have two schools in one, hence you will automatically have shortage of teachers.

The three teachers from the three respective schools were uniformly in conjunction with their chairpersons, where they stated that they do not have libraries at their schools. In contrary, **Teacher 1** stated that they do have a library, but it is not functional, as it has outdated books. **The two teachers from School A and B** said only a few learners are affiliated at the library because other parents do not motivate their children to read or to go to the library. **Teacher 3** stated that most of their learners do attend and are affiliated at the library. Teacher 3 is at School C and once again it is evident in these learners reading ability in relation to their peers at School A and B.

Teacher 1 is of the view that learners are not being exposed to books. She further said that there is no support from the management of the school where reading in English is concerned as most of the teachers speak Afrikaans all the time with the learners. The learners converse in English only during the English period. "...thus, this affects the learners reading proficiency in English as they do not get much of English", she added. The researcher's experience was that most of these teachers at the school where the research was conducted are either Afrikaans or Xhosa speaking. English is also their second or third language thus they are struggling to speak or teach in English.

Teacher 2 & 3 raised their concern that they do not have relevant and sufficient reading materials in English to their disposal at their respective schools. All three teachers indicated that they were trained on how to teach the learners to read once and there are no follow-ups and no English reading materials to enhance their reading skills they have acquired during the training. **Teacher 1** confirmed this by indicated that she was only trained when she started teaching.

The DOE is lacking in terms of arranging workshops for teachers where they can be learned on how to teach reading in class. She further stated that she is in the process of furthering her studies where she also gets training on how to teach learners to read especially in English as their First Additional language.

The researcher's opinion on the said topic is merely that teachers are not properly trained on how to teach learners to read in English First Additional Language. In addition, teachers do not get support needed from the management to enhance reading in their schools. The researcher as a principal himself encourages educators to take part in all workshops in order to equip themselves to the best of their ability. In doing this he is hoping that it will filter down to the learners in order to perform better. The researcher from a management point of view also initiate reading programs such as "Drop everything and Read", Spelling Bees and Peer Reading at school.

4.4.2.3 Intrinsic to the learner (impairment)

Intrinsic factors were identified as the main contributing factors that affect learners' reading ability.

Teacher 2 indicated that some learners have visual impairment, which results in the learners not recognizing the sounds. The researcher must applaud the DOE for the program where all learners are screened for medical assistance. The Department of Health and DOE is working in collaboration in this regard. Hopefully this initiative will remedy the situation of visual impairment and all other medical conditions.

Principal 1 concurred with teacher's **2** arguments by highlighting that dyslexia is also one of the factors that hamper learners' reading ability.

Teacher 2 also stated that foetal alcohol syndrome plays a major role in the reading difficulties that the learners are experiencing, based on their socio-economical background. Both **Principals, 1 & 2** concurred with this statement made by teacher 2 above. They stated that "...the children who suffer from foetal alcohol syndrome are placed in the mainstream. This is a huge challenge to teachers because they are not trained to work with these type of children", they added. The researcher is of the opinion that these learners does not belong in the main stream, but the DOE is of the view that "Inclusive Education" must take place in schools where educators must cater for all kinds of learners.

4.4.2.4 Curriculum Factors

All the three teachers agree that the Foundation Phase teachers are not laying a strong foundation in terms of reading in English.

Teacher 1 stated that the Grade 5 learners' English proficiency reading is at a level of a grade 3 learner. She elaborated further by saying that teachers are using ineffective teaching methods to teach the learners how to read, and that teaching to read needs to be done as you would teach grammar.

All the three teachers including principal 1 indicated that most of the learners in their schools are experiencing a big challenge as Language of Teaching and Learning (LOLT) is not their home language. Thus, the learners are struggling to master reading in English because they taught in both English and Afrikaans.

Principal 2 also mentioned the inclusive education in his school, which can be regarded as a factor that contributes to reading problems. **Teacher 2** stated in conclusion that the DOE are putting learners through the system on a basis that they can only fail once in a phase, which means that if a learner fails in grade 1 (Foundation Phase) that learner can only fail once again from grade 4 to 6 (Intermediate Phase).

Summary of Theme 2

The following sub-themes emerged from the main theme. Educational factors; Lack of physical and human resources; Factors intrinsic to the learners and Curriculum factors.

Due to the low socio-economic circumstances of these parents, they are unable to buy reading material and the fact that they are also at times illiterate hinders them to do model reading to their children. It was also evident that some teachers and parents do not motivate the learners to read. Foundation Phase teachers do not lay a strong reading foundation for the INTERSEN teachers to build on. One out of the three schools seems to have a strong reading culture where this school is also trying to build a functional library. The three SGB chairpersons share the same sentiment that their schools do not have sufficient reading material and that the DOE is not doing much to remedy the situation. A teacher shortage that leads to overcrowded classrooms is also a contributing factor for the low reading ability of the learners. The teachers in the three respective schools are mostly Afrikaans speaking and are therefore mostly speaking Afrikaans in their classrooms.

Visual impairment, dyslexia and foetal alcohol syndrome are common factors that are influencing the learners reading ability negatively.

All three the educators are once again in agreement that the Foundation Phase educators should lay a strong foundation for reading. Teachers are making use of ineffective teaching methods in teaching the learners to read. The teachers were also in agreement that most of the learners are not taught in their mother tongue language.

4.4.3 Theme 3: The effect of reading difficulties on the learners.

What are the effects of reading difficulties in EFAL on the learners?

Teacher 1 felt that learners that are struggling to read develop a low self-esteem, because learners tend to laugh at these learners.

Teacher 2 concurred with this statement and by highlighting that this results in the learners feeling belittled and stupid.

Teacher 1 also said these learners develop a negative attitude towards reading in EFAL as they lack motivation.

Teacher 2 stated these learners are not able to answer question papers due to the fact they cannot read. This means that learners with no literacy will result in constant failure and become dropouts because they are coping with the curriculum.



The researcher is also of a firm believe that these learners that cannot read are most likely not able to learn and due to this are causing disciplinary problems in the schools.

Summary of Theme 3

The teachers responded by saying that learners that are struggling to read, tend to be laughed at by their peers which results in these learners having a low self-esteem and that they feel stupid. In this, these learners develop a negative attitude towards reading. These learners will never show any progress at school and normally becomes dropouts.

4.4.4 Theme 4: Learner support measures in selected schools.

What support measures are being implemented in your school for learners experiencing reading difficulties?

The following sub-themes emerged from the data collected:

4.4.4.1 What reading strategies do you apply in your reading lesson?

4.4.4.2 What intervention methods do you have in place for the learners that are experiencing reading difficulties?

The schools are represented in the following sub-themes.

4.4.4.1 What reading strategies do you apply in your English reading lessons?



Teacher 1 response

“The learners must predict what is going to happen in the story through looking at the pictures. After that, the learners do skim and scan text to before the actual reading”.

Teachers 1 & 3 stated that they instruct the learners to identify the difficult words from the text, and let them look up the meanings in the dictionary and discuss the meanings afterwards.

Teachers 2 & 3 indicated that they make use of model reading where the educator reads the story twice to the learners while they are listening and reading silently. They further mentioned the use of paired reading and group reading.

Teacher 3 responded that she starts with a play or a story where multimedia is used. She also makes use of silent, class, individual and comprehension reading as strategies to teach learners how to read during the reading lessons in EFAL.

4.4.4.2 What intervention methods do you have in place for the learners that are experiencing English reading difficulties?

Principal 1 stated that he always advise the School Based Support Team to identify learners with reading difficulties, and fill in the necessary forms and submit it to the DOE for intervention. From experience the researcher is stating that this is not always possible especially in the bigger schools with big classes. Teachers don't want to fill in these lengthy forms because of their big workload and tend not to identify learners.

Principal 3 concurred with this statement and added that such learners should be referred for counseling.



Principal 1 response

"I further suggest extra reading activities and remedial classes to assist those identified learners who are experiencing reading challenges".

Principal 3 response

"I always encourage and suggest after school classes to teachers to show a support to the learners".

Teacher 2 concurred with this statement, but stated further that this intervention must only be for those learners that cannot read or struggle to read to ensure that the teachers can interact with these learners on a one on one basis. This can also be used to build the confidence of these learners.

The SGB chairpersons of all three schools agreed that parents should be roped in to assist the learners to read, where the chairperson of School B stated further that parents need to be advised as to how to teach learners to read. The Principal of School A concurred with these statements above.

Principal 2 suggested the following programs for intervention:

Drop all and read where all the learners must utilize the first twenty minutes of every day for reading. They also have a reading session once per term where the different grades read at the assembly. The school also makes use of friend reading where the different grades read for one another.

Teacher 1 suggested that the learners read for enjoyment where the school should also establish a book club at school. Through this, she wants to stimulate the learners love for reading as a way of promoting reading culture where these learners can also tell other learners how interesting and fun reading books are. In addition, **Teacher 1** indicated that teachers must model reading where teachers must read when learners read and the other way around.

Teacher 3 is a psychologist and stated that she will firstly test the learners to establish their reading abilities and increase their levels as they improve. She also advised giving learners spelling words on a regular basis and to test them on a pre-determined date.

Summary of Theme 4

The following sub-themes emerged from the main theme: What reading strategies do you apply in your reading lessons? What intervention methods do you have in place for learners who are experiencing reading difficulties?

Teacher 1 let the learners predict what is going to happen through a picture in the story. She also makes use of skim and scan reading.

Teacher 2 and 3 both make use of model reading and pair reading. Teacher 1 and 3 also instruct learners to look up the meaning of difficult words from the text using a dictionary and discuss it afterwards. Teacher 3 also made use of multimedia, silent, class and individual reading as a form of reading strategies.

Principal 1 and 3 were of the opinion that learners with reading problems should be identified and referred for counseling. Principal 1 and 3 added that remedial classes should also be held after school as an intervention strategy. Teacher 3 concurs with this statement, but added that these classes must not be for all the learners, only for those with reading problems to ensure one on one interaction with these learners. The SGB chairpersons felt that the parents must be roped in to come to assist in the afternoon in the form of invigilating.

Principal 2 suggested “Drop all and Read”, reading sessions once per term at the assembly and friend reading where one grade reads to another. Teacher 1 suggested that book clubs should be established to promote a love for reading.



4.4.5 Theme 5: Contributions of the DOE, parents and None Government Organizations (NGO's).

How would you comment on the contributions from the DOE, parents and NGO's in supporting English FAL reading?

All the principals stated that the DOE does contribute in terms of very useful workbooks and readers with a wide variety text in it but Principal 3 indicated that these books are in most instances not enough. Principal 1 also said that the DOE does support schools in terms of cluster meetings that are held every term. According to the researcher the DOE can do much better by having workshops for teachers on how to teach reading in their classes. They must also ensure that the workbooks are enough. In doing this they must not work on the learner numbers of the previous year but on the numbers of the current year.

Teacher 1 concurred with her in this regard but also said that when teachers come back from cluster meetings or workshops that they cannot implement what they have learned due to time constraints.

Teacher 2 also agreed that the DOE gives support in terms of workshops and cluster meetings where subject advisors give guidance as to what needs to be done, but also indicated the shortages of resources from the side of the DOE.

Teacher 3 agreed with the other two teachers, but also said that more can be done in terms of the lack of reading materials.

Principal 2 & 3 indicated that the DOE supports schools with programs such as Spelling Bees and they find this working miraculously as the learners' reading have improved a bit.



All the three chairpersons from the three respective schools agreed that the DOE does not give any support when it comes to reading. The chairpersons of School A and C referred to the lack of resources at their schools and the chairperson of School B indicated that there are many shortages of teachers at his school, which contributed to overcrowded classrooms that prohibits reading.

The three principals said that the parents could do much more to support their children with reading. The three teachers share the same sentiment of their principals in this regard, where Teacher 3 stated that parents do not even sign a document and send it back to school as requested by the teacher as signal that they checked and helped their children.

The three chairpersons concurred with their principals and teachers and said if the parents supported their children, then the schools would not have this reading crisis. All the principals and their teachers commended on the Wind Farm, GM Foundation and Siyawela for their contribution towards the education of their learners.

These organizations introduced the following programs in their schools: Masikane reading program and bring a parent to the education table, where grade one and four parents were trained on how to assist their children with reading and homework.

Principal 1 & 2 applauded the local libraries for their assistance where they arranged reading competitions and the annual reading week for the learners.

Teacher 3 added on by saying that the two libraries are well resourced and available for their learners. The learners need to be encouraged to visit the libraries more often. All three chairpersons stated that it is only the GM Foundation in collaboration with the Cookhouse Wind Farm and Siyawela that support the schools. They feel that the other local companies could do more since the community supports them. The researcher concurs because the education of our learners is a community effort and all stakeholders within that community have a responsibility towards educating our children.

Summary of theme 5

The principals and the teachers were in agreement that the DOE does supply schools with useful workbooks, but in most instances these books are not enough. They also confirmed that the DOE does held regular cluster meetings where subject advisors gave guidance to the teachers and the teachers must go back to school, give feedback and implement.

According to the SGB chairpersons the DOE can do much more as far as reading material and other resources are concern. The DOE are also failing to allocate enough teachers to schools to ensure effective teaching and learning. Principals, teachers and SGB chairpersons are in agreement that parents must show more interest in the education of their children.

The Cookhouse Wind farm, GM Foundation and Siyawela was widely applauded by all stakeholders, principals, teachers and SGB chairpersons for their contribution towards the education in their schools. The Masikane Reading Program and Bring a Parent to the Education Table is only some of the programs that were introduced by these organizations.

The principals were impressed by the two local libraries for the fact that they are so well resourced, for arranging reading competitions as well as for organizing the annual reading week for the learners.



The SGB chairpersons made a cry to other NGO's to also follow the lead of the Cookhouse Wind Farm, GM Foundation and Siyawela in assisting schools.

4.5 Focus group interviews of learners

The table 3 below shows the learners' different descriptions for the clarity purposes in there different schools.

Table 3: Focus Group Interviews of Learners

School Name	PST	LAS	HL	OL	MBTTR	MBPTR	ST	MOLL	RC
A	Girl 1	No	Xho	Afr	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Girl 2	No	Afr	Xho	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Girl 3	No	Xho	Afr	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Boy 1	No	Xho	Afr	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Boy 2	No	Afr	Xho	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Boy 3	No	Afr	Xho	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

School Name	PST	LAS	HL	OL	MBTTR	MBPTR	ST	MOLL	RC
B	Girl 1	No	Afr	Xho	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Girl 2	No	Afr	Xho	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Girl 3	No	Xho	Afr	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
	Boy 1	No	Afr	Xho	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Boy 2	No	Afr	Xho	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Boy 3	No	Xho	Afr	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

School Name	PST	LAS	HL	OL	MBTTR	MBPTR	ST	MOLL	RC
C	Girl 1		Afr	Eng	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Girl 2		Afr	Eng	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Girl 3		Afr	Eng	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Boy 1		Afr	Eng	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Boy 2		Afr	Eng	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Boy 3		Afr	Eng	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

KEYS:**PST: Participant****LAS: Library at school****HL: Home Language****OL: Other Language****MBTTR: Motivation by teacher to read****MBPTR: Motivation by parent to read****ST: Spelling test****MOLL: Member of local library****RC: Reading corner****IsiXho: IsiXhosa****Afr: Afrikaans****Eng.: English.**

The researcher has interviewed three boys and three girls from each school at Grade 5 English FAL level to elicit information as to what the factors that affect the learners' reading culture are.  With regard to the home language of the learners, most of the learners' home language is Afrikaans, where only five learners speak IsiXhosa at home.

Those who speak IsiXhosa at home also speak Afrikaans and one speaks English as another language at home. Those speaking Afrikaans at home also speak English where the other eight speak IsiXhosa as an additional language at home. It is common in small towns that IsiXhosa speaking learners also tend to speak Afrikaans.

None of the three schools has a library. All the learners from the respective three schools indicated that they do not have a reading corner in their classes.

The learners from **School A** indicated that they do not write English spelling tests but they do write spelling tests in Afrikaans.

The learners from **School B & C** do write spelling tests in English. All these learners indicated that their teachers do motivate them to read in English more often.

Not all the learners from School A are affiliated at the library. From school B, only two learners are not affiliated at the library, one boy and one girl. At school C only one boy is not affiliated at the library. All the learners indicated that their parents motivate them to read in some form or another, except for one boy at school B.

4.6 Document Analysis

From the schedules of the Grade 5 learners of **School A** it was clear that out of the 51 learners, only two learners failed English FAL and 16 acquired the required level 3 to pass. This means that 34 learners achieved above the required pass rate.



From this document analysis, the researcher deduced that only a small percentage of the Grade 5 learners are experiencing reading difficulties in the school. Only one learner was labeled as an LSEN learner and was tested by an assessor from the DOE. Teachers complete retention forms for possible retainers.

The researcher has noted from the schedules for **School B** that out of the 86 Grade 5 learners, 4 learners did not meet the required pass level that is a level 3 for English FAL. From these 86 learners, 36 learners just met the required pass rate. This means that 46 learners performed above the required pass rate. One Grade 1, two Grade 3, one Grade 4 and one Grade 5 learners were referred for professional evaluation. The test results of the Grade one learner revealed that the mother was very emotional and was suffering from diabetes during her pregnancy.

The researcher also found out that from the 102 Grade 5 learners from **School C** 61 are doing English FAL and 41 are doing Afrikaans FAL. From the 61 that are doing English FAL, only three did not meet the required pass rate. 11 learners just met the required pass rate and 47 performed above the required rate. From the data elicited, the researcher deduced that most of the learners do not have reading difficulties.

From the workbook activities, continuous assessment records and learners' portfolio records, the researcher made the following findings in all three schools,

- The workbooks were incomplete and not marked by the teachers.
- Some learners did not hand in their assessment tasks, as it was evident on the mark sheets where there were blank spaces; hence, teachers have evidence of where they tried to intervene in giving the learners more opportunities to complete the tasks, with no success.
- Letters were sent to the parents informing them of their children that did not complete assessment tasks.



Besides the above mentioned, most learners are progressed due to the dedication of the teachers and the systems that the schools have put in place to support the learners where reading in English is concerned.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with analysis and interpretation of data. Sub-themes were used to elicit responses from both interviews and Focus Groups for the main themes. The next chapter would focus on the discussions of the findings, conclusion and the recommendations of the study conducted in the three participating schools.

Chapter 5

Discussions, conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and analysed the data that was collected from both Interviews and Focus Groups with participants in three primary schools in the Cookhouse and Somerset East area. The data was collected from relevant participants in order to get the relevant information and perspectives on the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. This chapter would discuss the following: a brief overview of the study; the findings of the study; limitations and recommendations drawn from the study and recommendations for future research are also indicated.

5.2 Overview of the study

The study was conducted in the Eastern Cape in the Graaff-Reinet District. The purpose of the study was to answer the following question: "What are the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English FAL at grade 5 level in the Somerset East and Cookhouse area in the Blue Crane Municipality?" The reading ability of the learners in South African schools is a big concern, especially in the Somerset East/Cookhouse area, where the research was conducted.

The aims of the research are to: Identify the challenges faced by both teachers and the learners in South African schools; to find strategies that are promoted in teachers' training for Foundation Phase learners and to investigate whether the teachers are well equipped to teach learners how to read fluently in English.

Thus, the study made use of the constructivism theory because it is informed by the assumption that a learner is a social being that can learn to read and understand only if there is guidance from the more knowledgeable adult.

According to Slavin (1994), Constructivism is a theory of how people learn based on the work of developmental psychologists. In this view, the study adopted an interpretive paradigm that allowed the researcher to interact with the respondents to get their views on the factors affecting the learners reading culture in English FAL in Grade 5. In addition, a qualitative approach was also adopted whereby the data was collected in face-to-face situations by interacting with the selected persons in their personal settings.

The study made use of the purposive sampling technique as it was based on the revelations by the Graaff-Reinet District Department of Education and from colleagues at cluster meetings on the reading difficulties that learners are experiencing. The researcher elected three primary schools that were accessible and reachable for data collecting. Data was analysed systematically per specific themes and to address the main research question.

5.3 Discussion of the findings



All three selected schools comprise of three phases namely, Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase. The learner numbers also differ respectively, which put them in different post levels. All three schools have functional SMT's where schools B and C have a principal, deputy principal and two HOD's. School A only has a principal, an HOD and two additional members. All three schools also have functional SGB's. All three schools are "No Fee" schools. School B and C have a prefect system and class monitors where School A only has class monitors.

All three schools have a neat and tidy environment, conducive for teaching and learning where School A furthermore has a promising vegetable garden. School C also has a vegetable and flower garden. The vegetable gardens are of great use as the schools can use these vegetables to prepare an extra meal for learners to ensure that they do not go to bed on an empty stomach. This will ultimately result in learners performing better at school as no child can learn on an empty stomach.

School A has a library, but it is not well resourced and it is also used as a staffroom. School B and C do not have libraries. Learners are not performing badly, mainly because some of them are affiliated with the local library but they could perform even better with a well-resourced library at school. In this instance, library periods can be indicated on the timetable. In all three schools, most of the learners have access to Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSM), there are however shortages at times due to central procurement from the Department of Basic Education. With reference to the Departmental Workbooks, in the instances of shortages, not all the learners can take books home as homework, which creates frustration for the learners, and teachers as proper teaching and learning cannot take place. All three schools have sufficient teaching and learning aids where most teachers created their own resources.

School A has one computer, School B has three computers and some teachers have their own laptops. Only School C has one computer for the utilization of the administration clerk and has a  fully functional computer laboratory with 25 computers. All teachers have their own laptops. The fact that School A has one computer and School B only three computers to use for administrative duties can influence the learners negatively as far as technology is concerned. This is because all learners need to know how to operate a computer in the 21st century as they can get access to almost everything on the internet.

The learners from School C have an advantage as they are exposed to computers as well as the internet. They can search for reading programs and exercises as they have a computer laboratory to their disposal to improve their reading culture in EFAL.

All three schools have the following sporting codes: rugby, netball, athletics, cross-country and choir that can be regarded as an extra-curricular activity. School B also has cricket, gymnastics and indigenous games, where School C also has cricket, tennis and chess.

The learners from the three respective schools are actively participating in the codes that are offered. As the saying goes, a healthy body hosts a healthy mind. Learners also learned to be well disciplined, to get into routines, to concentrate, to work together as a team and to be patient, which is beneficial for educational development.

The following findings would be discussed under the sub themes that emerged from the main research question. These findings also emerged from the interviews and focus group discussions that were held with the participants. The researcher would discuss the findings under the following headings:

5.3.1 Factors affecting the learners reading culture (Teachers' perspectives).

All three teachers from the three respective schools agreed that a lack of parental involvement and motivation towards their children's education could be regarded as a huge contributing factor to these reading problems. They were also concerned that most parents are illiterate and are not in a position to assist their children in any form as far as learning is concerned.



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The researcher tended to agree with the teachers in this regard as it is quite evident, especially in the former Model C schools that these learners are doing much better compared to their peers in the public schools.

Parents from former Model C schools pay a lot of money and are very much involved in their children's' education as far as attending meetings, support on the sports field and assisting in projects and homework are concerned. These parents are most probably also educated and are in a position to assist or pay for assistance if learners are struggling with their schoolwork. The teachers also identified poverty as a major factor affecting the learners' reading culture.

They said that in some households, learners are only exposed to reading material such as books and newspapers at school because parents cannot afford it. It can be found that learners in the former Model C schools have a better vocabulary and read more fluently. These parents can afford to buy books, newspapers, and model reading in their respective homes.

The teachers also concurred that some learners are experiencing reading difficulties because of the transition from Foundation Phase to Intermediate Phase where they read to learn and not learn to read. The researcher concurred with the teachers as it is a big step for these young learners from Foundation Phase where they only had three learning areas to the Intermediate Phase where they now have six learning areas that are tough in EFAL.

One of the teachers said that some teachers have social groupings in their classes where only those learners that can read well are asked to read. Teachers also underestimate the learners as far as the reading materials concerned. The researcher's opinion on this is that learners should be put in groups where the learners are mixed.

Learners that experience reading difficulties should be grouped with learners that read well to introduce peer teaching. At times, it is found that learners understand better if a person on their level explained something.

Another teacher pointed out that the Department of Education's policy on promotion and progression can be regarded as a factor affecting the learners' reading culture. With reference to the said policy, a learner can only fail once in a phase regardless of whether or not the learner has mastered the curriculum for the specific grade. He further stated that language is also a barrier where Xhosa speaking learners are enrolled at Afrikaans schools. Overcrowded classrooms can be regarded as a contributing factor in this regard.

The researcher is of the view that the Department's policy on promotion and progression in this regard must be reviewed as it does more harm than good because if the learner cannot cope with the work in the Foundation Phase where they only have three learning areas, how will such learner cope with the six learning areas in the Intermediate Phase.

Overcrowded classrooms deny learners the opportunity of a one on one session or interaction with the educator where the educator can now be afforded the opportunity to pay more attention to those learners who are struggling to read. One educator pointed out that because learners are not spending enough time reading, they become shy and develop a low self-esteem.

5.3.2 Causes of reading difficulties in schools.

- **Educational Factors**

Some teachers in the Foundation Phase do not lay a strong foundation for reading. This in itself creates problems that role over to the Intermediate Phase where learners now read to learn. Some schools do have a reading culture, but it is not at a satisfactory level. Schools also do not have reading corners in their classrooms where learners can read for fun. The researcher is of the opinion that if the foundation of any form of learning is not sound and solid, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to build further. It is like building a house where if the foundation is not solid, after some time the house will show some cracks and will ultimately come tumbling down. The same applies for education. Schools that have a good reading culture will produce quality results because if you can read well you will be able to learn well.

- **Lack of physical and human resources.**

It is evident that schools do not have sufficient resources to ensure effective teaching and learning. It also became known that the DOE does not support schools completely in giving them enough reading material and books.

Schools also experienced teacher shortages, where the department of education also does not come to the party. This results in overcrowded classrooms that make it very difficult to assist those learners who are struggling to read on a one on one basis. Schools do not have libraries and those learners that are affiliated at the local libraries are not motivated and encouraged by their parents to go and visit the library to take out books. Teachers do not know how to teach the learners to read for they have only been trained at college and university level without any refreshing courses from the DOE in this regard.

- **Factors intrinsic to the learner (impairment)**

Some learners have visual problems. Due to this impairment, such learners are not able to recognize the sounds, which result in learners struggling to read. Dyslexia is also a determining factor that contributes to the poor reading ability of learners. Due to poverty and the low literacy level of parents, mothers are drinking alcohol during their pregnancies. They give birth to children that are suffering from foetal alcohol syndrome, which plays a major role in their reading and any form of learning difficulties, that learners are challenged with. Since these learners are in the main stream, teachers do not know how to work with them, as they were not trained to do so.

- **Curriculum Factors**

It was found that the foundation for reading is not properly laid in the Foundation Phase, for you would find that a grade 5 learners' reading ability is at the level of a grade 3 learner. This contributes to learning difficulties that teachers and learners are confronted with in the Intermediate Phase. Ineffective teaching methods are also used by teachers as far as teaching learners to read are concerned. It was found that parents enrolled their children in the wrong LOLT because in most instances you will find that it is not the child's home language and this in itself creates difficulties for these learners on how to learn to read. It was found that a learner should master how to read in their home language first before attempting to master an additional language.

The promotion and progression policy of DOE also has a detrimental effect on the reading ability of the learners where learners can only fail once in a phase. In this regard, even if a learner failed for a second time, without mastering the content of that grade, he/she is promoted to the next grade. These learners are bound to struggle or even fail in the grades to come, as they will now have a backlog as far as the curriculum is concerned.

5.4 Effect of reading difficulties on the learners

Their peers in the class quite often laugh at learners who are struggling to read. This results in the development of a low self-esteem. These learners also feel stupid at times. Because they cannot read, they mostly do not feel motivated to read. Learners that cannot read will most definitely fail, as they also will not be able to learn or to answer question papers in other learning areas. Learners that are experiencing reading problems normally tend to disturb other learners in class because they feel frustrated and bored, as they cannot cope with the workload. Such learners also normally tend to give disciplinary problems at school. Because of their frustration, these learners always find themselves in trouble and later become dropouts.

5.5 Learner support measures in selected schools.

5.5.1 Reading strategies applied in reading lessons.

Some teachers are using the picture method where learners must use the pictures to help them in determining what is going to happen in the story. Teachers also use skim and scan reading. Teachers instruct learners to identify difficult words in the text, look up the meaning of these words in the dictionary and discuss these meanings. When learners are familiar with these words, they will be able to read the text fluently. Teachers also use model reading, paired reading, group reading and shared reading.

One educator also used role-play and stories where multimedia is used. It is always very easy to get learners' attention and to keep it when making use of multimedia such as a data projector, tape recorder etc. Teachers also make use of silent and comprehension reading as strategies during their reading lessons as indicated in the previous chapter.

5.5.2 Intervention methods for learners experiencing reading difficulties.

It was found out that schools do have intervention strategies in place. In some schools it is advised that the School Based Support Team identifies learners with reading difficulties or any other learning difficulties, fill in the necessary documentation and submit it to the DOE for intervention fore they have or are supposed to have all the relevant therapists at hand. It was also found that the DOE does not assist schools in this regard. Some schools also have afternoon classes where extra reading material and activities are used. It was said that teachers should assist parents in showing them how to teach their children on how to read.



In one school, they have a “Drop All and Read” session where the whole school takes the first twenty minutes every day for reading. Different grades are granted the opportunity to read at least once per term at the assembly. They make use of friend reading where learners from one grade go and read to the learners in the other grades. It was suggested that book clubs be established in schools to make reading more interesting and to motivate other learners to read. In some schools even teachers do not have a love for reading where one educator stressed that teachers should set an example in doing model reading in order to motivate learners to read.

It was found out that schools do not write regular spelling tests to expand the learners' vocabulary and this could also contribute to the low reading level of the learners. You will find that learners with a vast vocabulary like to read.

5.6 Contributions of DOE, parents and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's).

The DOE assists to a certain extent as far as reading material is concerned i.e. (workbooks, readers), but in most instances these materials are not enough for all the learners. As a result, learners now need to share a book and cannot take the books home to do homework or further reading. The DOE arranges cluster meetings, but due to teachers being overloaded, administrative work and the challenge of too little tuition time with the compact curriculum, teachers cannot come back to school and implement what they have learned at these meetings and workshops. The DOE can do more in terms of filling of vacancies. Post level one bulletins are not published on a regular basis hence classes are overcrowded and proper teaching and learning cannot take place.

Some parents show no interest in the education of their children. They do not even come to collect their children's report cards from school. This lack of interest and involvement from the parents discourage the learners even more as far as learning is concerned. NGO's such as the  Cookhouse Wind Farm and GM Foundation were very much involved in the schools in the Somerset East and Cookhouse area where they also had programs running such as the Masikane Reading program and also "Bring a Parent to The Education Table", where parents were trained on how to assist their children with homework. The local libraries are well resourced and they arrange reading competitions for the learners to improve their reading ability.

5.7 Focus group interviews with learners.

Most of the learners speak Afrikaans, as those who speak IsiXhosa as their native language are fluent in Afrikaans. Afrikaans and IsiXhosa learners also tend to speak English once in the while.

This is what is affecting them mostly in reading in EFAL. In addition, the learners were clear that there is a need for a library in their schools where English books will be easily accessible in order to practice reading more often. The fact that there is no book corners in their classrooms also contributed to the fact that these learners are struggling to read. Learners indicated that they do not write regular spelling tests in English but they do write tests in Afrikaans.

Based on the arguments above, the researcher is of the opinion that if you cannot spell, you will not be able to read and ultimately you will not be able to learn. According to the learners, their teachers do motivate them to read. It was also found out that most learners are not affiliated at the library, most of them do not have books at home, there is no library at school and the fact that there are no reading corners in the classroom result in these learners not being exposed to English books and this can be regarded as huge contributing factor for their poor reading ability.



5.8 Conclusions and summaries regarding the findings.

The main aim of the study was to investigate and explore the extent of the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English FAL at grade 5 level in three schools in the Blue Crane Municipality. Reading difficulties are exacerbated by various factors such as the physical, emotional, socio-economical, home and environmental factors, poverty, educational and neurological factors etc. Most teachers are not quite sure as to which methods to use when teaching reading in their classes.

Lack of resources and parent involvement also contribute immensely to learners' reading difficulties. It is quite evident that the Foundation Phase teachers must take the lead in laying a strong foundation to improve the learners' reading ability and to create a love for reading amongst the learners. Teachers in the Intermediate Phase should also cater for all the learners' needs in alternating various methods for teaching reading depending on the learners' needs.

5.9 Recommendations

The researcher recommends the following:

- Schools to be well resourced with physical resources such as libraries as well as teacher and learner support material.
- Schools should have compulsory English reading support within the instructional time for learners with reading difficulties.
- Schools should have a reading policy and the School Management Team (SMT) should monitor the implementation of the reading policy.
- Schools should make sure that learners take books home on a daily basis for most of these learners are coming from a poor socio-economic background where parents cannot afford books.
- Reports from UNNESCO (2000) recommended that schools pay particular attention to reading lessons. This includes learners undertaking independent reading every day. Reading should not be confined to language classes, but should occur across the curriculum.
- Learners with reading difficulties should be identified very early and intervention strategies should be designed.
- Reading material should be designed to be of high interest to the learners with reading difficulties.
- Teachers have to sort out reading material from other sources such as the internet and newspapers because textbooks are either too difficult or too easy for the abilities of the different learners (Naidoo, Reddy, & Dorasammy, 2015:140).
- DOE to arrange intensive reading workshops for teachers to ensure that teachers know how to teach the learners to read.
- Reduce administrative work of teachers in order to ensure that teachers spend more time with the learners to teach them how to read, for reading constitutes the corner stone of all learning.
- Schools should consciountise parents on the importance of reading through meetings, the media and workshops on how they can support their children.

- Schools to stick to the ratio of 1-32 learners. Classes are overcrowded and there are continuous interruptions that prohibit quality teaching and learning.

Support strategies for teaching reading in Foundation Phase.

As a former principal of a small primary school and a former primary school teacher, the researcher gained a lot of experience regarding strategies on how to teach reading. In Grade R, informal learning should take place where learners learn through play and storytelling. The teacher should emphasize visual and auditory discrimination. Draw pictures and write words to use the words to make a picture dictionary as new sounds are learned. Orientate learners about spatial awareness, e.g. up, down, forward, behind, backwards, in front etc. in relation to the learners' bodies and objects in their environment. Assist learners to acquire the ability to distinguish between "left" and "right" in relation to their bodies. Develop language skills through active participation through songs, rhymes etc. When teaching learners to read, teachers should start with phonetic awareness, then phonics and sight word sand finally vocabulary.

Phonetic awareness

- Develop learners' listening skills through games, poems and nursery rhymes.
- Learners to clap their hands as they sound their names.
- Teach learners to identify beginning sounds in words.
- Involve learners in segmentation activities e.g. let learners say the parts of the words that they hear.

Word recognition

- Breaking words into sections.
- Teacher reads words and learners repeat after you.
- Teacher does model reading to learners.

Phonics

- Introduce one or two sounds per week depending on the learners' performance level.
- Make sure learners know the letter sounds and that they can write and identify them before moving on to the next.
- Use different material and forms to reinforce letter formation.
- Allow learners to build and break words down by starting with the simplest words.

Comprehension.

- Identify difficult words from the text and explain the meaning of the words to the learners.
- Vary questioning to suit all learners in the classroom.

Support strategies for the Intermediate Phase.

- Give equal opportunities for learners to practice reading, irrespective of their reading difficulties, gender etc.
- Make sure that the reading material used to assist learners with reading problems are at the level of such learners.
- Make sure that reading is promoted across the curriculum.
- Teachers should help learners to develop a positive self-esteem in order to improve reading.

Recommendations for future research.

- This study focused on the factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English FAL at Grade 5 level. What is now needed is a more refined analysis of reading problems in learners who were promoted due to years in phase or were promoted with their age cohort.
- More research is needed in investigating the effect of reading difficulties on the general academic performance across the curriculum.

- More research is also needed in examining methods of supporting reading ability in English FAL and how reading can be effectively taught in the Intermediate Phase.



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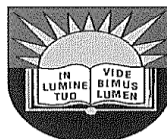
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- The logo of the University of Fort Hare, featuring a shield with a sunburst at the top, a book in the center, and the motto 'TOGETHER IN EXCELLENCE' at the bottom.
- University of Fort Hare
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance Certificate from University of Fort Hare.



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

Certificate Reference Number: LIN041SSNY01

Project title: **Factors affecting the learner's reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5: A case of three primary schools in Cookhouse and Somerset East Area, Blu Crane Municipality.**

Nature of Project: Masters in Education

Principal Researcher: Johnatan Marsel Snyers

Supervisor: Dr A.M Linake

Co-supervisor: N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change 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.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

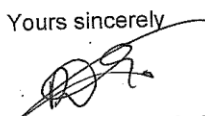
Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate 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.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office.

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely

 05/10/2018
Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola
Dean of Research

01 October 2018

APPENDIX B: Permission to Department of Education to do research

21 Mackay Street

Somerset East
5850
16 October 2016

The Department of Education
Private Bag X726
Graaff Reinet
6280

RE: Permission to do research in three primary schools in the former Graaff Reinet district (Sarah Baartman).

Att: Mr. P. Strydom

I am hereby applying for permission to conduct research in three of your schools, whereby three educators, three principals, 18 learners (six from each school) and three SGB members will form part of my study.

The topic under research is "Factors affecting the learners reading culture in English First Additional Language at grade 5. I am a Med. Student at the University of Fort Hare. My study is in the faculty of education.

A similar letter will be issued to the relevant principals, educators will receive consent forms and the learners will also receive consent forms for their parents to sign.

I believe the results from this study may assist the DOE in providing answers to the challenges faced by English FAL learners as far as reading is concern in the Inter Mediate Phase. All the participants will not be exposed to any form of risks by participating in this study.

Thanks, in anticipation for your assistance and co-operation.



J.M.Snyers (Researcher)

APPENDIX C: Permission letter to principals to do research



University of Fort Hare
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Educators: Consent for participation in a research project

Research Topic: Factors affecting the learners reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. A case of three primary schools in the Cookhouse and Somerset East Area: Blue Crane Municipality

- **Purpose of the study:** The purpose of the study is to add new Knowledge to the existing pool of information on reading culture where English as First Additional Language is involved.
- The study is aimed at reading culture in Grade 5 English First Additional Language teachers and learners.

You are hereby requested to participate as a respondent in the study. You will be observed and interviewed by the researcher Mr. J.M.Snyers at your school. Participation in the project is voluntary. Your real names will not be used and disclosure of your identity is guaranteed. Information gathered during the study will be strictly confidential and your personal privacy will be respected and honoured.

You are requested to sign the consent participation form, if you agree to participate in the research project. You are further advised that participation is voluntary and that you are free to withdraw from the project at any time that you may wish to.

I ... Gerda Elizabeth van Tonder ... fully know and understand my obligations and rights as a participant in the study.

Underline your option

I agree, disagree to participate in the study.

.....
Participant

.....
Date

.....
Witness

.....
Date

APPENDIX D: Participant information leaflet and assent form

NAME OF APPLICANT

<<Approved

>>

Ethics Human 2017

OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref:

Date:



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

CHILD ASSENT TEMPLATE

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND ASSENT FORM



TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Active Learning Strategies Used by Teachers During English Reading Comprehension Lessons in Six Selected Primary Schools in Nigeria.

RESEARCHERS NAME(S): Johnatan Marsel Snyers

ADDRESS: 21 Mackay Street Somerset East 5850

CONTACT NUMBER: 076 24 73 233

What is RESEARCH?

Research is something we do to find new knowledge about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about disease or illness. Research also helps us to find better ways of helping, or treating children who are sick.

What is this research project all about?

The study seeks to find the Factors affecting the learner's reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. A case of three primary schools in Cookhouse and Somerset East Area: Blu Crane Municipality.

The duration of the research project?

The researcher will gather the learners and discuss and observe them for about one hour.

Why have I been invited to take part in this research project?

The study is about Factors affecting the learner's reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. A case of three primary schools in Cookhouse and Somerset East Area: Blu Crane Municipality.

Confidentiality

The participants will be gathered in a class, discussion and observation will take place. Their names and that of their schools will not be mentioned.

If a sponsor is to be involved

There is no conflict of interest. (N/A)

Who is doing the research?

I am Johnatan Marsel Snyers, a Med student in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare.

What will happen to me in this study?

The participants will have discussions on the said topic. In the course of doing this, the participants will be observed and asked questions.

Can anything bad happen to me?

No, anything bad cannot happen to the child. The participants will be kept in a safe class where the observation and interview will take place. The participants will be asked to inform their parents about their participation in the study.

Who else is involved in the study?

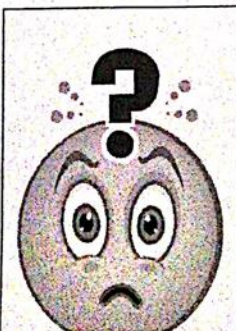
Other participants are three teachers, three principals, seventeen other learners two members from the SGB Department of Education and the University (consent).

Can anything good happen to me?

The study is to explore the factors that are affecting the learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language at grade 5 in the Cookhouse and Somerset East Area: Blue Crane Municipality

Will anyone know I am in the study?

The names of the participants will not be mentioned. Instead, pseudo names will be used. Only the researcher will know the identities of the participants.

**Who can I talk to about the study?**

**Name: Dr. M.A. Linake, School of Further and Continuing Education, Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare.
Contact: 07406024804**

What if I do not want to do this?

Please note that participation is voluntary and if you choose to withdraw at time no punishment will be meted out.

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

☒ YES☐ NO

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

☒ YES☐ NO

Do you understand that you can pull out of the study at any time?

☒ YES☐ NO

R. Jena
Signature of Child

Date

06/11/17

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

☒ YES

☐ NO

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

☒ YES

☐ NO

Do you understand that you can pull out of the study at any time?

☒ YES

☐ NO

R. Jones
Signature of Child

Date 06/11/17

APPENDIX E: Introduction before interviews

Introduction of interviews with principal, educators, learners, SGB chairpersons.

I am now at School A. Let me start by saying that I'm in the presence of the educator who will form part of the research.

My name is Jonathan Marsel Snyers. I'm the principal of Visrivier Primary School in Cookhouse. I am also a part time Master in Education (MEd) student at the University of Fort Hare at the Alice Campus, under the supervision of Dr. Linake. The topic under research is the factors affecting the learners reading culture in English First Additional Language at grade 5.

I've received consent from my EDO, Mr. Strydom to conduct research in your school. I've also asked permission from the principal, in this instance you to conduct the research. Consent forms have been distributed to everyone who will take part in the study.



All the information gathered and everything discussed will be treated as highly confidential at all times. The identity of the school and those of all the participants will not be exposed at any stage for the researcher will use pseudo names.

Now that all the formalities are out of the way we can start:

APPENDIX F: Interview questions for teachers.

The questions below are for the teachers' interviews.

1. How many learners do you have in your classroom?
2. What is the sitting arrangement in the class when teaching reading? Please choose the relevant one from the alternative answers below and indicate why.
 - a. sitting in groups.....
 - b. Individual pupils sitting separately and facing the teacher
3. What is your position in the class when teaching reading?
4. How many periods and minutes per week for reading in English First Additional Language(EFAL)?
5. Is reading taught as a subject or subsumed under English?
6. Comment briefly on pupils' attitude towards reading in English First Additional Language?
7. Do you have a library in your school?
8. Are your learners affiliated with the local library?
9. How often do they visit the library?
10. Did you receive training on how to teach learners to read in EFAL?
11. How would you rate the reading proficiency of the learners in your class in EFAL?
12. What are the challenges do you face during EFAL reading lessons?
13. What type of reading materials and strategies do you use in order to enhance your learners 'reading culture in English?
14. What intervention methods do you have in place for the learners who are experiencing reading difficulties?
15. In your opinion, how would you compare your FAL learners reading ability to the reading ability of their home language?
16. What is the "Foundation for learning campaign" in your opinion?
17. Do parents buy reading materials for pupils to encourage them?
18. From your experience, do parents at home encourage reading in EFAL?

19. In your own opinion, what do you think are the solutions to the problems of reading in English?
20. Do you get any support from the Department of Education, parents and other organizations where reading in EFAL is concerned? If yes, briefly comment on their contributions.



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APPENDIX G: Interview Questions for Principals

The questions below are for the principal's interviews.

1. There is a national concern of learners who cannot read at the standard level in English First Additional Language as compared to their peers in other countries. How do you rate your school in this regard?
2. Are the reading periods indicated on your timetables?
3. If yes, how do you monitor that reading period are honored by educators and learners?
4. Is there a reading culture in the school?
5. If yes. How do you cultivate this reading culture?
6. How would you rate the reading proficiency of the learners in your school?
7. In your opinion, what would you say are the causes of the reading difficulties/problems that learners are experiencing?
8. What support are measures being implemented in your school for learners experiencing reading difficulties?
9. In your opinion, do you think that the learners in your school receive the necessary support to alleviate or improve reading difficulties in EFAL?
10. How does the school's language policy cater for learners with reading problems in EFAL?
11. What do you think need to be done to improve the learners reading level?
12. Do parents buy reading materials for pupils to encourage them?
13. From your experience, do parents at home encourage reading in EFAL?
14. In your own opinion, what do you think are the solutions to the problems of reading in EFAL?
15. Briefly comment on the contributions of the Department of Education, parents and other organizations to support reading EFAL.

APPENDIX H: Interview Questions for the SGB Chairperson.

The questions below are for the SGB Chairperson's interviews.

1. How would you rate English reading proficiency of the learners in the school?
2. In your opinion, do think that the learners in your school receive the necessary support to alleviate or improve English reading difficulties?
3. How does the school's language policy cater for learners with English reading problems?
4. Is there a reading culture in the school?
5. If yes, how do you in cultivating this reading culture?
6. What do you think needs to be done to improve the learners' English reading level?
7. Do parents buy reading materials for pupils to encourage them?
8. From your experience, do parents at home encourage reading in English?
9. In your own opinion, what do you think are the solutions to the problems of reading in English?
10. Briefly comment on the contributions of the Department of Education, parents and other organizations to support reading.
11. What is your contribution in assisting learners to be better English readers?
12. What do you think need to be done to improve the learners English reading levels?

APPENDIX I: Interview Questions for Focus Groups.

Focus group interviews for learners.

- 1.What is your mother tongue language?
- 2.What other language do you speak at home?
3. What language is used for Teaching and Learning?
- 4.Do you enjoy reading?
- 5.Does your teacher motivate you to read more?
- 6.What reading materials do you use for English lessons?
- 7.Does your school have a library?
- 8.Do you have a reading corner in your class?
- 9.Do you have sufficient English reading materials in your class?
- 10.How often do you read at school?
11. How many English reading periods do you have per week?
- 12.Do you write spelling tests in your English lessons?
- 13.If Yes, how often do you write spelling tests?
- 14.Are you a member of the local library?
- 15.How often do you visit the library?
- 16.How many English books do you read in a month?
- 17.When last did you read a book?
- 18.Do you have English books at home?
- 19.Do your parents read at home?
- 20.Do your parents ever read for you?

EASTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Date: 2017/11/27

Class: GRADE 5
Learners: All Learners
Codes: All

MARK SCHEDULE FOR
THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE

No.	Admission Number	Surnames and Names of Learners in Alphabetical Order	Date of Birth			Gender (FM)	No. of Years in Grade	No. of Years in Phase	No. of days Absent (Year)	Subjects										Semester Total	Average %	Code	Codes: P (Promoted) NP (Not Promoted) PG (Progressed) RT (Retained) Deviation Comment		
			Year	Month	Day					Languages		Subjects													
										Home Language Level	First Additional Language Level	Mathematics (Or 05) Level	Natural Sciences and Technology (Or 05) Level	Social Sciences (Or 05) Level	Life Skills (Or 05) Level										
1	990		2005	08	10	F	1	2	9	62	5	52	4	49	3	48	3	37	2	48	3	296	49	P	
2	886		2006	06	18	F	1	2	0	84	7	68	5	65	5	61	5	45	3	65	5	388	65	P	
3	206		2005	08	17	F	1	2	3	80	7	69	5	66	5	71	6	55	4	66	5	407	68	P	
4	135		2007	04	23	F	1	2	0	82	7	75	6	65	5	75	6	65	4	66	5	418	70	P	
5	893		2005	12	14	M	1	2	3	54	4	47	5	49	3	43	3	28	1	53	4	274	46	P	
6	109		2006	07	12	M	1	2	9	78	6	65	5	63	5	67	5	49	3	60	5	382	64	P	
7	0506035602081		2005	06	03	M	1	3	11	51	4	43	3	45	3	48	3	35	2	54	4	276	46	P	
8	164		2005	05	15	F	2	3	16	50	4	48	3	44	3	48	3	27	1	51	4	268	45	P	
9	125		2006	10	21	F	1	2	12	51	4	43	3	40	3	41	3	30	2	52	4	257	43	P	
10	207		2005	09	27	M	1	3	16	52	4	44	3	42	3	43	3	32	2	50	4	263	44	P	
11	119		2006	09	15	M	1	2	13	56	4	45	3	47	3	46	3	35	2	51	4	281	47	P	
12	897		2006	06	12	M	1	2	6	20	1	38	2	33	2	48	3	23	1	53	4	215	36	NP	
13	154		2007	02	03	F	1	2	2	75	6	65	5	52	4	61	5	36	2	63	5	352	59	P	
14	120		2006	12	30	M	1	2	2	71	6	63	5	53	4	53	4	43	3	60	5	343	57	P	
15	140		2007	03	09	F	1	2	2	52	4	45	3	47	3	53	4	29	1	56	4	282	47	P	
16	998		2006	04	09	M	1	2	4	65	5	51	4	53	4	59	4	45	3	59	4	332	55	P	
17	2056		2006	04	03	F	1	2	3	63	5	60	5	48	3	48	3	37	2	59	4	315	53	P	
18	2035		2007	05	28	M	1	2	1	60	5	59	4	50	4	48	3	40	3	57	4	314	52	P	
19	895		2005	11	25	F	1	2	2	52	4	44	3	45	3	52	4	30	2	57	4	280	47	P	
20	115		2007	01	23	F	1	2	6	64	5	62	5	45	3	58	4	40	3	55	4	324	54	P	
21	123		2006	11	12	F	1	2	2	71	6	62	5	59	4	60	5	39	2	61	5	352	59	P	
22	852		2006	11	23	F	1	2	5	52	4	52	4	47	3	49	3	29	1	57	4	266	48	P	
23	144		2006	12	12	F	1	2	4	90	7	78	6	65	5	76	6	63	5	75	6	447	75	P	
24	993		2005	11	29	F	2	3	1	51	4	45	3	43	3	40	3	27	1	57	4	263	44	P	
25	100		2006	01	25	M	1	2	38	55	4	49	3	43	3	41	3	24	1	49	3	261	44	P	
26	1073		2003	05	27	M	1	2	2	86	7	65	5	64	5	76	6	54	4	66	5	415	69	P	

APPENDIX K: The Editor Certificate.

Email: arahim@gmail.com

Cell: 27 82 782 7448

LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

EDITOR'S DECLARATION LETTER

This letter confirms that I edited Mr. Jonathan Marsel Snyers dissertation on the title:

Factors affecting the learners' reading culture in English First Additional Language at Grade 5. A case of three primary schools in the Cookhouse and Somerset East area.

I provided an editorial service for the dissertation, which, he has written for the fulfilment of the Degree for M.Ed in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort: Alice.



The dissertation was comprised of five chapters covering 189 pages. During the process of the editing, the following changes were recommended: syntax structures, punctuation, and grammatical. In addition, consistency in use of abbreviation, referencing style, and the appropriateness of academic meaning of language, capitalization, the formatting of the entire thesis and table of contents were also recommended.

Sincerely yours

Professor A. Rahim

TABLES

Table 1: Description of Schools

School Demographics And Governance	School A	School B	School C
Learner Numbers			
Number of Teachers			
School Management Team			
Number of SGB Members			
Number of phases at the school	 University of Fort Hare <i>Together in Excellence</i>		
Type and level of school			
RCL's/Prefects			
Infrastructure			
Number of classrooms			

School Library			
Administrative Block			
Security/Fencing			
Location/Site			
Environment			

Transportation			
-----------------------	--	--	--

Location/Site	Semi-Rural.	Urban.	Urban.
Environment			
Transportation			

Resources	School A	School B	School C
LTSM			
Teaching and learning aids			

Resources	School A	School B	School C
Computers			
School Furniture			
Overhead projector			

Learner support	School A	School B	School C
Extra- and Co-curricular activities			
Academic support			
National School Nutrition Program (NSNP)			

Table 2: Profile of Participants

School Name	Participant	Gender	Age range	Post level	Qualification	Teaching experience	Subjects and grades
A	Principal 1						
	Teacher 1						
B	Principal 2						
	Teacher 2						
C	Principal 3						
	Teacher 3						

Table 3: Focus Group Interviews of Learners[illegible]

School Name	PST	LAS	HL	OL	MBTTR	MBPTR	ST	MOLL	RC
B									

School Name	PST	LAS	HL	OL	MBTTR	MBPTR	ST	MOLL	RC
C									



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