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Evaluating Reading Strategy Instruction (RSI) on FET Level 2 English Second Language (ESL) learners in the Eastern Cape, Mtata District

By

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(201414074)

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(March 2016)

DECLARATION

I declare that **"Evaluating Reading Strategy Instruction (RSI) on Level 2 FET English Second Language (ESL) learners in the Eastern Cape, Mtata District"** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

MISS MPU N.Y.

22/03/2016

DATE

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with/without my approval.

_____ _____

Professor E.O. Adu (Supervisor) Date

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ABSTRACT

Many students in Eastern Cape Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges of Education have problems comprehending Level 2 reading materials and thus struggle academically because English is the medium of instruction. To some extent, methods of teaching second language reading contribute to students' reading failure. The purpose of this study was to determine what reading strategies Level 2 ESL learners use; what reading strategies should be taught; what the effect of an implemented reading strategy programme is on their reading comprehension andwhat the effect of an implemented reading strategy programme is on the reading comprehension. Two intact cohorts of Level 2 students were randomly assigned to a control and intervention group. A reading strategy questionnaire and a reading comprehension test were used to examine the relationship between strategy use and level of comprehension. A quasi-experimental pretest–post- test control group design was used. A t-test was used to determine whether the mean scores of the experimental and control group differed statistically from each other. A statistical software package was used to analyze data. A discrepancy emerged between the responses of the participants and their actual performance in reading text. The intervention group showed significant gains in strategy use and reading comprehension after the six-week intervention period. Recommendations are that a treatment period of much longer than twelve weeks is required for possible better retention of RSI. Also, a sustained period of intensive instruction and practice in reading strategies seems to be required.

Keywords: English Second Language (ESL), reading strategy, reading strategy intervention, explicit instruction, reading comprehension, statistical data analysis, Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA).

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CHAPTER ONE

1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Reading is a skill essential to success in all academic areas (Anderson, 1999; Granville, 2001; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Pretorius, 2002). In other words, reading is central to the learning process. Anderson (1999) outlines that in the English Second Language (ESL) reading class, however, one great challenge is that even when learners can read in their second language, much of their reading is not fluent because they are not actively engaged with the text in a meaningful way. For example, the learners may move through the text one word at a time and not reap the full benefits from reading. Second language teachers, therefore, face many challenges in the classroom. Creating awareness, attention, intentionality and control of reading strategies are among the most useful contributions that teachers can make to develop their learners' reading comprehension ability (Oxford, 1990; Dreyer,1998).

The current study is prompted by a deep concern about the high failure rate of Grade 12 learners who revert to FET colleges because they do not meet the universities' entry requirement level in South Africa. They are at the range of Grades 9,10,11 and 12 when they register at FET colleges. Pretorius (2002:93) states that "every year there is a public outcry over the low certification and throughput rates as well as the retention rate of FET college learners, particularly learners who have to study through the medium of a language which is not their primary language."

In a study conducted by Pretorius (2002), it is concluded that a fundamental feature of academic underperformance in South Africa is poor reading ability. Her findings showed that learners who fail are those who perform poorly on reading tests and attain comprehension levels of less than 4.5%. According to the READ Annual Report (1999), the average age of entry of Grade 9 pupils in rural areas is 14,4 years. In addition, they have English as a Second Language (ESL) reading level equivalent, on average, to children at age 7,6 years. The problem becomes more serious at higher levels, as Pretorius (2002) points out that the skill in reading becomes more demanding as learners move up the education ladder, while the gap between skilled and unskilled readers widens. A pilot study undertaken by Dreyer (1998) in a multilingual classroom in the North West Province indicates a failure rate of approximately 75% among Standard 6 (Grade 8) learners on a reading comprehension test. At the heart of this problem, according to both Pitt (1985) and Pretorius (2002), is the lack of those skills basic to learning (i.e. reading skills and reading strategy use).

One widely recommended method of improving learners' ability to comprehend a second language text is explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies (Anderson 2001; Auerbach & Paxton (1997) state that specific instruction in strategy used together with teacher modelling is very successful not only in enhancing comprehension, but also in promoting self-monitoring and motivation. In addition, strategy research (Oxford, 2005) suggest that less competent learners may improve their reading skills through training in strategies evidenced by more successful learners.

However, Carrell et.al (1989) point out that relatively little research on meta-cognitive strategy training has been done in second language reading. Research conducted on poor readers and successful readers (Arabsolghar & Elkins, 2001; Carrell et.al.(1989); Lau & Chan, 2003; Kozminsky & Kozminsky 2001) indicated that while the latter know how to use effective strategies to facilitate the functioning of various cognitive processes and construct meaningful understanding of the text, the former simply read the text word by word without using any strategies.

Many intervention programmes have been developed to improve learners' reading comprehension through direct strategy instruction (e.g. Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Oxford, 1990; Deshler & Schumaker, 1993; O'Malley & Chamot, 1995; Pressley et al., 1992; 1995; Presley, 1998). Arabsolghar and Elkins (2001) point out that effective teaching provides a variety of strategies for learners to use before, during and after reading for constructing meaning, whereas ineffective instruction focuses only on written practice and isolated skills. Research indicates that reading strategies have been taught in various ways; some more beneficial than others. Kern (1989) points out that there are two major approaches to comprehension strategy training: direct explanation (DE) and transactional strategy instruction (TSI). During direct explanation, teachers do not teach individual strategies but focus instead on helping learners view reading as a problem-solving task that necessitates the use of strategic thinking, and learning to think strategically about solving reading comprehension problems. Transactional strategy instruction focuses on the ability of teachers to facilitate discussions in which learners collaborate to form joint interpretations of text and explicitly discuss the mental process

and cognitive strategies that are involved in comprehension. Pressley et al. (1992; 1995) have developed a transactional strategy instruction programme called Learners Achieving Independent Learning (SAIL). In SAIL, reading processes are taught as strategies through direct explanation, teacher modelling, coaching and scaffolded practice.

A goal of this programme is for learners to develop more personalised and integrative understanding of texts. Informed strategy instruction (Brown & Day, 1983; Oxford, 1990) can cause an increase in strategic intentionality. This form of strategy instruction tells the learner what a particular strategy does and why it is useful. This kind of instruction results in improved performance on the given language task. However, in most instances, it does not give the learner enough control to evaluate the success of the strategy or to know when or how to transfer the strategy to another task. Anderson (1999) states that a strategy-training programme should emphasise the "when" and "why" of strategy use at least as much as the "what". Oxford (1990) mentions three types of strategy training: awareness training, one-time strategy training, and long-term strategy training. Awareness training refers to the situation where participants become aware of and familiar with the general idea of language learning strategies and the way such strategies can help them accomplish various language tasks. One-time strategy training involves learning and practising one or more strategies with actual language tasks, usually those found in the regular language-learning programme. This kind of training gives the learner information on the value of the strategy, when it can be used, how to use it and how to evaluate the success of the strategy.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to:

- determine what reading strategies Level 2 learners use;
- determine what reading strategies should be taught;
- determine how and when reading strategies should be taught in the ESL classroom;
- determine what the effect of an implemented reading strategy programme is on the reading comprehension of the Level 2 ESL learners participating in this study; and provide guidelines in terms of the composition (i.e. format, outcomes, content, teaching method/approach, etc.) of a reading strategy instruction programme.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis is formulated for this study:

H1: A well-developed reading strategy instruction programme significantly affects Level 2 ESL learners' reading comprehension.

A null hypothesis was not formulated for this study because as Hatch and Lazaraton (1991:230) state: "If we have good reason to believe that we will find a difference (for

example, previous studies or research findings suggested that this is so), then we will use a one-tailed hypothesis". A single-tailed hypothesis specifies the direction of the predicted difference. A review of the literature led the researcher to believe that a positive difference could be expected, and therefore a null hypothesis was not formulated for this particular study.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quasi-experimental pretest–post-test control group design was used in this study. The subjects included a total of 60 Level 2 learners from a high school in the Eastern Cape. Two intact randomly selected classes participated in the study. All the learners were from the same school and have a homogeneous background. The learners ranged in age from 18-22 years. Both males and females participated in the study. A t-test was used to determine whether the mean scores of the experimental and control group differed statistically significantly from each other. Cohen's (1977) effect size d was used to determine whether the mean differences were practically significant.

1.5 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 2 contains theoretical framework on reading strategies and reading comprehension. It emphasises the idea that the readers' awareness and use of reading strategies facilitates the readers' comprehension of text.

Chapter 3 gives an outline of the research methodology employed in this study.

Chapter 4 discusses the results of this study.

Chapter 5 presents guidelines for reading strategy instruction programmes that are found useful and which can improve reading and comprehension.

Chapter 6 contains the conclusion and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A theoretical model for the reading process is important as a basis for explaining how reading for comprehension can be attained. Various reading models that seek to unfold the reading process have emerged, for example, bottom-up models, top-down models, interactive models and schema theory models. Bottom-up models contend that the process of reading begins with letters and their sounds, and learners are perceived as being almost passive decoders of visual stimuli (Wallace, 2001). Thus, reading is accepted as a passive skill. According to Grabe and Stoller (2002), in the bottom-up model the reader goes through a mechanical pattern by creating a piece-by-piece mental translation of the information in the text where the interaction between the reader and the text includes little or no inference from the reader's own background knowledge. Grabe and Stoller (2002:32) state that top-down models assume that reading is primarily directed by reader goals and expectations, and that is why top-down models characterize the reader as someone who has a set of expectations about the text information and samples enough information from the text to confirm or reject these expectations. The criticism against bottom-up and top-down models led theorists to develop a new approach called the interactive model.

Interactive models combine elements of both bottom-up and top-down models (Anderson, 1999). In interactive models, the reader needs to be fast in order to

recognise the letters. This is similar to what readers do in top-down models in order to skim a text for the main idea. Not only should the word recognition be fast, but also efficient. Schema theoretic models deal with what readers bring to the text they read. Schema theory attempts to describe the efficiency of prior knowledge. It is thought that prior knowledge of readers affects their comprehension of the text. Since schema theory requires schema activation or background knowledge support before starting to read in order to comprehend the text better, reading activities (especially pre-reading activities) play a vital role in schema theory reading models (Chan & Graves, 1995; Demirez, 1998). The schema theoretic model of reading is still relevant in the view of the majority of reading researchers (e g. Allen, 2003 Nassaji, 2002; Brown, 2001; Wallace, 2001; Harmer, 2001; Alderson, 2000; Khemlani & Lynne, 2003). In the next section the focus is on how the schema theoretic model of reading relates to reading comprehension. Additionally it focuses on the readers' awareness and use of reading strategies in order to facilitate comprehension of the text.

2.2 READING STRATEGIES

2.2.1 Definition

Only in the past several years has both first and second language reading research begun to focus on reading strategies. According to Carrell (1991), reading strategies are of interest for what they reveal about the ways readers manage interactions with written text and also for how strategies are related to reading comprehension.

Carrell (1991) defines the term 'strategies' as actions that readers select and control to achieve desired goals or objectives. Thus, the term 'strategies' emphasises the reader's active participation and actual way of doing something, or the reader's performance. According to Carrell (1991:160), strategies may be relatively conscious and non-automatic, or relatively subconscious and automatic. Arabsolghar and Elkins (2001:155) define a reading strategy as an activity or a series of activities that aids comprehension and thus plays an important role in reading. According to Garner (1984:301), "a strategy is a sequence of activities, not a single event and learners may have acquired some of the sequence, but not all".

According to Garner (1987b), teaching children a reading strategy often does not result in their being able to use it in contexts other than that in which they first learned it. To transfer this skill across time and contexts, readers need to acquire meta-cognitive knowledge of what conditions warrant the use of the strategy, as well as the ability to monitor comprehension and the environment to detect when these conditions are met. Thus, readers who know a range of strategies and when, where and why to use them are considered to be strategic readers (Paris, Oslon & Steven (1983). In addition, Anderson (1991:470) points out that it is not sufficient to know about strategies: a reader must also be able to apply them strategically. He further states that strategies are deliberate, cognitive steps that learners can take to assist in acquiring, storing, and retrieving new information.

Research has shown that learners' awareness and use of the reading strategies includes, among other factors, what reading strategies to apply, how to apply them effectively, when each strategy should be applied and why (e.g. Arabsolghar & Elkins, 2001; Chan, 1996; Anderson,1991). Such knowledge allows the reader, under various reading conditions, to identify, select and use appropriate strategies. In addition, it provides learners with a variety of strategies to use before, during and after reading for constructing meaning. As this is one of the important skills efficient readers should master in order to enhance their comprehension of the text, it is discussed in detail in the next section.

2.2.2 Classification of Reading Strategies

Reading strategies are classified according to the role they play before reading, during reading, and after reading.

2.2.2.1 Before Reading

According to Chastain (1988), the purpose of pre-reading activities is to motivate the learners to want to read the assignment and to prepare them to be able to read it. Ringler and Weber (1984) called pre-reading activities enabling activities because they provide a reader with necessary background to organise activity and to comprehend the material. These experiences involve understanding the purpose(s) for reading and building a knowledge base necessary for dealing with the content and the structure of

the material. Ringler and Weber (1984) further stated that pre-reading activities elicit prior knowledge, build background, and focus attention. According to Chastain (1988), pre-reading activities motivate readers to read the text. When they are motivated they are prepared for the reading activity, are able to complete it better and with less effort, and are eager to participate in the activity since they have gained confidence. Activating readers' prior knowledge of a topic before they begin to read may help students' comprehension (Grabe, 1991; Ur, 1996). The following section focuses on predicting what is to come in a text as an example of a pre-reading strategy.

2.2.2.2 Predicting

Swaffar, Arens and Byrones et al. (1991) point out the benefits of predicting techniques that allow students to formulate hypotheses about the text. By taking advantage of contextual clues, titles, headings and pictures, students are encouraged to draw inferences prior to reading. In addition, Swaffar et al. (1991) view identification of text genre, such as articles, poetry, non-fiction and plays, as a very important pre-reading exercise. They suggest that engaging in this type of analysis enables students to identify the probable rhetorical grammar, stylistic markers and possible constraints on the development of ideas. According to Chia (2001), the aim of predicting activities is to help readers predict or make some educated guesses about what IS in the text and thus activate effective top-down processing for reading comprehension. Several stimuli in a text, such as the title, photographs, illustrations, or subtitles are usually closely connected to the author's ideas and content. So, based on any of them, students can

make predictions about the content of the text. Predicting before reading can activate learners' prior knowledge and experiences about a topic. Robb (1995) states that recall and comprehension can improve when readers think about what they know about a topic before they even open the front cover of the book. He further states that as good readers move further into a story, they continue to predict and support, confirm or adjust their hunches as the narrative unfolds.

2.2.2.3 During Reading

According to Brown (2001), Nunan (1997) and Hyland (1990), skimming and scanning are important during-reading strategies. Through skimming, a reader is able to predict the purpose of the passage and perceive the writer's message (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001). In this way readers are asked to predict the whole text, though they do not read all of it. According to Alderson (2000), skimming is a meta-cognitive skill that is used by good readers. Bachman and Cohen (1998) and Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) also state that skimming allows readers to read for general understanding. Brown (2001) points out that readers scan to get specific information in a text, such as names, dates, etc. During- reading activities help learners to self monitor reading and also focus on details or concepts that are relevant to the purpose of reading. The following section focuses on how readers make inferences about the text based on their experience and observations on the text.

2.2.3 Inferences

Making inferences requires the reader to make connections between what the author wants his readers to understand. Inferences are always based on something, as in the author's descriptions, facts, opinions, experience and observations (Robb, 1995). Using the information the author has presented, readers must also comprehend more information than what is directly stated. Milan (1995) points out that to infer means to draw a conclusion from what has been implied. In other words, when you make inferences you "read between the lines." For example, one can infer that a man wearing a ring on the fourth finger of his left hand is married. Based on our "commonly accepted expressions" this inference is probably accurate, but is not necessarily true. The man wearing a ring may be a widower. The implication of the students' awareness about how inferences operate is that students are able to form conclusions from a text and better comprehension is likely to occur. Inferences are critical acts of comprehension, since they allow students to make words and phrases meaningful and join together prepositions and sentences (Johnston, 1984).

Johnston (1984) further states that the opinion on inference has shifted over the past few years from regarding it as a single process, almost an optional extra, to seeing it as a selection of fairly well differentiated types of inference upon which virtually all comprehension is predicted. Garner (1987a:137) calls inference 'text-connecting'. Text-connecting is the semantic or logical relations that the student establishes between prepositions expressed in the text and events discussed in the text. Wiener and Bazerman (1988) define inferencing as the process whereby students use hints to

gather information. However, inferences must be based on valid, available information and not simply on vague suspicions or wild guesses. In the next section another similar strategy (i.e. guessing meaning of words from the context) is discussed as it also facilitates the comprehension of the text.

2.2.4 Guessing Meaning of Words From The Context

Some ESL readers have a misconception that in order to understand a text, they must know the meaning of all the words that appear in the text (Laviosa, 1994). This task is time consuming as occasionally readers are faced with large volumes of reading material. To address this problem, researchers have recommended that teachers should train the learners to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by using the context and clues surrounding the words. Grellet (1994:38) points out that the following types of relation between the word and the context may help the reader to take a good guess from the context.

2.2.5 Identifying The Main Idea in a Paragraph

Readers need to be able to employ specific strategies to identify and substantiate important information (e.g. the main idea). Students are often asked to read a piece of text and find the main idea or ideas. According to Grellet (1994), the main idea may be implied and require the reader to connect information and make inferences. He further states that sometimes text has no main idea, simply enumeration of detail. In that case,

efficient readers need to be able to recognise facts and details that are important to achieve their purpose. Directly stated main ideas are sometimes called topic sentences and they focus the reader's attention on the most important idea in the passage or the central idea which the author wants his/her readers to understand about the subject matter. Main ideas are mostly presented in the first sentence of the paragraph.

However, they can also be found either in the middle or at the end of a paragraph (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984). According to Arnaudet and Barrett (1984:135), the following are some of the advantages of determining the main ideas of texts: As actively seeking main ideas helps readers concentrate on what they read, this lessens distraction since there is a purpose for the reading. Since the main idea holds the details of the paragraph together, readers will be able to recall many more of the details that support the main idea. Readers will find that determining the main idea is an aid in studying. For example, readers will be able to identify and mark important information in their textbooks and take effective notes and outline material more efficiently. Additionally, identifying the main ideas of separate paragraphs enables efficient writing of summaries. Writers present their ideas paragraph by paragraph with one main idea in each paragraph. In a paragraph there is usually one sentence which states the main idea. This makes the reading task easier. However, the reader still needs to determine the sentence that states the main idea. Main ideas can sometimes be stated indirectly or can just be implied.

i) Formulating Implied Main Ideas

When the main idea of a paragraph is not actually stated, that is to say when there is no topic sentence, the students may find it more difficult to decide what the general meaning of that paragraph is (Grellet, 1994). In such cases, readers will therefore have to formulate their own ideas on the basis of the information given. In order to understand the paragraph more clearly, readers need to formulate the main idea in their own words. When main ideas of paragraphs are implied, it is the responsibility of the reader to formulate these ideas in his/her own words for better understanding to take place. Cortina, Elder and Gommet (1989:183) presents several ways in which a writer may present main ideas indirectly: Although the writer may have presented most of the main idea in one sentence, the reader must sometimes add a word or phrase from another sentence to create a complete main idea. Another way of expressing main ideas indirectly is to present parts of the main idea in two different sentences. These sentences may follow one another in the paragraph, or they may be separated. A more common way of expressing main ideas indirectly is one in which the author expects the reader to combine and interpret important ideas from several sentences. In this situation, readers must combine and interpret the author's ideas according to their own experience and knowledge. Readers will have to use several of their own words to express the author's main ideas. On their own, main ideas do not make sense (Cortina et al., 1989). To enable readers to follow the writer's argument and see how one idea links with the next, writers use supporting ideas. As this is one of the important components of texts, it is discussed next.

ii) Identifying Supporting Details

It is important for the learners to be able to identify supporting details as this enables them to follow the writer's argument and see how one idea links with the next. If each paragraph is supposed to have only one idea, then learners may wonder what all those other words and sentences are there for in that paragraph. These are used to enhance the main idea and are therefore called supporting ideas (Murray & Johanson, 1989). Supporting details can therefore be said to be obvious and logical extensions of the main idea. The supporting detail question leads readers to details that further explain the main idea (Arnaudet & Barrett,1984; Cortina et al., 1989; Murray & Johanson, 1989). Mastering the skills of locating the main idea and supporting details are the basis for becoming a successful reader and learner. They are an important step towards critical thinking which any reader needs in order to interact with the text. Mastering the skill of locating main ideas and supporting details also assist the reader with a firm grasp of the important details so that they can easily summarise a text – the focus of the next discussion.

iii) After Reading

According to Chastain (1988), after-reading activities help readers to clarify any unclear meaning where the focus is on the meaning and not on the grammatical or lexical aspects of the text. After- reading strategies help students reflect on and respond to

text. They also assist students to select, organise and use relevant information for a specific purpose.

2.2.6 Summarizing

After reading a text, whether narrative or expository, students are frequently expected to recall main ideas and concepts from the assigned passage and to provide support for their decisions. To do this, they must process the content and determine which ideas are important. According to Garrigus (1999:121), "A summary is simply a shortened version of an action or communication that still provides the key elements". When readers are studying for an examination or preparing a report, they find themselves needing to put lengthy material into a form they can manage. A good summary can be written by first using the strategies that have been discussed above to understand and organise information. For example, writing a summary forces one to review the author's controlling idea, main ideas, and important details. Skidell and Becker (1999) point out that in a summary, a reader restates or paraphrases this important information in his/her own words. If a student can easily write an accurate summary, he/she probably has a very good understanding of the material he/she has read. Skidell and Becker (1999: 140) suggest the following steps to be considered in writing a summary:

- Think and decide on the controlling idea of the selection.
- Make a map or outline of the selection.
- Write a first sentence that paraphrases the controlling idea of the text.

- Write more sentences to restate the main ideas and, if necessary, important details that are essential to making the controlling idea clearly understood.

Garrigus (1999) states that summarising is more than a mechanical process of shortening; it requires thinking about and evaluating the material. Thus, a summary must reduce the length of the source material, but it does so by retaining only the main idea and key pattern elements.

According to Garrigus (1999:122), this means that;

1. Some parts of the original text may be shortened very little or not at all.
2. Some lengthy supporting examples or other details may be shortened drastically or left out entirely.
3. In the organisation of a summary points that are taken up may be very different from the original text.

Researchers have found that teaching students in regular education classrooms how to summarise expository text after reading has resulted in improved comprehension and memory of information (e.g. Bean & Steenwyk, 1984; Rinehart, Stahl & Erickson, 1986; Taylor & Beach, 1984). The following section focuses on the factors affecting reading strategy use, for example students' learning styles, motivation, culture and gender.

2.3 FACTORS AFFECTING READING STRATEGY USE

Language learning never occurs in a vacuum. A multitude of situational and personal factors also impinge on the language learning and teaching process, including gender (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995), motivation (Gardner, 1985; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989), cognitive style (Stansfield & Hansen, 1983), culture (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), and so on.

A review of the literature on strategy use indicates that the use of strategies is fairly prevalent among language learners and seems to depend on the interaction of learner characteristics and the demands of the situation (Oxford & Nyikos, 1996).

2.3.1 Students' Learning Styles

The term "learning style" refers to a person's general approach to learning and problem solving (Reid, 1995; 1997). Learning styles are "relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment (Keefe; 1979:4). According to Dunn and Griggs (1988:3), "Learning style is the biologically and developmentally imposed set of characteristics that make the same teaching wonderful for some and terrible for others." Nam and Oxford (1998) point out that learning style preferences often help shape the learner's choice of learning strategies. For instance, a student who has a strong visual learning style tends to use the strategies of taking notes and outlining, whereas an auditory-style learner tends to use the strategies of recording lectures and listening to a tape after the class is over.

Learners who have an analytic learning style often like to use strategies involving breaking material down into smaller pieces in an accurate fashion, whereas global-style learners prefer strategies that help them grasp the main idea quickly without attending to the finer points.

The results of a study conducted by Dreyer (1998) indicated the following main trends with regard to learners' perceptual preferences: Visual learners tended to use strategies related to visualisation or visual stimulation (e.g. relate sound and mental pictures, make mental pictures, use flashcards, remember location of new words on page, watch second language (L2) media, write L2 notes/letters, skim read, and then go back). Auditory learners frequently used strategies that encourage conversation where they receive aural stimulation (e.g. try to talk like native speaker, practice sounds of language, start L2 conversations, look for conversations, practice with others, ask a for native speaker's help, ask questions in L2). Hands-on learners used strategies related to movement (e.g. use rhymes, act out words, make guesses and use gestures). Extraverted learners used strategies related to socialisation and collaboration (e.g. start L2 conversations look for conversations, practice with others, ask questions in L2), while introverted learners tended to avoid these strategies such as read for pleasure in L2, skim read, and then go back.

The learners who were intuitive also tended to be global and they used strategies such as guessing and prediction from a few details, and they also used compensation strategies and engaged in social conversation. Concrete-sequential and analytic learners also tended to use similar strategies, especially a focus on details, structure

and the analysis of words and sentences into their component parts. Closure-oriented learners reviewed lessons and used meta-cognitive strategies very often, indicating their need for clarity, planning and lack of ambiguity. The results of the study conducted by Dreyer (1998) seem to indicate that the choice of language learning strategies is related to learning styles. This finding is consistent with other reported research (Oxford, 1989a; Rossi-Le, 1996; Ehrman, Lou Leaver & Oxford, 2003).

2.3.2 Motivation

Guthrie et al. (2000) point out that since reading is an effortful activity that involves choice, motivation is fundamentally important to reading comprehension. They also state that evidence shows that reading motivation is multifaceted, consisting of such processes as self-efficacy, goals for achievement, values and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for reading. They further state that these motivational processes energise and direct the cognitive strategies central to reading comprehension. According to Kaylani (1996), since humans are seen as being motivated by a complex set of interrelated factors, it is essential to view motivation as a largely social process. He states that the factors that influence an individual's motivation are partly represented by gender, age, level of learning, attitudes toward learning, expectancy, interest and needs. It is postulated that learners' beliefs about their ability will affect their goals and motivational patterns, which in turn will influence their learning behaviours and strategy use. Pintrich (1989) studied the relationship between students' motivation and strategy use (e.g. Pintrich, 1989; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). Based on a general expectancy-

value framework, Pintrich (1989) proposed that students' motivation consists of three components: expectancy, value, and affect. The expectancy component refers to students' beliefs about their ability to perform a task (i.e. self-efficacy), and the value component includes students' goals for the task as well as their beliefs about the importance, utility, and interest of the task.

The affective component includes students' emotional reactions to the task, such as test anxiety (Garcia & Pintrich, 1995). Pintrich et al. (1989) found that self-efficacy beliefs (the expectancy component of motivation) and intrinsic values (the value component) are both positively related to the use of cognitive strategies (e.g. rehearsal and elaboration), meta-cognitive strategies (e.g. planning and monitoring), and effort management (e.g. persistence and working diligently), whereas text anxiety (an important affective component) is negatively related to the three aspects of self-regulated learning (Pintrich, 1989; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). In other words, students who are more confident in their ability (i.e. have stronger self-efficacy beliefs) to do course work are also more likely to be cognitively engaged in their work and more likely to report attempts to control their thinking and efforts. Chan (2003) points out that as the ability to use reading strategies has the strongest relation with reading comprehension, intrinsic motivation and strategy attribution might facilitate reading development through their positive relation with strategy use. Highly motivated students use a variety of strategies which leads to more successful learning of a language. According to Chan and Lan (2003), achievement motivates students to perform better and become more interested in their tasks.

Thus, motivated students are more creative, predict the outcome of a story and make statements. Research findings have clearly supported the close relation between cognitive and motivational factors as well as the effects of motivational factors on students' reading comprehension (Borkowski, 1992; Guthrie et al., 1996; Licht, 1993; Shell, Colvin & Bruning, 1995, Van Kraayenoord & Schneider, 1999). Based on these findings, it is contended that motivational factors need to be incorporated with cognitive factors to achieve a more complete understanding of text comprehension (Borkowski & Mathukrishma, 1992; Guthrie & Wigfield et.al, 2000). The focus in the next section is on the influence of culture on the students' choice of reading strategies.

2.3.3 Culture

Among the many factors which might influence a language learner's choice of strategies is the learner's culture or ethnicity (Oxford, 1999, 2000; Oxford & Nyikos, 2009; Reid, 1997. As defined by Brown (1981:123), "Culture refers to the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools which characterize a group of people in a given period of time".

In addition, culture includes how and why one thinks, learns, worships, fights and relaxes. Keesing (1981: 59) defines culture as "an idealized body of competence differentially distributed in a population yet partially realized in the minds of individuals. Culture in this view is ordered not simply as a collection of symbols fitted together by the analyst but as a system of knowledge, shaped and constrained by the way the human brain acquires and processes information and creates internal models of reality."

Language interacts closely with culture; one's native language is both a reflection of and an influence of one's culture (Kaylani, 1996). Students' perceptions and judgements are influenced by assumptions shared by the unique social groups to which students belong. These perceptions will serve as guidelines for selecting and ordering information (Pritchard, 1990). A culturally unfamiliar text is more difficult to comprehend than one of which the style is familiar to the student. The background knowledge students use to comprehend is often culture-specific.

This strong bond between culture and language must be maintained if students are to have complete understanding of the meaning of the language that is used. The differences in values and attitudes are one of the main sources of problems in second or foreign language learning. Culture-specific values may be significant to comprehension if the values expressed in the text differ from those held by the student (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). Empirical studies have shown additional influences of culture or ethnicity on language learning strategies. Scarcella (1990) notes that many Asian cultures view the book as containing all knowledge and wisdom. Memorisation of the book word-for-word is therefore-e seen as the best way to gain knowledge in such cultures.

Empirical studies of language learning strategies show that memorisation is a strongly preferred strategy among Asian students (Politzer & McGroarty, 1985). Kachru (1988) suggests that many Chinese people dislike language learning strategies that involve theoretical models and prefer dealing with strategies that handicap practical questions because the Chinese language lacks implicational statement.

Guessing meanings is common among Chinese learners, both mainland and Taiwanese (Yang, 1992), but less common among Puertoricans (Green & Oxford, (1993-1995), so it might be a culturally-influenced strategy.

2.3.4 Gender

Gender differences also influence the selection of language learning strategies. Dreyer (2000) stresses the fact that gender differences cannot be ignored but must be examined from both theoretical and practical viewpoints. Oxford (2000), Oxford and Nyikos (2000), and Dreyer (2000) examined this phenomenon and found that females make greater use of language learning strategies than males. Politzer (1993) found that females used social learning strategies and formal rule related practice strategies significantly more often than males. According to Kaylani (2004), gender differences have been found in many areas of human social and cognitive development.

A comprehensive review of social development studies showed several gender differences such as: Females show more interest in social activities than males; females tend to prefer less aggressive interaction than males; females are less competitive and more cooperative than males (Oxford, 2003). Females also tend to show greater ability in articulation, are more fluent, and utter longer and more complexly formed sentences than males (Oxford, 2003; 2004a). Girls also usually score higher than boys in verbal ability and reading tests, especially from age eleven on (Slavin,1988). The results of a number of studies have consistently shown that gender plays an important role in

language: learning and strategy choice. For instance, in Taguchi's (2002) investigation of gender and motivation, he also reported choice of language learning strategies. He found that gender, levels of English proficiency and motivation levels of learners were the main factors affecting the reported choice of language learning strategies. He also found that female learners reported the use of a wider range of language learning strategies more often than did their male counterparts in Japan. Other similar studies have discovered that the common pattern is for females to use more language learning strategies than males. For example, Green and Oxford (1995), using a sample of 374 University of Puerto Rico students, found that there was greater use of learning strategies by women than by men. In another study by Ehrman and Oxford (1988), they used the Science Inquiry and Language Literacy (SILL) and the MT instruments to study the language learner strategies of 79 adults who were associated with a U.S. government agency. In this study, gender differences were extremely strong despite the small size of the sample; specifically females reported significantly greater use of language learning strategies than males. Not only has it been found that females use more strategies in general, but also in terms of specific strategies. For example, it has been found that females more frequently used social and compensation strategies.

In a study that investigated the relationship between learner factors and the reported choice of language learning strategies in both English First Language (EFL) context (Japan) and an English Second Language (ESL) context (Australia), Taguchi (2002) found that gender was one of the factors affecting the reported choice of particular language learning strategies. He administered a revised version of Oxford's (1990)

Science Inquiry and Language Literacy (SILL) to 46 Japanese learners of English who were studying at language centres in Melbourne, Australia at varying periods between 1998 and 2000 and found that the females reported greater use of compensation strategies. He suggested that this may occur because females have superior verbal aptitude and social orientation and tend to create more opportunities to use English and therefore have a greater need for compensation strategies.

Politzer (1983) supports this claim that females have a greater need for social strategies than males in his study of the language learning behaviours of 90 undergraduate students enrolled in French, Spanish and German courses at a university in the USA. He used a questionnaire to investigate the frequency in which they engaged in selected behaviours extracted from the good language learners' studies. He found that gender differences, although minor, favoured women, and women generally displayed more social orientation than males (Oxford, Nyikos & Ehrman, 1988). However, not all studies suggest superiority of females in all areas of strategy use. For example, when Nyikos (1987) investigated the strategy use by 135 first semester university students of German and in particular their use of associative memory strategies for learning German noun clusters, she found that the female students performed better when the treatment conditions were combined.

She assigned eight classes to four conditions. Three training conditions received written instructions and examples on how to use three different kinds of memory strategies per condition: 1) the colour-only group associated certain colours with

grammatical gender of each noun cluster to be learned; 2) the picture-only group associated each item with a drawing, and 3) the multiple-association or colour plus picture group used a combination strategy involving a colour-coded drawing. The fourth group (control) received no instruction regarding use of memory strategies to help them to learn the noun clusters.

Nyikos (1987) found that men outscored women in a colour-plus condition, whereas women outscored men in both the picture-only and colour-only condition. Various reasons have been given to explain why females and males use language learning strategies differently. According to Nyikos (1990), the school environment, with its role models, may promote one gender group over another in specific discipline areas. Furthermore, Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczela and Meece (1983) indicated that social forces such as parental attitude and gender-related beliefs influence the subject matter the students choose, and that the beliefs of males and females about their learning is greatly influenced by the classroom climate set by the teaching style. For example, as Eccles (1983) noted, in classrooms with low levels of competition with coral drills and practice, females are more confident and positive about their subject matter than their male counterparts. On the other hand, males were found to do better in teacher-fronted classrooms where raised hands dominated the discussions regardless of the teacher's gender. Classrooms with more cooperative activities and with hands- on problem solving performed in small groups were identified as beneficial to both males and females. Even so, in Politzer's (1983) study of language learning strategies, females reported a significantly greater propensity than males to engage in second-

language social interactions with others outside of the classrooms. In conclusion, most language learning strategy studies have found that females outperformed males in the use of general and specific language learning strategies. The focus of the following section is on the relationship between reading strategy use and reading comprehension.

2.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING STRATEGY USE AND READING COMPREHENSION

Various studies (e.g. Arabsolghar & Elkins, 2001; Kozminsky & Kozminsky, 2001; Dreyer, 1998; Laviosa, 1994) have attempted to show that a positive relationship exists between reading strategy use and reading comprehension. In most of these studies it was discovered that good readers plan their reading, compose a tentative meaning as they read, and constantly revise that meaning in accordance with new information they gain from the text's blueprint and from their prior linguistic and cultural knowledge. Laviosa (1994) states that efficient reading requires the use of various problem-solving strategies. For example, it is impossible for students to know the exact meaning of every word they read, but by developing their guessing ability, they can often understand enough to arrive at the total meaning of the sentence, paragraph or essay. In addition, researchers have found that teaching students in regular education classrooms how to summarise expository text after reading results in improved comprehension and memory of the information (Bean & Steenwyk, 1984; Rinehart, Stahl & Erikson, 1986; Taylor & Beach, 1984).

Researchers have consistently demonstrated that students with learning and reading problems can learn meta-cognitive comprehension strategies and that these strategies help students to improve their understanding of text (Swanson & De La Paz, 1998). Reading strategies are used by students to develop their comprehension of language. Garner (I987: 17) stated that "strategies that increase the likelihood of comprehension and retrieval of important content, given in the finite resources available, are essential." Understanding a written text means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible. For example, Grellet (1994:3) stated that learners apply different reading strategies when looking at a notice board to see if there is an advertisement for a particular type of flat and when carefully reading an article of special interest in a scientific journal. In the first case, a competent reader will quickly reject the irrelevant information and find what he/she is looking for. In the second case, it is not enough to understand the gist of the text; more detailed comprehension is necessary. It is therefore necessary to use various reading strategies in order to achieve various levels of comprehension depending on the reading purpose.

Readers who know a range of strategies and when, where and why to use them are considered to be strategic readers (Arabsolghar & Elkins, 2001). Good readers select and apply reading strategies to understand different kinds of reading materials to achieve new knowledge and to monitor and evaluate their comprehension (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Lorch, Lorch & Klusewitz (1993) ; Pressley & McCormick, 1995; Zwaan & Brown, 1996). Thus, they can read in different ways for different purposes. For example, when they read for a test they slow down and engage in more extensive activities than

when reading for fun or general comprehension purposes. In contrast, poor readers often fail to use appropriate strategies in reading for different purposes, cannot use cognitive strategies, and seldom look forward and backward in the text to monitor and regulate comprehension (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Paris, Wasik & Turner, 1991).

In a discussion of the processes that improve comprehension and lead to efficient learning from a text, Arnbruster, Brown and Palincsar (1994:133) list six activities that provide the basis for the reader's knowledge of strategies: clarifying the purpose of reading; activating relevant background knowledge; allocating attention and focusing on the major content; critical evaluation of content; monitoring ongoing activities, and drawing and testing inferences. Use of these activities permit the students to regulate their reading so as to improve comprehension (Brown & Day, 1983; Loranger, 1997).

Other studies reveal that poor students have difficulty in using strategies that contribute to reading comprehension (Brown & Palincsar, 1982; Ryan, 1981). The results of a study conducted by Brown et al. (1994) in which readers were coached in four strategies: summarizing, self-questioning, clarification and predictions, using a reciprocal teaching approach, point to a significant improvement in reading comprehension among a range of students. Another study (Gajria & Salvia,1992) examined the effects of summarisation instruction on text comprehension of students with learning disabilities. They found that instruction in the summarisation strategy significantly increased the reading comprehension of expository texts, and that this strategy was maintained over time and students generalised its use to other tasks.

A number of studies (Barnett,1988; Carrell et al., 1989; Kern, 1989; Park-Oh, 1994; Loranger, 1997) have investigated the effects of reading strategy instruction on gains in reading comprehension. A vast body of literature in first language acquisition has shown that learners' awareness of their own reading processes played a significant role in improving reading comprehension (Baker & Brown, 1984; Bereiter & Bird, 1985). There is a consensus among researchers that through overt strategy instruction, learners can be helped in four ways: (1) to become aware of the strategies they currently use; (2) to apply task specific strategies that can make learning more efficient and allow them to compensate for nervousness, inability to remember, and lack of wait time; (3) to monitor for strategy effectiveness, and (4) to create new strategies or weed out ineffective ones via meta-cognitive control (Chamot & Kupper,1989; Nyikos, 1991; Wenden, 1985).

2.6 SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY

The present empirical study is grounded in the social cognitive theory of reading. Social cognitive view of reading, coined from the social learning perspective proposed by Miller and Dollard (1994), maintains that social interaction is central to the development of knowledge and learning. In the reading field, the social learning perspective underscores the importance of social influences and social interaction on literacy learning. It is believed that the social community in which students live, the social community within the classroom, the parent-child language interactions, teacher-student interactions, and student-student interactions influence students' literacy learning. Social cognitive theory agrees with the idea of a natural component of cognitive

development, but believes that cognitive development is deeply rooted in culture. It emphasises social, cultural and linguistic factors in literacy learning. The social cognitive theory, initially known as social learning theory, believes that people learn more from observing others (their successes, failures, efforts and styles) than what they learn as a result of personal experiences. (Bandura,1989: 55: 60).

People learn from others by watching them and modeling their behaviour (Bandura, 1986). This idea is related to reading practices rather than the cognitive process engaged during reading. The four phases of observational learning are: the attention phase (the learners pay attention and watch the teacher while modeling), retention phase (the learners think about the processes of what they have observed), reproduction phase (learners repeat what they have observed), and the reinforcement phase (the teacher reinforces the behaviour as learners repeat it); (Bandura, 1986: 66).

Many literacy research studies have been conducted from a social learning viewpoint (e.g. Gambrell & Almasi, 1996; Moll & Greenberg, 1990) and found to be relevant to classroom practice. There are three aspects of social cognitive theory, namely: developing competencies through modeling, promoting esteem/efficacy, and enhancing motivation. Developing competency through modeling means students become competent as they observe models, store in memory, and reproduce the behaviour they have observed at the time of learning and in the future. Self-efficacy refers to self-perceived ability to successfully complete or perform a particular task. For example, when students are to learn a new skill or do a given task, students with high self-efficacy

will see themselves successfully acquiring the new skill or completing the task (Almasi & Gambrell,1996).

The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is rooted in three areas of theory constructivism, which emphasises the fact that comprehending a text is very much an active, constructive process. These areas three are: cognitive information processing, which focuses on the learner's mental processes and different types of knowledge; schema theory, which emphasises how the mind organises information into schemata or mental structures; and social-cognitive theory, which explains how people interact to create learning (Allen, 2003). There is a link between motivation and self-efficacy in that if students perceive themselves as able to learn a new skill or perform a task (high self-efficacy), they will be highly motivated to work hard at successfully learning the skill or completing the task (Allen, 2003:105-108). Students who have low self-efficacy will not be motivated to learn the skill or do the task because they anticipate failure. Thus, it is suggested that teachers create a learning environment that promotes students' self-efficacy. The above three aspects of social cognitive theory are related to cultural learning and organisational improvement (Bandura, 1988: 276-277), and are particularly relevant to this study. When students are taught how to be responsible for their learning, how to learn to read/comprehend and to learn by using appropriate strategies, their reading proficiency will improve and their self-esteem will increase.

Perkins (2001:43) maintained that interventions that are not based on the social cognitive view of learning might not achieve their aims. The strategy instruction

procedures of the current study is consistent with this and is based on the social cognitive theory. This is done based on the fact that in social cognitive theory (SCT), which is used in psychology, education and communication, portions of an individual's knowledge acquisition can be directly related to observing others within the context of social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences. The theory states that when people observe a model performing a behaviour and the consequences of that behaviour, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviours (Bandura, 33:40). This is linked to the study because the respondents are observed when they are engaged in behaviours they already learned. In other words, the respondents are observed upon the replication of the actions of others. Social-cognitive theory includes an emphasis on learners' motivation and sense of self-efficacy, a belief that one has the capacity to succeed at a given task.

The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) has three main components. First, the content in the ESL classroom is aligned with the content in the mainstream grade/level classroom. Science, with its hands-on component and extensive contextual supports for L2 development, is an excellent subject to start with because most students find it interesting and motivating. However, CALLA can be used in any content area. Second, academic language development includes all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. These are taught in the content area subject. In this way, students can learn concepts and skills such as analysing, evaluating, justifying and persuading that are necessary in the academic world. Third, learning strategies are "taught explicitly by naming the strategy, telling students, what

the strategy does to assist learning, and then providing ample instructional supports while students practise and apply the strategy" (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994:11).

2.6.1.1 Instruction

Instruction in the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach is based on the belief that explicitly modelled and explained multiple strategies, when practiced in groups, aid students in learning academic language in content subjects.

2.6.1.2 Classroom Procedure

These three broad components (i.e. the content in the ESL classroom and academic language development, which includes all four language skills and learning strategies) are translated into a five-stage instructional sequence. Although these stages are not always followed in a strict order, they are always present as new content, language and strategies are introduced. The stages can be viewed almost as a spiral, with the emphasis shifting depending on the needs of the students and forming an "interplay of instructional practices" (Chamot & O'Malley,1996:260):

1. Preparation is used to help students become aware of their prior knowledge of the subject and the strategies that they might already be using (meta-cognitive awareness). This alerts the teacher to the instructional needs in the classroom. While this is similar in non-CALLA classrooms, here the teacher takes special care in the way this

knowledge is elicited, builds in language opportunities, and provides support for the content of the answer rather than the form.

2. Presentation focuses on conveying new information using meaningful content with lots of visuals and demonstrations. Teacher modelling is extremely important in this stage.

3. During the practice stages, students use the new information in many ways, with oral and written academic language and applying strategies in classroom activities, often working collaboratively with classmates.

4. Evaluation allows the student to develop metacognitive awareness of their accomplishments and learning processes as they assess their worth.

5. Expansion allows the students to take what they have learned and apply it to their culture and the outside world– a significant undertaking (Chamot & O'Malley, 1996).

2.6.1.3 Assessment

Criterion-referenced,standardized, self-evaluation and performance-based assessments of student progress were used. The California Achievement Test's mathematics subtest showed consistently above-average scores for CALLA students (Thomas, 1992). Upper elementary and secondary students in the CALLA mathematics programme were

randomly selected to participate in think- aloud interviews concerning mathematical word problems. Some had been in high-implementation classrooms, in which teachers had participated more actively in CALLA staff development and had employed more CALLA techniques in the classrooms. Other students came from low-implementation classrooms, in which teachers were only marginally involved in the CALLA project. Students in high-implementation classrooms, as compared with those in low-implementation classrooms, used more metacognitive strategies, employed a sequential problem-solving procedure more frequently, and were more successful at finding correct solutions to problems (Thomas, 1992).

2.7 EVALUATION OF STRATEGY TRAINING PROGRAMMES

The four models of strategy instruction described above share many features. For example, according to Allen (2003), all four approaches are based at least in part in constructivist philosophy, which suggests that readers actively seek and construct the meaning of the text. However, he points out that Transactional Strategy Instruction takes constructivist theory one step further. In this view, when the students work in groups, they are able to exchange their individual responses to the text, transfer personal meaning, and create greater comprehension in the group. The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach, partly in the constructivist tradition, has its strongest roots in cognitive information processing theory, schema theory, and social-cognitive theory. All four models of strategy training programmes agree on the importance of developing learners' understanding of the value of learning strategies and

suggest that this is facilitated through teacher demonstration and modelling. They all emphasise the importance of providing multiple, practice opportunities with the strategies so that learners can use them autonomously. The four models of strategy training programmes suggest that learners should evaluate how well a strategy has worked, choose strategies for a task, and actively transfer strategies to new tasks.

The basic research hypothesis is also different for each instructional approach. The Reciprocal Teaching Approach undertakes to prove that teaching certain strategies and including discussions of the strategies following the lesson will increase student reading comprehension. Transactional Strategy Instruction attempts to prove that teaching comprehension strategy instruction over the long term will result in skilled readers. The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) endeavours to confirm that when multiple, explicitly modelled strategies are used, students are able to learn academic language in content subjects. The SIM Adolescent Literacy Programme involves two main reading components: a reading instruction core that helps students develop accurate word recognition and increased fluency, and a linguistic comprehension instruction core that focuses on the skills and strategies needed to bring meaning to reading. Like the Transactional Strategy Instruction (TSI), the Strategic Intruction Model (SIM) Adolescent Literacy Programme is a structured year-long course that allows for highly individualised instruction in targeted strategies as well as large-group activities.

The difference in the basic research hypothesis of the four models is of paramount importance as it serves to reveal the strong points or strengths for each approach. For example, TSI research includes the knowledge that both the intervention and the research takes place over a long period of time, unlike the Reciprocal Teaching Approach which generally lasts somewhere between two or three weeks and two or three months. The idea of the long-term strategy training is also supported by Oxford (1990). She points out that long-term strategy training also involves learning and practising strategies with actual language tasks. Learners learn the significance of particular strategies, when and how to use them, and how to monitor and evaluate their own performance. Oxford (1990) further states that long-term strategy training is more prolonged and covers a greater number of strategies. Therefore, it is likely to be more effective than other strategy training approaches.

In this view, the Strategic Intruction Model (SIM) Adolescent Literacy Programme and Transactional Strategy Instruction are likely to have more effect. The four approaches have several instructional perspectives in common. All view learning strategies as basic to comprehension of text. All emphasise students' awareness of both cognitive and metacognitive strategies for learning. All recognise the social aspects of learning and use cooperative learning as a facet of strategy instruction. All use direct modelling and explicit instruction. For example, the strategy is named, the educator tells students what the strategy does to assist them, and also practise and apply the strategy. However, the four models differ in some ways, for example designers of the approach, theoretical orientation, research hypothesis, typical research designs and practices and variables

of greatest interests). In addition, Allen (2003) believes that each approach builds on the research that precedes it. In this case, Pressley et al. (1992) expanded on the Reciprocal Teaching Approach because they felt that it was too rigid and prescribed, especially the teaching sequence which limited the flexibility of discussion. In addition, the number of strategies was also restricted.

In contrast, Transactional Strategy Instruction (TSI) places fewer restrictions on strategies and group discussion procedures in which students can participate. Transactional Strategy Instruction claims to generate greater student engagement because of its flexibility. Chamot and O'Malley (1994) took strategies several steps further with the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach. Not only do teachers follow the five practices of preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation and expansion, but they also apply them in content area subjects. While the Reciprocal Teaching Approach and Transactional Strategy Instruction were developed for reading only, the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach encompasses all language skills and a variety of content areas. On the other hand, the SIM Adolescent Literacy Programme covers reading, technology and writing.

In conclusion, among the four strategy training programmes, TSI seems to be more effective, especially when one looks at the role of the learners. Its collaborative nature puts emphasis on the interactive exchange among learners in the classroom, hence use of the term "transactional".

2.8 TYPES OF STRATEGY INSTRUCTION

In this section the focus is on direct instruction and implicit instruction. Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of both strategy instruction in promoting learners' strategic reading comprehension.

2.8.1 Direct Instruction

Strategy instruction can either be conducted separately from regular classroom activities or it can be integrated into the regular classroom activities. Arguments in favour of separate strategy instruction programmes advance the notion that strategies are generalisable to various contexts, and that students will learn strategies better if they can focus all their attention on developing strategic skills rather than try to focus on the content at the same time (Jones et al., 1987).

A study conducted by Flaitz and Feyten (1996) indicated that students benefit from short-term separate strategy instruction and manage to transfer it to their own learning, thus improving their language achievement. Direct strategy instruction includes providing students with an introduction about the value of language learning strategies, definition and explanations of how to use the strategies, and activities for practising and evaluating the strategies. Chamot et al. (1996:181-187) reported on a study where the direct teaching of language learning strategies was done successfully in Japanese, Russian and Spanish classrooms.

The National Reading Panel (2000) points out that the direct explanation approach was designed to improve on the standard direct instruction approach to strategy instruction used in most of the early studies in which students are simply taught to use one or several strategies. In this approach, teachers do not teach individual strategies but focus instead on helping students to:

- View reading as a problem-solving task that necessitates the use of strategic thinking.
- Learn to think strategically about solving reading comprehension problems. The focus in direct explanation is on developing teachers' ability to explain the reasoning and mental processes involved in successful reading comprehension in an explicit manner, hence the use of the term "direct explanation". During direct explanation, teachers do not teach individual strategies but focus instead on helping learners view reading as a problem-solving task that necessitates the use of strategic thinking, and learning to think strategically about solving reading comprehension problems.

Vacca et al. (2006) pointed out that a direct instruction model, is rooted in behavioural principles of learning. Students are taught what to do, given immediate feedback, and afforded extensive practice until discrete skills become habitual and automatic in their use. Students seldom grasp the rationale or payoff underlying the particular skills that are taught. When teachers make instruction explicit, however, students construct

knowledge about the use of skills and strategies. Explicit instruction involves strategic learning, not habit formation (Vacca et al., 2006).

According to Vacca et al. (2006:49), mini lessons follow a pattern that usually include:

- Creating awareness of the strategy;
- Modelling the strategy;
- Providing practice in the use of the strategy; and
- Applying the strategy in authentic reading situations. Awareness of a strategy often involves a give-and-take exchange of ideas between teacher and students. These exchanges may include explanations and strategy tips and are built around questions such as "Why is the strategy useful?", "What is the payoff for students?", and "What are the rules, guidelines, or procedures for being successful with the skill or strategy?"

2.8.2 Implicit Instruction

Those in favour of implicit (integrated) strategy instruction programmes argue that learning in context is more effective than learning separate skills whose immediate applicability may not be evident to the learner (Wenden, 1987), and that practising strategies on authentic academic and language tasks facilitates the transfer of strategies to similar tasks encountered in other classes (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990). In implicit or embedded strategy instruction, the tasks or materials cause the students "subconsciously" or "unconsciously" to use

particular learning strategies. In implicit strategy instruction, the language tasks and materials do not provide any explicit information to the student about the nature or importance of learning strategies, nor about how to transfer them to new situations (Oxford, 1992,1993). Oxford (1990) states that implicit strategy instruction provides indirect support for language learning through focusing, planning, evaluating, seeking opportunities, controlling anxiety, increasing cooperation and empathy, and other means. They are used for general management of learning. They ensure the provision of data, stimulate the subconscious acquisition process (data are processed), and stimulate enjoyment. Most strategies used are of the indirect type.

According to Oxford (1990:9), there are three types of indirect strategies:

- Metacognitive strategies are general learning strategies rather than Language Learning Strategies (LLS's) themselves. They allow learners to control their own cognition, and involve the utilisation of all resources in the production and comprehension of language.
- Affective strategies help regulate emotions, motivations and attitudes.
- Social strategies help students learn through interaction with others.

Oxford (1990) states that learners sometimes rebel against strategy training that is not sufficiently linked with their own language training. When strategy training is closely integrated with language learning, learners better understand how the strategies can be

used in a significant, meaningful context. Meaningfulness makes it easier to remember the strategies.

2.9 THE EFFECTS OF READING STRATEGY INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES ON READING COMPREHENSION

Research has been conducted on how to improve L2 students' learning strategies. In many investigations, attempts to teach learners to use learning strategies (called strategy training or learner training) have produced good results (Thompson & Rubin, 1993). However, not all L2 strategy training studies have been successful or conclusive. Some training has been effective in various skill areas but not in others, even within the same study (Oxford, 1994:13).

2.9.1 Charnot and Kupper's (1989) Project

Due to the apparent link between language learning strategies and acquisition, many studies have been undertaken to investigate how to teach second language (L2) learners to use them. For example, Chamot and Kupper (1989) conducted a project in which they investigated the use of learning strategies by foreign language learners and their teachers.

There were three different aspects to this project:

1. A descriptive study that identified foreign language learning strategies;
2. A longitudinal study which compared strategy use of effective and ineffective language learners; and
3. A course development study in which foreign language instructors taught students how to apply learning strategies in order to improve their reading comprehension ability.

The results of the research indicated that learners of all levels and abilities used strategies when learning a foreign language, but differences existed with regard to how the strategies were used and how they contributed to different degrees of success in reading comprehension. Therefore, Chamot and Kupper (1989) suggested that more should be done to find out what type of strategies are used by the most effective foreign language students and to identify ways of teaching these strategies to less effective learners.

2.9.2 O'Malley, Charnot, Stewner-Manzarenes, Kupper and Rocco's (1985) Training Study

O'Malley et al. (1985) conducted a training study to determine which language learning strategy combinations would facilitate language learning. The sample for this study consisted of Hispanic, Asian, and students from other ethnic backgrounds.

These students were put into three different groups comprising two treatment groups and one control group. The first treatment group received instruction in how to use a combination of metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective strategies. The second treatment group was not instructed on how to use any metacognitive strategies, whereas the control group did not receive any instruction on language learning strategies at all. Each group had two sets of tasks involving listening and speaking. The results showed that the two treatment groups clearly performed much better than the control group in speaking tasks. However, overall, the results of the listening tasks did not distinguish between groups, possibly because listening tasks were too difficult. The study concluded that language learning strategy instruction fit well into regular language programmes and that language learning strategies were as important to foreign language learning as strategies are for any other learning area.

2.9.3 Recommendations for More Beneficial Strategy Training to Learners

Recommendations about strategy training have been made by a number of researchers. For example, Vogely (1995) suggests that learners should be given training that helps them to become more self-reliant. Khaldieh (2000) suggest that training should focus on the cognitive and affective domain and that it should integrate both product and process-oriented approaches. This adds support to Oxford's claim (1993) that strategy training should take account of affective factors, be grounded on students' attitudes and beliefs, and at the same time, issues like anxiety, motivation and interests should be directly addressed. Further, Oxford (1993) suggests that the

strategies chosen should match with and support each other, whilst fitting the requirements of the language task, the learners' goals, and their styles of learning. Finally, strategy training should be interwoven into regular L2 activities and be undertaken over a long period of time (a semester or a year) rather than taught as a separate, short intervention (O'Malley, 1987).

2.10 NEGATIVE FACTORS THAT AFFECT STRATEGY TRAINING

Although strategy training has been reported to produce good results, not all of it has been uniformly successful or conclusive (Oxford, 1993; Oxford & Ehrman, 1993). Oxford (1993) indicates that this has occurred because of limitations in the research, such as: too short a period of training; a disproportionate ease or difficulty of the training task; an overemphasis on the more purely intellectual aspects of language learning; a lack of attention to affective and social strategies that are potentially important to language learning; a lack of integration of training into normal language class work and the perceived irrelevance of the training; and an inadequate pre-training assessment of learners' current strategy use, learning styles, and needs. Oxford (1993) therefore suggests a balanced focus on cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social strategies because the "whole learner" should be taken into account during learning strategy training. She also calls for more research in the area of L2 strategy training and on the differing approaches used in research for assessing strategy training.

In the second language learning arena, background (e.g. language and culture) as well as individual learner differences (e.g. learning styles) can be expected to play a part in both identifying the set of reading strategies students bring to a task and the ease or difficulty with which new strategies can be taught. Part of the background of students is their prior educational experience. For example, students whose initial educational training emphasised "spoon-feeding" and rote memorisation, as most disadvantaged students within South Africa receive, may have developed quite effective memory strategies, but be rather inexperienced with comprehension strategies (Dreyer, 1998). The National Reading Panel (2000) points out that proficient reading involves much more that utilising individual strategies; it involves a constant, on-going adaptation of many cognitive processes. To help develop these processes in students, teachers must be skilful in their instruction. In other words, teachers themselves must have a firm grasp not only of the strategies that they are teaching the children, but also of instructional strategies that they can employ to achieve their goal (National Reading Panel, 2000).

2.11 CONCLUSION

The discussion of strategy training programmes clearly indicates that the teaching of reading strategies, by whatever method chosen, enhances the learning of reading and other language skills. The four models of strategy instruction described in this chapter have much in common. For example, they all view learning strategies as basic to comprehension of text and they all use direct modelling and explicit instruction.

However, they differ slightly according to their basic research hypotheses and their research designs.

Research suggests that strategy instruction is useful for diverse groups of learners, including L1, L2 and teaching disabled students (Lederer, 2000; Pressley & Wharton-McDonald, 1997; Collins, 1991). Instruction in reading comprehension strategies is particularly beneficial if strategy instruction is included in content areas. For example, in the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach, students learn how to use strategies, such as connecting what they already know with new information, to enhance content knowledge, L2 reading and other skills. The following chapter discusses the research methology, paradigm, approach and the design that the study has employed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

"Methodology" implies more than simply the methods you intend to use to collect data. It is often necessary to include a consideration of the concepts and theories which underlie the methods (Taylor, 2004:37). For instance, if you intend to highlight a specific feature of a sociological theory or test an algorithm for some aspect of information retrieval, or test the validity of a particular system, you have to show that you understand the underlying concepts of the methodology. When you describe your methods it is necessary to state how you have addressed the research questions and/or hypotheses. The methods should be described in enough detail for the study to be replicated, or at least repeated in a similar way in another situation. Every stage should be explained and justified with clear reasons for the choice of your particular methods and materials. There are many different ways to approach the research that fulfils the requirements of a dissertation. These may vary both within and between disciplines. It is important to consider the expectations and possibilities concerning research in your own field.

3.1.2 Research Paradigm

Research paradigm is defined as an intellectual perception or view, accepted by an individual or a society as a clear example, model or pattern of how things work in the

world. This term was used first by the US science fiction historian Thomas Kuhn (1922-96) in his 1962 book, *The Structure Of Scientific Revolution* to refer to theoretical frameworks within which all scientific thinking and practices operate. A paradigm is simply a belief system (or theory) that guides the way we do things, or more formally establishes a set of practices (Gagne, 2001: 288). This can range from thought patterns to action. This study employs positivism as a research paradigm because positivism, in philosophy, generally is any system that confines itself to the data of experience and excludes a priori or metaphysical speculations. More narrowly, the term designates the thought of the French philosopher Auguste Comte (1997–1998). As a philosophical ideology and movement, positivism first assumed its distinctive features in the work of Comte, who also named and systematised the science of sociology.

Across disciplines (and within) there are varying views of what research is and how this relates to the kind of knowledge being developed. Paradigms guide how we make decisions and carry out research. Lawyers, for example, will use an adversarial paradigm, while selection committees will use a judgemental paradigm (Guba, 1990). Your own discipline will also be guided by a paradigm and through the research papers you read in your subject, you will begin to identify through the methodology the kind of paradigm that is used. As a researcher, it is important to know where your discipline belongs, that there are different ways of viewing the world, and that your approach to knowledge is one of many. The following concepts illustrate some of the different approaches to research. Disciplines tend to be governed by particular paradigms, such as: positivism (e.g. experimental testing), post positivism (i.e. a view that we need context and that context free experimental design is insufficient), critical theory (e.g.

ideas in relation to an ideology – knowledge is not value free and bias should be articulated), and constructivism (i.e. each individual constructs his/her own reality so there are multiple interpretations; this is sometimes referred to as interpretivism).

3.1.3 Research Approach

Quantitative approach is used for this study. Qualitative research approach is described as a paradigm in which objective data are gathered and analysed numerically (Hopkins, 2008: 210). Central to quantitative research is the understanding of how and why variables are related to each other. Thus, it is used to answer questions about relationships between measured variables (Punch, 2003:17). Quantitative research uses methods adopted from the physical sciences that are designed to ensure objectivity and generalisability (Thomas, 2003: 6). Thus, this kind of research generates statistics through the use of large-scale survey design, using instruments such as questionnaires or structured interviews, or instruments designed to test a specific construct such as locus of control, reading comprehension, or spatial skills.

It is sometimes referred to as the traditional or positivist approach. Some common research designs in quantitative research are: experimental designs, surveys, correlation design, and causal comparative designs.

The purpose of this chapter is to give an outline of the methodology employed in this study. The main aspects addressed in this chapter include the design used in this study, the subjects that participated, the instruments that were used to collect the data, an outline of the data collection procedure followed, a justification of the data analysis

techniques utilised in the study, as well as a section highlighting the ethical considerations followed in this study.

3.2 EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

3.2.1 Design

A quasi-experimental pre-test post-test control group design was used in this study. A quasi-experimental design is most frequently used when it is not feasible for the researcher to use random assignment. Real- life situations in ESL classroom research create many instances when experimental research is not possible, but some type of causal inference is needed. The purpose of the quasi-experimental design is to approximate the conditions of the true experiment (Gribbons & Herman, 1997). The majority of classroom research involves the use of classes where students have already been assigned on the basis of some principle. This is called an intact group. In intact group studies, researchers are unable to select or assign students randomly for research purposes. Thus, in this research it is impossible to select students randomly. In classroom research where researchers wish to see the effects of a teaching learning treatment, the design often uses the intact group (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991:86). While such designs will not allow researchers to make causal statements about the findings, they will allow researchers to give evidence in support of links between variables of these particular classrooms.

3.2.2 Subjects

The accessible population comprised of 60 Level 2 Xhosa speaking learners taking English as a Second Language (ESL) at one of the FET colleges in the Eastern Cape with its name contained because of the ethical concern form that the researcher made them to sign prior the study commenced. In convenience sampling, the selection of students from the population was based on easy availability and/or accessibility and they were not the only Level 2s in the campus.

They were divided into two groups: one for experimental on which the different reading strategies were conducted, and the other was the control group which used the traditional methods that the college curriculum was using. The major disadvantage of this technique is that researchers have no idea how representative the information collected about the sample is to the population as a whole. However, the information could still provide some fairly significant insights and be a good source of data in exploratory research (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2005). The subjects were in two intact classes in order to prevent disruption to the normal teaching day at college. One class was randomly assigned, using a random numbers table, to the experimental group (N = 30) and the other to the control group (N = 30). The ages of the subjects ranged from 18 - 32 and the sample consisted of both males (N = 19) and females (N = 41).

3.3.3 Instrumentation

The Reading Performance Test in English: Advanced Level (Roux, 1996) was used to determine the students' reading performance level in English within the range of Senior Secondary Performance Levels (i.e. Grades 10, 11 and 12). The term "reading performance" in this context refers to the ability to obtain meaning from print (i.e. reading comprehension). This standardised test consists of 50 items. Questions are based on prose, passages, advertisements, a film review, a cartoon and two cloze-test passages. All the questions were in multiple-choice form consisting of four options per item. The raw scores of the students were converted to a stanine scale. The stanine scale is a nine-point standard scale according to which raw scores are divided into nine intervals. It provides standard scores ranging from 1 (very poor) to 9 (very good) with a mean of 5 and a standard deviation of 1.96. The norms for second language speakers are specified in Roux (1996:22).

The Reading Performance Test in English was a standardised test used by the HSRC. The details of the norms as well as the content of the test can therefore not be discussed or published in this study. For more detailed information on this test, including the norms, consult Roux (1996). A Reading Strategies Questionnaire, based on the work of Oxford (1990), Pressley and Afflerbach (1995), and Pressley et al. (1995), was used to determine students' use of reading strategies. The reading questionnaire included before, during and after- reading strategies. Students answer in terms of how well a certain statement describes them.

For example, a typical statement would be:

"I briefly skim the text before reading." The student must choose one of the following:

- Never or almost never true of me
- Usually not true of me
- Somewhat true of me
- Usually true of me
- Always or almost always true of me

Each of the three parts is then summed to get the total for each part. The sum of each part is then divided by the number of items contained in each part in order to get the students' average use of that particular group of strategies.

The following guide was used to assess the frequency of strategy use (Oxford, 1990: 300):

High	Always or almost used	4.5 - 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 - 4.4
Medium	Sometimes	2.5 - 3.4

Low	Usually not used	1.5 - 2.4
	Never or almost never used	1 .0 - 1.4

3.2.4 Data Collection Procedure

In this study, all subjects took the tests (e.g. reading strategies questionnaire and reading comprehension tests) during their regular classroom periods. All participants received uniform instructions on how to complete the questionnaire, which was taken on the first day by both groups. Prior to completing the questionnaire, the subjects were informed that the study was not associated with their regular instruction, they would not be required to identify themselves in the questionnaire and, of utmost importance, their obtained responses would be handled with absolute confidentiality. The reading strategies questionnaire was followed by the reading performance test in English, which was used as a pre-test and was administered to both groups (control and experimental) on the following day. Both groups wrote the test in their classrooms under the supervision of the educator. On the third day, the educator focused only on the experimental group. The experimental group received the strategy instruction which lasted for three months (i.e.12 weeks).

In this study, the researcher was also the educator who conducted the strategy training. The researcher is a lecturer at FET college and this ensured that the students were familiar with the educator and did not perform differently merely because they were

participating in a study (Hawthorn effect) (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991). In a study conducted by Dreyer (1998: 23), she stated that the three-month interval between administrations was deemed long enough to control for any short-term memory effects, since subjects were not provided with the correct answers after the pre-test. Even if they were to remember how they had answered a question the first time, they had no way of knowing whether that answer was correct. In addition, the interval was considered short enough to control for any significant learning except for that due to the instruction. The control group did not receive the treatment on the reading strategy instruction. However, in the course of their normal teaching they were also exposed to strategy training (e.g. skimming, identifying main ideas, etc.). This was, however, not done explicitly. At the end of the twelfth week, the post-tests (reading comprehension test and strategy questionnaire) were administered to both groups on the same day, but in consecutive periods. The two groups were allowed the same time to complete the tests as before. The learners were given exactly the same tests they received for the pre-testing. The rationale for using exactly the same test for both pre and post-testing was to assure exactly comparable tests, thus avoiding the problem of equating different forms of pre and post-test.

3.2.5 Data Analysis

The data were analysed by means of the STATISTICAL software package. By definition, statistical analysis is a component of data analytics. In the context of business intelligence (BI), statistical analysis involves collecting and scrutinising every

data sample in a set of items from which samples can be drawn. A sample, in statistics, is a representative selection drawn from a total population (Holt,1997:66). STATISTICAL includes not only general purpose statistical, graphical and analytic data management procedures, but also comprehensive implementations of specialised methods for data analysis (e.g. data mining, business, social sciences, biomedical research, or engineering applications). Some of the unique features of the STATISTICAL line of software include:

- The breadth of selection and comprehensiveness of implementation of analytical procedures;
- The unparalleled selection, quality and customisability of graphics integrated seamlessly with every computational procedure;
- A wide selection of advanced software technologies that are responsible for STATISTICAL's practically unlimited capacity, performance (speed, responsiveness), and application customisation options;
- The efficient and user-friendly user interface, and
- The fully integrated, industry standard STATISTICAL Visual Basic that adds more than 11,000 new functions to the comprehensive syntax of Microsoft Visual Basic, thus comprising one of the most extensive development environments available (Statsoft, 2005). One of the most unique and important features of the STATISTICAL family of applications is that these technologies allow even inexperienced users to tailor STATISTICAL to their specific preferences.

The same version of STATISTICAL can be used by:

- Novices to perform routine tasks using the default (e.g. Quick) analysis start up dialogs (containing just a few, self-explanatory buttons), or even by accessing STATISTICAL with their Web browsers (and a highly simplified "front end"), and

- By experienced analysts, professional statisticians, and advanced application developers who can integrate any of STATISTICAL's highly optimised procedures (more than 11,000 functions) into custom applications or computing environments, using any of the cutting edge, object-oriented, and/or web-embedded software technologies (Statsoft, 2005).

A t-test was used to determine whether the mean scores of the experimental and control group differed reliably from each other. The t-test is a procedure that tests the difference between two groups for normally distributed interval data (where the mean and standard deviation and appropriate measures of central tendency and variability of the scores (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991: 249).

The assumptions underlying the use of t-tests include:

- There are only two levels (groups) of one independent variable (reading strategy use) to compare.

- The data are truly continuous.
- The mean and standard deviation are the most appropriate measures to describe the data (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991:263-264).

A relationship can be regarded as statistically significant if the results are significant at the specified alpha level (i.e. Probability of chance occurrence). Alpha is established as a criterion, and results either meet the criterion or they do not. In behavioural research, alpha is frequently set at p<O, 05 or p< 0, 1 (i.e. the odds that the findings are due to chance are either 5 in 100 or 1 in 100) (Hatch & Lazaraton,1991). A relationship can be regarded as practically significant if the results are of practical value to the researcher, language practitioner, or educator. Cohen (1977) established various scales according to which a relationship or difference between means can be regarded as practically significant. Cohen's (1977: 20-27) effect size d was used to calculate the difference between two means.

Cohen uses the following scale for the d - values:

Small effect	d = 0, 2
Medium effect	d = 0, 5
Large effect	d = 0, 8

3.3 READING STRATEGY INSTRUCTION

The reading strategy instruction was administered to the experimental group over a period of 12 weeks. The content of the reading strategy instruction was based on the following reading strategies.

3.3.1 Reading Strategy Instruction (Experimental Group)

Week 1 and 2: In the introductory session the educator and the learner brainstormed about their current strategies (based on the results of the Reading Strategy Questionnaire (RSQ). The educator then introduced the learners to reading strategies, the rationale for their use, when and where to use them, how to evaluate the use of the strategy, and how to apply strategies to other tasks and contexts. The learners' attention was drawn to the following five reading strategies:

- Identifying the main idea
- Making inferences
- Predicting what is to come in a text
- Guessing the meaning of words from the context
- Summarising

3.3.2 Identifying the Main idea

i) Presentation

Week 3 & 4: During this week, identifying the main idea in a text as a reading strategy was introduced. The session took five days consisting of fifty minutes each day.

The instruction involved the completion of worksheets to teach the following:

- The definition of the main idea.
- How to find the main idea in different locations in the paragraphs.
- Why such sentences are more important than others.

ii) Practice

During the practice session the students were given specific tasks to complete and also very clear guidelines as to how the ability to locate the main idea in the text facilitates comprehension. For example, learners were asked to locate the theme and the main characters in the short story book. The learners were encouraged to apply the reading strategy (find the main idea) to other similar tasks as well as to other subjects/learning areas.

(iii) Evaluation

The learners were asked to state how they used clues in the text to find the main idea. This exercise was done by learners in pairs or sometimes in groups, and they used their prescribed short story book.

3.3.3 Making Inferences

i) Presentation

Week 5 & 6: During this period, making inferences as a reading strategy was introduced. The instruction covered the following:

- Making inferences was defined as obtaining information by "reading between the lines".
- Guidelines to infer the implied meaning in the text.
- The educator explaining how the process of inferencing plays a facilitative role in reading comprehension.

ii) Practice

The educator gave the learners a task to perform where they labelled the inferences as probably accurate, probably inaccurate, and insufficient evidence.

A list of statements was provided. Learners were encouraged to use the same reading strategy in similar tasks and in other subjects in order to comprehend the text better.

iii) Evaluation

The teacher asked the learners to compare their inferences and also to explain how they arrived at such inferences. For example: (i) "A student yawns several times". In this situation the learners inferred that the student is hungry or drowsy. (ii) "A student falls asleep". The learners inferred that the student is drowsy. (iii) "A student returns from break crying". Learners inferred that old students bully the young ones, or the crying student simply needs the teacher's attention.

3.3.4 Predicting What is to Come in a Text

i) Presentation

Week 7 & 8: During this period, instruction in prediction was given which focused on:

- The definition of prediction which was given in the form of guessing what the text or reading material was about before one reads, by making use of a book cover, the pictures in the book or text and other cues that could help one assess and decide whether to read intensively or not.
- When is prediction used?

- Why is it used?
- How is prediction applied as a strategy?

ii) Practice

The educator worked with the entire class and modelled how making prediction works before and during reading. A prediction chart was developed as a framework for organising thinking and helping learners sort out whether predictions come from clues in the text or their own experiences (Table 1)

Table 1: THE WINNER (BARBARA KIMENYE)

Can you predict what this story will be about?

1. Predictions before reading	**Based on**
(a) The story is about someone who has won a race.	The title and personal experience.
(b) The story is about someone who has won in the voting polls.	The title and personal experience.
(c) The story is about someone who has won a game or competition.	The title and personal experience.

2. Adjustments / confirmations after reading	Based on
(a) The story is about Pius Ndawula who has won the football polls.	The clues in the content of the actual story.

iii) Evaluation

The teacher invited the learners to return to the prediction chart to confirm and adjust their ideas. The adjustments were written on the chart with a different colour marker pen so that they could easily compare initial predictions with what actually occurred in the story. The educator further asked the learners to mark the words in the text that support or help them correct their predictions. In addition, pair work and group work was encouraged so that learners could check how close peers' predictions were to what the book really was about.

3.3.5 Guessing the Meaning of Words from the Context

i) Presentation

Week 9 & 10: Guessing the meaning of words from the context as a reading strategy was introduced. The instruction covered the following:

- Use of hints from the context to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.

- Learners were encouraged to read the story more than once to find clues in the sentences, and that their guesses should make sense.

ii) Practice

Passages from the prescribed text were used. Learners were given a passage with some words deleted. They were asked to choose the most appropriate word from the three possible choices including the deleted word. After two lessons, options were not provided; learners were encouraged to rely on the context and make appropriate guesses.

iii) Evaluation

While learners were working in small groups, the teacher visited each group, checking for understanding, offering support, and modelling the verification process as necessary. He would review the group's answers and listen as they explained.

3.3.6 Summarizing

i) Presentation

Week 11 & 12: Learners were taught how to write summaries. Instruction covered the following:

- The definition of a summary was given as a short or condensed version of information in fewer words without losing what the longer text states by making use of key sentences and some of their supporting ideas.
- Why summarising is an important strategy.
- How to write a summary.

ii) Practice

Learners were given passages and complete short stories from their text to summarise following Garrigus's (1991: 23) five-step summary process:

Step1: The first task is to determine the topic of the source material. Usually the title gives a clear clue. If not, look for a word or phrase that seems to be frequently repeated. When you have decided on a topic, write it down.

Step 2: Test to see if the reading text has a main idea. Does it answer a main "What about the topic" question? If so, verify your hypothesis by tracking the idea throughout. Then, look away and write the main idea in your own words in a complete sentence.

Step 3: If the material has a topical organisation, use a topical pattern map or a traditional outline in your own words to list main topics and major details. To determine these, think how your source provides answers to the questions who, what, when,

where, why and how. Look away from the text as you write. If the source is organised around a main idea, determine the organisational pattern (steps in a process, reasons supporting an opinion, etc.). Create a map to help you visualise the main pattern elements. Look away from the text and write the pattern elements in your own words.

Step 4: Survey supporting minor detail-examples, for example: statistics, historical data, expert opinion and studies. Decide how much minor detail you wish to include; the length of the summary will depend on one's purposes and/or the length requested by the educator.

Step 5: The outline or pattern map – not the original text – will now determine the organisation of your summary.

iii) Evaluation

The educator asked the groups to present their summaries. Each summary was judged according to its relevance to Garrigus's five-step summary process.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

At the beginning of 2014, the researcher contacted the CEO as well as the principal of the college in question in order to obtain permission to conduct the study at the college. The FET colleges were by then independent entities and therefore everything depended

only on the college officials for granting permission. Permission was granted by both. It was also felt that permission from the parents of the participating learners was vital. The researcher sent an indemnity form to all parents of the specific learners, and parents were requested to sign the form and return it to the researcher if permission was granted for their children to participate in the study. At the beginning of the study, the learners were also requested by the researcher to sign if they were willing to participate in the study and every detail was explained clearly before signing, including their right to withdraw at any time when they felt they were no longer interested.

Also, the fact that their names were never to come up at anytime during and after the research was put clearly.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The methodological overview in this chapter was aimed at providing an accurate description of the various steps taken in the research process in order to facilitate future replication, as well as to serve as a basis for the discussion of the results in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is devoted to the presentation and discussion of the analysed data. The aim of this chapter is to attempt to address the following research questions posed in Chapter 1:

- What reading strategies do Level 2 learners use?
- What is the effect of an implemented reading strategy training programme on the reading comprehension of the Level 2 ESL learners participating in this study?

4.2 THE PRE-TEST READING STRATEGY USE PROFILE OF LEVEL 2 ESL LEARNERS

In terms of reading strategy use, the results (pre-test) indicated that there was not a statistically significant or a practically significant difference in the reading strategies used by the learners in the experimental and control groups. Specifically, the results of the strategy analysis indicated that the learners in the experimental group and the learners in the control group do not significantly differ in the use of the strategies at the before-reading, during- reading and after- reading stages. An analysis of the before-reading stage strategy use indicated that both groups used the following reading strategies more frequently than other reading strategies: "Briefly skim the text before reading" (experimental group - 2.99; control group - 2.99) and "I skim/scan to get the

main idea" (experimental group - 2.98; control group - 3.00). The least frequently used strategies at the before-reading stage included the following reading strategies: "I often look for how the text is organised and pay attention to headings and sub-headings" (experimental group - 2.55; control group - 2.44); "I try to anticipate information in the text" (experimental group - 2.13; control group - 2.20); "I set goals for reading (e.g. studying for a multiple-choice test, reading for a research paper); (experimental group - 2.39; control group - 2.26); "I usually make predictions as to what will follow next" (experimental group - 1.99; control group - 2.00).

An analysis of the before-reading stage strategy use indicates that for both groups (experimental and control) the gap between the frequently used and the least frequently used strategies is not wide. Moreover, the frequently used reading strategies do not reveal a high frequency use of such reading strategies. Therefore, the pre-test strategy use profile of both groups showed that the averages were low, indicating limited reading strategy use.

In the during- reading stage, the learners used the following reading strategies far more frequently than other reading strategies: "I pay greater attention to important information than other information" (experimental group - 2.66; control group - 2.68); " I try to underline when reading in order to remember the text" (experimental group - 3.40; control group - 3.38) and "I search out information relevant to my reading goals" (experimental group - 2.99; control group - 2.89). The least frequently used reading strategies at this stage included the following reading strategies: "While I am reading, I

reconsider and revise my background knowledge about the subject based on the text's content" (experimental group - 1.70; control group - 1.75), and "When reading, I ask myself questions about the text content to better remember the text" (experimental group - 1.98; control group - 1.99).

An analysis of during- reading stage strategy use indicates that for both groups (experimental and control) the gap between the frequently used reading strategies and the least frequently used reading strategies is wider than in the before-reading stage. However, the mean scores for the least frequently used reading strategies in the during-reading stage are lower than the mean scores in the before-reading stage. An analysis of the after- reading stage strategy use indicated that both groups used the following reading strategies far more frequently than other reading strategies:
"I summarise/paraphrase the material that I am reading in order to remember the text" (experimental group - 3.52; control group - 3.54); "After I have read a text, I review it" (experimental group - 3.35; control group - 3.34), and "After I have read a text, I summarise it" (experimental group - 3.56; control group - 3.48).

These three reading strategies fell in the high usage category (mean of 3.5 or higher). The least frequently used reading strategies at this stage were the following reading strategies: "After I have read a text I try to interpret what I have read" (experimental group - 2.87; control group 2.79), and "After I have read a text, I evaluate what I have read" (experimental group - 2.33; control group - 2.19). An analysis of the after- reading stage strategy use indicated that for both groups (experimental and control) the mean

scores for the frequently used reading strategies as well as for the least frequently used reading strategies are higher as compared to the other two reading strategy stages (i.e. before-reading and during- reading). In other words, the learners appeared to be using the after- reading strategies more than the before-reading strategies and during-reading strategies. This could be attributed to the fact that teachers' presentations of lessons and class activities are relevant for the development of such strategies.

Table 2: The pre-test reading strategy use profile of Level 2 ESL learners: Experimental group versus control group

	Experimental (pre-test) (N=30)		**Control (post-test) (N=30)**	
strategies	**mean**	**sd**	**mean**	**Sd**
I briefly skim text before reading.	2.99	0.66	2.99	0.58
I skim/scam to get the main idea.	2.98	0.71	3.00	0.70

I pay greater attention to important information than the other information.	2.66	0.50	2.68	0.54
I try to relate the important points in the text to one another in an attempt to understand the entire text.	2.28	0.58	2.44	0.60
While I am reading , I reconsider and revise my prior questions about the text based on the content .	2.23	0.54	2.17	0.56
While I am reading. I reconsider and revise my back-ground knowledge about the subject based on the text's content.	1.70	0.60	1.75	0.57
I plan how I am going to read the text.	2.11	0.60	2.07	0.58

I often look for how the text is organised and pay attention to headings and subheadings.	2.55	0.70	2.44	0.73
usually make predictions as to what will follow next.	1.99	0.48	2.00	0.54
While I am reading, I try to determine the meaning of unknown words that seem critical to the meaning of the text.	2.11	0.58	2.10	0.52
I try to underline when reading in order to remember the text.	3.40	0.71	3.38	0.64

When appropriate, I try to visualise the descriptions in the text that I am reading in order to remember the text.	2.11	0.59	2.19	0.61
Summarise/paraphrase the material that I am reading in order to remember the text.	3.52	0.63	3.54	0.64
When reading I ask myself questions about the text content to better remember the text.	1.98	0.44	1.99	0.50
When I think that I am not comprehending a text, I change my reading strategies (e.g. re-reading).	2.39	0.66	2.37	0.68
After I have read a text, I	3.35	0.63	3.34	0.69

review it.				
After I have read the text, I try to interpret what I have read.	2.87	0.71	2.79	0.78
After I have read a text, I evaluate what I have read.	2.33	0.66	2.19	0.66
While reading, I jump forward and or backward in the text to find the important information.	2.12	0.49	2.14	0.53
While reading, I distinguish between information I already know and new information.	2.00	0.54	2.10	0.56
	2.13	0.63	2.20	0.69

I try to anticipate information.				
As I read along, I check whether I anticipated Information correctly.	2.15	0.61	2.19	0.64
I set goals for reading (e.g. studying for multiple choice test, reading for a research paper).	2.39	0.71	2.26	0.69
I search out information relevant to my reading goals.	2.99	0.66	2.89	0.67
I evaluate whether what I am reading is relevant to	2.20	0.56	2.20	0.56

my reading goals.				
I vary my reading style depending on my reading goals.	1.99	0.53	2.00	0.5
After I have read a text, I summarise it.	3.56	0.68	3.48	0.69

4.3 THE POST-TEST READING STRATEGY USE PROFILE OF LEVEL 2 ESL LEARNERS

The post-test results indicated that the learners in the experimental group use certain strategies statistically ($p < 0.05$), as well as practically significantly (small to large effect sizes), more often than the learners in the control group. An analysis of the reading strategies that discriminate between the learners revealed that there is a difference in terms of the process that occurs before reading, during reading and after reading. The post-test results cited in Table 3 revealed an improvement in the frequency of usage of

the reading strategies by the experimental group. During the pre-reading stage, the frequency of use of the following reading strategies improved: "I briefly skim the text before reading" (experimental group pre-test - 2.99; post-test - 3.60), and "I often look for how the text is organised and pay attention to headings and subheadings (experimental group pre-test 2.55; post-test - 2.98). During- reading strategies and after-reading strategies also show an improvement when the frequency of usage of reading strategies during the pre-test is compared to the frequency of usage of reading strategies during the post-test. Table 3 shows that learners in the experimental group used a wide range of reading strategies they did not use before (pre-test). Specifically, an improvement is witnessed in the strategies that formed the content of the reading strategy instruction. In other words, the findings regarding knowledge and use of reading strategies suggest that the reading strategy instruction resulted in an increased reported use of reading strategies.

The following reading strategies were used to train the learners during strategy instruction: The strategy "I usually make predictions as to what will follow next" was used more frequently by the learners in the experimental group during the post-test (2.88) than during the pretest (1.00). Learners' exposure and training in the use of this strategy seem to have been effective. The strategy "While I am reading, I try to determine tile meaning of unknown words that seem critical to the meaning of the text" was also used by learners in the experimental group more frequently during the post-test (2.88) that during pre-test (2.11). The strategy "I try to anticipate information in the text" showed a great improvement during post-test (3.20) than during the pre-test (2.13).

The strategy "While reading, I jump forward and/or backward in the text to find the important information" showed an improvement as indicated by the results of the experimental group during the post-test (3.54). Another improvement was witnessed in the strategy "After I have read a text I summarise it". Although learners in both the experimental and control groups frequently used this strategy during the pre-test more than other strategies, the experimental group showed more frequent usage of this reading strategy (3.62) than the control group (3.22). Below, Table 3 illustrates the post-test reading strategy use profile of Level 2 ESL learners for both the experimental and control groups.

Table 3: The post-test reading strategy use profile of Level 2 ESL learners: Experimental group versus control group

	Experimental (Post-test) (N=30)		**Control (Post-test) (N=30)**		**p**	**d**
	M	**S.D**	**M**	**S.D**		

Strategies						
I briefly skim the text before reading.	3.60	0.71	2.98	0.67	*	0.87
I skim/scan to get the main idea.	3.54	0.80	3.20	0.74	*	0.42
I pay greater attention to important information than other information.	3.03	0.77	3.02	0.65		
I try to relate to important points in the text to one another in an attempt to understand the entire text.	2.40	0.60	2.44	0.54		

While I am reading, I reconsider and revise my prior questions about the text based on the text's content.	2.40	0.60	2.41	0.60		
While I am reading, I reconsider and revise my background about the subject based on the text's content.	2.54	0.61	2.00	0.63	*	0.85
I plan how I am going to read the text.	2.40	0.56	2.48	0.67		
I often look for how the	3.00	0.70	2.98	0.69		

text is organised and pay attention to headings and sub-headings.						
I usually make predictions as to what will follow next.	2.88	0.57	2.00	0.51	*	1.50
While I am reading, I try to determine the meaning of the unknown words that seem critical to the meaning of the text.	3.05	0.66	2.81	0.61	*	0.36
I try to underline when reading in order to remember the text.	3.51	0.66	3.49	0.54		

When appropriate, I try to visualise the descriptions in the text that I am reading in order to remember the text.	2.40	0.61	2.42	0.54		
I summarise/ paraphrase the material that I am reading in order to remember the text.	3.65	0.58	3.58	0.56		
When reading, I ask myself about the text content to remember the text better.	3.4	0.74	2.96	0.75	*	0.65
When I think that I do	3.00	0.64	3.01	0.60		

not comprehend a text, I change my reading strategies (e.g. re-reading).						
After I have read a text, I review it.	3.42	0.53	3.34	0.60		
After I have read the text, I try to interpret what I have read.	3.48	0.60	3.3	0.55	*	0.30
After I have read a text, I evaluate what I have read.	3.01	0.61	2.99	0.69		
While reading, I jump forward and/backward	3.54	0.75	3.30	0.57	*	0.32

in the text to find the important information.						
While reading, I distinguish between information I already know and new information.	3.00	0.60	2.90	0.51		
I try to anticipate information in the text.	3. 20	0.77	2. 88	0.60	*	0.41
As I read along, I check whether I anticipated information correctly.	3.00	0.56	2.32	0.49	*	0.41
I set goals for reading (e.g. studying for a multiple-choice test,	3.82	0.68	3.00	0.71	*	1.15

reading for a research paper).						
I research out the information relevant to my reading goals.	3.38	0.57	3.44	0.56		
I evaluate whether what I am reading is relevant to my reading goals.	3.56	0.68	3.29	0.73	*	0.37
I vary my reading style depending on my reading goals.	3.12	0.67	2.76	0.51	*	0.48
After I have read a text, I summarise it.	3.62	0.58	3.22	0.57	*	0.68

Practical significance: d=0.2 (small effect size); d=0.5 (medium effect size); d=0.8 (large effect size) ; statistical significance: *p <0.005

4.4 THE READING COMPREHENSION PROFILE OF LEVEL 2 ESL LEARNERS

An analysis of the pre-test reading comprehension scores of the Level 2 ESL learners in the experimental and control groups indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in their mean scores on the reading comprehension test (Table 4). The pre-test reading comprehension scores indicated that both experimental and control groups scores were weak and below 50% (experimental group - 37.53, control group - 36.73). Their weak reading comprehension had a negative effect on their performance in the language classroom and also in other content areas. The situation is true if one considers that reading comprehension has come to be the essence of reading (Durkin, 1993), essential not only to academic learning in all subjects areas but also to professional success and to lifelong learning (Pritchard et al., 1999; Rings, 1994; Strydom, 1997).

Table 4: The reading comprehension test profile of Level 2 ESL learners: Experimental group vs. control group

	Experimental (Pre-test) (N=30)	Control (Pre-test) (N=30)	Experimental (Post-test) (N=30)	Control (Post-test) (N=30)	**p**	**d**

Variables	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
English reading comprehension	37.53	15.80	36.73	13.14	50.40	16.85	40.86	16.13	***	0.56

Practical significance: d=0.2 (small effect size); d=0.5 (medium effect size); d=0.8 (large effect size) Statistical significance: $p < 0.05$.

An analysis of the post-test reading comprehension scores of Level 2 ESL learners in the experimental and control groups indicate that learners in the experimental group achieved statistically significantly ($p < 0.05$) higher mean scores on the reading comprehension test in comparison to the Level 2 ESL learners in the control group (Table 4). The mean difference indicates a medium effect size. The results therefore seem to indicate that those learners who are taught to apply and evaluate as well as transfer strategy use to other relevant contexts or tasks receive the greatest benefit (i.e. intentionality and control), whereas learners who are not taught to apply strategies or transfer were incapable of seeing their relevance to the tasks contained in the reading

comprehension test. This also confirmed the hypothesis formulated in Chapter 1, namely that a well-developed reading strategy instruction programme may significantly affect Level 2 ESL learners' reading comprehension.

4.5 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results of this study selection indicate that a well-developed reading strategy instruction programme can have a strong, positive effect on the Level 2 ESL learners' reading comprehesion. In other words, the results indicate that reading strategy instruction makes a contribution in increasing the reading comprehension ability of learners. This finding is consistent with other reported research (Alfasi, 1998; Dreyer, 1998; Kern, 1989; Lau & Chan, 2003; Van Keer & Verhaeghe, 2005). The learners in the experimental group improved their performance significantly after the intervention, whereas the learners in the control group did not improve their performance. Thus, the findings portrayed the intervention as a viable method for enhancing the reading comprehension of the Level 2 ESL learners. The findings in this study support the current view of reading comprehension as a process of emerging expertise in which readers create meanlng through the flexible use of reading strategies to foster, monitor, regulate and maintain comprehension (Alexander & Jetton, 2000; Dole et al., 1991 ; Glaser, 1990; Wittrock, 1998).

Findings in the present study also reveal that explicit instruction in the use of reading strategies was essential to bring about more increased use of reading strategies for

learners in the experimental group. These results are congruent with previous research confirming the positive effect of explicit strategies instruction on reading comprehension achievement (e.g. Van Keer & Verhaeghe, 2005; Pressley et al., 1989). In the current study, explicit reading strategies instruction was made possible by means of modelling strategic reasoning and explicit teacher explanations of why, where and when to use them. The results of this study indicate that learners' ability to use reading strategies is the most critical factor in their reading comprehension performance. Thus, the close relation between strategy use and reading comprehension provides support for the possibility that educators could enhance the learners' reading comprehension through explicit reading strategies instruction.

4.6 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Certain limitations of this study may have influenced the results. One of the limitations of this study is that the sample size was relatively small and was only drawn from one institution, making it difficult to generalise the findings of this research to the entire population of learners in the Eastern Cape or in South Africa. Thus, the need for cross-replication in future studies with a larger and more representative sample should be emphasised. However, it is important to point out that the learners used in this study share important common attributes. For example, they all belong to government or government-aided schools, their ages do not vary a lot, they use the same English syllabus, and they write common English examinations at the end of their final year. The results indicated that the treatment period was of crucial importance. It is clear that a

treatment period of much longer than twelve weeks is required for possible better retention and transfer. Also, a sustained period of intensive instruction and practice in reading strategies seems to be required.

Moreover, the results of this study would have been more meaningful if learners were classified according to their proficiency levels. This would give the researcher an opportunity to compare the relationship between proficiency and strategy use.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In the above discussion an attempt was made to address the research questions in Chapter 1. The results indicated that learners benefit from strategic reading instruction. However, Dreyer (1998) points out that it is important to note that reading strategy instruction is not a magical formula to improve learners' reading ability in all instances. Various variables (e.g. context, teacher educational background, etc.) can affect the extent to which reading strategy instruction can facilitate the development of reading comprehension ability. The research evidence, in both L1 and L2 contexts, however, leads one to feel confident that such instruction properly carried out can assist learners in becoming more self-directed and autonomous language learner

CHAPTER FIVE

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A READING STRATEGY INSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, guidelines are provided and reference is made to relevant literature to support the importance and rationale of the guidelines to assist teachers in future when they have to integrate and/or develop a reading strategy instruction programme. The guidelines provided in this chapter were utilised by the instructor when developing and implementing the programme specified in this study. The following aspects were addressed:

- What reading strategies should be taught?
- How and when should reading strategies be taught?
- What should an effective reading strategy programme look like?

5.2 WHICH READING STRATEGIES SHOULD BE TAUGHT?

Selection of reading strategies is a complex task as it is not guided by a simple factor but by several factors. Many reading strategies have been proposed but only some have proven potent for ESL reading comprehension.

According to Pressley et al. (1989), recommended strategies are those strategies supported by research evidence. Pressley et al. (1984:4) state that "not all strategies recommended in the literature have been evaluated adequately, and many have not been evaluated at all. Some have been studied and continued to be recommended, despite scientific evidence that they do not produce memory or comprehension gains." Thus, only strategic procedures that enjoy clear scientific support should be recommended to educators. Such strategies have proven their worth in studies that permit cause-and-effect conclusions (Pressley et al.,1989).

De La Paz (1998) point out that each recommended strategy should have been formally evaluated and found to be effective for improving learners' reading comprehension. The compilation of the reading strategies should be inspired by contemporary reading research and recurrent strategies in explicit strategy instruction programmes (Brown et al., 1996; De Corte, Vershaffel & Van De Ven, 2001; Palinscar & Brown, 1984). Such research should provide information about strategies to educators to make informed decisions about which strategies to teach.

Ellis (1994:558) states that much of the research on language learning strategies "has been based on the assumption that there are 'good' learning strategies". According to Ehrman et al. (2003), however, a given learning strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until it is considered in context. Ehrman et.al. (2003:315) further state that a strategy is useful under these conditions: 1) The strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand; 2) the strategy fits the particular learner's learning style preferences to one

degree or another, and 3) the learner employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies.

Strategies that fulfil these conditions "make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (Oxford, 1990: 8) and enable more independent, autonomous, lifelong learning (Allright, 1990; Little, 1991). Ehrrnan (1996) states that reading strategies should be chosen for the demands of the learning task and be consistent with the learners' style. In addition, Ehrman (1996:185) points out that "There is no cookbook of learning strategies." This is supported by the fact that some researchers (e.g. Reid, 1998; Oxford et al., 1993; Oxford & Crookall, 1989; Oxford, 1989) suggest that there is no single strategy pattern used by effective language learners. In fact, successful learners use an array of strategies, matching those strategies to their own learning style and personality and to the demands of the task. Pressley et al. (1995), as well as numerous other intervention researchers (Ellis ,1994; Collins, 1997; Graham, Harris, MacArthur & Schwartz. 1997) have advocated teaching learners strategies in contexts that are relevant and appropriate for their use.

Pressley et al. (1995) state that learners learn to use strategies as the need arises and when a particular set of heuristics is appropriate for an assigned task. In addition. Oxford (1994: 3) points out that "Strategies should be chosen so that they mesh with and support each other and so that they fit the requirements of the language task, the learners' goals, and the learners style of learning." Graham (1997:170) states that educators who have thought carefully about which strategies are most appropriate for

which task are more likely to be successful in developing "strategic competence" in their learners.

An analysis of proficient readers' reading behaviour has revealed that skilled reading does not involve the use of a single potent strategy but the coordination of multiple strategies (Brown et al., 1996). There are so many learning strategies that a variety of schemes have arisen for accounting for them. Among the relatively early taxonomies is that of Weinstein and her associates; their model is represented by the LASS questionnaire (Weinstein, 1987; Weinstein et al., 1987; 1988). Around the same time, Oxford (1990, 1992) was developing her Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) which uses factor analysis to group strategies into six categories.

Oxford (1990) identified six major groups of L2 learning strategies:

- Cognitive strategies enable the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways, e.g. through reasoning analysis, note-taking, and synthesising.

- Metacognitive strategies (e.g. identifying one's own preferences and needs, planning task success) are used to manage the learning process overall.

- Memory-related strategies (e.g. acronyms, sound similarities, images, key words) help learners link one L2 item or concept with another, but do not necessarily involve deep understanding.

- Compensatory strategies (e.g. guessing from the context, circumlocution, and gestures and pause words) help make up for missing knowledge.

- Affective strategies (Identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking and using deep breathing or positive self-talk) help learners manage their emotions and motivation level.

- Social strategies (e.g. asking questions, asking for clarification, asking for help, talking with a native speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms) enable the learner to learn via interaction with others and understand the target culture.

Both Weinstein and Oxford based their work on categorising heterogeneous strategies into a smaller number of categories. An alternative taxonomy has been offered by O'Malley and Charmot (1990) who emphasise the interaction of teacher and learner and place emphasis on scaffoldibility and the development of metacognitive strategies, under the rubric of CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach). Ehrman et al. (2003) point out that another approach to bringing older and more simplicity into the seemingly infinite universe of learning strategies is to group learning approaches by the purpose of learning, for example Biggs' (1992) model, which used his Study Process Questionnaire. Biggs' work is based on that of Schmeck (1998).

This model and instrument addresses both motivation and learning strategies, categorising each into:

- Surface (to get a task done with little personal investment);
- Achieving (to succeed in competition and get good marks), and
- Deep (to make personal investment in the task through associations and elaboration).

Ehrman (1996:173) describes deep processing as an active process of making associations with material that is already familiar, examining interrelationships within the new material, elaborating the stimulus through associations with it and further development of it, connecting the new material with personal experience, and considering alternative interpretations. The learner may use the new material actively to reconstruct his/ her conceptual frameworks. Surface processing, on the other hand, is completion of the task with minimum conceptual effort, with the result that much less information will stay in memory because it has been encountered much less and there is no emotional or cognitive investment in it. Ehrman (1996) suggests that the most successful combination of these strategies and motivations is deep and achieving strategies, though she indicates that there is a place for surface strategies because sometimes the cost benefit ratio of tasks does not justify only deeper investment.

Lessard-Clouston (1997) points out that in order for educators to select relevant reading strategies for their learners, it is crucial for educators first to study their teaching context, paying special attention to their learners, their materials, and their own teaching. It is also crucial for educators to know something about their learners' interests, motivations, learning styles, etc. By observing the learners' behaviour in class, educators will be

able to see what language learning strategies their learners already appear to be using. Do they often ask for clarification, verification, or correction? Do they co-operate with their peers or seem to have much contact outside of class with proficient L2/L1 users? Beyond observation, however, one can prepare a short questionnaire that learners can fill in at the beginning of a course, describing themselves and their language learning. Sharkey (1994/1995: 19), for example, asked learners to complete statements such as "In this class I want to/will/won't....." ; My favourite/least favourite kinds of class activities are .....'; "I am studying English because .....," etc.).

The idea of administering a questionnaire before the beginning of the course is also supported by Anderson (1999). After administering a reading strategy questionnaire, Anderson (1999) asked his learners to talk about which strategies they used that were helpful in reading. They discussed this in small groups and came up with a list of strategies which could be used to help learners improve their reading. This exercise enabled the learners to list different strategies and they saw how others approach reading and were able to discuss why some strategies were more helpful than others. Beyond the learners, however, one's teaching materials are also important in considering reading strategies.

Textbooks, for example, should be analysed to use whether they already include reading strategies. Audiotapes, videotapes, handouts and other materials for the course at hand should also be examined for reading strategies (Lessard-Clouston, 1997). According to Lessard-Clouston (1997), after educators have studied their teaching

context, they should begin to focus on specific reading strategies in their regular teaching that are relevant to their learners, materials, and their own teaching style. According to Carrell (1991), several studies have similarly shown relationships between various reading strategies and successful or unsuccessful second language reading (Arabsolghar & Elkins, 2001; Lessard-Clouston, 1997).

Research pointed out that the use of certain reading strategies did not always lead to successful reading comprehension, while use of other strategies did not always result in unsuccessful reading comprehension. Research results reported by Anderson (1990) showed that there are no simple correlations or one-to-one relationships between particular strategies and successful or unsuccessful reading comprehension. His research, with native Spanish-speaking university level intensive ESL learners reading in English as their second language and self-reporting their strategy use, suggested much individual variation in successful or unsuccessful use of the very same reading strategies. Rather than a single set of processing strategies that significantly contributed to successful reading comprehension, the same kinds of strategies were used by both high and low comprehending readers.

5.3 HOW SHOULD READING STRATEGIES BE TAUGHT?

In order to address the next research question (i.e. How should reading strategies be taught?), an important question to ask is whether learners must be made conscious of the reading strategies they are taught, or whether just providing practice opportunities is

sufficient. This is related to the problem of determining whether a strategy is used consciously or subconsciously (Dreyer & Van der Walt, 1995). Weinstein (1988) suggests the following procedure for the teaching of reading strategies: The instructor introduces the strategy and explains how it can be used to solve a problem, then the key elements of the strategy are presented along with a few examples. This is immediately followed by practice and feedback sessions. The learner is thus made conscious of the strategy.

Oxford (1990) also mentions creating "awareness" in the learner as a way of teaching strategies. She points out that during awareness training, participants become aware of and familiar with the general idea of language learning strategies and the way such strategies can help them accomplish various language tasks. Oxford (1990:61) states that in the "how to" of strategy training, the following eight steps are important: 1) determine the learners' needs and the time available; 2) select strategies well; 3) consider integration of strategy training; 4) consider motivational issues; 5) prepare material and activities; 6) conduct "completely informed training"; 7) evaluate the strategy training, and 8) revise the strategy training.

Weinstein and Meyer (1991) state that it is important not to teach only about the strategies, but to provide practice also, followed by feedback. Therefore, when training learners in strategy use, teachers should provide both conscious exercise and practice opportunities. Strategies may be seen as conscious or at least potentially conscious, something which the learner employs intentionally. The learner can take a conscious

decision to take control of learning (Oxford,1990:12) and to deploy a strategy to overcome a learning problem. The concept of strategy starts from the learner's choice – the learner is a human being with a free will to opt for one thing or the other (Cook, 1993:137).

Modelling is one of the most powerful ways of teaching strategies. The teacher uses a strategy during a learning task, and constantly points out what he/she is doing and what strategies are being followed. For example, if the task is to read a passage, the teacher asks:

- What do we want to find out?
- What must we do to find out?
- What must we do to find out?

This is the planning stage. The teacher then monitors the task while it is in progress: Are we achieving what we set out to achieve? Teacher and class think aloud together, and if an error is made it must be corrected so that learners can learn to regulate their learning. Another example of modelling a short story, is when the teacher models the process by presenting reading as a bet. The teacher put "I bet ..." on a chart in the front of the room, read the title of a story from an overhead, and made a bet. After this, the teacher put the phrase, "I already know that ..." on the chart and explained that sometimes people make bets or guesses based on what they know. Then reader-based inferencing was modelled. Next, the teacher wrote on the chart "The text says . ." and explained that sometimes we make bets or guesses because the text has hints about

our bets. The teacher modelled text- based inferencing with the next line of the text. Thus, the prediction was made and the source of information used to make the bet explained (Walker, 1990:4). When incongruences occurred, the process of revising predictions was modelled.

Coaching is another powerful teaching strategy. For example, after the introduction of chart and modelling the self-questions, the teacher used betting throughout the text as the strategies of prediction and revision were used alternately between the learners and the teacher. To change the instructional context, learners discussed their predictions in small groups of three. At the prediction the teacher points in the story, learners summarised and re-read the text and then discussed predictions and revisions. Then each group shared their divergent responses and the reasons for these responses with the teacher and other learners. As they shared their thinking, the teacher identified problem areas and modelled alternative ways to think through the story. Coaching does not only apply to learners but also to educators.

In a study conducted by Van Keer and Verhaeghe (2005), it was felt that at the beginning of intervention, coaching was necessary for educators. In this programme educators were provided with a manual giving step by step instructions on how to conduct the instructional innovations. The manual presented to educators included an extensive general description of the rationale, aims and the organisation of the innovation. Since educators need evidence that the innovative approaches do actually work (Butler et al., 2004; Stein, Smith & Silver, 1999), educators during this coaching session focused on developing understanding of the characteristics of reading

instruction that successfully improve learners' comprehension of texts. During coaching, a short video film made the innovations more concrete and outlined how to introduce them in the regular instructional practice. As recommended by Loucks-Horsely, Hewson, Love and Stiles (1998), educators were in this respect helped to translate their knowledge of the innovative practices into practice. Hollingsworth (2000) also recognises the need to contextualise teaching and educator development by employing cases, and more especially video cases, as a means to situate the professional development of educators in realistic contexts. In Van Keer and Verhaeghe's (2005) study, coaching meetings more specifically comprised an observation of a preparatory or explicit strategy instruction lesson, a detailed discussion of the attended and other already completed lessons, and a preparation of the coming lessons. According to Van Keer and Verhaeghe (2005), precisely selected extracts from the video film were used to stimulate discussion and debate about the importance of the educators' role in supervising and coaching the reading lessons.

Tutoring is another way of teaching reading strategies. Peer tutoring is structurally embedded in the curriculum and classroom organisation and is characterised by specific role taking: One person has the job of tutor, while the other is the tutee (Topping, 1996). Moreover, effective peer tutoring is characterised by preceding tutor training (Bentz & Fucks, 1996). Peer tutoring has been successful in a variety of curriculum areas and age groups. Research has indicated positive effects on academic achievement for both tutor and tutee (Cohen, Kulik & Kulik, 1982; Davis & Ginsburg, 1995; Greenwood, Carta &Hall, 1988; Fantuzzo, Davis & Ginsburg, 1995; Matches,

Torgesen & Allor, 2001). In this respect, peer tutoring is not only about transmission from the more able and experienced to the less able (Topping, 1996), tutors seem to benefit even more from tutoring than learners who receive the individual tuition (Fitz-Gibbon, 1988).

This can be explained by the nature of tutoring a peer: Tutors are challenged to consider the subject fully from different perspectives, to engage in active monitoring to identify and correct errors to organise and clarify their own knowledge and understandings, and to elaborate on information in their explanations (Fucks & Fucks, 2000). Because the application of reading strategies requires actively monitoring the reading process, peer tutoring may be considered a powerful learning environment for the acquisition of reading comprehension skills.

Monitoring the reading process of another reader might facilitate the acquisition of self-monitoring skills and hence the adequate application of reading strategies. Another important way that teachers achieve a complete instruction programme is to scaffold instruction so that learners become aware of and competent in the use of reading strategies they need to be successful. According to Vacca et al. (2006), the scaffold metaphor suggests helping learners do what they cannot do on their own at first. Instructional scaffolding allows teachers to support literacy learning by showing learners how to use reading strategies that will lead to independent learning. Vacca et al. (2006) further state that instructional scaffolding means giving learners a better chance of being successful with reading. Teachers provide literacy scaffolds through the use of

well-timed questions, explanations, demonstrations, practice, and application. These scaffolds provide instructional support for learners in two ways: 1) the application of strategies at the point of actual use during reading, and 2) explicit instruction in the development of strategies through mini lessons.

According to Pressley et al. (1992:514), good strategy instruction is not rote learning. Learners are not just memorising steps and mechanically executing them; strategy instructors are not drill sergeants. Rather, good strategy instruction entails making learners aware of purposes of strategies, how and why they work, and when and where they can be used. Learners are given extensive practice in the context of ongoing school instruction, practice which produces a personalised mastery of the method. The Rand Reading Study Group (2002: 67-81) recommends the following principles for educators on how reading strategies should be taught:

- Use comprehensive monitoring strategies, such as cooperative learning, graphic organisers, reading chapter summaries first, question generation (e.g. turning headings into questions), concept mapping, story structure and summarising to help learners become aware of their understanding of the reading material.

- When learners get stuck in their reading comprehension, have them connect the text to their lives, make a prediction, stop and think about what they've already read, ask themselves a question and try to answer it, reflect in writing what they've read, visualise, use print conventions (bold print, punctuation, etc.), recall

what they've read, reread, notice patterns in the text structure, and adjust the reading rate by slowing down or speeding up. Demonstrate the use of specific cognitive strategies until learners are able to use them independently.

- Teach learners how to draw inferences from their reading (ask questions, look for important clues, think about what they know about the evidence, use this information to try to answer the original question).

- Use a variety of instructional strategies that relate specifically to reading comprehension: Ask high level questions that require learners to think beyond the text; help learners connect what they read to their personal lives; use small group instruction to meet varied learning needs; provide reading materials at an appropriate reading level for each learner, and monitor reading performance.

- To increase textbook comprehension, use visual organisers, peer reading, collaborative summarising, and questioning the author to enhance pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading effectiveness (Strong et al., 2002).

- Use multiple strategies for enhancing vocabulary: explicit discussion of words and definitions; exposure to words in reading and multimedia; repeated use of the words in context connecting new words with existing vocabulary; and teaching vocabulary before, during, and after the reading activity. Teach

vocabulary directly (e.g. learning words before reading a text) and indirectly (e.g. reading or listening to others read). Have learners keep a journal of definitions of key concepts in the content area.

- Strengthen the organisation and processing of new vocabulary by visualisation (graphic organisers, pictures), inductive learning (e.g. classifying words), and peer practice. Connect new vocabulary with existing vocabulary by encouraging learners to build associations and generate preliminary definitions of new words (Strong et al., 2002).

5.4 WHEN SHOULD READING STRATEGIES BE TAUGHT?

This part of the research question pertains to the relevant stage at which the reading strategies should be taught. Traditionally, there has been a tendency among educators to view the primary grades as the time to have word recognition skills, with comprehension developed in the later grades (Pressley, 2001). Increasingly, this view is rejected, with many demonstrations that interventions aimed at improving comprehension, that is interventions beyond word-recognition instruction, make an impact during the primary years. When researchers have asked primary-level learners to use comprehension strategies and monitoring, the learners benefited greatly from it (Brown et al., 1996). There is definitely interest in expanding comprehension instruction in the early elementary grades, with the expectation that such instruction will affect 5 to

8 year olds dramatically in the short- term and perhaps lead to development of better comprehension skills over the long- term.

However, some researchers focused their attention on the reading strategies of primary school learners. For example, Arabsolghar and Elkins (2003) focused on the reading strategies of Grade 3, 5 and 7 learners. Chan (1996) also focused on the reading strategies of Grade 7 (13 year old) classes. Both studies showed good results with regard to the development of reading comprehension ability. On the other hand, some studies focused their attention on the reading strategies of high school and tertiary institution learners. Paris, Wasik and Turner (1991) identified developmental trends in strategic reading. Children acquire a large repertoire of strategies between the ages of seven and thirteen. Some are explicitly taught and others are spontaneously generated. Therefore, beginning readers require guidance in the use of strategies. However, beyond the age of ten, children exhibit increasing abilities to select and control the use of strategies.

According to the Rand Reading Study Group (2002) report, research has shown that many third grade learners who are reading at grade level will not automatically become proficient readers in later grades; teachers must explicitly teach reading comprehension strategies from primary through the high school years. The case is very strong that teaching elementary, middle school and high school learners to use a repertoire of comprehension strategies increases their comprehension of text (Pressley, 2000). Considering the fact that many intervention programmes aimed at improving

comprehension make an impact during the primary years, it is wise for educators to introduce the reading strategy intervention programmes as early as primary level. This could raise learners' awareness and strategy use so as to make learning manageable.

5.5 WHAT SHOULD AN EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGY PROGRAMME LOOK LIKE?

In order to address this question, general guidelines for teachers that derive from the research evidence on comprehension instruction programmes used in similar contexts to this study are provided. These relate to the format, outcomes, content, teaching method/approach, etc. According to Van Keer and Verhaeghe (2005), two decades ago, strategy intervention research was in vogue, but only recently has comprehension instruction received renewed attention, with current studies building on what was accomplished in the 1980s. Currently, the challenge in reading comprehension research is to increase the efficacy of instruction in elementary, middle and high school by identifying the instructional practices and activities that best serve to develop learners' self-monitoring for comprehension.

Alexander (1996:90) points out that for learners to become mindful, motivated strategy users, they need "systematically orchestrated instruction or training". Thus, learners need to be exposed to a set of interlocking, related and mutually supportive strategies. Grabe (1991:393) states that "effective strategy training is not a simple or easy matter." He further stated that the duration of training, clarity of training procedures, learner

responsibility, and strategy transfer are variables that influence strategy training. Literature revealed that effective reading strategy programmes begin by identifying learners' current reading strategies through activities such as completing questionnaires, engaging in discussions about familiar tasks, and reflecting on strategies used immediately after performing a task.

Most effective reading strategy programmes suggest that the educator should model the new strategy, thus making the instruction explicit. Instruction is explicit when specific directions are given. Regarding the explicit reading strategies instruction, the key elements in a study conducted by Van Keer and Verhaeghe (2005) were (a) instruction and practising a repertoire of reading strategies instead of focusing on one strategy; (b) phasing in the strategies gradually throughout the school year; (c) introducing each strategy and practice in isolation in three steps, representing a transfer from teacher regulation to learners self-regulation (explicit teacher explanations and modelling by thinking aloud, practice characterised by teachers scaffolding and coaching and more independent practice to internalise strategy use); (d) following the strategies with a period of practising the given number of strategies as a repertoire; and (e) the teacher recursively cycling back to modelling and re-explanations during each phase of the strategies introduction or practice.

Chamot (2004) points out that an effective reading strategy programme also provides educators with the support concerning all materials necessary to conduct the innovation at the beginning of the programme (i.e. a description of the intervention's rationale and

organisation; lesson scenarios describing the objectives, materials, and successive phases of each lesson). Literature reveals that effective reading strategy programmes take into consideration the integration of reading strategies and the school curriculum. Alfasi (1998) reported on studies that were designed to determine the effectiveness of combined strategy instruction incorporated into the school curricula in promoting strategic reading while fostering learners' ability to perform reading comprehension tasks that require high levels of knowledge construction. Langer (2001) states that some schools infuse the needed strategies and knowledge into the curriculum, and educators instruct learners to be more reflective about their reading. The findings are commensurate with the claim that strategies are best learned and applied when taught throughout the curriculum as part of the actual academic tasks that learners encounter (Snyder & Pressley, 1995; Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000), thus advocating that educators incorporate reading into the regular curriculum as a comprehension tool for learning.

According to Graham (1997:169), strategies training "needs to be integrated into learners' regular classes if they are going to appreciate their relevance for language learning tasks; learners need to constantly monitor and evaluate the strategies they develop and use; and they need to be aware of the nature, function and importance of such strategies." The following guidelines (Pressley, 1995: 68) may be useful in developing a reading strategy instruction programme for middle and secondary learners:

- Instruction needs to match learners' zone of proximal development. The tasks must be simple enough to sustain motivation (simple tests) yet also be challenging (they need to learn to use the strategy).

- Teachers should model the strategies they are teaching and provide much practice using authentic, real-world tasks.

- Learners should learn and practice only one or two new strategies at the same time. While it may take longer to learn each of the new strategies, they will be more durable (not forgotten), transferable to different disciplines, and more likely to be used when needed.

- Learners must be able to use the strategy automatically before they are taught to monitor how well it is working because taking attention away from learning the strategy itself can interfere with its acquisition.

- When they are able to use a strategy automatically, learners should monitor learning on a regular basis. They must also understand that their assessment of how well they are doing may be flawed; they may have been better or worse than they thought they were. They need to keep making the connections between their perceived success and their real success.

- To increase and sustain their motivation, learners need to understand how useful the strategy can be when they are attempting to learn something new. They also must have lots of opportunities to experience success by working hard so they understand that effort can lead to accomplishment.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In the above discussion mention has been made that the selection of reading strategies is governed by several factors. Among these factors are the teaching contexts, learners' interests, materials and the teaching styles. Attention has also been paid on the procedure for the teaching of reading strategies. Modelling, coaching and tutoring have been highlighted as ways of teaching reading strategies. It has also been mentioned that reading strategies should be taught as early as the primary grades. The following chapter is the summary and recommendation for future research.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a conclusion and recommendations for future research.

6.2 SUMMARY

In summary, this study provided a reading strategy use profile of the Level 2 Xhosa-speaking learners in the Eastern Cape as well as empirical evidence for the relationship between reading strategy use and reading comprehension. A review of the literature has shown that learners' awareness and use of the reading strategies includes, among other factors, what reading strategies to apply, how to apply them effectively, when each strategy should be applied and why. Such knowledge allows the reader in various reading conditions to identify, select and use appropriate strategies. The findings of this research support previous language learning strategy research that through overt strategy instruction, learners can be helped in four ways: (1) to become aware of the strategies they currently use; (2) to apply task specific strategies that can make learning more efficient and allow them to compensate for nervousness; (3) to monitor for strategy effectiveness, and (4) to create new strategies or weed out ineffective ones.

The most important outcome of the current study is that learners' awareness of their own reading process plays a significant role in improving reading comprehension. In other words, learners who receive strategy training generally learn better than those who do not, and that certain techniques for such training are more beneficial than others. Similar findings were obtained by Arabsolghar and Elkins (2001); Dreyer (1998); Lan and Chan (2003), and Van Keer and Verhaeghe (2005).

This study not only identifies the reading strategies employed by Level 2 ESL learners, but also reveals the effect of an implemented reading strategy training programme on the reading comprehension of the Level 2 ESL learners. It has added another dimension to the language learning strategy research by providing information about the use of strategies in a different cultural context. This research has opened up important areas for future research.

6.2.1 Literature review

Reading strategies are tools that assist a reader in unlocking the meaning behind the printed word. These strategies can be helpful before, during and after the actual reading event. Recent L2 reading research suggests that readers' awareness of their reading process and strategies enhances comprehension ability. Researchers such as Oxford (1990), Cohen (1987), and O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have stressed that effective learners use a variety of different reading strategies in order to solve problems that they face while acquiring or producing the language.

Investigations involving language learners often showed that the most successful learners tended to use learning strategies that are suitable to the task, material, self-objective, needs, motivation and stage of learning (Oxford, 1990). Much of the current literature on reading instruction supports the idea of teaching learners a series of reading strategies.

Based on such research, it has been suggested that strategy instruction can have beneficial effects on reading performance because this instruction enables learners to become more aware of their reading processes and strategies. Literature reveals that strategy instruction can either be conducted separately from regular classroom activities or it can be integrated into the regular classroom activities. Arguments in favour of separate strategy instruction programmes advance the notion that strategies are generalisable to various contexts and that learners will learn strategies better if they can focus all their attention on developing strategic skills rather than try to focus on the content at the same time (Jones et al., 1987). Those in favour of integrated strategy instruction programmes, on the other hand, argue that learning in context is more effective than learning separate skills whose immediate applicability may not be evident to the learner (Wenden, 1987), and that practising strategies on authentic academic and language tasks facilitates the transfer of strategies to similar tasks encountered in other classes (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990).

However, it is important to note that reading strategy instruction is not a magical formula to improve learners' reading ability in all instances.

Various variables (e.g. context, teacher, educational background, etc.) can affect the extent to which reading strategy instruction can facilitate the development of reading comprehension ability. The research evidence in both L1 and L2 contexts, however, leads one to feel confident that such instruction, properly carried out, can assist learners in becoming more self-direct and autonomous language learners.

6.2.2 Empirical study

The results of this research indicated that the learners who followed the reading strategy programme and received strategic reading instruction (experimental group) obtained both statistically and practically significantly higher marks on the reading comprehension test (post-test) than did the learners in the control group. The post-test results indicated that the learners in the experimental group used certain strategies statistically ($p < 0.05$) as well as practically significantly (small to large effect size) more often than the learners in the control group.

6.2.3 Reading Strategy Training Guidelines

The programme designed follows guidelines that research has demonstrated to be effective in training strategy use. Specifically, explicit strategy training was used as literature revealed that it can easily be adapted to teach a variety of comprehension strategies. The following guidelines were implemented:

- Informed by the learners' needs, the educator identified the relevant reading strategies.

- The tasks were simple yet also challenging.

- Integration of the reading strategies with the curriculum.

- The educator explicitly explained and modelled why, how and when a specific strategy can be used in order to enhance comprehension.

- The teacher-led lesson in which a new reading strategy was introduced and practiced together with the learners was followed by the independent practice of that strategy by learners in another context.

- Learners learn and practice only one new strategy at a time.

- By working together, learners learn that people often have different views of what they are learning and may do things in different ways, and that many ways can lead to success.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the research has shown significant results, there is still much to do. At this point there is no assurance that what the learners have acquired from the intervention programme will be transferred to other tasks and to other subjects in the curriculum. Longitudinal research on the development and continuation of strategy applications as learners increase their language proficiency would help to further determine an appropriate sequence for strategies instruction at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of language study. Considerable research remains to be done on teaching methods for strategies instruction. The amount and timing of explicit instruction needs to be further explored perhaps through simple experiments with strategies for specific language tasks. Similarly, the amount and type of professional development for teachers interested in integrating strategies instruction in their ESL classroom needs greater attention.

This study recommends more research to investigate learners' reading strategies in combination with gender, culture, learning styles and motivation. In conclusion, strategy instruction research is important in assessing learners' strategy use. therefore, there is a need for conducting research that will pave the way for building the theory that seems necessary for more reading strategies work to be relevant to current second language teaching practice and which can be aligned to the current curriculum structures.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

University of Fort Hare

Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: ADU061SMPU01

Project title: Evaluating Reading Strategy Instruction (RSI) On FET Level 2 English Second Language (ESL) learners inthe Eastern Cape, Mtata District

Nature of Project: Masters

Principal Researcher: Nondumiso Yolanda Mpu

Supervisor: Prof EO Adu

Co-supervisor:

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's 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

Professor Gideon de Wet
Dean of Research

23 September 2014

APPENDIX B: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE FET COLLEGE

REQUEST FOR YOUR PERMISSION /CONSENT TO UNDERTAKE A RESEARCH PROJECT TO YOUR COLLEGE.

P.O.BOX 198

COFIMVABA

5310

10 March 2014

Attention.....

.....College.

Dear Sir/Madam

I, Nondumiso Yolanda Mpu am a Masters degree student at the University of Fort Hare (East London Campus). My specialization is in the field of Education at the above mentioned University. A research project is required for the completion of the degree. I herein request your consent to use your Institution to participate in the project.

The title of my research project is: Evaluating Reading Strategy Instruction (RSI) on FET Level 2 English Second Language (ESL) learners in the Eastern Cape: Mtata District

The study aims at evaluating to learners who are English Second Language learners which Reading Strategies Instructions are relevant to their environment inorder to boost their academic performance in future. This is triggered by the outcry that learners at post –matric level today have a decline in the culture of reading books. Data collection will be through questionnaire distribution and observation during their classrooms activities. The study will take two days in a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 80 minutes after the normal teaching time. Both boys and girls will be used for the project. You will be furnished with the necessary documentation that will be used during the project before the proceedings so as to make sure that no ones rights are violated during the study. Participation will always be voluntary and this means that participants may withdraw from the study at anytime if they wish to do so and anonymity will be adhered to. They can do so without incurring any penalties. All the findings will be confidential and the debriefing of participants will be done before leaving the site and the information will be made available at any time. The University of Fort Hare has granted permission for this project. Research tools are attached herewith for your perusal.

Your anticipated positive response by your office in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Mpu N.Y.

Email: mpuyolanda@gmail.com

Contact: 076 988 5310

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE FET COLLEGE

King Sabata Dalindyebo
Further Education and Training College

KING SABATA DALINYEBO FET COLLEGE

R61 Queenstown Road, Cicira Village , Private Bag x 5110, Mtata, 5009 Eastern Cape

Enquiries: Mrs Molock N.

Tel: +27(0)47 505 1000
Date: 17 April 2014

Miss N.Y. Mpu

P.O. Box 198

Cofimvaba

5380

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A THESIS RESEARCH: Evaluating Reading Strategy Instruction (RSI) on FET Level 2 English Second Language (ESL) learners in the Eastern Cape: Mtata District

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.

   Your application to conduct a research in our Further Education and Training College in one of our Campuses is approved based on the following Conditions:

   a. There will be no financial implications for the College.

   b. Institution and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.

   c. You present a copy of the written approval letter or the certificate of your Institution to the College CEO and Counsel before any research is undertaken at any institution within the College.

   d. You will make arrangements concerning your project prior;

   The research may not be conducted during official contact time, as lecturers' schedule should not be interrupted.

e. Should you wish to extend the agreed period after the approval has been granted, an application for your extension must be communicated prior

f. The research is highly condemned during Integrated Systems Assessment Tasks (ISAT)when learners are supposed to be fully engaged in this programme

g. Your research thereof will be limited to the Institution for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected, another written permission must be obtained and be granted before commencement

h. Upon completion of the research, a summary of findings, recommendations or a full report/dissertation/thesis must be submitted to the Administration Office of the College

i. You comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form)

2. The College reserves the right to withdraw the permissionshould there be no compliance to the approval letter and any breach of this contract in Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the College

3. The College CEO and the Counsel wishes you well in your undertaking.

S. SMIT: COLLEGE CEO

APPENDIX D: DECLATION CONSENT TO PARTICIPANTS

DECLARATION

I .....(full names of participant)hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedure for the study:Evaluating Reading Strategy Instruction (RSI) on FET Level 2 English Second Language (ESL) learners in the Eastern Cape: Mtata District

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project at any time that I so desire.

Signature of Participant.....Date.....

Signature of Witneness.....Date.....

Thanking you in advance

Miss N.Y. Mpu

APPENDIX E: LANGUAGE CERTIFICATE

CERTIFICATION

THIS DOCUMENT HEREBY CERTIFIES THAT

'Evaluating Reading Strategy Instruction (RSI) on FET Level 2 English Second Language (ESL) learners in the Eastern Cape, Mtata District'

WRITTEN BY

YOLANDA MPU

Has been professionally proofread by
Lauren Wainwright
(BA Languages & Literature)

4 FEBRUARY 2016