

**TEACHERS' VIEWS ON GRADE 7 READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS
AMONGST ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS: A CASE
STUDY**

By |

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the views of Teachers about reading comprehension skills in grade 7 English Additional Language classrooms in Buffalo City Metropolitan, Eastern Cape. Objectives are to instil the love for reading and enabling learners to successfully learn to read and attain their full potential. The researcher was interested in exploring broader trends in reading comprehension skills, with the intention of contributing possible strategies to address the literacy level in English First Additional Language. The study was framed as qualitative in inquiry; a face-to-face semi-structured interview was used to collect data. The participants comprised of 24 learners and 4 educators. The theoretical framework utilised was Lev Vygotsky's (1979) constructivist theory to analyse data using a qualitative analysis approach. Different tools to verify data, which comprised of semi- structured interview of open-ended questions and document analysis to obtain data from English First Additional Language teachers in four primary schools in the Buffalo City Metropolitan District, were used. Findings indicate English First Additional Language learners are not proficient in the language of teaching and learning because in other public schools mother tongue is additive language, while in other schools it does not exist. The recommendation was that the Department of education needs to introduce a reading module for English First Additional teachers who need training in this area of learning. Another recommendation highlighted by teachers is the revisiting of child development theories that will help teachers have a better understanding about the learners and which strategies to utilise during reading.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, First Additional Language, Reading, Constructivism, Grade 7, Senior phase, Mother tongue

DECLARATION ON COPYRIGHT

I, **Benedictor Ruiters, 200602275**, declare that the study on **“Teachers’ views on grade 7 reading comprehension skills amongst English First Additional Language learners: A case study”** is my own work and has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any university.



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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Ruiters'.

24/03/19

Date

B. Ruiters

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted under my supervision and with my approval.



Professor E.O. Adu (Co-supervisor)

24/03/19

Date



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DEDICATION

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ACRONYMS

BICS	- Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	- Communicative Academic Language Proficiency
CAPS	- Curriculum Assessments Policy Statements
DoE	- Department of Education
EFA	- English For All
GPLMS	- Gauteng Province Literacy Mathematics Strategy
LOLT	- Language of Learning and Teaching
LNS	- Literacy Numeracy Strategy
NRS	- National Reading Strategy
OECD	- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PIRLS	- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PRAESA	- Project for study of Alternative Education in South Africa
SACMEQ	- Southern African Consortium for Mentoring Educational Quality
STARS	- School Transformation and Reform Strategy
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation
ZPD	- Zone of Proximal Development



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the overview and conceptualisation of the phenomena of reading comprehension skills by the world and further explicitly explains the reasons of poor literacy in South Africa. The chapter contextualises the study, which assessed Grade 7 English First Additional Language (EFAL) reading comprehension skills in the Buffalo City Metropolitan District. This chapter also provides the statement of the problem, research questions, purpose of the study, research objectives, and significance of the study and delimitation of the study. Lastly, definition of key terms and the outline of the study are discussed.

1.2 Background to the study

Today's world demands readers who can read more and faster than before. There are now more media in which information is being conveyed, which requires more effective instruction approaches to assist learners to effectively understand the ever increasing variety of textual formats (Morrow and Gambrell, 2003). To overcome this challenge, learners must be fluent readers in order to withstand the demands of the world and the workplace. The world recognises that teaching reading comprehension skills is a challenge; countries have projects to curb the crisis of literacy in their countries.

Reading is a major factor that weighs heavily on the teaching and learning process; therefore, it needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency, particularly in South Africa (DoE, 2011), especially if we are committed to the provision of quality education and of promoting success for every learner. Literacy development must be prioritised by everyone, as this issue hinders the process of learning and teaching when not properly developed (Mudzielwana, 2012). In this way, any factor that prohibits and undermines learners' success must be addressed.

Hence, schools cannot afford to allow this factor to make learners victims of drop-out in the education system. It is in this light that this study is focusing on exploring reading comprehension skills amongst grade 7 English First Additional Language (EFAL) in four primary schools in the East London District. Based on the discussion above, a child is obviously entitled to be successful in education and life. For that child to be successful he/she must master reading. In order, for a child to master reading, he/she needs to grasp the basics of reading (Hunt, 2010). Foundation Phase teachers are facing a huge challenge in the teaching of reading to all the learners and making them believe that reading is a skill that needs to be acquired and enjoyed. The acquisition of reading skills is not the calling out words; it is a critical skill as well as a complex process because reading serves as a bridge to communication and understanding. "Of the entire core comprehensions recognized to contribute to lifelong learning and sustainable development, none is as quite central as the ability to read" (Trudell, Dowd, Piper and Bloch, 2012:12).

As pointed out by the researchers above, learning to read is a contributing factor throughout the learner's lifelong learning as well as to their progress in life and in their careers. As much as reading is one of life skills that are most important in education, this should be purposefully acquired through effective teaching and learning at school level (Mhlongo, 2013). Core comprehensions, phonetic awareness, fluency, decoding, comprehension and vocabulary development are basic reading acquisition skills that help a learner to acquire reading effectively and gain meaning from the text (Mudzielwana, 2012). Reading acquisition skills are required for proficient reading fluency. Fluency is the ability to read smoothly with precision while ensuring the understanding of the text and is one of several pivotal factors for successful reading comprehension.

1.2.1 Finland

Several international countries, like Finland, pride themselves with regards to reading comprehension, hence, that is ranked number one in reading ability. Even then, reading comprehension still remains a challenge in the Finland regardless of their achievements. In Finland reading comprehension, according to Torpa (2016), is considered as a social activity in which parents and grandparents are also invited to motivate and encourage

learners in reading and to read to them. These parents were surprised on how enthusiastic these learners were in listening to their reading. This gave them confidence and encouraged them to put more effort to support the development of literacy (Aerila, Merisuo & Storm, 2017).

In Finland there are two projects that are utilised; one project is meant for junior readers that are struggling and the other group is meant for middle class learners. These two projects are meant to improve the interpretation of literature and to ensure that learners are not bored. During these sessions of reading learners are engaged in literacy lessons activities; as a result, these learners who hated reading and had a negative opinion about homework are now interested in reading and consider this process meaningful (Merisuo, Storm & Soininer, 2012).

Most studies show that engagement with reading and the length of time children spend reading for pleasure correlate most significantly with their reading achievement (Brozo et al., 2008; Chiu & Mc Bride, Chang, 2006; Wigfield et al., 2008). To motivate learners to read, teachers must find ways to stimulate learners' interest to read and bolster their confidence to enhance their reading engagement (Poikkens et al., 2011). International assessment like the Programme for International School Assessment (PISA) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS) show that Finnish children have excellent reading skills. However, Finland shares a common concern with others of girls outperforming boys in reading. Ways to make reading interesting to boys must be found in order to close the widening gap in the reading performance between boys and girls, this must be done to help them find pleasure in reading (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2013); Valijarri et al., 2007).

1.2.2 America

Amongst western countries, America is ranked 41st in reading ability; even though they spent lots of funds on education, outcomes are disappointing. Youth and adult centres are formed to curb the literacy crisis experienced in states like Detroit and Michigan, where 93% (clear majority) of people are illiterate because of poverty.

The youth as centres are of help to youth, as they keep them off the street by being involved in art and boxing. Before these sessions start co-ordinators ensure that learners are assisted with their homework as well as to read for them. Outcomes of these projects have seen a lot of those who found reading dreadful to them finding it enjoyable and beneficial to them. The new studies conducted shows that the problem is getting worse in states like New York. Although in certain states like Mississippi and Rhode islands, there is an improvement in the literacy rate, with this being said, America does not stick out against the other 14 countries that are rated above them in terms of reading ability. In New York there is a project established called “Read to succeed” to develop literacy in the early stages of learning. This literacy programme has no age limit. It involves everyone, who has a low literacy problem. Each group has a different co-ordinator.

1.2.3 Britain

In Britain education is falling behind compared to Chinese education, as a result, Hampshire’s best performing school decided to bring from abroad five Chinese teachers to improve their education level (Wang, 2012). A notable problem is that British children are less disciplined than Chinese children though class size in Britain is smaller (they are 30) than the Chinese class, where there are 50 learners in a class (Lui, 2012). Discipline in China is implemented in Early Childhood stage, learners are taught to listen and not disrupt learning to be successful. Their teachers do not encounter any difficulties in classroom management, as compared to their counterpart’s British teachers who encounter a lot of discipline problems, where learners challenge teachers instead of learning and focus to what they are taught.

1.2.4 Overview of reading on the African continent

In 2004 Kenya introduced English as First Additional Language. Since, then, Kenya has used English as a First Additional Language alongside other languages in the country. There are two approaches used to teach reading in the lower primary grades (Bunyi, 2011). There is no external support for educators in literacy development, neither are there any other initiatives by government to support literacy development, whereas, for

a country to succeed government must play a pivotal role. Currently, the two reading approaches are still used to teach reading for understanding and meaning (Wangia, Magoma and Limboro, 2011). According to Yeats (2011), it is important for Kenyan learners to learn to read in English while they are in lower primary schools, as that can assist them when they reach higher grades. Another research conducted by Crouch, Medina and Mumo (2009) indicated that, in Kenya, reading in English progressed in the early years, especially in poorest schools in Kenya. Interestingly, teachers were supported by the supervisors, who frequently visit schools and assisted teachers with reading methods to be utilised when teaching reading. Bunji, Wangia, Magoma and Limboro (2011) highlighted the fact that, while existing teachers were assisted with reading, new teachers were not afforded orientation programmes, as the assumption was that they were proficient in teaching.

The country with the best education in the Sub-Sahara, Zimbabwe, is rated third in Africa (UNESCO, 2015). Zimbabwe inherited their education system from Britain because it was their colony. Zimbabwe's biggest challenge is dropouts in the ordinary school level, as compared to primary school level, because education is being paid for in this level (Omolewa, 2008). With that said, in financial ratings Zimbabwe is rated 1st with an adult literacy of 93%. Primary education is compulsory in Zimbabwe; the disadvantage with education in this country is accessibility, especially for poor people. Zimbabwe's education level has an upper hand compared to other Sub-Saharan countries because the Cambridge system was adopted and it works for them. Even though the current economy state is dire, education is still prioritised because it's the cornerstone of any country's success.

South Africa has the most documented education system that is underpinned by numerous policies that need proper implementation (*City Press*, 2015). With that said, South Africa's literacy is in dire situation, leading the economy of the country to tatters.

In the past, South African Education was meant to divide the nation, whilst the present education system is trying to unite the nation and to redress the divisions of the past.

Hence, Phatudi, Mhlongo and Spaul (2013) are of the view that not much has been done to save the country's economy.

1.2.5 The benefits of reading

The benefits of reading are so prominent nowadays because reading is the core element in all subjects, regardless of the language in which someone is taught (Katalayi, 2014). Even in tertiary institutions, a learner cannot withstand the challenges of academic life if he/she doesn't possess the strategies and basics of reading. Studies have shown that staying mentally stimulated can slow the progress of (or possibly even prevent) Alzheimer's and Dementia, since the activity of the brain and engagement prevents it from losing power. Reading keeps learners away from mischief (Govender, 2010). Furthermore, a good novel that is well structured can transport you to other realms, while an engaging article will distract you and keep you in the present moment, letting tension drain away and allow you to relax like a stress reducer.

If the learner is struggling with reading,  that learner will find it difficult to retrieve or construct meaning from his previously acquired knowledge, and link knowledge and relate to the ideas expressed in the text and to his schemata.

1.2.6 Schemata and reading comprehension

Schemata is one of the theories that further explain how reading is facilitated by the mind (An, 2013). It emphasises that any text, whether spoken or written, does not by itself carry meaning, but a text enables a reader to make meaning by using previously acquired knowledge. This previously acquired knowledge is called the schemata. It is always about the mind taking the bigger picture and later filling in details. In other words, the organisation of information is a process not an event.

That is why schemata are often referred to as an active, non-passive arrangement of experiences (Vacca & Vacca, 2009). In this instance, the discussion is about EFAL learners who have a different grasp of sounds than first language speakers, and tend not to have difficulty in differentiating spoken language sounds from written language sounds. EFAL learners have a two-way process that takes place cognitively to register

information; as a result, EFAL learners tend to first transfer knowledge in their mother tongue and at a later stage to the language of teaching and learning (Cummins, 2008). Based on the discussions above schemata depends on an individual mental development. Hence, EFAL learners use an indirect route which requires visual word presentation and alteration into auditory equivalence (Rogers, 2010). This then involves the segmenting of words into sections, like sounding each element and then integrating the sounds to produce a word. This method, then, is used by EFAL learners who confront difficult material, or material that is unfamiliar to them, because the words might appear that way (Dixon, 2010). As soon as the EFAL learners increase their reading volume, they develop contextual strategies like skilled learners, but may never completely master them.

One of the most noted criticisms against the schemata is that it allows for more than one interpretation of the material (An, 2013). Hence, learners with underdeveloped schemas can get easily confused because of these interpretations. In other words, one can conclude by saying that two people can have the same schemata for a concept but have different interpretations. In the next section the researcher will discuss reading comprehension as a cognitive process that can further develop reading, exploring what it is and how it affects what learners read.

1.3 Rationale of the study

Researchers established that grade 7 learners of English First Additional Language (EFAL) find it difficult to read a comprehension passage and make meaning (Manyike, 2009). The motivation behind this study is the need to understand the claims made by educators of reading comprehension skills that are used by primary EFAL learners and assess the reading comprehension skills levels. It is also notable that very little research has investigated and evaluated reading comprehension skills amongst EFAL learners in South Africa.

Reading comprehension skills helps a nation to stay informed, we live in an age abundant with information. Hence reading comprehension skills will assist a nation to become informed. This in turn enhances a nations critical skills to look at things beyond face value,

especially when a person is educated. Compared, to poor readers who have low opinions of self-image, efficacy and capabilities. Builds self-esteem are not afraid to take risks to widen their knowledge. There more a nation can read, the lesser the crime and behavioural problems.

Researchers in earlier studies have focused mostly on reading attitudes, rather than focusing on learners' experiences on how to handle intricacies. Some national and international assessments conducted on South African schools' literacy levels are reasons for concern. In promoting literacy, the International Reading Literacy Study (2011), in which 49 other countries participated, revealed that South African grade 5 learners scored on average 80 points below the 500 points international standard. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (LNS) is one of the national assessments conducted in the Western Cape from 2006-2016. This initiative was put in place to curb the poor literacy levels in this province. According to Taylor et al. (2012), the PIRLS study conducted in 2006 and 2011, respectively, showed that South Africa's grade 4s achieved the lowest score of 40% (Howie, 2009) compared to the other 72 countries that formed part of the study.



Hence, in provinces like Gauteng Province, the Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS) was initiated to target 792 underperforming primary schools in the province (DBE, 2012). This initiative was implemented to curb the low literacy level. Hence, this province has a good achievement record in the matriculation results because appropriate action, intervention strategies are done at primary level and the focus is on underperforming primary schools (DoE, 2008a). Mpumalanga province followed suit by implementing the School Transformation and Reform Strategy (STARS) and Kwazulu-Natal Department of Education recently initiated the Literacy Numeracy Strategy (LNS). These initiatives were formed to deal with different issues discovered in the schools of the two provinces and to strengthen literacy and numeracy development.

After the implementation of these initiatives, huge progress has been made in the provinces mentioned above. In the Eastern Cape, the Molteno Project was initiated in 2003-2006 to improve literacy skill in schools and its mission was to change the world through literacy (Pretorius, Jackson, Spaul, 2017). The focus of this project in the Eastern

Cape was to improve the literacy skill in underperforming schools, but the downfall of this project was to focus on urban primary schools only situated in Port Elizabeth, which formed a third of the schools in the whole Eastern Cape. This project would have made a big difference if selection was also made from the rural schools, because the Eastern Cape have several schools situated in deep rural areas that have no access to libraries and technology.

Even then, this project saw 62% of the learners in the project schools correctly matching all the words with the correct picture, while in both control groups just over 50% could not answer these items successfully. Nonetheless, currently there is a continuous campaign started in 2015 by the Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2015) called “Read to lead” to curb the literacy crisis in South Africa which will help millions of learners to read according to their ages. The main aim of this campaign is to create social cohesion and nation building. This is a positive response by government to the regional and international assessment benchmarks. The Minister of Education, Angie Motshekga (2017) states that in fixing performance and changing attitudes towards reading” it must be taken into consideration that not all learners have the same passion about reading, some have a negative attitude towards reading. Hence, this initiative was developed to improve the current state of literacy in South Africa.

1.3.1 State of reading comprehension skills in the senior phase grade 7 EFAL learners

The researcher decided to explore how teachers utilize reading strategies to improve EFAL learners’ reading comprehension skills in grade 7. The researcher decided to approach the research by finding out the views of teachers on reading comprehension skills amongst EFAL learners in grade 7 before reading, during reading and after reading. The researcher further observed how these strategies influence teachers’ classroom teaching of reading comprehension. Given this kind of background, the researcher decided to conduct a research on teachers’ views on reading comprehension skills amongst grade 7 EFAL learners.

1.3.2 The focus of the study was selected for the following reasons:

One of the reasons underlying the reading failure is historical, political and economic in that there is a bimodal distribution of achievement (Taylor, Fleisch and Schindler 2013). This means that quantitative data results were statistically distributed and divided into two clusters. This was done especially to measure the achievement of racial groups through statistical distribution in the past. The first and majority category (70%-80%) was that of South African primary school learners from disadvantaged areas.

Learners in these schools “are completing their primary schooling without being able to read fluently,” in their school’s instructional language (Spaull, 2012). Many of the learners from disadvantaged areas (Afrikaans and isiXhosa) township school left schooling at an early age because they could not cope with the demands of schooling. Since the end of apartheid more Africans are moving from primary to secondary school, but the rates of graduation from secondary school have barely shifted since 1994. Perhaps the biggest challenge is to fix the basic education system and further, expand post-school training opportunities in colleges and universities (South African Info, 2012) so that there can be an increase in the number of people, who qualify and get skills to improve the economy of the country.

Evidence increasingly suggests that not only do resources need to be allocated better from salaries to learning materials but also that the total envelope for education is not high in comparative terms, certainly when measured in expenditure per learner (Bhorat, Ncube, 2014). So, education commitments could increase. The fundamental challenge is to improve the quality of management of schools and the provincial administration systems which will allow for more rapid improvements in teacher performance. Given the global trend in returns to education, a policy priority for the government must lift the lower end of the distribution of educational attainment, so that those currently at lower incomes can benefit from the rising returns (Bhorat and Ncube, 2014). While the government spends a relatively high share of GDP (4%) on education, the outcomes are disappointing. Measured in standard school quality benchmark tests, South Africa’s schools perform poorly by global standards; measured in proportion to the cost of

education, the result is particularly poor (Muller, 2013). Muller and Mncube (2013) argue that the apartheid spatial framework legacy extraordinarily damaged education and the economy of South Africa and is a further key challenge that has not yet been adequately addressed. Worldbank (2012) further states cities need to be made into more efficient economic activity hubs and more liveable places for the poor. The effective implementation of housing and public transport policies within a reforming spatial development framework is critical, city by city.

If the gap between the demand and supply of labour remains so large, special measures must be taken to reduce the negative social effects of widespread unemployment; especially among young people, there needs to be more initiatives that are put into place like skills development and entrepreneur initiative. Based on the reasons stated above, reading comprehension has been highlighted as crisis amongst South African learners. Even recent national and international comparative data have respectively indicated that the problem is ongoing (PIRLS 2006, 2016 and ANA, 2011).

Researchers need to face politicians and investors on the issue of quality education and establish the possible reasons that are the cause of the failure in reading. Teaching in mother tongue in the early age of EFAL learners can be beneficial for EFAL learners in understanding other languages better compared to the use of the foreign language (English) (Williams, 2010). This is costly in terms of the economy as more books and funds are going needed to translate into and rewrite in other languages as well. Research states that additional language acquisition occurs most successfully when a child master his first language before learning in the additional language, an approach which enhances the acquisition of speech, listening and reading as well.

1.3.3 Culture of reading and reading comprehension

The lack of a culture of reading in South Africa is regarded as one of the nation's reasons for failure in reading. A culture of reading refers to an environment in terms of which South Africa has embraced the habit of reading in our personal lives and becoming intensely engaged with the written word in its diverse forms (Mda, 2015). Reading becomes a culture when it has been internalised into a way of life and has become a

popular form of family entertainment. Proficiency in reading and writing does not necessarily amount to reading as a cultural practice. There are many South Africans who have not read a single book since leaving high school or university 10 years ago (Probyn, 2010). They have the ability, but do not care to use it because reading is not part of their way of life. A culture of reading can be cultivated at any age, though like all habits, good and bad, it is best instilled early in childhood (Blickenstaff, 2013). A culture of reading produces an engaged and motivated reader who is not reading for utilitarian purposes; for instance, to pass an exam, to prepare and present a report to the boss or to a prospective client, to secure employment, and myriad other situations that may compel us to read. We are talking here of reading for pleasure, for edification, for entertainment, and for fulfilment. However, Mda, (2015) and Manyike (2009) state that this is difficult for many South Africans. The national survey into the reading and book-reading behaviour of adult South Africans 2016 commissioned by the South African Book Development Council found that 60% are living in households without a single book (Manyike, 2009). It notes the obvious, that poorer households with lower levels of education are less likely to have books in their homes. Only 5% of adults with children in their home read to their children.



Apparently, the African continent is known as an oral nation that tells stories verbally more than reading. According to Foncha and Sivabrumaniam (2014), there is a difference between the nature of oral tradition and the nature of literate tradition. In Africa reading is viewed as an abnormal and anti-social activity as well as connected only to educational purposes (exams); such attitudes do not promote the development of a reading culture but rather make reading a private and solitary activity. Research suggests that a reading culture be established at home because home is a comfort area where a child grasps easily when given attention by his or her parents (Commeyras and Mazile, 2011). This means that learners and their parents nowadays need to have some basic knowledge of inter-cultural communication skills to cope with English wherever they go (Dairen and Asselin, 2011). Hence, this means that more parents, teachers and families must instil the love of reading. Children should be encouraged to maintain the strong desire to read; reading keeps them away from negative peers and helps them develop. If reading is

introduced as early as possible to children, South Africa would not be highlighting reading as a reason for failure.

1.3.4 Teachers' view on reading

Teachers are having organizational issues which have an influence on reading because of the big class sizes and this becomes a problem to both parties that are involved in reading (Mannase, 2010). During a reading session, a teacher creates a rapport with learners, and walks in between their desks to give attention to each learner. When there is not enough space for movement this will not happen with bigger or overcrowded class sizes. Effective classroom space and organisation, however, promotes an atmosphere where the learners are comfortable and aware of what options they have in the completion of their tasks and are more likely to produce better and effective reading results. From experience, it is difficult to be an effective teacher of reading if the class total is bigger than the school of 1 to 40 ratio class size (DBE, 2011). Teachers who face such situations find it extremely difficult to promote group tasks, produce good reading tasks, and produce good reading results and, lastly, give individual attention.



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DBE (2012) claims that many educators blame government for frequently changing the curriculum, saying that the curriculum is given to them in “unstructured and inexplicit” documents and “irreparable damage that cannot be done to a system in a relatively short period of time.” Nonetheless, the new curriculum is addressing the issues and closing the loopholes that the previous curriculum could not cover, and consistent outcomes and performances of learners are testimony to this improvement, although there are still challenges that are faced in terms of literacy development (Spaul, 2015). Another view teachers hold is that of early transition to English from mother tongue children. They suggest learners who are first additional language speakers (L2) of English (DBE, 2011) and who did not enter early into formal schooling will not succeed compared to their counterparts who were in longer mother tongue programs are strengthened by good teaching in English as a subject, or mother tongue for six years of schooling with dual medium bilingual education from the seventh year of schooling. These latter learners are more likely to succeed than their counterparts (Tarchi, 2010).

1.3.5 Teacher competency

The National Reading Strategy (NRS) (2008) states that research has shown that even foundation phase teachers do not know how to implement reading properly; what this effectively means is that there is a lack of knowledge of reading strategies. Most teachers across South Africa are said to have an under-developed understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing. Mazinyo (2017) highlights that “most often teachers know one reading method”. This is a concern that needs to be addressed; teachers need empowerment to know more than one reading strategy to accommodate different learning styles. Hence, many teachers have resorted to repeated reading and rote learning because they were not explicitly trained in reading. Teachers’ knowledge of the subjects they teach has been questioned in both regional tests (PIRLS, 2011) and national survey (Taylor, Fleisch, Schindler, 2012) conducted.

This study revealed that there was inadequate provision of teachers trained to teach English first additional language, too often English in disadvantaged schools is taught by additional language speakers. This is “caused by marked teacher shortage” in South Africa that needs to be confronted (OECD 2013:67). As highlighted above, educators who are instructing English in the mainstream must possess numerous reading strategies to utilize them to teach learners to use during reading (Cummins, 2008). This means that teachers need to be equipped with proper teaching methods to implement in their teaching. It would not help having trained teachers possessing these skills, if they are not aware of how and when to utilize them to English First Additional language learners (Mhlongo, 2013). Therefore, government has a duty to empower educators through further study in language.

Research has mostly focused on first language learners’ reading proficiency because they are strong readers in their own mother tongue as compared to their counterparts’ EFAL learners, who are struggling to be on the same level as the mother tongue speakers of this foreign language (Banda, 2010). First additional learners experience a two-way stream, when processing information about the teaching and learning language. Educators need to be specialists in the field of Languages to improve teaching and learning (Pillay, 2011). The department has a huge challenge to ensure this is taking

place. If, this is not taken into consideration, the low level of literacy will not improve in South Africa. Hence, this study focuses on teachers' views on reading comprehension skills amongst grade 7 EFAL in four primary schools in the East London Education District to curb literacy level.

1.3.6 Learners' lack of interest in reading

The reading problems among grade 7 learners are made worse because of their demography, especially learners in the disadvantaged areas where poverty is rife, and there is lack of motivation and limited English proficiency. This makes some educators think learners are incapable of meeting academic standards (Makoe, 2014; DoE, 2008; Pretorius, 2009). At some levels, learners are superficial (and pretend) to appear to have mastered the language but then they lag academically when the language use must be applied. To assist these learners, educators tend to code switch and this is invaluable in assisting learners through the transition (Manlike, 2009). What teachers should know is that second language learning comes with a degree of anxiety, which may be one of the reasons why learners fail to master a second language.



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Another challenge that the grade 7 learners face is the level of English used in the primary school textbooks which results in the lack of interest in reading. Karolia (2015) examined the English used in textbooks and found that it is above their level. She found that learners were not sufficiently prepared to deal with the range of language demands made by textbooks. She concluded that the learners were unable to read their English textbooks let alone use them to gain new knowledge. The learners' inability to use English at primary school level effectively means that they lacked stimulation for further development (Klapwijk, 2011). Thus, to make subject matter tangible to learners who use English as their language of learning without having an adequate grasp of it, teachers continue to set tasks in the classrooms at the most basic level. There is little attempt to develop learners' higher language or mental skills, leaving children with lists of de-contextualized words in their class work books and limited reading and writing skills. This means that the development of language skills is a major issue in learning, and that past educational practices have not enabled learners to adequately develop the language skills they need to learn (Mkhohlwa, 2015) for scholastic success.

1.3.7 Parents' educational background

Parents' level of education determines the level of aspiration for their children and, consequently, parental involvement in the education of their children and the family value system are important factors. According to Nqoma (2015), "children of highly educated parents" benefit more from education, their parents can assist in their learning. As a result, these children make more progress than those who are not fully supported by parents.

Parental involvement entails their assistance towards high scholastic achievements, offering academic guidance and the provision of resources on school-related tasks. It is obvious that such parents are more interested in managing and emphasising the educational activities of their children rather than pleasurable things like TV programmes, choice of books and magazines (Phokungwana, 2012:47). When parents cannot speak or understand English, the learners' acquisition of English is not supported and reinforced after school hours. Parents may feel ill-equipped to assist with homework.

1.3.8 Education system



South Africa has the most unequal school system in the world, says Spaul (2012) of the University of Stellenbosch. The gap in test scores between the top 20% of schools and the rest is wider than in almost every other country. Out of 200 black pupils who start school just one can expect to do well enough to study engineering, while compared to their counterparts' white children you cannot expect the same result. Many of the problems have their roots in apartheid. The Bantu Education Act of 1953 set out to ensure that whites received a better education than blacks, who were, according to Hendrik Verwoerd, the future prime minister then in charge of education, to be educated only enough to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (Christie, 2008: 73). Black pupils received about a fifth of the funding of white peers. They were taught almost no science. Most independent church-run schools that provided a good education in black areas were shut.

After Nelson Mandela became president in 1994, his government expanded access to schooling. It also replaced a school system segregated by race with one divided by

wealth (DBE, 2012). Schools in poorer areas receive more state funding but schools in richer areas can charge fees on top. In theory, poor (public) schools must admit pupils, even if their parents cannot afford the fees. In practice, they are fortresses of privilege. There are still about 500 schools built from mud, mainly in the Eastern Cape. Despite all the efforts and changes that are done by the democratic government, the education system is still facing challenges in language, because the literacy level of learners from grade 4 to 5 is not at the expected level internationally in the international and National benchmarks (DBE, 2012). Regardless of the discussions above, the democratic government continues with initiatives like ANA (Annual National Assessment), Drop all and read and National Reading Strategy (NRP, 2008) aimed to improve the standard of education, particularly in disadvantaged and under resourced schools. All these changes in education impacted negatively on the teaching of the curriculum (Nel and Muller, 2010).

Teachers who must implement these changes are not trained to do so, especially the phenomenon of reading. Nasvaria, Pascoe, and Kathard (2011) state that there were barriers in the school system which hampered the successful teaching of English reading in the school system. Barriers included lack of support for teachers from Heads of Departments in schools. As much as the DoE (2008) supplies schools with library material that needs to be utilised during teaching and learning, ANA is the only tool that has been continuously used for the past ten years to measure the deficits and strengths of the curriculum. At the beginning of ANA, improvement was seen, but as years progressed the outcomes and results were criticised by many thinkers for not reflecting the real situation in the classroom (Spaul, 2015).

The recent altercation (*Mail and Guardian*, 2015) between the department and educator unions about the issue of ANA was unpleasant because the department could not stick to the original agreement, which shows signs of unresolved issues between the education system and the educator unions.

Legislature, on the other hand, intervenes on how teachers must do their jobs; meanwhile, they must ensure that quality education takes place in poor background schools. As much as ANA started to assess learners from grade1 up to grade 9 and it is in alignment with

the workbooks and all the textbooks that are used in these grades, the question that still remains is where is the education system lacking? Is it the will or commitment by teachers or is it their competence that causes the results to be so low?

1.3.9 Language policy in ex-model C schools

The language policy of these primary schools is bilingual and the language of teaching and learning is either Afrikaans or English. The dominant language of conversation in the staffroom is Afrikaans. 40% of the learners are isiXhosa home language speakers, while 55% are African home language speakers and 5% are English home language speakers (Archer, Sherman, Coe and Howie, 2010). These schools are situated in different settings, where Afrikaans or Xhosa is the dominant language and learners come from disadvantaged background families. In the additional language used in these schools, learners have difficulty identifying their culture, as the school culture differs from their own culture, as they practice a different culture at school from what they do at home.

No support of home language causes a disruption of family patterns that result in the learner holding different beliefs and opinions from that of their parents (Coetzee, 2008). So, these schools are contravening the South African Language Policy, which promotes multilingualism through additive bilingualism. This means the learners referred to have a right to be taught in their home language, “where ever possible” (DoE, 2008:24). Ebrahim (2010) rightfully states that children learn readily and effectively in a second-/additional language, if they are taught to read and write in their own language first. All cultures, religions and languages should be valued in classrooms (DoE, 2008b). If South Africa hopes to produce learners who have good self-esteem and respect for others, this is of great importance to ensure they reach the expected outcomes, especially in South Africa with the current state of literacy level and the educational language requirements as espoused by the language policy.

1.4 The problem statement

South Africa has an illiteracy rate of 12% for people between 15 years and above, with about 30% of adults reported to be functionally illiterate (UNESCO, 2009). The seventh graders are found to read at least three years below their expected decoding and

comprehension proficiency of 28% (ANA, 2011). Notable is the fact that government spends up to 20% of the national budget on educational programmes, and yet there are learners who are not confident readers and writers. Based on the discussion above, it is evident that there is a poor level of literacy across the world and in South Africa.

The inability of EFAL grade 7 learners to utilize reading comprehension skills across the curriculum in schooling is a concern to be reckoned with (DBE, 2012). Trending currently across South Africa, especially in the public schools, reading skills are introduced later in primary school levels, whereas in ex-model C school's learners reading skills are introducing at an early stage of a child's learning. Learners can then be equipped with the skills and grow up being able to differentiate skills that are text orientated from those that are not, and know those that work for them (Pretorius et al., 2016). Drawing from these discussions, there is no balance in the education system in South Africa and in the Eastern Cape Province.

Hence, this study seeks to explore learners' reading comprehension skills in grade 7 learners and the reading strategies that are implemented to deal with the problem to help improve grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in preparation for their entry into grade 8, which is the high school entry level. It is assumed that grade 7 learners are meant to be very proficient readers with good reading comprehensive understanding and skills (Archer, 2010). However, this is not so in underprivileged schools in the Buffalo City Metropolitan Education District. Hence, the need for such a study to inform the cluster as to the pedagogical transformation possibly required in the cluster to strive towards best practice in EFAL learning.

1.5 Research questions

1.5.1 Main research question

What are teachers' views about English First Additional Language learners' reading comprehension skills in grade 7?

1.5.2 Sub-research questions

- a) Why do teachers claim that First Additional Language learners are not proficient in English?
- b) What challenges do teachers experience with English First Additional Language grade 7 learners?
- c) What effective reading strategies can improve grade 7 English First Additional Language learners' reading comprehension skills?

1.6 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are:

- ❖ To understand reading challenges encountered by EFAL learners in the teaching of reading comprehension skills.
- ❖ To understand claims made by educators of EFAL learners' lack of proficiency in English.
- ❖ To empower and develop educators to understand the depth of literacy development to help learners reach their full potential.



1.7 Purpose of the study

This study seeks to investigate the educational practice of reading comprehension in EFAL teachers and learners as well as its implications for social and critical literacy in four selected primary schools in the Buffalo City Metropolitan education district. The motivation behind this study is to understand the reading comprehension skills of EFAL learners and their responses when dealing with reading comprehension texts.

Most importantly, grade 7 learners must know the importance of reading with understanding, and understand how to utilize reading comprehension skills within the text.

1.8 Significance of the study

This study will be significant for reading achievement in South Africa, especially to the officials in the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Education where this study is

based. Literacy specialists will benefit from the outcomes and results of the study and that will add to the body of knowledge on literacy development. It is hoped that the findings of the study will hopefully inform and improve English First Additional Language (EFAL) teaching and assessment of reading in under-resourced primary schools by highlighting some of the factors that affect students' performance and their responses. Furthermore, the study will be able to help learners to use different reading strategies to acquire English reading proficiency.

The study intends to provide recommendations based on the findings to help policy makers and empower primary school teachers who teach this skill in the English language, thereby enabling learners to reach their full potential and understanding the difficulties that they encounter during this process. It is expected that this study will provide invaluable information on the process of comprehension which may feed into policy discussions on literacy development.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

The study is limited to four primary schools in the Buffalo City Metropolitan District in the Eastern Cape. It focuses on grade 7 (Afrikaans and Xhosa) learners using English First Additional Language (EFAL) as the medium of instruction. The schools have learners of bilingual background because they admitted children from other multilingual surrounding areas. These four primary schools are located around impoverished areas that are surrounded by informal settlements, which are a stone throw away from these schools. The total number of learners who participated in this study is 24 learners.

1.10 Operational definitions of key concepts

The following terms are defined in the context of the study:

Literacy: It is the ability to use available symbol systems that are fundamental to comprehending and composing for making and communicating meaning and knowledge (Lanks, 2011). It is not just about the ability to read and write, but it is also about the ability to use these skills. Even so, literacy affects our daily lives; it affects the way we think, our work income and how we fit into society (PIRLS, 2011). In literacy development,

vocabulary extension is the natural and necessary bridge between oral language development (which encompasses listening and speaking skills) and literacy. Furthermore, literacy becomes comprehensible when the vocabulary involved in the reading is identified and taught directly or through context (DoE, 2008a). This also involves purposeful reading and writing activities. Individuals do not learn to read by reading just twice a week. This must be a continuous activity that takes place every day. By developing literacy, learners acquire the vocabulary of the target language and then transfer the skills involved in reading from their first language to the target language.

Reading: This is a combination of different processes that can be referred to as functional components of reading or the 'what' of reading. Reading is a rapid, efficient, comprehending, interactive, strategic, flexible, purposeful, evaluative, learning, and linguistics process (Grabe, 2009). Constant exposure to different texts makes a learner fluent, reach automaticity and gain a better understanding of the text. Jhingran (2011:17) affirms that "reading is a foundational skill on which all formal education depends". Reading is not solely the skill that makes a learner succeed without writing, because if something is not clearly written that reading would not make any meaning to the reader. Hence, mastering the basic skills of reading is prominent in a learner's life and in academic achievement as well.

Reading comprehension: This is the ability to read a text, process it and understand its meaning. An individual's ability to comprehend a text is influenced by his/her traits and skills, one of which is the ability to make inferences (Mboacha, 2015). Reading comprehension also encourages learners to become more responsible for their learning, once they have mastered the strategy.

Although reading comprehension proficiency is vital for learners to be successful in their academic career, South African studies have revealed that this reading skill is severely under developed in primary school learners (Aleksandra, 2012). Reading comprehension should be developed thoroughly in primary and secondary school because this is a skill needed for tertiary level. If learners' reading skills are under developed they might struggle to cope with the different texts that they are going to be exposed to in tertiary education.

Before students are exposed to these strategies, teachers need to model and demonstrate them as well as be equipped with them. As research has shown, reading comprehension is not a single step acquired easily. It is complex and involves teaching, thinking, past experiences and knowledge (Pretorius, Jackson, McKay, Murray and Spaul, 2016), although the foundation of reading comprehension lies in word identification and decoding. These strategies need to be implemented so that learners can cope with the difficulties they encounter with the text. This involves knowing and understanding what is being read and the meaning of the words and engaging. The relationship of past experiences to reading, thinking and reading theories and other accompanying theories will be further discussed below.

Comprehension: Comprehension is a process that involves the interaction of a wide range of cognitive skills and processes that are in many occasions where difficulties arise that may lead to comprehension failure (Lipka, 2010). Comprehension on its own cannot be gained without grasping the fundamental stages of reading. Comprehension strategies must be utilised.



Multilingualism: It advocates for the acceptance and recognition of linguistic diversity in order “to ensure social cohesion and avoid the disintegration of societies” and handle languages in contrast, as it leads to a mastery of several of them (Makoe, 2014:34). Language learning in some multilingual contexts could be an integrative and instrumental process. Multilingualism is the most sophisticated approach to handle languages in contrast, as it leads to a mastery of several of them.

In Africa multilingualism is normality because it is everywhere and thus cultural diversity is an asset (UNESCO, 2010). According to the latest research in language learning in multilingual contexts, many researchers (Cummins, 2008; Jessner, 2008; and Ouane, 2009) claim that languages should not be separated from each other but drawn upon so that learners can develop language awareness. Several languages should be learnt and the respective cultures simultaneously, which helps EFAL learners to understand the complementarity which exist among languages and cultures and become skilful communicators in multilingual settings.

First Additional Language: In the South African context First additional language means a language that it is additional to the learner's mother tongue (DoE, 2008b). The curriculum for the subject assumes that learners do not necessarily have knowledge about the language when enrolling for it. First additional language refers to the language proficiency level that reflects the basic intercultural and interpersonal communication skills needed in social situations and the cognitive academic skills essential for learning across the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2011c).

Mother tongue: Mother tongue is referred to as a language that a child is exposed to from birth, from their parents and their surroundings and dominant in their community. Sometimes mother tongue is referred to as first language, meaning the language a person learnt to communicate. In South Africa there are 11 languages and all of them are mother tongue to some people (DBE, 2011). The South African constitution allows EFAL learners to be educated in their first language (Home language) at times. Mother tongue is a language through which a child discovers kinship with other children and with people around him; for the purpose of this study, mother tongue is referred to Afrikaans & IsiXhosa dominant language in the circuit of Buffalo City Metropolitan District in the Eastern Cape. In this study, two schools under research are also taught in IsiXhosa and the other two in Afrikaans as their mother tongue.

Grade 7: In the South African context, grade 7 is regarded as a final grade in primary school level (exit grade) to high school. The age of learners who are studying in this grade ranges between 11, 12 and 13 years. Grades 7s are treated as seniors at primary school because they are monitoring school behaviour during break times and control learner interaction (DoE, 2008b).

They become prefects who watch smaller learners not to endanger themselves and prevent the bullying of smaller learners by bigger learners. When learners reach grade 7 some have reached the adolescent stage. In grade 7 learners are introduced to subjects that they are going to be exposed to in high school, such as history, geography and EMS.

Senior Phase: The General Education Band is divided into three phases, Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase and Senior Phase, respectively, as well as in two bands,

primary and secondary school. The Senior Phase consists of grade 7 to 9. It starts in primary school but is regarded as an institution that operates on its own, not attached to the rest of the schooling institution.

1.10.1 Literature review

Learning to read should be the most important achievement in a learner's life because a child connects with the wider community; as with all languages, it is a complex interaction between text and the reader (Van der Vijver, 2014). In the process of reading, oral language (communication) and writing are instructional language strategies that are interwoven, hence they need to be integrated in all subject areas and encouraged at every opportunity.

By doing so, learners become proficient readers and this develops them further in oral and writing skills. The foundations of good reading are the same for all children, regardless of their gender, background, or special learning needs (Doganay, Ashirimbetova, and Davis (2013). All children use the same processes in learning to read, although some will need more help than others and may need more instruction in one reading skill than another, but all children must ultimately master the same basic skills for fluency and comprehension in reading because reading is a key skill in the context of learning.

1.11 Research design and methodology

This research study was underpinned by these various research questions:

Main research question

- ❖ What are teachers' views about English First Additional Language learners' reading comprehension skills in grade 7?

1.12 Qualitative research approach

This study was guided by the qualitative research approach. This study did not attempt to measure the performance of grade 7 EFAL; instead, it focused on their ability to utilize reading comprehension skills during reading (Mkhohlwa, 2015). It is thus a qualitative

case study that investigated the teachers' views on grade 7 EFAL reading comprehension skills. While the focus was on grade 7 EFAL learners the study may well be relevant to some Intermediate and Senior Phase teachers. The researcher also investigated the classroom practices of grade 7 EFAL teachers when teaching reading comprehension during reading lessons (Mazinyo, 2017). The research did so to find out how teachers teach reading comprehension skills to EFAL learners. For learning to be more effective, learners must be exposed to more reading, whether they are home language or first additional language learners.

The teaching of reading comprehension skills exposes learners to various text orientated skills to assist EFAL learners with text reading. These skills assist learners in gathering more information and provide them with skills to read for various purposes. For the researcher to gather the information shared above, she had to use various tools to collect data. The tools that were utilized were classroom observation, teacher interviews and document analysis. This study was conducted for the reasons previously stated above.

1.13 Sampling



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The research study is a case study of grade 7 teachers' views in four primary schools to explore and understand the teaching of reading comprehension skills in the Buffalo City Metropolitan District in the Eastern Cape. The researcher decided to utilise purposive sampling as a method of selecting participants and unit analysis. The four public schools, each with four grades 7s, participated in the study.

This study focussed on the four (government) schools and one teacher per school in the Buffalo City Metropolitan District of the Eastern Cape. Thus, not all grade 7 learners and teachers at these schools of Buffalo City Municipality Metropolitan circuit 14. The research took a purposive sample that included four schools that were close to the University of Fort Hare were the researcher studies.

1.14 Data collection method

Data collection methods are methods used to collect raw data from the participants involved in this study. According to Stake (2010:89), in a qualitative research, data collection includes observation, interviews, documentary analysis and artefacts

gathering. The data collection techniques used in this study were in-depth individual interviews with four English teachers, and observation of four grade 7 educators and document analysis of EFAL grade 7 learners reading comprehension test scripts. Data collection focused on how reading is taught and assessed. The instruments used for data collection were interview schedules and observation. Data was collected on the management of teaching and learning through interviews with the grade 7 English teachers. On how reading is taught and assessed, data was collected through observation of teachers' lesson presentations and the reading comprehension test documents of learners were analysed.

The objective for gathering data from these documents was to validate curriculum implementation (Creswell, 2009). During both the interviews and the observations, the researcher could see and hear things and record the findings rather than rely solely on the subjects' responses to questions. This generated a triangulation of data gathered to enhance its validity and strengthen subsequent analysis.

1.14.1 Observation



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Observation is the construction of a picture of what transpires during the classroom practices (Wahyuni, 2012). There are other types of observations, participant observations, complete observer and active participant. The researcher observed the content taught, teaching strategies and the teaching resources. All those were observed in relation to reading and writing.

This was done through complete Observation. The researcher chose to be a complete observer because that would influence the outcome of the observations.

1.14.2 Classroom observations

The researcher adopted a naturalistic approach to studying teachers' techniques of teaching reading comprehension in the classroom on several occasions (Govender, 2009). It allowed the researcher to observe what happened in the classroom pertaining to reading comprehension over time. The researcher chose to be a non-participant observer because the researcher did not want to have an influence over the participating teachers (Stake, 2010). The researcher wanted to have a chance to observe the

interactions in the classroom without influencing the teachers, giving them a chance to act more realistically.

1.14.3 Interviews

Interviews are face-to-face conversations between two individuals or a group of individuals who are asked questions on a phenomenon (Stake, 2010). Different opinions and responses are gathered by the researcher from the participants, in one setting from participants who have lived and experienced the phenomena under discussion. This is known as a focus group. There are different types of interviews, semi-structured interviews, structured interviews and focus group interviews. In this study semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with English First Additional Language teachers in a school. In semi-structured interviews, the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants using structured questions that intend to get the views and opinions from the participants (Creswell, 2009). An in-depth interview is an approach which involves one-on-one interviews in which individual respondents are questioned at length about issues and experiences.



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1.14.4 Individual teacher interviews

Individual interviews with teachers were conducted. The individual interviews gathered in-depth information about teachers' knowledge and strategies on reading comprehension (Yin, 2009). They also provided an important level of professional reflection and increased the credibility of the classroom observation.

Teachers also raised their concerns about the learners' reading comprehension skills level in grade 7. However, some highlighted their faith in the education system and progress made thus far.

1.14.5 Content analysis

Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. This is when literature and documents on the teaching of reading comprehension skills were reviewed, as these documents informed

the researcher about the emphasis on the teaching of reading comprehension skills in the South African context (Wahyuni, 2012) based on the South African policy documents on the teaching of reading comprehension in the Senior Phase. Content analysis is divided into two divisions that follow. Traditionally, content analysis has most often been thought of in terms of conceptual analysis. In conceptual analysis, a concept is chosen for examination, and the analysis involves quantifying and tallying its presence.

Also known as thematic analysis although this term is somewhat problematic, given its varied definitions in current literature - see Palmquist, Carley and Dale (2013) while Stake (2010) states that the focus is on looking at the occurrence of selected terms within a text or texts, although the terms may be implicit as well as explicit. Conceptual analysis begins with identifying research questions and choosing a sample or samples (Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas, 2013).

Once chosen, the text must be coded into manageable content categories. The process of coding is basically one of selective reduction. By reducing the text to categories consisting of a word, set of words or phrases, the researcher can focus on, and code for, specific words or patterns that are indicative of the research question.

1.14.6 Document analysis

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic (Bowen, 2009). These are used as additional data collection sources as evidence of the study (Mpiti, 2016).

Analysing documents incorporates coding content into themes like how focus group or interview transcripts are analysed (Bowen, 2009). A rubric can also be used to grade or score a document. There are three primary types of documents (O'Leary, 2014):

Public Records: The official, ongoing records of an organization's activities (Yin, 2009). Examples include student transcripts, mission statements, annual reports, policy manuals, student handbooks, strategic plans, and syllabi.

Personal Documents: First-person accounts of an individual's actions, experiences, and beliefs (Cresswell, 2008). Examples include calendars, e-mails, scrapbooks, blogs, Facebook posts, duty logs, incident reports, reflections/journals, and newspapers.

Physical Evidence: This means physical objects found within the study setting (often called artefacts) (Cohen, 2008). Examples include flyers, posters, agendas, handbooks, and training materials. In the case of this study, reading comprehension is utilised to collect evidence because reading comprehension skills are text orientated skills.

1.15 Chapter demarcation

This study encompasses six chapters that are outlined as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic that is investigated. It discusses the background, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, delimitations and the significance of the study. It also addresses the aims and objectives of the study, research question and provides definition of terms



Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter discusses the literature that is reviewed in this study. English as lingua franca and constructivism are the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study, as well as related literature.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter explains the overview of the methodology used in this study. It entails the research design and data gathering tools. Qualitative methods were used to interpret data as well analyse data. A case study design was followed in this study and is discussed and justified. Issues of ethics, credibility, confidentiality and anonymity are also dealt with.

Chapter 4: Data analysis and findings

This chapter interprets and analyses the raw data collected from observations, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. This is done through brief presentations to contextualise and focus on answering the research questions.

Chapter 5: Recommendations, limitations and conclusions

This chapter is an extension of teachers and learners' experiences of reading comprehension in English from the previous chapter. The chapter discusses the underlying issues and findings. The conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study are identified and discussed.

1.16 Summary

This chapter aimed to familiarize readers with the background to the study and stated the research question and research aim, namely “Teachers’ views about reading comprehension skills of grade 7 EFAL learners in the research area”. Chapter 2 will discuss literature on language and new developments in the teaching of reading in a second language.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on language instruction in South African schools. Literature will be reviewed about English as an international language of communication, language of business and social practice (DBE, 2012). Discussions below will highlight concerns about the way in which additional language learning takes place in most South African schools and the tendency of First Additional Language instructions and reasons for its prevalence among black South Africans. There is also focus on how additional language instruction should be practiced, as well as the negative consequences of this. Language policies in South Africa and practice as set out by the Department of Education (DoE) as well as literacy in relation to Curriculum Assessments Policy Statements (CAPS) are outlined as well.

Included in this section are discussions on the differences between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), as advocated by Cummins (2008). Readers' attention will be turned to ways to improve reading in South Africa.

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 The socio-constructivism theory

The theoretical framework provides the lens through which research is viewed. Niewehuis (2011: 56) states that, "A theoretical framework can be thought of as a map or travel plan". When planning a journey in unfamiliar countries one maps as much knowledge as possible about the best way to travel, using previous experience and the accounts of others who have been on similar trips. Hence, the following framework is found suitable for this study and underpins it.

Vygotsky's (1981) description of how learning occurs gives us a fuller understanding as to why home language maintenance is so important for learning.

His theory saw speech as central to cognitive development and learning, claiming that constructivism serves as mediation in learning. The essential feature of learning is that of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), awakening a variety of internal developmental processes that can operate only when the child is interacting with people in his /her environment and in co-operation with his/her peer (Siyepu, 2013). Fundamental to his theory is his views on speech and cognitive development and his notion of concept development.

The zone of proximal development contends that mental functions that are beyond an individual's current level must be performed in collaboration with other people before they are achieved independently (McLeod, 2012). Thus, a teacher's most critical function is facilitating children's literacy development to demonstrate various uses of reading and writing and to help children use them, such as making use of several instructional strategies to fit the needs and interests of their students. Enabling students to develop content knowledge and concepts when they are being educated in a language in which they have limited proficiency is not easy (Winter & Poehner, 2012). Teachers must perform a variety of tasks and roles to ensure that students acquire the skills and knowledge in the school curriculum at a level commensurate with those students who are learning it in their native language. To do this the teacher must be skilled in negotiating meaning; they must have well-developed skills in monitoring school performance, they must be experts in instructional decision making, and they must serve as a role model for the use of language.

2.3 Constructivism

Constructivists argue that humans generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and their ideas. This theory is based on the premise that learners construct their own perspective of the world through individual experiences and schema, and this enables them to solve problems in ambiguous situations (Mergel, 2011).

A major influence of the rise of constructivism has been the theories of reading and research into human development of Vygotsky (Schunk, 2008).

According to constructivists, learning should be situated in realistic settings; testing should be integrated with the task and not be a separate activity and learners should be actively involved. Lastly, teachers should not teach in the sense of delivering instructions to learners; rather they should facilitate learning. Constructivism underlies emphasis on the integrated curriculum in which learners study a topic from multiple perspectives (Schunk, 2008). Therefore, constructivism has influenced educational thinking about the curriculum, instruction and curriculum design, based on an assumption that teachers should not teach in the traditional way but rather structure learning in such a way that learners are actively involved and provide support and guidance rather than lecturing.

Constructivism emphasises reflective teaching, stressing that social group learning and peer collaboration are useful because as learner's model and observe each other they acquire not only skills but also experience higher self-efficacy for learning (Mergel, 2011). Similarly, the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) is learner centred, emphasising integrated curricula and active learner participation, with teachers acting as facilitators. It is designed to promote problem-solving skills, to develop learners' "critical thinking through exploration and experimentation, and to promote social interaction" (DoE, 2008). In South Africa, the new curricula promote this approach to learning. Notwithstanding this, it, however, appears that the problem of poor reading in the East London district is not related to this (Middleton, 2011).

Furthermore, the researcher locates studies which support the social constructivist theory, particularly on how co-operative teaching contributes to meaningful learning in the classroom (Stake, 2010). This is so because learners in this grade under study are old enough to teach one another. There are three Vygotsky principles that underpin the social constructivism theory. Zone of proximal development, scaffolding, reciprocal teaching and other principles which are further discussed below.

2.4 Zone of proximal development

The zone of proximal development contends that mental functions that are beyond an individual's current level must be performed in collaboration with other people before they are achieved independently (McLeod, 2012). Thus, a teacher's most critical function is facilitating children's literacy development and demonstrating various uses of reading and writing to help children use them, such as making use of several instructional strategies to fit the needs and interests of their learners. Enabling learners to develop content knowledge and concepts when they are being educated in a language in which they have limited proficiency is not easy (Winter and Poehner, 2012).

Teachers must perform a variety of tasks and roles to ensure that students acquire the skills and knowledge in the school curriculum at a level commensurate with those learners who are learning it in their native language. To do this, the teachers must be skilled in negotiating meaning; they must have well-developed skills in monitoring school performance, they must be experts in instructional decision making and they must serve as role models for the use of language.



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2.5 Scaffolding

In learning, scaffolding refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move learners' progress toward better understanding (Sikepu, 2013). Scaffolding is the support needed to assist a learner and falls into four basic categories: metacognitive, procedural, strategic and conceptual strategies. Metacognitive scaffolding helps learners to review what they know in a sense, while procedural scaffolding directs the learner with tools like side maps, flowcharts, even complex graphic representation (Erlingsson, 2013). Strategic scaffolds provide the learner with alternatives to approach a given task. Conceptual scaffolds direct a trainer on what to consider. For instance, the teacher does this by systematically building on the learners' experiences and knowledge as they are learning new skills. Eventually the scaffold fades away and the focus shifts from teacher to learner. The goal of a teacher in using a scaffolding strategy is to make the learner become a more independent self-regulating learner and a problem solver (Raymond, 2009). The assumption is that poor self-regulated learners can learn from highly regulated learners when applying reading comprehension strategies in a group. As time goes on and

learners get more exposure and practice using the strategies, teachers slowly withdraw their responsibility (Miller, 2011). This is to enable learners to manage their own learning by making use of the strategies. Therefore, when a teacher utilizes reciprocal teaching there is promotion of self-directedness and flexible use of the learnt strategies through scaffolding instructional collaboration (Sporer, et al., 2009:273).

The teacher must gradually release the leadership role to learners as this promotes learner centeredness, cooperative learning and peer support amongst learners. During the process of learning the teacher facilitates the process of learners utilizing strategies learnt as learners take the leadership role. Learners must take turns when practicing the strategies. Learners must take on different roles when practicing these strategies. Each learner must lead the discussion as they progress with the practice of these strategies. Then one learner becomes the scribe and others will predict what is coming up next in a text. The leader summarises the discussions and the process continues for each part of the text.

2.6 Reciprocal teaching



Reciprocal teaching is an instructional procedure to improve learner's comprehension skills, one of Vygotsky's principles (Raymond, 2009). This approach has three main components, namely, dialogue between learners and teacher, each taking a turn in the role of dialogue leader. Reciprocal interactions are where one person acts in response to others and structured dialogue using four strategies namely generating questions, summarising parts of the text, clarifying words, meanings and confusing text passages and predicting what might come next in the text. Reciprocal teaching is designed to improve reading comprehension of learners (Mudzielwana, 2012). Its goal is to enable learners to have turns in discussion about the text; while discussing they must adhere to the following questions, make learners able to answer questions they have and give a better explanation on what they understand and how to relate to the text.

2.7 More knowledgeable other

According to the Vygotsky's socio -cultural theory (1981), any person who possesses a higher skill level than the learner regarding a task or concept is called a More

Knowledgeable Other or MKO. This person may be a teacher, parent, an older adult, a coach or even a peer. Meet the MKO, a person with a better understanding and considerably higher or superior level of ability, skill or knowledge about a subject, task or process, than the person who is attempting to learn (also called the learner) (Lumadi, 2016). The MKO often comes in the person of a teacher, a superior at work, or a peer with more experience. There are instances when he could be someone younger, but with more cultivated knowledge and skill (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2011). In this digital age, the MKO may even be a computer or any intelligent machine. In the eyes of a child, adults are the MKOs. For example, a father and his little boy headed to their backyard to play catch. He happens to know how to play baseball, and he plans to teach his boy the basics while he is still young. In this case, the MKO is the father, by his adult status and his knowledge and skills in the sport (Mhlongo, 2013).

Twenty years later, the son is now a professional baseball player, and his father has just retired. Before a major game, the son hands his father the latest, most advanced camcorder model, so he can film the game from his VIP seat (Mwanamukubi, 2013). He sits down with his father and teaches him how to operate the camcorder. This time, the MKO is the son, since he is more knowledgeable about the device. To prepare for the game, the son had to leave, but before doing so, he downloaded an app on his father's cell phone that will guide him further on how to work the camcorder. The father was then left exploring the features of the camcorder, using the voice prompts from the app on his phone (Goodnough, 2008). The MKO is now the electronic device, his cell phone. While learning and discovery that is self-initiated is effective, learning becomes more productive and contributory to cognitive development when acquired from an MKO.

2.8 Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning is another guiding principle of constructivism theory that develops learner's social skills; learners are deeply involved with content when learning collaboratively (Neo and Neo, 2009). Usually, learners work together to come with a solution or make meaning or sometimes creating a product, most of the time, collaborative learning takes place in groups this builds interpersonal skills amongst learners. These are skills they need to acquire for tertiary education and their careers

(Cockroft and Alloway, 2012). Additionally, these skills assist learners and prepare them for the world of work, where collaborative writing and problem solving are key elements to most careers. There are strategies associated with collaborative learning which are role assignment, problem solving, task and group processing.

Collaborative learning combines many elements of learning collaboration, it acts as a research based strategy in which learners work together through various phases, “of planning, reflection and action as they explore a task or a question in a group” (Goodnough, 2008:88). This strategy becomes a success amongst learners when a teacher serves as a facilitator monitoring the learner’s progress because there are always those learners who hide behind others. Dewey (2009) asserts that in collaborative learning learners learn to accept each other more and become free amongst each other as well. They learn to talk more about the material and motivate each other, making sure they all participate on the task at hand. Learners have more positive attitudes when working in a group than working alone because there is a competition atmosphere created within the group.



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2.9 Bruner’s theory of learning

Bruner (1986) put forward the message of discovery learning in learning to learn. He believes that the process of learning is more important than the mere material learnt learners must learn how to learn. He stated that a child passes through several stages of development which he termed the inactive, iconic and symbolic modes. The inactive mode is seen in infants when they reach and grasp objects. In the iconic mode, the child will give meaning to previous experiences as he thinks about these experiences (Jhingran, 2011).

The child then proceeds to the symbolic mode, which is regarded as the highest form of thinking wherein the child can attach names to objects or items in his surroundings because of his increased language ability. At this stage a learner can make sense of language and non-verbal interactions. These aspects are relevant in the teaching of reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning (Snow & Sweet, 2009:1). This implies that the

purpose of reading is to read the text with understanding. The implications of this theory for teaching reading comprehension is that new concepts should be presented repeatedly, initially at a simple level and overtime at an increasingly difficult level, a concept Bruner referred to as the “spiral ordering of content” (Arua et al., 2013). By applying this theory, the teacher can deal with important reading comprehension issues.

A supportive environment will encourage learners to share information with their peers and to develop their problem-solving skills. Making use of problem-solving activities would also be a way of utilising Bruner’s theory when teaching reading comprehension. To ensure suitability for each stage, Bruner advocated the spiral organisation of curricular material, so that the same unit can be split into various grades and stages that could be mastered in terms of experiences appropriate for the developmental stages of a learner.

2.10 Ausubel’s theory of reception learning or meaningful verbal learning

The most important factor influencing Ausubel’s (1963) learning theory is the quantity, clarity and organisation of the learner’s present knowledge. This present knowledge consists of factors, concepts, propositions, theories and raw perceptual data that a learner has available to him/her at any point in time, this comprises of his/her cognitive structure. Meaning learning takes place when an idea is related in some sensible way to ideas that the learner already possesses. Ausubel believed that new material can be presented effectively; the learner’s cognitive structure should be strengthened. When this is done, acquisition and retention of new information is facilitated (Haas and Parkay, 2013:144). The way to strengthen the learners’ cognitive structure is by using advance organisers that allow learners to already have a bird’s eye view or to see the “big picture” of the topic to be learned even before going to the details.

2.10.1 Super ordinate learning

Imagine that a child was well acquainted with a banana, mango, guava etc., but the child did not know, until she was taught, that these were all examples of fruits. In this case, the child already knew a lot of examples of the concept, but did not know the concept itself until it was taught to the learner. This is called superordinate learning.

2.10.2 Combinatorial learning

This is when newly acquired knowledge combines with prior knowledge to enrich the understanding of both concepts. These first three learning processes all included new information that relates to hierarchy at a level that is either below or above previously acquired knowledge (Karbalea, 2013). Combinatorial learning is different, it describes a process by which the new idea is derived from another idea that is neither higher nor lower in the hierarchy, but at the same level (“in a different, but related, branch”). It is a lot like a learning analogy. Examples, to teach someone about how plants “breathe” you might relate it to previously acquired knowledge of human respiratory, where man inhales oxygen and exhales carbon dioxide. Ausubel’s theory has implications for teaching reading comprehension because teachers must know certain minimal levels of intellectual maturity are necessary before various subjects can be taught with a reasonable degree of efficiency and with hope of success (Lumadi, 2016).

Therefore, teachers should employ words so skilfully that the learner will encounter no difficulty for accommodating in the new  knowledge. Teachers must use the existing interests of learners, consider their point of view, and consider their limitations in the command of language and their grasp of concepts.

2.10.3 Piaget’s theory of cognitive development

Jean Piaget (1968) has provided one of the most comprehensive descriptions of children’s cognitive capabilities and development. Piaget’s theory is based on several assumptions, which underpin the way in which he believed children learn (Jacobs, 2010). He maintained that children use schemas to organise, categorise and understand the world. As children grow older, these schemas become increasingly abstract as new experiences are assimilated into the existing schemas. Piaget used the term “accommodation” to refer to the process of reorganising existing schemas to improve the new information so that equilibrium is achieved (Piaget, 1968). If accommodation does not occur, then disequilibrium occurs and children should organise their schemas to achieve equilibrium. Piaget states that experiences and interaction with the environment, and not only maturation, facilitate the development of cognitive structures (Morrison and Glenny, 2011).

According to Piaget, children's cognitive development progresses sequentially through a series of stages which are linked to certain age ranges. The transition from the sensory motor stage through the preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational stages is a continuum on which children move from subjective to objective realisation (Auer, 2013). For Piaget, learning is a process of internal construction (Makhubele, 2012). Learners must construct knowledge in their own minds through the guidance of more knowledgeable others. In the context of the study, teachers must teach learners to acquire self-regulatory competence by observing and hearing their explanations; for example, when the teacher is demonstrating the use of the strategy, guiding and giving constructive feedback, the learners use the self-directing, self-pacing and self-correcting strategy and learn how to adjust their skill to change personal, behavioural and contextual conditions to optimise their own learning during reading.

For this study, attention is given to the concrete operational stage lasting from seven to eleven years of age as promoted by Piaget. During this stage, children start to use logical thought processes, such as the reversal of concepts, multiple classifications and mental ordering, to begin to solve problems limited to real, observable objects. Centralisation is no longer present during this stage as children begin to realise that there are many sides to a problem (Piaget, 1968).

Piaget's theory has implications for teaching reading comprehension, as each individual child's current stage of cognition development must be considered when the teacher plans learning activities (Anastasiou and Griva, 2009); the theory helps teachers to understand that learners at this level have reached a new level of self-development that allows them to understand some of the ways in which they are related to people. Through interaction with the teacher, other persons, and during play, learners can understand the physical and the social world. Here, realistic fiction may encourage learners to interact with characters who are involved in a conflict situation, during reading comprehension (Mhlongo, 2013). Knowledge about this stage will assist the teacher to understand that the learners are ready to listen to stories and to read about real-life heroes and stories which move between the past and present, such as legends.

The knowledgeable teacher is aware that learners in this stage begin to apply logic to concrete experience, so that they begin to move beyond one dimensional thinking (Piaget, 1986). Concerning reading comprehension, this enables learners to relate one event to a system of interrelated parts. They gradually start perceiving an event from the beginning to the end and from the conclusion to the beginning (An, 2013). It is therefore important that the environment should be rich to encourage learners to learn and reason about what they read. Learners at this stage could understand picture storybooks, folk tales, and books written for bibliotherapy. It is critical is for the teacher to guide learners on which strategies to use, showing them when and why and how to apply each strategy correctly.

2.11 Bandura's social learning theory

Bandura (1977) argues that learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and occurs purely through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement. The social learning theory emphasises the importance of observing and modelling the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. Thus, it focuses on learning originally evolved from behaviourism but now includes many of the ideas that cognitivists also hold, as a result, it is sometimes called social cognitive learning.

Social cognitive theory is divided into four steps in the processing of information: attention, retention, reproduction and motivation. Attention is when a learner needs to pay attention to make learning meaningful. The child's interaction with other people is based on observing their norms, values and beliefs within the context of a society and the child is most likely to imitate adults with whom he or she has an emotional or nurturing bond, these adults are referred to by Bandura as "natural models" (Graves and Wright, 2011 p 68).

In his theory, Bandura (1977) refers to this concept as "modelling", which means that learners learn positive or negative behaviour patterns from observing behaviour. When the learner interacts with people, he/she is being socialised and, as a result, he or she

adopts and lives according to what has been seen. Another concept in Bandura's theory is that "experience gives learners a sense of self-efficacy, which refers to learner's beliefs about their own abilities and talents" (Kail, 2011: p16). This means that learners will have a good sense of what they can or cannot do and, therefore, will mostly not imitate the actions of someone if they feel their own abilities are not similar.

The imitation of a model is important in a classroom situation; learners are expected to pay adequate attention to what the teacher says so that they can understand what is being taught (Gale, 2014). With memory, what is being observed must be processed into short-term and long-term memory for storage, so that it can be retrieved when such information is needed? Observation is important because the behaviour displayed by the model should be reproduced. For an observed behaviour to be reproduced perfectly, practice is important. Reinforcement also plays an important role and if modelled behaviour is rewarded, the chances of this behaviour being repeated are high (Trogonza and Lewis, 2009).

This theory is very important for reading comprehension because learners imitate what they see other people doing, be it parents or teachers. Teachers are regarded as good models as they usually have positive and nurturing relationships with the learner. They should therefore display positive reading comprehension strategies so that learners can imitate and internalise these.

The above-mentioned theories formed the foundation of Zimmerman's applied social-cognitive model of self-regulated learning (Dixon, 2011). For example, for the learners to become independent readers who could master of their own learning they should be actively involved in their own learning, think independently, recall, analyse information and construct meaning from the text. Learners should gain confidence through regular practice which involves modelling.

2.12 Zimmerman's applied social-cognitive model of self-regulated Learning

According to Zimmerman (2008), self-regulated learning involves the regulation of three general aspects of academic learning. Firstly, self-regulation of behaviour involves the active control of the various resources learners have available to them (Garcia &

Pintrinch, 2014; Pintrich, Smith, Garcia and McKenzie, 2013). Secondly, self-regulation of motivation and effect involves controlling and changing motivational beliefs such as self-efficacy and goal orientation, so that learners can adapt to the demands of a course. Thirdly, self-regulation of cognition involves the control of various cognitive strategies for learning and these strategies result in better learning and performance than learners showed previously (Palincsar and Brown, 1989; Garcia & Pintrinch, 2014; Pintrich, Smith, Garcia and McKenzie, 2013).

In the context of this thesis, teachers must motivate learners to be actively involved in reading with understanding instead of memorising words on the page. It is important for teachers to encourage learners to think positively about reading comprehension and believe that they can read and understand the text, and to condition their satisfaction to reach their goals. Thus, poor motivation can impede acquisition of self-regulatory competence (Zimmerman, 2008). In addition, learners can learn how to control their emotions and apply positive ways to improve their learning. Literature suggests that self-regulation of cognition involves the control of various cognitive strategies for learning, such as the use of deep processing strategies that result in an improved learning performance (Garcia and Pintrich, 2014; Pintrich et al., 2013).

The teacher must teach learners to acquire self-regulatory competence to become independent readers and learn to read and use the appropriate strategies needed for the text.

These processes are planned and adapted to support the pursuit of personal goals in changing learning environments. Zimmerman (2008) proposed the idea of learners themselves being the source of plans, intentions, strategies and the emotions that are necessary to create meaning from the written text. According to Zimmerman (2008), teaching multiple strategies is important, since the self-regulatory strategy will not work for all learners and using a few strategies will not work on all tasks. Zimmerman (2014) and Zimmerman and Hutchins (2013) suggest multiple self-regulatory strategies rather than a single strategy and states that learners can be taught to become more self-regulated. This view is linked to the constructivist theory where learners should be able to construct meaning from the written text. By learning to self-regulate a skill from peers,

parents or teachers, each new generation of learners can build on the achievement of prior generations and avoid the mistakes of the past (Zimmerman, 2014).

According to Zimmerman (2008), self-regulated learning involves the regulation of three general aspects of academic learning. Self-regulation of behaviour involves the active control of the various resources learners have available to them, such as their time, their study environment and their collaboration with others, such as peers, to help them (Garcia and Pintrich, 2014; Pintrich et al., 2013). In her view, Zimmerman (2008) postulates that the applied social-cognitive model of self-regulated learning can be organised within a learning cycle based on three types of self-effective thoughts. This includes the following (Zimmerman, 2008):

- ❖ Goal-setting and strategic planning;
- ❖ Self-monitoring of one's accuracy in implementing a selected strategy;
- ❖ Self- assessment of strategy outcome and task performance.

These processes are considered cyclic because each process entails information that can lead to changes in a subsequent step of the cycle and they are integral to reciprocal teaching. These processes qualify as self-reflective cognition activities and the associated corrective processes are central features of each step included in the cycle (Sporer et al., 2009:273).

Drawing on Zimmerman's applied model of self-regulated learning, during reciprocal teaching, learners are engaged in cognition and metacognitive activities, and they alternate between prompting, using a strategy, applying the selected strategy, and monitoring its accurate implementation (Sporer et al., 2009:273). A self-regulated learning perspective on learners' learning and achievements has profound implications for the way teachers should interact with learners and the way schools should be organised. Zimmerman's social-cognitive model of self-regulated learning provides a theoretical basis for suggesting the effects of strategy instruction and reciprocal.

2.13 Conceptual framework

2.13.1 Introduction

This section gives readers a deeper understanding and insight about the phenomena at hand. This is a process of reviewing the work of others in a researcher's field and can become useful for data collection. Furthermore, a researcher's collections of articles that relate to the research field are analysed and given credibility through recognizing work done by these numerous authors. Several sub-topics in this section are going to discuss issues related to the research topic.

2.13.2 Why non-mother tongue instruction?

According to Heugh (2013), English language proficiency is essential for EFAL learners who are expected to complete tasks in English and tasks in other subjects. Moreover, in South Africa, the truth is that English is a dominant official language and the government of South Africa is promoting its use as a language of business, commerce and industry (Howie, 2010). Furthermore, black parents regard English as a language that is going to uplift their status in the community. Hence, they encourage their children to study in the English medium schools. The preference of English undermines the policy of government to promote equal opportunities in South Africa (Spaul, 2012). When comparing blacks to their counterparts, whites, blacks do not have support structures to develop English language related skills and this puts them at a disadvantage.

Their white counterparts, however, do not have problems because English is their mother tongue so there is no two-way language stream for them. That makes whites have an upper hand compared to their black counterparts. As indicated earlier, the most disadvantaged group is black learners from rural areas and townships studying in English as a language of learning and teaching (LOLT).

2.13.3 Additional language instruction

The acquisition of the additional language is based on a sound mother tongue and should be an additive process. Additive multilingualism means acquiring another language while maintaining mother tongue. It must be taken in cognisance that the acquisition of an additional language has a complementary effect on the learner's cognitive and social

development (Coetzee, 2008). Socially, learners feel accepted when their home language is used in making them understand content. An additional advantage is when the teacher can facilitate understanding in the home language; it creates a social bond and a positive environment for teaching and learning between the educator and his/her learners (Spaul, 2012).

Within an additive approach the transfer to English (as a language of learning and teaching) (LOLT), the home language needs to continue being taught as a subject to ensure its maintenance and development. However, the South African Department of Education's Language in Education Policy (1997) does not specify how this should be implemented (Heugh, 2013). Hence, a pilot project of implementing the mother tongue (especially isiXhosa in the Eastern Cape) is implemented because of the lack of basic knowledge in the learner's mother tongue and an attempt at changing parents' attitudes towards their mother tongue or indigenous spoken home language.

2.13.4 Additional language of instruction in South Africa

In South Africa, most black parents place their children in ex-model C schools, which usually follow a subtractive approach to language development. With this approach, there is no real development in either the mother tongue or the additional language. This then has a serious effect on the cognitive development and social development of the learners. Harmse (2015) argues that cognitive development is successfully achieved when a person's mother tongue is used as a language of learning and teaching.

Without sound cognitive skills, learners struggle to make sufficient academic progress in the additional language (Van Staden, 2011). Coetzee (2008) believes skills and knowledge which are developed in the first language will be transferred to the additional language (in this case English) as the language of teaching and learning and this additional language will build on the underlying conceptual-linguistic foundation of the mother tongue.

The latter is based on Cummins Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) (2008). Howie (2008) warns that EFAL learners whose CALP is not well developed in the language of learning and teaching (the additional language) are weak and disadvantaged, even if they

are instructed in a way which facilitates comprehension and active participation. However, it needs to be acknowledged that there are limited material language structures available in mother tongue (or any African language structures). Heugh (2013) argues that the development of new terminology should not be problems for any language where we might decide to coin new terms or to borrow terms from other languages. Whichever option will be facilitated, communication and understanding among its speakers becomes essential for purposes of linguistic ability, language usage and comprehension.

According to curriculum and proficiency learners who take English as a first additional language, they have proficiency at conversation level in and through English, yet have trouble in communicating academic English language written skills. These learners have mastered Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS). The acquisition of BICS mostly relies heavily on visual cues and social context and it takes approximately two years to develop (Coetzee, 2008). Having mastered BICS, it is mostly assumed that learners will be academically able to learn through and in their additional language. Research has proven this wrong. Learners need Communicative Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in their additional language to facilitate academic comprehension and resulting success if the additional language is the medium of instruction. BICS is acquired through language processes of mainly pronunciation, vocabulary and grammatical patterns, whereas CALP requires skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation, with the appropriate language process of semantics and functional meaning. The learner requires five to seven years to acquire sufficient CALP to perform well on academic tasks (Coetzee, 2008).

To acquire BICS and CALP simultaneously within the school situation is cognitively and emotionally demanding on any learner. IsiXhosa home language learners at ex-model C schools face the formidable task of acquiring CALP while having to master academic content at the same pace as that of English home language speakers. Mergel (2011) recommends early and gradual introduction of English in primary schools to allow the learner sufficient time to acquire CALP, which is needed to master the upper primary and secondary syllabus. Mergel (2011) further opines that the early introduction of English creates a problem to EFAL learners sometimes, especially for the learners whose mother

tongue is not well developed in a formal school situation, for this reason Mergel recommends the inclusion of the mother tongue, as this will be appreciated, encouraged, maintain and develop mother tongue.

Pretorius and Makhweshana (2009) believe that the development of the mother tongue aid EFAL learners' academic progress throughout their school life. If a high level of proficiency is present in the mother tongue, that level of proficiency will automatically be transferred from mother tongue to additional language. Most isiXhosa learners attending ex-model C schools have acquired BICS, but not CALP and are placed in the same class with English home language speakers. This puts them at risk of under achieving (Tarchi, 2010) academically as they not only have to acquire a certain standard of English, but must also use English as a medium of learning for all academic disciplines.

English home language speakers are in a better position to attain CALP, as social interaction through their language of learning (BICS) makes possible the transfer of cognitive academic proficiency from one language to another. For them there is no other language. Cummins (2008) argues that there must be some significant minimal levels of verbal academic performance in both languages of a learner and that these minimal levels are significant for cognitive development to transfer readily to the additional language, which then aids the process of CALP development in the additional language. Teaching time for English home language speakers can be more concentrated on CALP/cognitive fluency, as BICS/surface fluency is developed in their everyday interaction, as a given.

2.13.5 National policy documents

According to DBE (2012), the implementation of CAPS was a critical period as it marked the final stage of the incremental implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). CAPS was first implemented in Gr R-3 (Foundation Phase) in 2012 and in 2013 grades 4-6 in the Intermediate Phase (IP) and in 2014 the Senior Phase (grades 7-9) and grade 12. The implementation of CAPS provided stability in the sector by providing teachers with clear guidelines on content, pedagogy and assessment. There

has been a notable improvement in learner performance in FP and IP since the implementation of CAPS.

A recent study conducted by DoE (2011) demonstrates that learners are still struggling in reading comprehension, according to the Annual National Assessment (ANA) (2011) results. These results revealed that a greater number of learners in South African primary public schools cannot read. ANA data was collected from 1800 primary schools between the years 2011, 2012 and 2013. Through data analysis, it became evident that the percentage of learners reaching a partially achieved level of performance in literacy varied from 30% to 47%. The percentage of learners reaching the achieved level of performance varied from 12% to 31%, which was very low. While the problem of illiteracy clearly does not rest on multilingual schools alone (it is under resourced primary schools currently attaining the poorest results), it is still important to understand how reading is taught in these multilingual contexts to see what implications this has for language and reading development and support in South Africa (Archer et al., 2010).

2.13.6 The National Reading Strategy (NRS)



The National Reading Strategy (NRS) was the third intervention strategy for promoting reading in South African primary schools (DoE, 2008). The vision of the NRS was that every South African learner would be a fluent reader who reads to learn and reads for enjoyment and achievement. The purpose of the NRS was to put reading firmly on the school agenda. It was meant to clarify and simplify curriculum expectations. Furthermore, it was meant to promote reading across the curriculum and to affirm and advance the use of all languages.

This process will encourage reading for enjoyment and ensure that not only teachers, learners and parents, understand the role of improving and promoting reading but also the broader community. However, according to the DoE (2008a), there were many challenges regarding the implementation of the NRS, namely teacher competency, a lack of libraries, teacher conditions, the print environment, language issues and inclusive education. In addition, the NRS states the following (DoE, 2008:8b): Many teachers in South Africa have an underdeveloped understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing. Many teachers simply don't know how to teach reading. Too often teachers know

only one method of teaching reading which may not suit the learning style of all learners. Therefore, teachers are expected to be competent to teach reading comprehension and can create an atmosphere which is conducive for reading to the learners. Because teachers have not been explicitly trained to teach reading, it is difficult for them to assist learners.

2.13.7 Provincial policy

The DBE (2011), in collaboration with provinces, implemented many curriculum interventions in 2011 and 2014 aimed at improving learning outcomes in languages and mathematics and, thereby, improving the 2014 ANA results. Best practice programmes in this area are the strategies in Gauteng (Gauteng Province Literacy & Mathematics Strategy (GLPMS), Western Cape (Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (LITNUM) and Free State (IBP).

2.13.8 South African policy and practice

The tendency at ex-model C schools is that they are multicultural and multilingual, but not in practice (Coetzee, 2008). Many educators at these schools equate success with the mastery of English. Teachers at ex-model C schools are still predominantly white, and have English or Afrikaans as their mother tongue. Teachers have little to no proficiency in the mother tongue of many of the learners they are teaching, and are therefore not able to use the learner's home language to facilitate the development of additional language (DoE, 2008). So, by implication, these teachers are unable to practice additive multilingualism.

Language and education policies in South Africa promote additive bilingualism, but most isiXhosa learners experience subtractive bilingualism (Mannase, 2012) where they lack proficiency in both languages, as their mother tongue has never been developed. This results in the learner's education being based on a submersion model of additional language acquisition, whereby the first language is replaced with English, as a poorly developed Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT), according to PRAESA, Occasional Paper No.11, (Bloch, 2015). Bloch (2015) says the aim of the submersion

model is to increase majority language usage in the classroom while decreasing the usage of the learner's mother tongue in the classroom.

In such classrooms, the teachers usually are monolingual and have no knowledge of the learners' mother tongue. The results are that isiXhosa learners become semi lingual and have very low proficiency in both their mother tongue and their language of learning and teaching (Dairen and Asselin, 2011). Having identified the problems associated with the subtractive approach to multilingualism, I now turn to a more specific concern facing many learners in South African schools, that of poor literacy due to poor reading strategies and comprehension abilities and skills in English First Additional language.

2.14 Reading strategies

Reading strategies are perceived as conscious, purposeful means to solve difficulties encountered in the process of reading, which all takes place cognitively (Cabinda, 2012). To distinguish skills from strategies is to perceive skills as text-oriented and strategies as reader-oriented (Cabinda, 2012). Uruquhart and Weir (2008) both show similarity on the issue that there is another way of distinguishing skills from strategies: skills are text orientated whereas strategies are reader orientated. Reading strategies are a part of a broader range of language learning and language use strategies to develop further (Cohen, 2008).

In recent approaches discovered by Brown and Sullivan (2010), key goals to make unconscious processes conscious occur when English First Additional Language learners are well equipped in grasping phonics in their own first language to give capacity to grasp phonics of the language of learning and teaching. If they are not grasped properly the learner might encounter difficulty in the proficiency of English. The language of learning and teaching has a different phonic sound than any African language.

Hence appropriate strategies must be employed to encourage the reader to reflect on his/her reading. Therefore, teachers must expose EFAL to different reading strategies to develop their fluency in the language of teaching and learning.

2.15 Metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies help learners to monitor their progress with the task at hand and, as a result, that leads to a learner gaining a better understanding of text (Karbalaee, 2011). These strategies emphasise monitoring and mechanisms readers use during the process of reading. When learners are taught these strategies by a teacher, they become aware of their thinking as they progress with reading (Zhang & Wu, 2009). Metacognitive strategies and cognitive strategies both take place in the mind and help the learner to be conscious about his reading and thinking. This strategy plays a pivotal role in the reading process of a learner, because they are high-order executive tactics (Govender, 2009) that entail planning for learning, monitoring, identifying and remediating causes of comprehension failure or evaluating the success of a learning task at hand.

Metacognitive strategies enable learners to have a better understanding of what they are reading as well as reflecting on their actions and choice of strategies (Mazinyo, 2017). Metacognitive strategies are higher-order executive tactics that entail planning for learning, monitoring, identifying and remediating causes of comprehension failure or evaluating the successes of a learning activity that is, the strategies of self-planning, self-monitoring, self-regulating, self-questioning and self-reflecting (Van Staden, 2011). Therefore, metacognitive strategies are when a learner gets the opportunity to use reading strategies effectively. Motona & Hill (2010) emphasises that the lack of metacognitive approaches in learners results in a lack of direction and an inability to self-monitor their progress, accomplishments and future learning directions.

Research in reading comprehension has led to an increasing emphasis on the role of metacognitive awareness, which has been defined as the perceived use of reading strategies while reading (Taylor et al., 2012). When learners use metacognition their thinking level is stimulated as they go through the text. Metacognitive strategies activate one's thinking and lead to improved performance in learning (O'Connor, J. and Geiger, 2009). Good readers use metacognition strategies to think about their own reading and have control over this process, for example, before reading learners might clarify their reason for reading and previewing the text (Rasinki, 2009). During reading, learners monitor their understanding, adjusting their reading speed to fit the difficulty of the text

and fixing up any comprehension problems they have. After reading, they check their understanding of what they read.

Cognitive strategies are closely related to reading comprehension as they involve direct interaction with the text and contribute to facilitating comprehension, operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning (Anastasiou and Griva, 2009). Cognitive strategies include the strategies of underlining, using titles, using the dictionary, writing down, guessing from the context, imagery, activating prior knowledge, summarizing, using linguistic clues, using text markers, skipping the difficult parts and repeating phrases (Anastasiou and Griva, 2009).

2.15.1 The role of metacognition in reading comprehension

In the context of reading, it refers to thinking about and controlling one's reading. Metacognition is an advanced cognitive process. However, there is ample evidence that young children plan, monitor, revise, and regulate reading. According to Philips, Norris and Vavra (2009:1), the role of metacognition in reading comprehension may be described on two levels: At the macro-level (the level of text of organisation), readers rely upon the author's organisation of the text (headings, paragraph length, main ideas and summaries) to get a sense of how to interpret the text (Vacca and Vacca, 2008).

At the micro-level (the level of sentences), readers endeavour to understand individual words and idea units in the context of their use, and to make sense of phrases and sentences to connect the text information with their relevant background knowledge (Williams, 2010). These connections require readers to attend to and monitor their sense of interpretation. Readers use a variety of strategies to make decisions, such as whether to be tentative, to reread, to question, to shift focus, or to continue (Sanford, 2015). Each of these decisions requires selective use of a reader's cognitive resources to monitor whether interpretation is successful and to shift their focus in cases where it is not.

In such cases, there are numerous possible strategies controlled by metacognition. What seems to be important in reading comprehension is for the reader to be aware of strategies, for example, knowing how, when, and where to use a strategy (Schunk, 2008). Examples of this is when a learner rereads a text because it is not making sense, when

to remain settled until more information is provided, and when to shift focus because the vocabulary choice made does not seem to make sense in the context of the story being read. Teachers must teach learners to set goals when reading, and to monitor and check regularly whether they comprehend what they read (Zimmerman, 2014).

Teachers should also emphasise that learners must use alternative strategies as well (Zimmerman, 2011), for example, if learners come across some unknown words, teach them to revisit what they read, to use pictures as clues, and to think about what would make sense based on what they have read. In addition, teachers need to teach learners to reflect on their reading to assess whether they have met their reading goal, to identify what caused a problem and to think about how to read differently next time (Vacca & Vacca, 2008). What seems to be important in reading comprehension is for the reader to be aware of reading strategies, for example, knowing how, when, and where to use a strategy. Good examples here are when to make connections: learners need to know when to remain focussed when unsettling information comes across, and when to be flexible because the vocabulary choice made does not seem to make sense in the context of the story being read.



2.15.2 Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies refer to the integration on of new material with prior knowledge. Cognitive strategies involve direct interaction with the text and contribute to facilitating comprehension; they operate directly on oncoming information, manipulating it in ways to enhance learning (Anastasiou and Griva, 2008). Cognitive strategies that learners use to acquire, learn, remember, retrieve and understand the material while reading includes rehearsal, elaboration, and organisational strategies (Davids, 2010). These two concepts are important in reading comprehension and, even though they seem to be different, they both complement each other.

Cognitive strategies are necessary for learners to perform in a reading task, while metacognitive strategies are necessary to understand how the task has been performed. Aarnoutse and Schellings (2013) and Van Keer (2014) indicate that good readers employ different cognitive and metacognitive strategies before, during and after reading text. In

the same vein, Tarchi, (2010) and Vacca & Vacca (2008) state that the most practical way of thinking about teaching reading comprehension is to organise instruction according to how the teacher would want learners to think about strategies. These include, before reading (phase 1), during reading (phase 2) and after reading (phase 3). Before-reading consists of those strategies that a learner learns to use to get ready to read a text selection (Ngece, 2014).

These strategies help learners to get an idea of what the author might be trying to say and how the information might be useful, and to create a mental set that might be useful for taking in and storing information. These strategies could include previewing headings, surveying pictures, reading introductions and summaries, creating a pre-reading outline, creating questions that might need to be answered, and making predictions that need to be confirmed (Vacca, Vacca, and Mraz, 2014).

During-reading consists of those strategies that learners learn to use while they are reading a text selection (Vacca and Vacca, 2008). These strategies help the learner to focus on how to determine what the author is trying to say, to match the information with what the author is saying and then to match the information with the learner's prior knowledge.

These strategies should be influenced by the before-reading strategies because learners should be using or keeping in mind the previews, outlines, questions, and predictions (Philips, Norris and Vavra, 2009). The after-reading process consists of those strategies that learners use when they have finished reading a text selection (Vacca, Vacca & Mraz, 2014). The aim is to help the learner to look back and think about the message of the text and determine the intended or possible meanings that might be important. These strategies are used to follow up and confirm what was learnt, for example to answer questions or confirm predictions from the use of the before- and during-reading strategies (Philips, Norris and Vavra, 2009). However, these reading strategies also help the reader to focus on determining which the big, critical, or overall idea of the author's message is and how it might be used before moving on to perform tasks or other learning tasks.

In this study, a reading strategy consists of the appropriate skills and the knowledge that teachers teach the learners for understanding the written text. So far as the teaching of reading comprehension skills are concerned, various authors suggest many reading strategies that are utilised by learners in the process of teaching reading comprehension in the primary grades. All these different views have in common the notion that reading comprehension can be taught. What is important is to make learners aware of how and when to use a strategy before, during and after reading.

2.16 Reading in a multilingual classroom

South African schools face a huge challenge in language development, where the English language is dominant in the classroom and EFAL learners must accomplish for academic purposes (Cabinda, 2012). Clearly, these learners must develop academic language proficiency in their second language, with little or no support in their mother tongue. According to Pretorius (2009), teaching reading in a multilingual society such as South Africa, where reading tends to be masked by the language that is not their primary language, and it is generally assumed that poor academic performance stems from poor additional language is a mammoth task. The relationship between poor academic performances and poor additional language can be a complex one.

When learners have difficulty reading to learn, their comprehension problems stem from limited English proficiency (Harmse, 2015), whereas multilingualism has a challenge of its own, as it affects social and cognitive aspects of learners. If multilingual learners attempt to attain literacy in English, a language which is not their home language, they will require a solid foundation in their mother tongue to become literate in English. Apart from the LoLT of a school and the mother tongue of learners, the value and impact of home languages should not be disregarded (Marcell, De Cleene and Juettner, 2010). Ex-model C schools in South Africa, where the LOLT is English or Afrikaans, and many learners are multilingual, teachers have a tendency not to fully acknowledge that learners are multilingual, which is often an indication that schools do not have resources to promote and encourage multilingualism. Equal opportunity in education is a priority in education if it has not yet received the attention it deserves.

Based on these discussions, South Africa still has a long way to go regarding the successful implementation of multilingualism policy in schools.

2.17 Reading aloud

Reading aloud is another approach that can have a positive effect on the development of reading comprehension (Lane & Wright, 2009). Read-aloud time should be a well-planned activity and not impromptu (Sipe, 2008). The teacher should be well-prepared, read to the whole class or to a small group, using material that is at the listening comprehension level of the learners (Teale, 2008). Reading aloud is regarded as the best motivator for instilling the desire to read in learners. In read-aloud sessions, the teacher reads to the whole class or to a small group using material that is at listening comprehension level of the learners.

The benefit of this approach to the learners is that it helps them to develop a love of literature, motivates them to read various kinds of texts on their own and increases their vocabulary (Lane & Wright, 2009). The speaking skills of the learners are enhanced by hearing good pronunciation and language use, as well as their thinking skills through their comprehension of the text and experience with cause and effect, including logical sequencing. According to the DoE (2008), reading aloud should occur every day to stimulate learners' interest in the written text.

Several key activities take place before, during and after reading. Regarding the teaching of reading comprehension, the DoE (2008) emphasised that teachers should keep a close check on learners to ensure that they are not barking at print, but reading with understanding. They must also be able to interpret what they read in various situations.

Involving learners interactively while reading aloud helps to improve comprehension. The after-reading discussions encourage learners to link the story events to their personal experiences (Sipe, 2008), semantics and functional meaning. The learner requires five to seven years to acquire sufficient CALP to perform well on academic tasks (Coetzee, 2008). To acquire BICS and CALP simultaneously within the school situation is cognitively and emotionally demanding on any learner.

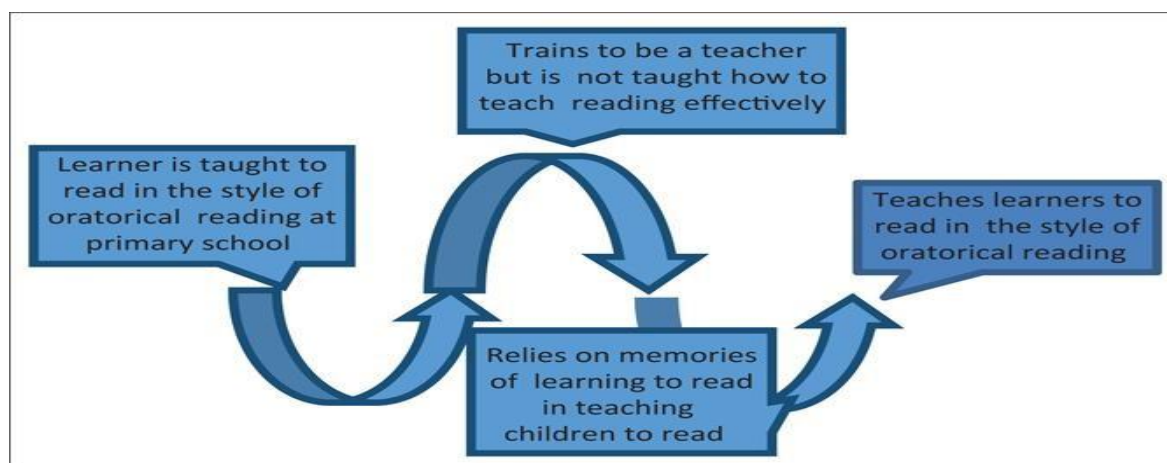


FIGURE 1: Cycle of reproduction of oratorical reading.

Figure 2. 1: Cycle of reproduction of oratorical reading

2.18 Class and race

Ghahaguru, Liang and Kit (2008) describe the South African literacy context as having inadequate infrastructure with over 50% of schools not having school libraries and learning materials such as exercise books, textbooks and appropriate reading materials. These conditions create a situation which is not conducive to effective literacy development. In addition, these authors addressed the issues of learning material impoverishment, which are still prevalent in South Africa by claiming that in a situation where many learners come from maternally impoverished backgrounds that can not afford to buy a bible. How will these families afford to buy a reading book for children, while unemployed, illiterate and show no interest in reading.

Moreover, with specific reference to the South African context, Stoller and Grabe (2009) noted that most school systems only provide explicit teaching of reading in the Foundation Phase (Grades R-3) by the end of which learners are expected to be independent readers. Researchers of early age literacy development disagree with this notion, suggesting that learners “from highly literate backgrounds are likely to reach this stage in the time provided, while learners from normal, working class backgrounds are not” (Crawford and Temple, 2008:23). Fleisch, Taylor and Schindler (2013) further cautioned

that literacy development is “an on-going process, which does not come to an end, but rather continues throughout life, under enabling conditions.”

2.19 Motivation and achievement

Motivation is another tool to use in developing skills in English First Additional Language, as defined by Junius (2012), as a kind of internal drive that allows someone to do readings to achieve something. Gardner (2015) sees motivation as the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of the desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity (Gardner, 2015:60). However, Gardner further argues that motivation for language learning varies and can either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both. Motivation in this study is vital to learning English (EFAL). Guay (2015) specifies four aspects in his definition of motivation. They include a goal, effort to reach the goal, a desire to attain that goal and positive attitude towards the goal. In the context of this study, the goal is the stimulant for learning English in primary schools.

Therefore, this study focuses principally on a constructive view of motivation, which places emphasis on social context and personal choices. Each participant is motivated differently and, as such, acts on the environment (affordances) (Fahim, 2012). Most participants in this study are motivated to learn the English language because they perceive its values (rewards) within the context where they find themselves. Motivation in the context of this study is therefore either internal, external or both (Junius, 2012). It is external when a participant is motivated to acquire a language as a means for attaining an instrumental goal (functional reasons) which in this case is the LOLT.

On the other hand, it becomes an internal motivation in a situation where a participant wants to integrate into a culture of another group where such a participant may get involved in a social interchange in that group (Mannase, 2012). When a participant learns a language for instrumental reasons, such participants do so because they desperately want to, while the integrative motivation for language learning is generated from a want rather than from an externally imposed need. Therefore, integrative motivation is referred to as the desire of a given participant to become a member of a speech community by choice (Mkhohla, 2015). Teachers should create a positive environment during reading instruction for a learner to achieve the level anticipated. Learners can become proud of

taking ownership of whatever literary attempts they have tried. This can also improve their self-concept and self-esteem (Mannase, 2012). EFAL learners must be encouraged and motivated to read extensively and use the library frequently to expose themselves to different texts.

2.20 Teacher capacity and skills

According to Hagaman, Luschen and Reid (2010:40), “the capacity of nation to sunrise and prosper economically depends crucially on how well the country develops”, its human resources and schools are considered as one of the prime agencies within which this development can be brought about. In SA teachers perform many different roles at schools, but the reality is that most of them were never trained for those roles. Aleksandra (2012:57) notes that, “most teachers do not have enough capacity to address the diverse needs of learners, because of the theoretical foundation received in pre-service training”. Pre-service training needs to prepare educators to withstand any challenge that the Department sends in their direction. Some of these teachers feel threatened by practices introduced by the Department of Education. It is, therefore, a challenge to the Department of Education to equip teachers with skills to strengthen their beliefs in themselves. Cabinda (2012) says that the basic aim of every teacher’s education programme is to educate competent teachers and develop the necessary professional qualities to ensure lifelong teaching careers for teachers.

This implies that pre-service teacher training is of great importance and any challenges appearing in the programme will have consequences that will be very difficult to correct in the future. The need for in-service teacher education is, therefore, inevitable, but the basis for professional competence is to teach student teachers during the period of pre-service teacher training. In most cases, teachers teach reading the way they were taught and sometimes most strategies do not correspond with the type of learners that are in the class (Archer, Schoeman, Coe, Howie, 2010). Hence, pre-service teacher training needs to empower teachers during training on how to teach reading comprehension skills and reading strategies, so that the teachers do not struggle on how to teach this important component of language.

2.21 Challenges faced by teachers in English language teaching

Most of the teachers that teach in the Foundation Phase have a vast experience in teaching and learning and therefore are more than forty years old. There are very few young teachers entering the system, especially in the Foundation Phase (DBE, 2012). The Department of Education needs to ensure that there are more young teachers joining the Foundation Phase, so that there can be a change in the teaching of literacy. Teachers also state frustration in implementing reading strategies because of heavy workloads. As they first had to teach the language and vocabulary for specific content, they found it impossible to complete the syllabus for the year. Also having learners in the class with better English abilities, teachers reported having to teach on diverse language and academic levels (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009).

Teachers reported being required to give extra attention to learners who were not keeping up, as well as adequately challenging stronger learners to ensure that all learners in their class had an equally effective education (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). Large numbers of learners in their classes increased the workload in all teaching areas such as marking and preparation of lessons, leaving teachers feeling over-worked and resentful. This is one of the reasons for the under-developed understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing. The findings of (National Reading Strategy) (NRS) (2008) were that most Foundation Phase teachers do not know how to stimulate reading inside and outside the classroom.

2.22 Theories on language development

Theorists categorise the development of language into two categories, language acquisition and language learning. The former is the unconscious and unstructured process that takes place from birth to pre-school years and the latter is more formal and structured. Theorists such as Rogers (2011) suggest that language should be acquired rather than taught (naturalist approach). He feels that language should not be taught directly in early school classrooms and believes that speech will emerge once the acquirer has received and accessed enough comprehensible input. Having discussed

more general notions of language acquisition and language learning in South Africa, I now turn to my second body of theories of reading.

2.22.1 Reading theories

For many decades educational psychologists have grappled with the problem of how reading occurs, which, to date, has proved to be much more complex and intriguing than previously thought, as reflected by theorists in various theories on reading (Aleksandra, 2012). Schunk (2008) further defines a reading theory “as a scientifically acceptable set of principles offered to explain a phenomenon also involving how this process is taking place.”

Correlating with Schunk’s definition of a reading theory (2008) is the view that a theory is a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of the phenomenon with the purpose of predicting and explaining the phenomena of reading. Mergel (2011) infers that reading theories provide frameworks for interpreting environmental observations about reading and serve as bridges between research and education. According to Sanford (2015:54), a reading theory “is about thinking and reflecting”; it is an initial idea or model that needs to be tested to determine its validity and to provide an explanation for a specific phenomenon. Sporer and Brunstein (2009) state that formal reading theories are used to explore how learners learn to read, but are not assisting teachers on how to develop reading.

2.22.2 The behaviourist view on reading

According to Masterson (2010), the behaviourists view reading as a process that moves from the parts to the whole upwardly. One first learns separate letters and their characteristics, then diphthongs and other letter units that represent sounds, thereafter single words, phrases and sentences, and, lastly, the meaning of the text. The reader must first master the mechanical and technical aspects of written language before attention can be given to comprehension and understanding, and once the learners have mastered the skills they will be able to read.

2.22.3 Constructivist view of reading

A constructivist assumption is that teachers should not teach in the traditional way but rather should structure reading lessons such that learners are actively involved, provide support and guidance rather than lecturing, and place emphasis on reflective teaching. Teachers should stress social group learning, while peer collaboration is also useful because as learner's model for and observe each other they teach and learn not only skills but also experience higher self-efficacy for learning (Schunk, 2008). Constructivists assume that knowledge is first constructed in a social context, and is then appropriated and owned by the individual.

Constructivists view reading as an active process through which learners discover concepts. According to the constructivists individual learners make meaning through interaction with each other and with the environment in which they live (Schunk, 2008). These principles are like those outlined in the CAPS policy document that also encourages group work and interaction amongst learners. This study's discussion is now going to shift to the concept of reading.



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2.23 Reading comprehension processes

Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols to construct or derive meaning. It is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas (Coetzee, 2008). Like all languages it is a complex interaction between text and the reader and is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude and language community, which is culturally and socially situated (Mannase, 2010).

Therefore, the key to reading is for the reader to understand the text and to get relevant meaning out of it, even though it might be quite complex to understand without proper exposure. Reading sharpens the mind, makes one reason rationally and objectively as well as projects one for greatness in life (Osonde, 2009). He further asserts that if a person can read and write, he will most certainly be able to avoid certain things that can harm him. Becoming a skilled and adaptable reader enhances the chances of success at school and beyond. Stols (2015) argues reading is not just for school, it is for life and all

its variety is vital to being better informed and having a better understanding of us as well as others. In addition, it makes man to be a thoughtful and constructive contributor to a democratic and cohesive society. Regardless of what has been said about reading, many people still think of reading as a skill that is taught once and for all in the first few years of schooling (Baruthram, 2012).

However, they fail to realise that to be proficient in a foreign language like English, a reader must continuously practice, develop, and refine the language. The problem for second language readers learning in a foreign language is that people are not conscious of or aware that even if a text is written using a different alphabet or characters, it might be written from right to left, or bottom to top, but fundamentally the same processes are going on (Rogers, 2011). In contrast to the view discussed above, there has been relatively little research on literacy development in Africa, and there is no academic journal on the continent dedicated to reading comprehension skills.

On the other hand, this is starting to change; the last decade has seen an increasing number of individual studies. Reading benefits the emotional and moral development of young people (Gustafson 2011:24).  When young people read they explore their feelings and build a sense of their own identity and values; they go to places they never visited by using their imagination and inferring to real life situations, for instance, when reading a folktale. Thus, this study explores reading comprehension skills amongst grade 7 learners, since most researchers have focused on reading problems. Nonetheless, reading is an important element that is vital because it helps learners to cope in other subjects.

2.23.1 Decoding

Decoding is that part of reading when the brain processes and translates what the eyes have seen into language (Pretorius et al., 2016). This normally takes place when a learner is a beginner reader in the early stages of learning. In grade 7 learners are supposedly skilled readers; however, that is not the case in the disadvantaged schools. There are still learners who are struggling with decoding and find it difficult to understand the text. Many learners enter the intermediate phase unable to read because they cannot decode the words. Decoding is the first step in reading but this does not guarantee comprehension,

but without decoding, reading does not take place. Reutzel, Brandt, Fawson and Jones (2014) state that “there is consistent data showing failure to develop basic decoding skills by first grade is predictive of lifelong poor literacy.”

Failure to develop the basic decoding skill might destroy a lot of learners’ success in life and their careers. Therefore, it is important for a teacher to pay attention when encountering learners with reading difficulties. The teacher must use decoding as the first step in remedial teaching with these learners (Noltemeyer, Joseph, and Kunesh, 2011). Most teachers think if learners can read aloud, reading is done. The underlying factor is decoding which is the start of the journey towards reading automatically and fluently. The purpose of developing decoding skills with the struggling learners is to ensure that they understand what they read (Gale, 2014). There are four aspects that determine success in reading: phonological and phonemic awareness, word recognition, oral reading fluency and alphabetic knowledge and phonics.



2.23.2 Alphabetic knowledge: refers to knowledge about letter-sound relationships, i.e. knowing the letters of the alphabet, what sound each letter represents and how different sound patterns represent writing (National Institute for Literacy, 2008). So, teachers should know how to teach phonics systematically.

2.23.3 Word recognition: is the ability to recognise a written word automatically without conscious effort. It relies on letter-sound relationships, the ability to perceive letters within words and combining of groups. Teachers need to understand that when children start to learn to read, word recognition is a slow, halting process. Through practice it becomes increasingly accurate and speeds up.

2.23.4 Phonological awareness: is the ability of being aware of the language sound. This includes being able to hear how many syllables there are in a word and being able to identify words that rhyme. The good news about it is that learners can all be taught to become better at it and teachers should know how to do this.

2.23.5 Phonetic awareness in reading comprehension

Phonemic awareness is an aural and a subcategory of a broader notion called 'phonological awareness', which refers to the ability to recognise and manipulate spoken language in different levels, such as word rhymes, blending and decoding (Phillips, 2008). Children who lack phonemic awareness are highly unlikely to benefit fully from phonics instruction because they are considered as prerequisites to phonics. Research has shown that phonemic awareness is a crucial determinant of success in reading and spelling attainment of alphabetic language (Maritz, 2010). Hence, EFAL learners should grasp phonemic awareness of their mother tongue to help them to develop much better and enable them to cope in comprehending the language of instruction in learning and teaching.

Considering the discussion above, this requires teachers to teach phonemic awareness explicitly because studies show that learners who receive explicit instruction on phonemic awareness improve significantly in their word recognition and spelling abilities (Yopp, 2009). Without phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling make no sense and are learned by rote (Yopp, 2009: 130) because children “do not understand what letters and spellings are supposed to represent.” Since phonemic awareness takes place during the early stages of learning, educators should allow learners to manipulate letters because they learn better in this way. In addition, phonemic awareness instruction needs to be introduced explicitly by educators so that all learner learning styles can be accommodated, irrespective which language. This will then help learners to have a good grasp of phonemic awareness to be able to cope with the elements discussed in the following section.

2.23.6 Vocabulary development in reading comprehension

Vocabulary is a component that affects reading comprehension for Foundation Phase learners and Intermediate Phase learners as well (Pretorius et al., 2016). The knowledge of this component is the most important aspect for additional language learners for academic achievement and oral English. This means educators should teach vocabulary that is closely related to the learning needs of their subject matter (DBE, 2011c). To be proficient doesn't involve strategies, but metacognitive levels like BICS and CALPS.

Knowing how to use the vocabulary obtained during reading is an important aspect because it builds representation of text of all readers. After decoding, the word is entered in the reader's oral vocabulary. National Panel Reading (2008) states that as a student reads, the words become part of the reading vocabulary.

During this period a reader begins to decode the unfamiliar words that were read into speech. However, if the word is not in the student's oral vocabulary the student will not understand the words that he discovers when reading. According to the discussion above, reading vocabulary is crucial in the development of the reading comprehension process (Sporer and Brunstein, 2009). Being articulate and well-spoken is of great help in any profession, and knowing that you can speak to higher-ups with self-confidence can be an enormous boost to your self-esteem. Reading books is also vital for learning a new language, as additional language learners gain exposure to words used in context which will ameliorate their own speaking and writing fluency.

2.23.7 Fluency

For years reading fluency was not regarded as an important aspect of a reading programme; it was viewed as oral reading, neither of which was considered important for the development of a learner (Hoffman, 2008). However, later, as the years progressed it was thrust back into the spotlight. Fluency requires efficient word recognition so the reader can gain meaning from the text with little conscious effort. In addition, fluency is considered the rate or speed that a learner is reading. Smith (2011) refers to fluency as a gateway to comprehension in reading. Nevertheless, reading comprehension is affected by fluency because if a learner does not consciously interpret every word, he/she will lack understanding in one way or the other. Learners who lack reading fluency fail to extract meaning from reading material (Rasinski, 2009). Repeated reading is an activity in which a learner reads and rereads increasingly difficulty passages.

In Senior Phase (grade 7) this element in reading is important because that is strengthening the proficiency of English for tertiary level. Fluency in grade 7 is regarded as the rate of speed that a learner reads. Regardless of the discussions above, the relationship between fluency and comprehension has been proved; reading fluency is indeed a factor that needs to be considered even amongst EFAL learners and especially

struggling readers (Tarchi, 2010). Then grade 7 EFAL teachers will need to consider using fluency as a tool to improve struggling learners' reading rather than measuring their performance. As much as fluency doesn't cause comprehension in reading, comprehension fluency can't be grasped completely without fluency because that is how the reading process is completed.

2.24 Reading comprehension strategies

Reading comprehension strategies provide language around comprehension processes (Blickenstaff, 2013). They give readers a vehicle for expressing their thinking and monitoring their thoughts as they are reading the text. "A strategy is a plan of action; you are to be thoughtful as you go along to fit and often adjust the plan" when you do this planning, in this situation it must be done with precision like good readers use many strategies (Cabinda, 2012: 35). For example, good readers use the following strategies: predictions, question generating and question answering to get a better clarity about a text as they go along reading.

This enables them to independently understand, discuss the text and to relate it to other situations. Afflerbach, Pearson and Paris (2008:368) define reading comprehension strategies as specific, "deliberate mental processes or behaviours, which control and modify the reader's efforts to decode a text", understand words and construct the meaning of a text. Blickenstaff (2013) emphasises that what is important is that readers should know what strategies there are, and how and when to use them. In addition, the reader must also know how to apply the strategy successfully in different contexts. Reading comprehension strategies, then, are like a set of steps consciously planned e.g., "making connections, creating mental images (visualising) or questioning that good readers use to make sense of text; and help(s) learners become purposeful, active readers who are in control of their own reading comprehension", for example, self-monitoring (Marcell, De Cleene, and Juettner, 2010:120).

According to the Pretorius et al (2016), comprehension strategies are procedures that guide learners as they attempt to read and write. In the same vein, Lumadi (2016) maintains that comprehension strategies are specific, learned procedures that foster

active, competent, self-regulated and intentional reading. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that teachers must encourage learners to use strategies independently throughout their reading activities. Schumm (2008:229) added by saying that reading comprehension strategies are processes that are controlled by the reader, are metacognitive, are intentional, are flexible, and emphasise reasoning. This means that, during reading comprehension, teachers must teach learners a combination of strategies and how to use them flexibly to become strategic readers.

Middleton (2011) regards reading comprehension strategies as “techniques for improving students’ (learners) success in extracting useful knowledge from text.” This means that teaching learner’s comprehension strategies may enhance the learners’ understanding. For this study, reading comprehension strategies are useful tips teachers teach learners to utilise when reading a text to ensure an understanding of the text.

2.25 International perspectives on reading

Leading world nations like Finland, Singapore and China pride themselves on their promotion of reading and their programmes that are successful because through all levels they are monitored and work in unity. South Africa needs to learn from these countries, so that the literacy level can develop and be counted amongst the best in the global village because that is what we are striving for. However, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2011) findings revealed that nearly 861 billion people (20%) of the world’s adults entered the 21st century unable to read a book or write their names. Recent findings by UNESCO (2016) revealed that there is improvement across the globe stating that 60 educational programmes have achieved above the international benchmark. Noted from PIRLS (2011 & 2016), findings show that in South Africa female learners outperform their male counterparts in literacy as well as in 48 other countries and dependent territories by an average of 19 points.

In addition, Howie (2015) states that a national sample revealed a strong rural element with more than a third of the learners tested at schools in rural areas, which had been previously found to influence the PIRLS (2011) performance, were still not improving. The PIRLS Literacy (2016) results concur with the previous 2006 & 2011 findings (Howie

et al., 2012) that indicates learners in the remote rural settings still achieve significantly below (291 points) while learners from urban areas achieved between 384-417 points. Learners in township areas also tended to achieve low scores, only 20 points higher than learners in remote areas and more than 100 points below the highest performing groups. Howie (2017) states that this indicates the school environment and climate as having a negative impact on the results of learners in rural areas more than learners in township schools.

This seems to say that achievement of quality basic education in all countries in Africa calls for the development of good reading habits in both the children and the adults. In Africa, this is a problem as most people are still illiterate according to Nigeria's inclusive literacy development initiative (Aina, Ogungben and Adigun, 2010). This is a result of the absence of a widespread culture of reading, in the case of Nigeria, and acts as an effective barrier to development and international competitiveness.

Nigeria needs this kind of development to meet the needs of its present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Gbadamosi, 2009). This will change the stigma already associated with Africa as a continent with a "poor reading culture". Nevertheless, Nigeria's literacy rate keeps on dropping from 62% in 1992 to 52% in 2006, despite the government initiatives that it is implementing. It also means that rather than improving on the literacy rating, Nigeria keeps on retrogressing (Olanrewaju, 2008).

2.26 Reading in the South African context

In most disadvantaged schools in South Africa, English is taught by teachers who are not mother tongue speakers of English. As a result, learners acquire English at a First Additional Language level; their language will not be proficient like first language learners.

Hence, this study intends to close the gap between reading comprehension skill of EFAL and, because most researchers have focused on reading problems, reading habits and reading leisure (Mc clure, 2011). Therefore, reading needs to be promoted and adequately or proficiently developed in South Africa, so that everyone can be fluent in

English, which is the language of teaching language and learning. It is needful to say that many teachers in South Africa do not know how to help learners struggling with reading because they are not developed to improve the teaching of reading (Botha, van der Berg, van de Walt and Uys, 2009).

Nonetheless, reading is an important element that is vital because learners cope in other subjects across the curriculum and can improve their performance in tertiary education. The Education for All (EFA, 2010) extends this view by revealing the lowest literacy rates observed in sub-Saharan Africa, South-west Asia and South Africa inclusive because these regions represent half of the world population. These rates are better in the European countries, especially amongst adults. EFA states that adult literacy had risen to 86% by 2015 and youth literacy to 92% as well. This shows that South Africa faces many challenges in promoting literacy like in the northern African countries, while leading world countries pride themselves in promoting reading in all aspects of life: home, in schools, at work and public places (DoE, 2008:4).

One of the factors that contribute to low literacy levels in South Africa is the non-availability of textbooks in homes and in classrooms as well as the rarity of well-established school libraries. However, the Department of Education has improved by supporting schools with library materials. A few schools don't have these facilities due to vandalism of school property by thieves, which remains a challenge that needs to be addressed as it is hindering the process of learning and teaching. Some researchers like Phokungwana (2012) have investigated the established libraries and have found out that very few underprivileged schools have fully resourced libraries and even when these facilities do exist there is a lack of management, whereas having this type of resource improves the results and achievements of schools. If the facility is utilized properly and organized effectively, these benefit teaching and learning.

Numerous studies have been conducted and carried out by independent researchers (Pretorius, 2010) regarding the usage of resourced libraries and their importance has been stressed. These researchers concur that learners in grade 7 are not reading at the level expected of them because grade 7 learners are less visible in libraries. On the other hand, McClure (2011) found that many grade 7 learners who cannot read or write

possess a literacy level of grade 5 learners. Wise (2009) highlights the link between reading and literacy as an asset that plays an important role in the development of language for school-going adolescent learners. This issue is further discussed below, namely reading comprehension in the South African context.

2.27 Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to read a text, process it and understand its meaning. An individual's ability to comprehend a text is influenced by his/her traits and skills, one of which is the ability to make inferences (Cottone, 2011). Reading comprehension encourages learners to become more responsible for their learning, once the child has mastered the strategy. Although reading comprehension proficiency is vital for learners to be successful in their academic career, South African studies have revealed that this reading skill is severely under developed in primary school learners (Aleksandra, 2012). Reading comprehension should be developed well in primary school because at tertiary level reading is a skill needed from the undergraduate students. If learners are under developed in reading competency, they might struggle to cope with the different academic and professional texts that they will be exposed to at a tertiary educational level.

Crawford & Temple (2012) agree that teachers should use various strategies when teaching reading. Before students are exposed to these strategies, teachers need to model and demonstrate these strategies and be equipped to teach the methodology of effective reading. It is complex and involves teaching, thinking, and utilizing experiences and knowledge (Linake, 2015). The foundation of reading comprehension lies in word identification and decoding strategies needed for implementation, so that learners can cope with the difficulties they encounter with the text.

This involves knowing and understanding what is being read and the meaning of the words. The relationship between experiences, thinking and reading theories and other accompanying theories will be further discussed below (Fleisch et al., 2013).

2.27.1 Reading comprehension as cognitive processing

There are several models that define the process of reading comprehension taking place in the mind (Aleksandra, 2012). For instance, intern active models underpin interactive aspects and interactive compensatory (any reader compensates): these are intentions that influence reading in the mind. In the automatic information processing model internal aspects of attention are dealt with and discussed in the following section. Alertness is the reader's active attempt to access the relationship involving sound, syntactic knowledge and word meaning. Selectivity refers to the ability of the reader to be selective to ascertain information requiring processing (Anastasiou and Griva, 2009). Limited capacity is another factor that refers to human's limited amount of cognitive energy available for use in processing information. This means that if a learner is unable to process information as defined, those EFAL learners have a default in the development of their brains.

In other words, if the reader is focused on decoding, the cognitive energy and attention cannot be directed at integrating at the same time, because relating and combining the meanings of words will suffer as well as comprehension (Commeyras and Mazile, 2011). Automaticity in information processing, then, means information processed with little attention, which can result in misunderstanding and confusion to the learner regarding the text while reading.

2.27.2 Reading comprehension as socio-cognitive process

Reading comprehension is a socio-cognitive process where modelling takes a constructivist view of reading comprehension, that is, the reader, the text, the teacher and the classroom community are all involved in the construction of meaning. Stols (2015) asserts that the classroom plays a role of a social context and on the influence of the teacher. On the readers' side meaning is negotiation and constructions are central to this model.

In other words, this model views comprehension as a process that involves meaning negotiation among texts, teachers and other members of the classroom community. However, the educator must have a sound knowledge of the subject matter and must be

able to activate the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to help learners learn (DoE, 2008b).

Within this process schema must be active for text meanings, academic tasks, and sources of authority are all brought to the negotiation task. The role of the teacher is to orchestrate the instructional setting and being knowledgeable about teaching/learning strategies and about the world.

2.28 Development of reading comprehension skills of primary school learners

Before a teacher develops reading comprehension skills, understanding of the issues that affect the teaching of reading comprehension skills to grade 7 EFAL learners must be in place. It is necessary to understand the development of children in the early childhood years up to adolescence (Maswanganye, 2009). Knowledge of the learner is pivotal when implementing a curriculum where developmental and learning theories play a significant role in guiding the planning of teaching programmes and can influence the choice of teaching and learning strategies. Taylor (2008:16) asserts that at senior phase is where much of the school learning is conveyed by texts that are longer, “more complex, and more abstract”. Reading interests are more varied and individualized.

2.29 Developing reading comprehension skills in primary school learners

The developing of reading skills generally begins from preschool years and continues up to higher education level. Klapwijk (2012) maintains that at stage five (grade 7 up) much of the school learning is conveyed by texts that are longer, more complex and more abstract. Reading interests are more varied and individualized. This indicates that, in developing reading comprehension skills, the learner’s age and developmental stage need to be considered. The development of reading skills initially aims at equipping the learners with basic reading skills to improve the reading comprehension skill.

Zimmerman, Howie & Smit (2012) suggest that EFAL learners should first master the six reading skills and that decoding is the vital step in the reading process. Learners use this skill to sound out words they’ve heard before but haven’t been written out. The ability to do that is the foundation for other reading skills. In addition, grade 7 learners who are still struggling with this skill can be helped through parent intervention by developing

phonological awareness at home, playing word games and reading to their children often. Fluency is one of the basic reading skills that EFAL learners master at this stage (Williams, 2010).

This indicates that, in developing reading comprehension skills, the learner's age and developmental stage need to be considered. Initially, the development of reading comprehension skills aims at equipping learners with basic communication skills to function adequately in their society. At this level, reading comprehension is a communication mode. Junius (2009) holds the view that reading comprehension skills need to be introduced at an early age in South Africa. EFAL learners must be able to understand what reading comprehension means and know what can be done when comprehension fails to occur. This then gives learners opportunities to activate their background knowledge, discover information, and construct new understanding.

However, Archer (2011) argues that the development of reading comprehension skills does not necessarily mean the increase of word knowledge or vocabulary, and nor does it automatically increase the reader's vocabulary size. Sentences and texts require that the reader go beyond the lexical information present on the printed page. This indicates that reading comprehension skills need to develop towards a higher level of thinking.

2.30 Demands and challenges in the development of reading comprehension skills of township schools

In some primary schools, there are EFAL learners in grade 7 who are found to be experiencing reading comprehension difficulties (Van Staden, 2011). Even so, they are taken for granted by some teachers in this grade and they are expected to read fluently with comprehension.

Little is done to support those who are experiencing this problem. Learners who fail to read with comprehension are always left behind only with an option of using a dictionary to enhance comprehension (Makhubele, 2015). In township schools, the standard of reading comprehension might be low for various reasons. Surprisingly, there are EFAL grade 7 learners who are proficient readers in some township areas.

2.31 Comprehension

Comprehension involves the interaction of a wide range of cognitive skills and processes as there are many occasions where difficulties arise that may lead to comprehension failure (Phokungwana, 2012). Comprehension is a cognitive process that requests a learner to have the ability to make meaning that is normally enhanced when there is a reduction in the cognitive load of a reader's working memory, and the reader can decode the words or phrases fluently and bring meaning to the unfamiliar vocabulary encountered. Therefore, successful readers are more efficient at gaining unfamiliar word meanings from texts because they have a greater existing vocabulary, and have more experience in using context clues and great background knowledge (Commeyars and Mazille, 2011). In contrast with this view, less skilled readers are considered to have more difficulties integrating reading and text information (Benton and Craib, 2011).

Furthermore, strong contextual clues are not always found in many texts, and less skilled readers may encounter more difficulties considering the writer's interpretations, and forming appropriate inferences from unfamiliar events or relationships. Machel (2015) asserts that the premise underlying comprehension is a cognitive process that requires a strong focus on the connection between language and thinking, and places importance on the reader's ability to make appropriate choices between contextual cues and the ability to decode, comprehend and read the text.

This means, meaning is formed in the reader's mind when prior knowledge is activated for the learner, to respond to the kind of meaning that is subsequently altered as the reader accommodates further text information as reading progresses. Comprehension of a text is more difficult if a reader is not fluent in English as a second language. Therefore, reading comprehension is "a product of the word-level reading skills" (decoding) and "linguistic comprehension" (understanding the meaning), as several studies have shown (Mboacha, 2015). This skill cannot be acquired solely without strategies on how to develop comprehension. Those strategies are further discussed under strategies for reading development.

2.31.1 Comprehension strategies

Comprehension strategies are therefore used to gain a better understanding of a text. These strategies are as follows: monitoring comprehension, metacognition, graphic and semantic organizers, generating questions, they are conscious plans or sets of steps that good readers use to make sense of text (Dogany, Ashirimbetova and Davis, 2013). Comprehension strategy instruction helps learners become purposeful, active readers who are in control of their own reading comprehension. These strategies have research-based evidence for improving text comprehension (Stols, 2015). Teachers can utilise these strategies to teach learners text comprehension strategies. Metacognition can be defined as "thinking about thinking" (Karolia, 2012). Good readers use metacognitive strategies to think about and have control over their reading.

Before reading, they might clarify their purpose for reading and preview the text. During reading, they might monitor their understanding, adjusting their reading speed to fit the difficulty of the text and "fixing" any comprehension problems they have. After reading, they check their understanding of what they read. Graphic organisers illustrate concepts and relationships between concepts in a text or using diagrams (Sporer and Brunstein, 2009). Regardless of the label, graphic organizers can help readers focus on concepts and how they are related to other concepts. Graphic organizers can provide learners with tools they can use to examine and show relationships in a text and help learners write well-organized summaries of a text.

Questions can be effective because they give learners a purpose for reading (Stols, 2015), stimulate the learners' focus, and help them pay attention on what they are to learn and help learners to think actively as they read. Questions also encourage learners to monitor their comprehension, and help learners to review content and relate what they have learned to what they already know. The Question-Answer Relationship strategy (QAR) encourages learners to learn how to answer questions better (Adler, 2008).

Learners are asked to indicate whether the information they used to answer questions about the text was textually explicit information (information that was directly stated in the text), textually implicit information (information that was implied in the text), or

information entirely from the learner's own background knowledge. By generating questions, learners become aware of whether they can answer the questions and if they understand what they are reading (Smith, 2011). Learners learn to ask themselves questions that require them to combine information from different segments of a text. For example, learners can be taught to ask main idea questions that relate to important information in a text.

Recognizing story structure instruction, learners learn to identify the categories of content (characters, setting, events, problem and resolution) (Ebrahim, 2010). Often, learners learn to recognize story structure using story maps. Instruction in story structure improves students' comprehension. Summarizing requires learners to determine what is important in what they are reading and to put it into their own words. Instruction in summarizing helps students (Dessoiff, 2008). Identify or generate main ideas, connect the main or central ideas, eliminate unnecessary information. The teacher helps learners practice the strategy until they can apply it independently.

2.32 Learners' strategies for reading development



2.32.1 Extensive reading

Extensive reading involves learners reading texts for enjoyment and developing general reading skills and focused meaning (Grabe, 2009). In other words, instead of spending a half an hour decoding a tiny part of one book, a learner is exposed to reading many simpler books that are at a slightly lower level at which a person can read fluently. In addition, extensive reading is overall beneficial to English First Additional Language speakers' language acquisition in the long term, but there is no guarantee that all skills will develop equally (Mitchell, 2010). The benefits of extensive reading cannot be observed in the short term, but its strength is the smooth slow rate that a reader uses when engaged in this type of reading.

This strategy is particularly suitable to primary school learners and is age appropriate whereas Senior Phase learners at this stage are exposed to a variety of texts. However, McClure (2011) posits that extensive reading is effective for First Additional Language learners of English in grade 7 as they are exposed to abstract text, for example

magazines, e-books and more scientific readings. Furthermore, extensive reading is enjoyable because there is no pressure exerted on learners to finish reading a certain amount of text. There is a freedom of choice in the text at any time in terms of what they want to read and in whatever they want to explore. Hence, grade 7 learners need to gain experience in extensive reading to be proficient in language, although extensive reading contributions are limited because of the overall nature of EFAL learners.

2.32.2 Intensive reading

Intensive reading is when learners interact with a text. It might be with visuals or dialogue but they must make meaning of what is being discussed in the text (McClure, 2011). This type of reading normally takes place in the classroom where learners are forced to read individually, listen to a teacher modelling reading to them or doing it with other peers in groups. If the use of this method is increased during language lessons, this will develop the attention span of learners because when reading a learner concentrates and excludes everything around him (Gillet, 2012). This will help EFAL learners to engage more with the text and enjoy travelling to different worlds. This is a good time for a teacher to ask questions that are probing, and to stimulate reading interest in learners, especially when they interact with other learners who understand the words and who have a wide variety of word vocabulary.

2.32.3 Prediction

Predicting enables the reader to form expectations about what is read. This method is influenced by prior knowledge, that is, what the reader already knows and brings to the reading task (Hagaman, 2012). This is an important method when selecting the material to read. Indeed, the more the reader knows about a text, the easier it will be for him to make predictions because he can relate the sampled text to his existing knowledge (Mwanamukubi, 2013). At the same time, this method helps when the knowledge of the subject is limited, because then the reader can make use of all available clues to predict the content of what is read (Van der Walt, 2011).

Several aspects in a text can stimulate the reader's prediction. For example, pictures, tables and graphs, headings and subheadings, and words and phrases can all lead the

reader to think actively during the reading process and thus convert him from being a passive recipient of information to a more active participant. Where learners formulate ideas about what is to happen, they predict the story.

2.32.4 Co-operative learning

Co-operative learning involves learners working together in small learning groups, helping each other “carry out individual and group tasks” (Mitchell, 2011:43). Cooperative learning recognizes when learners cooperate or collaborate; this has an energetic effect. In other words, by working together learners can often achieve a result that is greater than the sum of their individual capabilities. In addition, cooperative learning rests on the belief that much of learner’s knowledge is socially constructed. This is to say, we learn from others in our immediate environment. If the class is large (Mitchell, 2011), it can be a major strategy for helping learners learn to read more easily.

Cooperative learning is a pedagogical approach that promotes learner-to-learner interaction via working in small groups to maximize their learning and reach their shared goal. It is suitable to be used in the South African education system, as espoused in the curriculum which emphasises cooperation (DBE, 2012). Co-operative learning refers to work done by learners as teams producing a product of some sort (such as a design of a product or a process) (Klapwijk, 2011). In the case of reading comprehension, learners can be grouped according their abilities to ensure that everyone understands everything in the tasks that the team hands in. This approach makes groups responsible for seeing that non-contributors do not get credit for work they did not do. Hence, this approach is suitable for my study as a strategy to help grade 7 EFAL learners with their reading comprehension skills.

2.33 Summary

What emerged from Chapters 2 is that teaching reading comprehension is a complex task and that it involves metacognitive and cognitive processes. However, the combination of theoretical and practical knowledge of learning theories and reading comprehension strategies can help teachers to teach reading comprehension effectively. This chapter dealt with the theoretical framework that underpins the study. It discussed

factors affecting teaching reading comprehension skills in EFAL grade 7 learners in their additional language.

The chapter made references to reading theories as well. Further discussed was additional language both in the international context and in the South African context and how language policies were contributors to the development of reading comprehension. Additional language acquisition theories proposed by Cummins & Krashen (2008) were also discussed. The information gathered in this chapter forms the basis of this research and guided the researcher in conducting qualitative research that follows in chapter three. Reading comprehension is a thinking process, the theories of Piaget (1986), Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1986), Ausubel (1963) and Bandura (1977) are relevant to the discussion of teaching comprehension and help to explain the cognitive concepts formed by Grade 7 EFAL learners.

Learners construct their own meaning as they are actively participating in reading activities (Piaget, 1986), as can be inferred from the theoretical framework. Reading comprehension is based on behaviours modelled and supported by competent adults (Vygotsky, 1978). As a result, this will encourage learners to change and refine the reading comprehension to a proficient and independent reader who can use both cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies, for example, cognitive strategies emphasise development of thinking skills and enhance comprehension while metacognitive strategies enable learners to benefit from instruction and correct use of cognitive strategies effectively. In addition, Zimmerman's (2008) model of social-cognitive theory can be useful for the teaching of reading comprehension because in the process of teaching reading comprehension, learners should become independent readers and be able to master their own reading comprehension.

This view agrees with the theory of Piaget (1986), Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1986), Ausubel (1963) and Bandura (1977) that understanding is that the teacher and the learner should play an active role during reading comprehension.

Therefore, it is critical that the teacher should integrate theories and practice to meet the individual reading comprehension needs of the learners. Chapter 3 delineates the

empirical process of the study. The research design and methodology are explained in detail and the procedure outlining how data was dealt with will be highlighted. Within the context of the study the participants and the sample selection are dealt with.



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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter views and opinions of authors were compared. This chapter discusses the research methodology that underpins the study as well as important ethical considerations. This study set out primarily to explore and record teachers' views on reading comprehension skills amongst grade 7 EFAL learners. Constructivism is the underpinning research paradigm of this study. The reason for this is that the researcher attempted to construct multiple realities during the teaching of reading comprehension skills in grade 7 classrooms. This study is qualitative in nature.

3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is regarded by Babbie and Mouton (2009) as a whole system of thinking, According to Creswell (2007:19), Collis and Hussey (2009:55), Babbie (2010:33; 2011:34), De Vos and Strydom (2011:40), as well as Neuman (2011:94), the theory of paradigms has had a major impact on the philosophy and methodology of the social sciences. According to Mouton (2008), a paradigm is referred to as an established research tradition in a certain discipline. The focus of a paradigm is to include accepted theories, traditions, approaches, models and frameworks; furthermore, it could be observed as a model of framework. The design of a research study begins with the selection of a topic and a paradigm. A paradigm is essentially a worldview, a whole framework of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place. It is this world views within which researchers work. Hence, the use of the concept paradigm is metaphorical when applied to the social sciences, as opposed to the natural science.

3.2.1 Positivism

The positivism paradigm is one of the educational research paradigms utilised in research related to education. This ideology assumes that there are real world objects apart from the human knower. In other words, there is an objective reality.

3.2.2 Interpretivism

This study is underpinned by the interpretivism paradigm that lays emphasis on the construction of knowledge through observable phenomena. The interpretive paradigm considers how people understand and make meanings of different situations by describing their intentions, beliefs, values and reasons (De Vos and Creswell, 2009). The interpretive inquiry often implies research methods that occur in natural settings, and it often makes use of unstructured observations, interviews and qualitative research techniques. Informed by the interpretive research paradigm, my main approach to the search has been a qualitative one. The qualitative research methods that were employed for this research correspond with the interpretive paradigm as they aim at gaining a better understanding of how to explore reading amongst grade 7 learners in four primary schools in the Buffalo City Metropolitan District.

Research has been described as a systematic investigation (De Vos, 2011: 88) or inquiry whereby data is collected, analysed and interpreted in some way to "understand, describe, predict or control an educational or psychological phenomenon or to empower individuals in such contexts". Fouche (2011) puts forward that the argument that what was relatively simple to define thirty or forty years ago has become far more complex in recent times with the number of research methods increasing dramatically, particularly in the social/applied sciences. It is suggested that the exact nature of the definition of research is influenced by the researcher's theoretical framework with theory being used to establish relationships between or among constructs that describe or explain a phenomenon by going beyond the local event and trying to connect it with similar events (Cohen, 2008).

This may lead the first-time research or early career researcher to wonder where the notion of 'paradigm' fits into the research course of action and to question its relevance. Some authors prefer to discuss the interpretive framework in terms of 'knowledge claims' (Creswell, 2009); epistemology or ontology; or even research methodologies (Morrison, 2009) rather than referring to paradigms.

Several theoretical paradigms exist, such as positivist (and post positivist), constructivist, interpretive, transformative, emancipatory, critical theory, pragmatism and deconstructivist. The use of different terms in different texts and the varied claims regarding how many research paradigms there are sometimes leads to confusion for the first time or early career researcher.

3.3 Research approach

Research approach is a procedure that a researcher employs to collect, analyse, interpret and present data. A research approach will typically include how data is to be collected, what data collecting instruments will be employed, how these instruments will be used and the intended means for analysing data collected (Fouche, 2010). This study followed an interpretivist approach and a case study design was used.

According to Maree (2015), there are different research approaches, namely quantitative, qualitative and mixed method approaches. The difference comes, when a researcher sought to answer questions to the following:



- a) What knowledge claims are being made by the researcher?
- b) What strategies of enquiry will inform the procedures?
- c) What methods of data collection and analysis will be used?

Quantitative and qualitative research differs in the following ways:

1. Analytic objectives
2. Types of questions posed
3. Data collection instruments used
4. Forms of data procedure
5. Flexibility of the study design

Qualitative research is an umbrella term under which different types of information are included. Although qualitative research might be the oldest approach that tends to focus on small scale research and results in the outcomes being generalised (Deacon, 2009)

and lacks methodological rigour, Ary (2010) views the qualitative research approach as having several characteristics, namely: an in-depth understanding of the social world of research participants, allows research to create a deeper and richer picture of what is going on in a setting, adopts a common sensical view of generalizability and systematic process of collecting information.

A qualitative approach seeks “to provide an in-depth picture and generally deals with smaller numbers than quantitative data” (Yin, 2009:46). It can be used to flesh out qualitative data and it tries to isolate and define categories during the process of research. It is appropriate when the questions asked by the researcher are difficult for a respondent to answer precisely to illuminate the values of people’s everyday lives; “it values participants’ perspectives on their words; often relies on people’s words as primary data” (Cresswell, 2009:34). The relevance of the qualitative approach in this study lies in its flexibility, allowing the researcher to become an instrument in observing how grade 7 teachers interact with their learners during English and other lessons. In other words, the qualitative approach provides the researcher with better insight into the teaching of reading by acquiring richer descriptions and thoughtful responses from the teachers, classroom observations and document analysis.

The qualitative approach also enabled the researcher to get a deeper understanding of how teachers conducted reading lessons in multilingual classrooms, as the researcher was interested to know or understand how teachers make sense of reading methods they employed to accommodate foreign learners in teaching reading (Yin, 2009). Therefore, exploring the interaction between teachers and learners through a qualitative approach facilitated my understanding and interpretation of issues regarding the teaching of reading in a multi-cultural classroom environment. It also allowed me to understand my colleagues’ attitudes and beliefs about reading that might in turn foster collegial support to each other. Grade 7 EFAL learners and data collected quantitatively might not be able to do this. In addition, aspects such as people’s perceptions might not be measured accurately using numerical data but the number of participants can verify how many of the learners comprehended the questions posed in the reading comprehension.

Advantages of qualitative approach

- ❖ Gives detailed information
- ❖ Participant perspectives are unchanged
- ❖ Researcher understands more about participants' cultures
- ❖ Participants are given a chance to explain their behaviour
- ❖ Researcher has good control and direction of the study
- ❖ Include many factors as possible in the analysis

Disadvantages of qualitative approach

- ❖ Method cannot be verified objectively
- ❖ There is no data to do statistical analysis
- ❖ Time consuming and requires a lot of labour

3.4 Document analysis

In document analysis as a data gathering instrument, the researcher focuses on all types of written communications that could shed light on the phenomenon under investigation (Maree, 2012) for this study. This included the published and unpublished documents such as lesson plans, assessment instruments and assessment records; school records, education Department records (archives) on support provision. The researcher was cautious of the authenticity and accuracy of using these instruments. In the case of this study, reading comprehension scripts of the learners were used to reveal the outcomes.

Mpiti (2016) asserts that documentary evidence can often provide a useful background and context for the study and can be illuminating, especially when comparing what is claimed and what has happened in practice. One of the research sub-questions was, "Why do teachers claim that the EFAL learners are not proficient in English?" In reading these documents, the writer wished to compare what educators say they do (in reading) with what was happening as revealed through observation. In this study, the researcher chose reading comprehension for analysis regarding grade 7 EFAL learners. The following advantages and disadvantages of document analysis are given by Maree (2012):

Advantages of document analysis:

- ❖ Documents can provide insight into what people think and what they do.
- ❖ Documentary information is grounded in local settings.
- ❖ Information is unobtrusive, making reactive and investigator effects very unlikely.
- ❖ Information is obtained in an inexpensive way.

Disadvantages of document analysis:

- ❖ Information recorded may be incomplete because of selective recording.
- ❖ Access to some types of information might possibly be difficult.
- ❖ Interpretive validity is possibly low.

3.5 Interpretive paradigm

The interpretive paradigm underpins this study, emphasising the construction of knowledge through observable phenomena. The interpretive paradigm considers how people understand and make meaning of different situations by describing their intentions, beliefs, values and reasons (De Vos, 2009). The interpretive paradigm seeks to capture and understand the lives of the participants by analysing conversations and interactions that the researcher had with the subjects (Cohen, 2009). In this study, the researcher observed how the teachers and learners interacted in the classrooms and how they attached meanings or interpreted the ways of interaction.

Cohen et al. (2009) define the interpretive paradigm as an attempt to understand individual interpretations of the world around them. They further claim that the interpretive paradigm works directly with experiences and understanding of the theories that emerge as more information becomes generated during the research process. This research therefore fits into this paradigm as it investigates the experiences of teachers and learners in the reading of English First Additional Language (EFAL) using the interpretive/constructivist approach. The intention of research is to understand "the world of human experience" better (Manyike, 2009: 56), suggesting that reality is socially constructed. Hence, Wahyuni (2012) states that interpretive research is fundamentally concerned with meaning and seeks to understand social members' definition of a

situation. In other words, it relies on the perspectives of the research participants and the way that the researcher understands these perspectives. Wahyuni (2012) also says that this approach provides a deep insight into the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it.

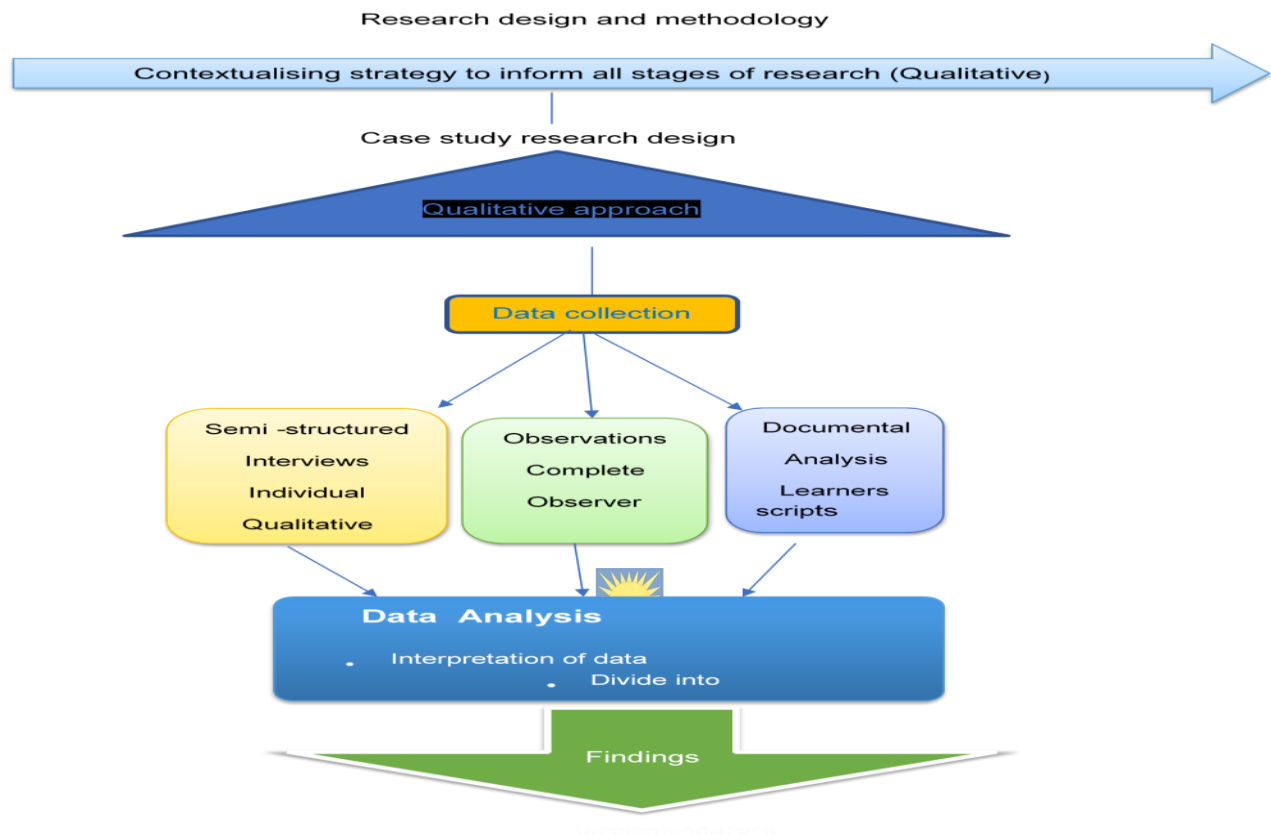


Figure 3. 1: The Research Process

3.6 Research design

Research design refers to the overall strategy that a researcher chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring you will effectively address the research problem; constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Cohen, 2008). A research design according to Wayhuni (2012) is not just a workplan. A work plan details what must be done to complete the project but the work plan will flow from the project's research design. The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to

answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

Research design is mostly confused with the method on how to collect data, rather is a logic structure that is followed to collect data. Maree (2013) states that research design is based on the researcher's assumptions, skills and research practices and influences the way in which she or he collects data. The figure below demonstrates what practices each case study posits.

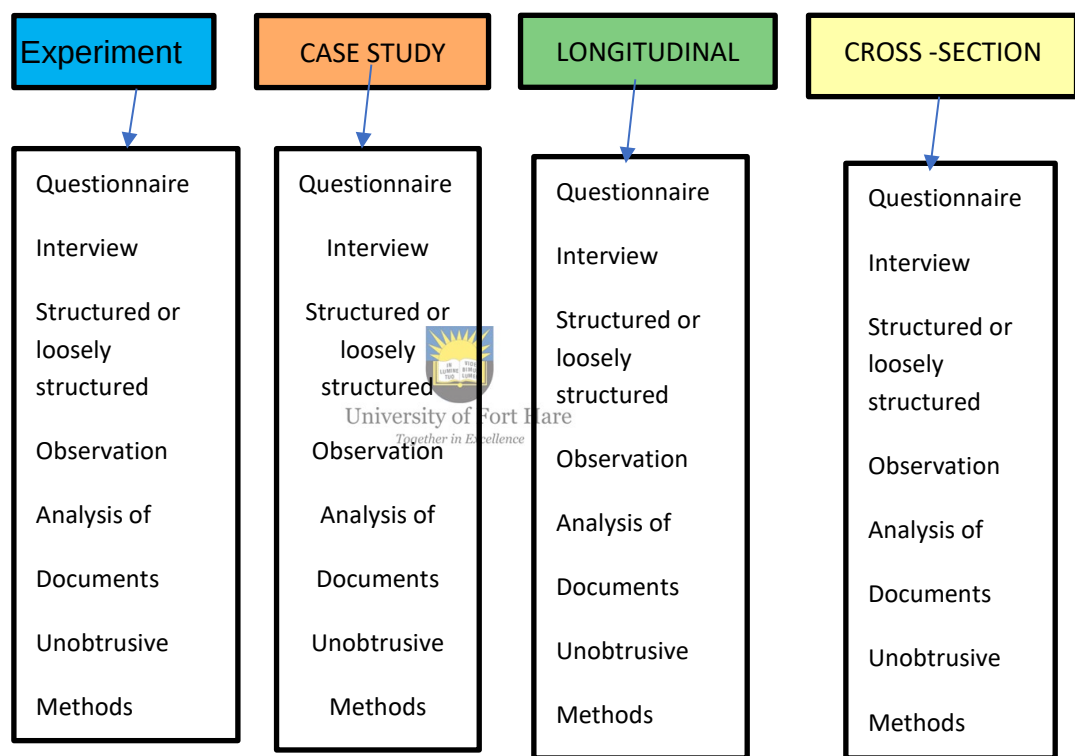


Figure 3. 2: The Overall Research Strategy

3.6.1 A case study

The case study method uses multiple data collection methods and analytic procedures. This provides a researcher with opportunities to compare interpretations (De Vos, 2011). A case study expands on the relevance of a project by developing unforeseen findings and explores anomalous findings. Cresswell (2009) states that a case study possesses one characteristic of five qualitative approaches. A case study most likely identifies a

single entity to study to gain theoretical and professional insights from a full documentation of that one individual or a large scale of an entire school. It focuses on the specific and detailed study of a case or cases. Yin (2009) defines a case study as a process that dominates largely through interviews, observations, and the study of school and national achievements records.

These interviews are mostly underpinned by lived conditions and experiences. These conditions are not taken as single variables but as lived experiences, which are indigenous to teaching and learning daily practices. Case studies show a strong sense of time and place and represent an overwhelming commitment, which localizes the aspect that is prominent. The goal of a case study, in its most general sense, is to undertake an inquiry in which both a researcher and educators can reflect upon instances of educational practice. This is therefore suitable to my study because this study is a case study that undertakes an inquiry on teachers' views regarding grade 7 EFAL learners reading comprehension skills in four cluster primary schools.

One central premise of it is regular and structured interactions between explanatory principles and cases that both educational practitioners and researchers can avoid the applications, on the other hand, theorising, appreciating the complexity and uniqueness of practice. This study will employ a case study design.

3.7 Population

Population is referred to as a total number or a group of people a researcher collects data from or a group of participants who can answer questions asked by a researcher in a form of interview questions (Van Rensburg, 2010). According to Okeke (2015), a population is a group of persons, items or objects whose measurements are collected from samples. A research population is also known as “target group”, or as a group of all elements (Bless and Higson - Smith, 2010).

3.8 Sample and sampling procedure

This section outlines the protocol that was followed for selecting the respondents and the collection of data.

3.8.1 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting participants from a population of four cluster primary schools in the East London District. In this study, the researcher used purposive sampling which entails selecting participants for a specific purpose that involves a small number of respondents from a total population (Maree, 2011). Purposive sampling enables the researcher to understand the depth of the problem and produce an extensive amount of information while using multiple resources. The sample population included a language head of department from the school and all teachers who teach the grade 7 English medium classes at the school. The data collecting instruments determined the sample size: six learners consisting of two high achieving learners, two average learners and two low achievers in each of the four primary schools.

3.8.2 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research to collect rich information for identification and selection. This involves the selection and identification of individuals that are knowledgeable on the concept that data is collected from (Black, 2010). In this study, participants were purposively selected after characteristics were identified by the researcher to locate individuals interested in participating in the data collection process. Purposive sampling, according to these authors, is a non-random sampling method where a researcher seeks individuals with a specific behaviour. Maree (2008) elaborates that purposive sampling is a type of enquiry that seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon. It is important to choose a sample where the most can be learned.

Advantages of sampling

- ❖ Cost-effective and time-effective sampling methods available
- ❖ Appropriate method for limited number of primary data sources who can contribute to the study
- ❖ Effective in exploring anthropological situations
- ❖ Disadvantages of sampling
- ❖ Vulnerability to errors in judgment by researcher
- ❖ Low level of reliability and high levels of bias.

- ❖ Inability to generalize research findings

3.8.3 Selecting participants

The selection of participants of this study was purposive. The sampling of participant's 24 learners, four primary schools and four EFAL educators was done. Selection of 6 learners from each grade7 class and an EFAL educator per school. Participants willingly participated in the study. The table below indicates the participants of the study. The six learners from each school were selected according to gender, not performance.

Table 3. 1: The Research Sample

Participants	School A	School B	School C	School D	Total
Teachers	1	1	1	1	4
Learners	6	6	6	6	24
Total	7	7	7	7	28



3.9 Data collection instruments, procedures and data analysis

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The researcher collected information from multiple sources and different primary and secondary sources such as: semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. Primary data was collected from participants, which means learners and teachers of the school. Collection of data from two or more participants by different means (Manion, Morrison & Cohen, 2007) is called triangulation. Hence, this study employed document analysis, semi-structured interviews and observation collection instruments.

3.9.1 Interviews

Interviews are very useful research tools as they give the researcher a degree of flexibility and privileged access to other people's lives. They are often associated with survey based research used by many qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2008). The participants in this study could discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live and to express how they regarded situations from their own points of view. Furthermore, an interview encourages open-ended dialogue between the researcher and the participants and helps the researcher to see things in a new light. In line with the thought above,

Manion, Morrison and Cohen (2008) state that interviews allow for in-depth exploration of experiences and, as a result, can yield a great deal of useful information. Interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity to probe and ask follow-up questions where vague or unclear statements were made. In this study, the semi-structured interviews allowed the participants to lead the conversation and to identify what they saw as significant as they told their stories in ways they wanted to tell.

Advantages of interviews

- ❖ They are useful to obtain detailed information
- ❖ They help to explore perspectives on a phenomenon.
- ❖ They can assess participants' knowledge.
- ❖ They allow the participant to ask questions that may reveal useful additional information for deciding.
- ❖ the interview may be modified as needed to gather important information.

3.9.2 Structured interviews



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A structured interview is commonly known as a standardised interview; it is mostly employed in a survey research. It is a means of collecting data statistically. In this case data is collected by the researcher rather than a self-administered survey. A structured interview also standardises the order of questions, the questions are always answered in the same context. There is minimal probing, because its main feature is planned around a predetermined number of questions (Alsheelqi, 2014). There is little freedom of expression in a structured interview.

3.9.3 Semi-structured interviews

Conducting an interview is a more natural form of interacting with people than making them fill out a questionnaire. It gives an opportunity to get to know people quite intimately so that the researcher can really understand how participants think and feel (Greef, 2011). There are different types of interview questions. This study adopted semi-structured questions; they encompass single or two open-ended questions at the start of an interview. This allows the researcher to follow up on what was said by the interviewee.

The face-to-face interview has continued to be the best form of data collection because the presence of the interviewee is felt. Maree (2011) sees the semi-structured one-on-one interview as a mode of obtaining information through direct interchange with an individual to gain knowledge the researcher seeks, while Mergel (2011) states that semi-structured interviews are a method commonly used in a research project to corroborate data emerging from other data sources used. Although the open-ended question produces data that is difficult to organize and code, it allows subjects to respond freely and express shades of opinion rather than forcing them to have pre-coded opinions.

According to Johnson & Christensen (2008), qualitative interviews consist of open-ended questions and provide qualitative data and qualitative interviews are equally referred to as depth interviews. Alshenqeeti (2014) identified four interviews that are frequently used in social sciences that include semi-structured interviews, informal conversational interviews, non-directive interviews, and focus group interviews. In this study the semi-structured interview was employed to collect data because probing could be an area of challenge. Sometimes an interviewee may not understand a question or may not have received sufficient information to answer a question.



3.9.4 Focus group interviewing

Focus group interviewing is a form of qualitative research consisting of interviews in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging (Stake, 2012). According to Dilshad (2013), a focus group interview is one of the valuable tools for collecting data in qualitative research.

He further states that focus groups provide a more naturalistic environment as compared to an individual interview. Desscombe (2007) elaborates that a focus group consists of a small number of participants, between 6- 9 participants. Participants are brought together to explore feeling, opinions and ideas about a topic. Further, Barber (2008) pointed out that focus groups can be referred to as an interview that does not need formatted questions to take place, rather depends on the groups interaction. According to Maree (2013), a focus group is more useful to gather information than other group interviews.

The responses are more useful and fruitful because they are broadening and provide with a range of information, also activate forgotten live experiences.

Advantages of focus group interviews

- ❖ They are useful to obtain detailed information about personal, group feelings, perceptions and opinions.
- ❖ They can save time and money compared to individual interviews.
- ❖ They can provide a broader range of information.
- ❖ They offer the opportunity to seek clarification.

Disadvantage of focus group

- ❖ Groups are more difficult to manage than one individual.
- ❖ Certain assertive individuals tend to dominate.
- ❖ The environment can have an impact on the responses.
- ❖ Unexpected conflicts, power struggles, and other group dynamics may inhibit discussion.
- ❖ An open-ended structured interview format must be used.



3.10 Data analysis

De Vos et al. (2011) define data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. In addition, Ebrahim (2010) asserted that data analysis involves working with the data, organising it, breaking it into manageable units or descriptive themes, coding it for insights into the participants' experience on their world, synthesizing the data and searching for patterns.

These patterns are themes. Themes are recurring patterns of meaning (ideas, thoughts and feelings) throughout the text. They are more likely to identify both something that matters to the participants (an object of concern is to piece details of some importance). Moreover, it should also convey something about the meaning of that thing to the participants. Some of these themes are eventually grouped under much broader themes called superordinate themes (Cresswell, 2009). Considering the above, Creswell (2009)

postulates some steps needed to follow the data analysis process, which he refers to as the data analysis spiral. After transcribing, the researcher applies the following steps (Creswell, 2009) to the loading of the data:

- ❖ The researcher makes a thorough study of the data by reading it over and over.
- ❖ Organises the data and identifies statements that are related to the topic /research questions.
- ❖ The researcher separates relevant from irrelevant information in the interviews.
- ❖ The relevant information is broken into smaller segments such as paragraphs, sentences and individual words.
- ❖ The researcher must peruse the entire data set several times to get a sense of what it contained.
- ❖ Possible categories are identified and underlined.
- ❖ The researcher must have sought divergent perspectives and considered various ways in which different participants responded to the questions.
- ❖ The researcher must further identify general categories or themes and subthemes and the data is classified as it emerges.
- ❖ The above means that the data analysis is the process of making sense from the data by consolidating, reducing and interpreting what people said and what the researcher saw and read (Maree, 2009). He or she opines that data analysis is a complete process that involves moving back and forth between bits of data analysis and abstract concepts, between inductive and between description and interviews.

3.11 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis has been poorly branded, yet widely used in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and has been rarely appreciated in the same way as grounded

theory, ethnography, or phenomenology. Braun and Clarke (2006) argued that thematic analysis should be a foundational method for qualitative analysis, as it provides core skills for conducting many other forms of qualitative analysis. Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research. It emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns within data. Themes are patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated to a specific research question.

3.11.1 Familiarising yourself with your data

This step requires the researcher to be fully immersed and actively engaged in the data by firstly transcribing the interactions and then reading (and re-reading) the transcripts and/or listening to the recordings (Cohen, 2008). Initial ideas should be noted down. It is important that the researcher has a comprehensive understanding of the content of the interaction and has familiarised him-/herself with all aspects of the data. This step provides the foundation for the subsequent analysis.

3.11.2 Generating initial codes



Once familiar with the data, the researcher must then start identifying preliminary codes, which are the features of the data that appear interesting and meaningful (Stake, 2010). These codes are more numerous and specific than themes, but provide an indication of the context of the conversation.

3.11.3 Searching for themes

The third step in the process is the start of the interpretive analysis of the collated codes. Relevant data extracts are sorted (combined or split) according to overarching themes. The researcher's thought process should allude to the relationship between codes, subthemes, and themes.

3.11.4 Reviewing themes

A deeper review of identified themes follows where the researcher needs to question whether to combine, refine, separate, or discard initial themes. Data within themes should cohere together meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions

between themes. This is usually done over two phases, where the themes need to be checked in relation to the coded extracts (phase 1), and then for the overall data set (phase 2). A thematic 'map' can be generated from this step.

3.11.5 Defining and naming themes

This step involves 'refining and defining' the themes and potential subthemes within the data. Ongoing analysis is required to further enhance the identified themes (Okeke, 2015). The researcher needs to provide theme names and clear working definitions that capture the essence of each theme in a concise and punchy manner. At this point, a unified story of the data needs to emerge from the themes.

3.11.6 Producing the report

Finally, the researcher needs to transform his/her analysis into an interpretable piece of writing by using vivid and compelling extract examples that relate to the themes, research question, and literature (Yin, 2009). The report must relay the results of the analysis in a way that convinces the reader of the merit and validity of the analysis. It must go beyond a mere description of the themes and portray an analysis supported with empirical evidence that addresses the research question.



3.11.7 Application

Thematic analysis is the first qualitative method of analysis that researchers should learn, as it provides core skills that will be useful for conducting many other forms of qualitative analysis (Brown and Clarke, 2008). Through its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data.

3.12 Validity

Validity, according to Greef (2011), is about how sound is the research, that refers to both the design and the method of the research. Validity in data collection means those findings that are truly represented by the phenomenon the study is claiming to measure. This is a primary source of all researchers claiming to gather educational data. Cresswell (2009) asserts that validity has an element of biasness that researchers must be aware of when collecting data, which means obtaining information consistent with the intentions of the researcher. This tends to have an influence on the observation of a researcher, who becomes selective in data collection. Christensen et al. (2015) argue that there are other terms associated with validity such as: descriptive validity, interpretive validity and theoretical validity.

3.12.1 Descriptive validity

Thomson (2011) refers to validity with regards to the accuracy of data, data which must reflect what the participant had said or done. This means the reporting must reflect the same account on accuracy for instance, pitch and mood. Descriptive validity serves as the base on which all the other data are built.



3.12.2 Interpretive validity

Captures how well the researcher reports the participants' meaning of events, objects and/or behaviours (Maxwell, 1992). The key here is that the interpretations are not based on the researcher's perspective but that of the participant. "Interpretive validity is inherently a matter of inference from the words and actions of participants in the situations studied' (1992, p. 49). For example, if during an interview the participant hits the top of the desk it may be to punctuate a point or it may have been done in anger.

3.12.3 Theoretical validity

Theoretical validity "goes beyond concrete description and interpretation and explicitly addresses the theoretical constructions that the researcher brings to, or develops during, the study" (Maxwell, 1992: 50). What theoretical validity seeks to evaluate is the validity of the researcher's concepts and the theorized relationships among the concepts in

context with the phenomena. The question that is asked here is: has the researcher provided an accurate explanation of the phenomena? For Auerbach & Silverstein (2009) this means “the theoretical constructs must fit together”

3.13 Credibility and trustworthiness

Credibility refers to the objective and subjective components of the believability of a source or message. Credibility has two key components: trustworthiness and expertise, both these components have objective to research. For trustworthiness, learners were used in the research. These individuals are minors so their educators in loco parentis, consented to their participation. In other words, the researcher had to get consent from their educators. Participants are told beforehand about the nature of the study and given the choice if they want to take part or not (De Vos, 2009).

3.13.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research means that the research ensures that research findings are accurate. This is achieved using appropriate research procedures. The truthfulness of the research findings occurs throughout the research process. Trustworthiness is one of the pillars of qualitative research as it determines whether the research findings are accurate from the researcher, the participants and the readers' perspectives of the study (Creswell, 2009:190-191). A research definition of trustworthiness might be; “Demonstration that the evidence for the results reported is sound and when the argument made based on the results is strong.” To maintain high trustworthiness in a qualitative study, Bowen (2009) suggested four criteria to ensure valid interpretation of data: truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality.

In the qualitative approach, truth value is measured by credibility; having an adequate engagement in the research setting so recurrent patterns in data can be properly identified and verified. Muhammad (2008:39) supports this view by arguing that a qualitative research's examination of trustworthiness is of great importance in ensuring the reliability of the study. He further states that the trustworthiness of a research report

is grounded on discussions centred on validity and reliability. According to Bowen (2009), the following mentioned points can enhance the trustworthiness of a study.

- ❖ Multiple sources: To utilise a variety of sources to check findings.
- ❖ Verifying raw data: the researcher might ask participants to verify data during informal conversations.
- ❖ Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity: if researchers do not mention persons' names and positions, the researcher holds confidentiality and anonymity. Bless, Dessemontet and Morin (2014) mentioned some tools for increasing research trustworthiness as follows:
- ❖ Adequate description of context: is a detailed description of the context of the study, participants, their relationship and the context they find themselves.
- ❖ These descriptions are essential because qualitative research emphasises on the context which the study takes place.
- ❖ Concurrent data collection and analysis: means to analyse data as it is and highlighting an aspect of the investigation that the researcher was not aware of.
- ❖ Triangulation: multiple methods utilised to collect data to verify data collected by the researcher to increase trustworthiness of qualitative research.
- ❖ The purpose of doing this is to prove that results are independent of the methodology used.
- ❖ Methodological verification: this is a method of involving other qualified researchers to verify data collected, its logic and procedures followed.
- ❖ Ensuring data saturation: the researcher must be able to prove that the information collected reflects the full range and depth of the topic.
- ❖ Respondent validation: is also known as member checking and is a process when a researcher gives feedback to the original member from whom data was collected. During that process a researcher asks for the respondent's feedback.
- ❖ Use of sufficient verbatim: The use of direct quotations makes a reader visualise the mood and feel the interviewee during the interview session. This is an important characteristic of qualitative research that shows rigour.

3.13.2 Dependability

Dependability is important to trustworthiness because it establishes the research study's findings as consistent and repeatable (Ary & Jacobs, 2010). Researchers aim to verify that their findings are consistent with the raw data they collected. They want to make sure that if some other researchers were to look over the data, they would arrive at similar findings, interpretations, and conclusions about the data. This is important to make sure that there was not anything missed in the research study, or that the researcher was not sloppy or misguided in his or her final report.

While there are several techniques one could use to establish dependability, one of the best ways to establish dependability is to have an outside researcher conduct an inquiry audit on the research study (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This technique is also called an external audit. An inquiry audit involves having a researcher outside of the data collection and data analysis to confirm the accuracy of the findings and to ensure the findings are supported by the examine the processes of data collection, data analysis, and the results of the research study (Cohen, 2008). This is done to data collected. All interpretations and conclusions are examined to determine whether they are supported by the data itself. Inquiry audits are beneficial because they allow an outside researcher to examine, explore, and challenge how data analysis and interpretation occurred (Cresswell, 2008). A researcher can gain valuable insight from this method, and the inquiry audit can help prepare doctoral students for their final defence. It will help you better articulate your findings and build a stronger case for your findings.

3.13.3 Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research is synonymous with generalizability, or external validity, in quantitative research (Stake, 2010). Transferability is established by providing readers with evidence that the research study's findings could be applicable to other contexts, situations, times, and populations. It is important to note that the researcher cannot prove that the research study's findings will be applicable. Instead, your job as the researcher is to provide the evidence that it could be applicable (Wahyuni, 2012).

This may sound tricky but Morrison and Glenny (2011: p316) state that “It is, in summary, not the naturalist’s task to provide an index of transferability,” it is his or her responsibility to provide the data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers. Each school is different in terms of what techniques they allow to establish transferability, but here we will stick to Lincoln and Guba’s (2015) recommendation of providing thick description of the phenomenon. Thick description may sound familiar to those who have taken a methodology course that included a review of ethnography, and good for the researcher for remembering that! It is a technique that ethnographic researchers used extensively, but it is a technique that other qualitative researchers can use as well.

Specifically, thick description is a technique in which a qualitative researcher provides a robust and detailed account of their experiences during data collection (Cresswell, 2008). A qualitative researcher makes explicit connections to the cultural and social contexts that surround data collection. This means talking about where the interviews occurred, the possibility of participants conducting the interview after work (which can be exhausting), and other aspects of data collection that help provide a richer and fuller understanding of the research setting (Cohen, 2008). It is helpful to put what participants express to the researcher into the context of the surrounding social and cultural environments that the research study is framed around. This allows outside researchers and readers to make the transferability judgements themselves.

3.13.4 Negotiation of entry

The researcher sought permission to conduct research from the East London District Office since the study involved learners. A letter requesting permission to conduct the research was written to the principals of four schools clearly stating the purpose of the study. A preamble letter and letters of consent to participants in the study were written to parents of learners since they were minors. They were notified that they have a choice to participate in the research voluntarily or to decline as they would not be forced to participate. The researcher also received ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Fort Hare before the research was conducted.

3.14 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are regarded as informing the research site, participants and all other parties involved in the jurisdiction of the research (Wayhuni, 2012). In this case, the researcher gave information to all relevant participants about what the research procedures were, taking to consideration the times that the researcher was going to conduct observations, interviews with the teachers and the reading comprehension test to assess learners' reading skills. The researcher ensured that identities of both participants and of schools were kept confidential. The participants participated voluntarily and were made aware of their right to choose not to answer questions should they feel uncomfortable. They were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the project if they wished to do so.

3.14.1 Anonymity

Anonymity describes situations where the acting person's name is unknown. Anonymity is a technique used by researchers to keep a person non-identifiable, unreachable, or untraceable. In general, a researcher must keep the nature and quality of participants' performance strictly confidential. For instance, the researcher might give each participant a unique, arbitrary code number and then label any written documents with that number rather than with the person's name. And if a person's behaviour is described in depth in the research report, he or she should be given a pseudonym and other trivial, irrelevant details that might give away the person's identity should be changed to ensure anonymity. In this study, the researcher ensured that participants were not known to the public and they were informed about this right to enable them to make the right choices.

3.14.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is taken to mean that identifiable information about individuals collected during the process of research will not be disclosed without permission; hence the notion of confidentiality is founded on the principle of respect for autonomy (Williams, 2010). Confidentiality means that although researchers know who has provided the information or are able to identify participants from the information given, they will in no way make the connection known publicly; the boundaries surrounding the shared secret will be

protected (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2008). The researcher ensured that the information that was obtained from the participants was treated confidentially. No information was disclosed without the permission of the participants. Participants were also not subjected to any form of disclosure. All information was kept confidential.

3.14.3 Informed consent of the participants

Learners were used in this research. These individuals were minors so their educators acted in *loco parentis* and consented to their participation. In other words, the researcher had to get consent from their educators, since time was limited. Nieuwehuis (2011) stated that nobody should ever be coerced into participating in a research because participation must always be voluntary. A consent form was used stating the purpose of the study and seeking the participants' consent to participate in the study. Permission from the participants was requested and letters to request permission from the Department of Education and principal of the school before conducting the interviews were sent. A letter of informed consent was sent to the parents of the learners to be interviewed.



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3.14.4 The right to privacy

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) argue that any research study involving human beings should respect participants' rights to privacy. Under no circumstances should a research report, either oral or written, be presented in such a way that others become aware of how a participant has responded or behaved (unless, of course, the participant has specifically granted permission, in writing, for this to happen). In this study, the researcher ensured that participants were aware of what was expected from them and that they had the right to withdraw. They were also informed about their rights and encouraged to voice their concerns in case they had any. Participants (teachers and learners) agreed to participate voluntarily in the research study and no participant was coerced or forced to participate.

Discontinuance is a freedom of a participant to withdraw at any time during the research without penalty (Altermatt, 2011). To ensure discontinuance a consent form included a statement explicitly informing participants that they were free to discontinue the experiment at any time without penalty.

3.14.5 Protection from harm

The researcher made sure that participants were protected from harm. They were not exposed to any danger or risk. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) stress that researchers should not expose research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm. When a study involves human beings, the general rule of thumb is that the risk involved in participating in a study should not be appreciably greater than the normal risks of day-to-day living. Participants should not risk losing life or limb, nor should they be subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment, or loss of self-esteem.

3.14.6 Respect for the study site

Permission was requested from the school principal of the school that was used for the study and the Department of Education before the commencement of the study.

3.14.7 Release or publication of the findings

Jacobs (2010) felt that it is desirable to present the findings to subjects as a form of recognition and to maintain future good relationships with the community concerned. Data and findings of the study were reported without altering any information. Also, the findings of the study will be honestly reported to the educational research community in conference proceedings and journal articles. The researcher also assured the respondents that the information will be used for the sole purpose of the investigation and will never be given out to anyone.

3.14.8 Debriefing of respondents

Creswell (2009) stated that the easiest way to debrief participants is to discuss their feelings about the work immediately after the session, telling them the results of the study. The researcher undertook to rectify immediately any issues that might have risen in the minds of participants.

3.15 Summary

This chapter discussed the research approaches and research designs, and considered how data was collected using different methods and techniques. A literature search on the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen methods was used to motivate the reasons why the chosen methods were found to be suitable for this study. It also demonstrated why the qualitative case study approach was chosen. The chapter further showed how credibility/trustworthiness of the study was established. In the next chapter, findings emanating from the data that was gathered are presented and analysed.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the rationale for adopting a qualitative method in this study. The aim of this chapter is to present and analyse the data generated through semi-structured interviews, observation and a document analysis. This primary data was used to address the main aim of the study, which was to analyse reading comprehension skills of grade 7 English First Additional Language learners.

To give the reader some insight into the participants in this study, some biographical information such as age, gender, grades taught, qualifications and teaching experience is provided. The researcher begins by introducing the teachers who participated in the study as well as the twenty-four learners who participated. The researcher used coding for the schools, teachers and learners to ensure adherence to ethical issues such as confidentiality, privacy and anonymity, as mentioned in the previous chapter. This is followed by a detailed presentation of teacher experiences in the EFAL classrooms, where their challenges and need for support structures are described.

The researcher used direct quotations from the transcripts of interviews and lesson observation to serve as evidence for the readers to judge if the conclusions made are justified or not. Finally, a description of each school and classroom where the study took place is presented through thick description. Since this research utilized a qualitative approach, the research sought themes or categories during analysis and interpretation of the data in chapters 4 and 5. The main categories or themes are clearly identified and each piece of data is therefore classified accordingly. Various sub-themes emerge from these categories which explicated the main themes. These themes are generated from the different categories that arise from the theoretical framework, i.e. the constructivist theory that is outlined in chapter 2.

Therefore, as Mpiti (2016) puts it, the themes are not separate and detached but interlinked in complex ways such that none can be ignored or be prioritized over the others. On the other hand, the quantitative approach quantifies the data numerically; presentation of the data is in charts and tables. This approach maps out the similarities and differences in the form of numbers. They are of significance to this study because these main themes are related to the perspectives of teachers and learners reading comprehension skills amongst EFAL by grade 7 language learners. The rationale behind the study is to see whether common problems arose and how they could be managed.

The aim of this study was to explore and understand “Teachers views’ on grade7 reading comprehension skills in English First Additional Language in Buffalo City Metropolitan District in Eastern Cape Province. The following sub-research questions were raised and they formed the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis.

4.2 Sub-research questions

- a) Why do teachers claim that First Additional Language learners are not proficient in English?
- b) What challenges do teachers experience with English First Additional Language grade 7 learners?
- c) What effective reading strategies can improve grade 7 English First Additional Language learners’ reading comprehension skills?

Sample of participants demographic

Table 4. 1: Participants across all the 4 schools

Participants	School A	School B	School C	School D	
Teachers	1	1	1	1	4
Learners	6	6	6	6	24
Total	7	7	7	7	28

The sample consisted of 4 Grade 7 EFAL educators and 24 Grade 7 learners across the four selected primary schools in the East London Education District in Eastern Cape (see

table 4.1 above). For this study, the researcher refers to the participants by codes with respect to their school, as shown table 4.2 below. For this study, the researcher refers to the participants by codes with respect to their school, as shown table 4.2 below.

Table 4. 2: Participant codes with respect to their school

Data Collecting Instruments	Participants	Code alluded
Interviews	Grade 7 EFAL educators	Edr A; Edr B; Edr C; Edr D
		Edr A represents English Educator in school A; Edr B represents English Educator in school B; Edr C represents English Educator in school c; Edr D represents English Educator in school D
		Lr(1-6)A, Lr(1-6)B and Lr(1-6)C. Lr(1-6, Where Lr1A, Lr2A, Lr3A and Lr4A, Lr5A, Lr6A indicates Grade 7 learners in schoolA; Lr1B, Lr2B, Lr3B and Lr4B, Lr5, Lr6 indicates Grade 7 learners in school B, while Lr1C, Lr2C, Lr3C and Lr4C, Lr5C, Lr6C indicate Grade 7 learners in school C.
Observations	Grade 7 English First Additional class	ObsA, ObsB and ObsC. Where ObsA represents the class observation in Grade 7 English class in school A while ObsB and ObsC represents the class observation in Grade 7 English classes in school B and C respectively

Data collected is analysed using themes and sub-themes to bring out the main issues on Teachers views on grade 7 reading comprehension skills amongst English First Additional language learners

4.3 Demographic information of participants

Participants' personal information was represented according to the assigned codes to participating educators and learners, respectively, to their school location as illustrated in

table 4-2,4-3, 4-4 tables illustrate the demographic characteristics of the participants across the three selected schools in Buffalo City Metropolitan District.

Table 4. 3: Educator's demographic information

Age range	gender	Marital status	qualifications	Employments status	Years of teaching	English Teaching experience	Grade7 class enrolment
25-30	Male	Married	B. Ed	permanent	3yrs	3yrs	110
50-55	Female	Married	SPTD, ACE	permanent	11yrs	26yrs	115
43-45	Female	Married	SPTD, ACE	permanent	15yrs	15yrs	100
50-53	Female	Married	SPTD, B. Ed	permanent	9yrs	21yrs	180

The table shows the distribution of participating educators according to age, gender, marital status, qualification, years of teaching English First Additional Language in the case study schools and overall teaching experience. The participants across the four-selected school responded that English should be taught by its mother tongue speakers. Unfortunately, in South Africa that is not the case an additional language teacher teaches English in township schools and semi-urban schools.

4.3.1 Demographic Characteristics of participating learners

Table 4.4 shows the distribution of participating learners according to age, gender and performance in last examination.

Table 4. 4: Learner Demographic Information

	School A						SCHOOL B						SCHOOL C						SCHOOL D					
Learner	Lr1A	Lr2A	Lr3A	Lr4A	Lr5A	Lr6A	Lr1B	Lr2B	Lr3B	Lr4B	Lr5B	Lr6B	LrC1	Lr2C	Lr3C	Lr4C	Lr5C	Lr6C	Lr1D	Lr2D	Lr3D	Lr4D	Lr5D	Lr6D
Age	14	12	13	14	14	13	14	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	14	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F	F	F	M	M	M	M	F	F	F	M	M	M	F	F	F	M	M	M
Grade	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
reading																								
comprehension																								
score																								

Table 4.4 shows the grade7 learners participated from A. They ranged from ages 12-14, which were the correct ages to be in grade 7. The number of boy participants shows that they were more represented than girls. Likewise, six participants from each school were part of this study. The results of the reading comprehension test conducted shows girls scoring above 50%. Their home language, gender, race and other languages they can speak are indicated in the table below. There was a mixed race of blacks and coloureds because the school is in a coloured community but it is multilingual. This area is surrounded by areas where there are predominantly isiXhosa speaking learners and Afrikaans. Some learners' home language is isiXhosa and others are Afrikaans speakers. The table shows that these learners could read and write Afrikaans and English.

4.4 Findings from interviews with the Grade 7 EFAL educators

4.4.1 Theme 1: Learners English Proficiency

Table 4. 5: Grade 7 learners proficiency in English

Theme 1	Sub-themes	Issue raised
Why do English First Additional language teachers claim learners are not proficient in English?	Learner's perception	The respondents indicated that learners assume that English as a subject is complex. Learners are not conversing in English at home. They also not exposed to reading English books like their English counterparts. Respondents further revealed that the EFAL learner experience a two way stream of interpreting information.
	Participation in class and performance	The educators acknowledged that most learners are affected by stigma of expressing themselves (that English is difficult) either from their parents, people around them.
	Previous performance in earlier grades	The educators said that the majority of girls than boys in EFAL classes find reading comprehension interesting. Some learners are scared to humiliate themselves when participating in it.
	Learning ability and competence in EFAL reading comprehension skills.	The educators said that the majority of EFAL believes they are not capable to grasp the rules that guide written language. Respondents claim that girls can perform better than boys. Reading comprehension skills are complex than merely reading.

4.4.2 Learners proficiency in English

The findings of the study revealed that the learner's proficiency in English Reading Comprehension skills is a major factor that determines their interest, whether to participate or not in learning the subject. According to the participants, most learners perceive and believe that reading skills are complicated, and are not supposed to be attempted by everyone, but should be reserved for those who have the ability and grew speaking English as mother tongue.

The respondents had this to say:

Edr A: *"Learners when answering questions in class are not comfortable, because they want to be spontaneous like in their mother tongue. The educator must code switch to ease tension."*

The respondent's views concurred with Edr A

The participant from school C had this to say:



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Edr C: *"I should be honest, I am not comfortable conversing in English the whole day, because English is not my mother tongue either." "Their inability to communicate spontaneously hinders communication".*

Another participant had this to say in corroboration to the views above.

Edr D: *"Encouraging learners to converse in English during English periods helps some of them to participate fairly, however some learners totally shutdown."*

4.4.3 Participation in class and performance

The findings from the participants revealed that the information the learners received affected their interests and participation in EFAL. It was gathered that this information might have been from parents and peers who did not do well in English and thereby dislike the subject. One of the participants said:

EdrA 2: *“Most learners have a tendency not to continuously reading their books, they think if they can express themselves well in spoken language that what’s needed to accomplish English. Reality is when they must be involved in other English tasks and utilise reading comprehension tasks.”*

Another Educator has this to say

Edr B: 2 *“These learners are not made aware of the importance of English reading comprehension skills. They are also not aware of its impact on their future and career. As a result, they do not see a need to put any effort in the subject and any elements that involve English.”*

The response of educator C was like that of educator D.

Edr C: 3 *“Some learners are affected by stigma when expressing themselves in English. Either from parents, peers or people around.”*

Edr D: 4 *“Majority of participation in an English class is girls than boys, because girls are more inclined to reading than boys.”*



4.4.4 Previous performance in earlier years

Participants revealed that a learner’s previous performance is important for an educator to note because learner’s lives change as they progress forward to other grades. They responded by saying that learners’ socio-economic background change has an adverse effect on learner’s current performance.

EdrA : 1- *“It is of utmost importance that EFAL are introduced in English whilst they are young and in earlier years as well. Especially in black township schools English must be introduced parallel to isiXhosa.”*

EdrB: 2- *“Educators should note learners’ socio-economic background can hinder a learner performance and that may affect their performance.”*

EdrC: 3 - *“Some learner had previously failed due to English and are scared, of the subjects and consequently are not interested in participating in it.”*

EdrD: 4 - *“Learner’s previous performance can equip the educator on which strategies to utilise to be able to accommodate their experience and problems as well.”*

4.5 Why teachers claim that EFAL are not proficient in English

Findings from participants revealed that a number of factors have an influence on the learners’ English proficiency in the class. It was discovered that many of grade7 EFAL learners have a problem in expressing themselves in EFAL during lessons because they don’t communicate the language at home. There is also a case of (Coetzee, 2008) learners who take English as a first additional language who have proficiency in conversation level in BICS and through English, yet have trouble in communicating academic English language written skills because their first language was not well developed. In this case, EFAL learners have to master BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and CALP (Communicative Academic Language Proficiency) in order to be well developed in English. Learners can acquire a first additional language quickly only when their teachers are interested in English and are passionate because this rubs off to learners.



More acknowledgement was made about learner’s participation affecting their performance. Considering that in Howie’s (2008) study mention is made about how a learner’s participation influences performance in class. In addition, participants mentioned that learners are often scared of reading, and this is also highlighted in Mudzielwana (2012), who argues that its due to learner’s lack of self-efficacy. Most parents want to be involved in their children’s education, regardless of their socio-economic background (Jeynes, 2014).

4.6 Challenges learner experience with regards to reading comprehension skills

Table 4. 6: Challenges Learners experience with regards to reading comprehension skills

Theme	Sub-theme	Issues raised
Challenges EFAL learners experience with reading comprehension skills.	Lack of cognitive skills	Respondents claimed that learners lack metacognitive skills. Some experience difficult(y) in comprehending what has been taught. English is a challenge naturally to EFAL because it is a foreign language.
	Lack of vocabulary	Participants revealed that learners want to pronounce an English word sounding similar in mother tongue. Respondents allow learners to converse in mother tongue then teacher explains in English. Lack of vocabulary is due to no exposure to different books.
	 University of Fort Hare <i>Together in Excellence</i> Lack of parental involvement	Respondents revealed that parents' level of education has an influence on a learner's performance. Successful learners have sound parental support and those parents are educated or care. Lack of parental involvement is also due to teachers' perceptions and school warm welcoming climate.

Lack of vocabulary

According to the response of the teachers, it is evident that English is a foreign language and a challenge naturally to learners as well as educators. First additional language teachers continue to teach this subject in township schools as well as in semi-urban schools. It is still a long journey and the gap is widening between township schools and urban schools that have mother tongue speakers of English. The respondents had this to say:

EdrA: 1 – *“I do experience challenges with them. For instance, when I’m teaching in English some experience difficult(y) in comprehending what has been taught. Hence, when I’ve done with the explanation. I make sure I explain again in their mother tongue (isiXhosa) so that the learners can be at the same level of understanding.”*

Edr B: 2 – *“Yes, I do experience challenges, especially in the first t(w)o terms. Whereby you could see the learners were reluctant to speak in English during reading sessions. Even during lessons, because they have limited vocabulary as a result I must allow them to express themselves in (Afrikaans) which is their mother tongue.”*

Edr C: 3 – *“The challenges that I face with my EFAL learners is parental involvement, fear, vocabulary. Mostly, they struggle in constructing a sentence which is a skill that they supposed to have acquired already when reaching grade 7.”*

Edr D: 4 – *“One! is the sounds of words because if they have done sounds (phonics) well in the Foundation Phase they would not encounter these problems in grade 7. They could be able to read, spell and (do) sentence construction. That means there is a gap between the Senior Phase and Foundation Phase so they have lost the sounding somewhere. As a result, these learners are reluctant readers because they cannot identify the words. T(o)o their cultural background has influence in their struggle; they speak Afrikaans at home and are taught other subjects in Afrikaans. As a result, some learners tend to neglect English they do not see English as important.”*

“As a teacher, I had to play my role to convince, motivate and encourage the love for English.”

4.7 Summary of findings and discussions of challenges learners experience

According to the responses of teachers during the interviews, it was evident that EFAL learners have challenges learning reading comprehension in a foreign language (English). Edr 2 and Edr 3 concurred in their views regarding vocabulary being one of the

challenges learners have. Edr 2 even emphasised during the interview that vocabulary is built when a learner is exposed to different texts through reading. In relation to chapter 2 it is stated that vocabulary is prominent in the early stages of learners, so that EFAL learners don't learn vocabulary incidentally because EFAL has an underlying linguistic performance which is not commensurate with First Language learners (Scarborough, 2011). However, locally, Wilsenach (2015) found receptive vocabulary to be a robust predictor of early literacy development in Northern Sotho-English emergent bilingual children. Each of the participants interviewed had different views on the challenges English language learners brought to their classrooms and mentioned that they reverse double syllable words, don't identify letters, lack a reading culture, and have no exposure to books, as a result, they are not reading extensively.

Parents should not hold sole responsibility for initiating and sustaining parental involvement because there might be barriers that parents experience (Robinson & Harris, 2014a). As already mentioned by the participants parents' education level can be a barrier as well. However, an extensive study conducted by Robinson and Harris (2014a) examined the depth of how parental involvement engagement can improve learner performance academically, emotionally and otherwise.

4.8 Strategies utilised to develop reading comprehension skills

Table 4. 7: Strategies Utilized to develop reading comprehension skills

Theme	Sub-theme	Issues raised
Strategies utilized to develop reading comprehension skills	Media as a strategy	Respondents indicated that they don't know any strategies to utilize. Must study to know which strategies to utilize when. Media helps to cater for those learners with audio-visual learning style. Other participants suggested shared reading as a strategy and cooperative learning.
	Build confidence	Respondents revealed that as a teacher you must motivate learners to love reading. Instil the love of reading to the learners' model by reading to them. Even a little attempt by a child a teacher should praise - that builds a learner's confidence.
	Educator role	 Respondents claimed that an educator role needs to be flexible. As an educator your role is to make learners see the importance of the subject matter in this case, its reading comprehension skills. An educator must be a lifelong learner as well as a role-model

This theme was intentionally selected by the researcher to emphasise the relation of this theme with the study in the hope that it might serve as guidance in the analysis, as the data revealed that learners faced numerous challenges in classrooms during the teaching and learning of English, which is not their home language. Below are some responses from the interview question that focused on strategies utilised by teachers to develop reading comprehension skills amongst grade 7 EFAL learners.

The respondents had this to say:

Edr A: *“I let them read randomly. One of the strategies I used was media for example: movies and cartoons because these are one of the things learners love.*

A couple of weeks back I choose a movie on a foreign language for them to watch, this movie had subtitles. Lucky, the movie was slow enough for them to understand.”

“Another strategy I like to use is cartoons with illustrations. They tend to draw their illustrations and draw their own stories. I think I need to do a research on how to utilize new reading strategies among EFAL learners since I am still new in the fraternity.”

Edr B: 2- *“I don’t experience any challenges with majority of them, where comprehension and understanding is concerned, but few of them are struggling. For instance, when I’m teaching in English, I must explain the lesson in their mother tongue.”*



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Edr C: 3- *“Mostly, I use reading aloud and shared reading because if I may use silent reading there will be a chaos. I utilize this strategy on them for them to emphasise on the sounds so that the struggling reader can familiarize himself with the sounds and words that are being pronounced. I utilize this strategy for them to be familiar with the sounds and build their confidence, which I picked up that they are not used to read alone in front of the class. For now, these are the only two strategies suitable for them “.*

Edr D:4- *“One is the sounds because if they have done sounds well in the Foundation Phase, they would not encounter these problems in grade 7. They should be able to read and write in grade 7 because these skills are acquired before reaching this phase. That means there is a gap between the Senior Phase and Foundation Phase, they lost the sounding somewhere. As a result, these learners are reluctant readers because they are ashamed of not being able to identify the words. T(o)o their cultural background has influence in their*

struggle; they speak Afrikaans at home and are taught other subjects as well in Afrikaans. Some learners have attitudes towards English they do not regard English (as) important. As a teacher, I must play my role in motivating, encourag(ing), and convincing them to love English.”

Teachers commented on issues regarding writing what they learnt in English.

Table 4. 8: Learners difficulty in writing what they read

Theme	Sub-themes	Issues raised
Difficulty to write what they read in English	Codeswitching	Respondents claim that EFAL learners tend to translate certain English terms into their mother tongue or pronounce them the way they hear them. They further emphasise that codeswitching helps EFAL learners to gain better understanding of content. EFAL learners have a two-way stream of processing information gathered from English and first gain understanding in their first language.
	Decoding	Participants responded by saying that EFAL should grasp sound to be able to read and write properly. Participants explained that decoding helps learners to compare the relationship of letters and sounds. Learners tend to reverse words with double consonants as if they are dyslexia.

	Lack of metacognitive skills	Participants raised concerns about learners' poor metacognitive skills. Respondents highlighted that learners' metacognitive skills are not developed due to poor nutrition. Teachers are not trained on how to develop learner's metacognitive skills.
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Question 4: Why do EFAL learners find it difficult to write what they have read in English?

Edr A: 1- Teacher 2: *"They translate English words in Afrikaans. They like to reverse words with double vowels. They sometimes cannot pronounce familiar words for example: girl is pronounced as gril. In Senior Phase, I am expected to teach reading of which that is not my field of expertise. They supposed to be fluent readers in grade 7."*

EdrB: 2 - *"They use borrowed English words, to accommodate their mother tongue when reading. This occurred especially when the sound of the English word is pronounced similarly to their mother tongue. They struggle to understand the letters that form words, hence they read what they hear. Ngamanye amaxesha (sometimes)."*

Edr C: 3- *"I think what makes these learners to encounter these difficulties is because of the phonics they have not been taught and the lack of reading culture in the community at large."*

Edr D: 4 – *"As I have mentioned before that these learners did not get a proper foundation as a result that affects their writing as well. They omit certain letters when constructing a sentence. Sometimes their sentences do not make sense you must make out or guess. Some components of reading affect their learning holistically because these concepts are parallel to each other."*

4.9 Summary of findings and discussions on why learners have difficulty writing

Respondents conclusively highlighted that EFAL learners tend to translate English words into their mother tongue due to the fact of not having properly developed basic decoding skill in LOLT in foundation phase. Concurrently to this are Reutzel, Brandt, Fawson and Jones' (2014), views that "there is consistent data showing failure to develop basic decoding skills by first grade which is predictive of lifelong poor literacy"; this then affects a learner's success in life and their career.

Another finding that was discussed and raised by participants is codeswitching which helps EFAL learners to gain better understanding of content.

4.10 Document analysis

In this chapter, the researcher has documented her attempts to explore the underlying dimensions of the English First Additional Language reading process, using a reading comprehension test to support or complement the results from the interviews administered to language teachers. From this, the researcher attempted to gain insights into the how and the what of learners' use and awareness of using certain reading comprehension strategies. The purpose of this exploration and of this study, as set out in previous chapters, was to gauge the level of reading comprehension skills of the EFAL participants and the adequacy of their reading skills and their strategies to construct meaning from different texts. Thereafter, the researcher developed a template, which is aligned with the policy document CAPS (2012) for marking the scripts of the learners. The template below shows how skills are grouped and defined.

Table 4. 9: Grouping type of skill reading comprehension test

Grouping type of skill	
1. Locating details	Recognition, paraphrasing, matching
2. Simple inferential skills	Understand words within context, recognize sequence of events, recognize cause and effect, recognize relationships
3. Complex inferential skills	Recognize main idea/title/topic; draw conclusions; predict outcomes.
4. Understanding	Relations between parts of a text and within sentences

This was adopted from Weir's Reading Taxonomy 1998.

The researcher noted that it was appropriate to use reading comprehension tests to assess the reading comprehension skills of grade 7 EFAL learners. A reading comprehension test is appropriate for use in assessing learners' reading difficulties and it also gives a valid picture of comprehension on a variety of levels. Hence, it is suggested that the use of reading comprehension tests is generally suitable for supporting readers who struggle with reading comprehension and word recognition. The process of the reading comprehension test involves providing the written words to fill in the deletions in a text passage and requires learners to make sense of syntax as well as semantics. Learners are required to think critically and interpret content to answer the questions, i.e. use the cognitive skills listed in the previous section.

The questions in the comprehension were designed in such a manner that learners were required to read and do many of the following (i) sequence of events and procedures, (ii) follow instructions, (iii) find the main ideas which the writer has attempted to make salient, iv) identify the underlying theme, iv) identify ideas in the text, and relationships between them, e.g. probability, solution, cause, effect, vi) identify, distinguish and compare facts, evidence, opinions, implications, definitions and hypotheses, vii) evaluate and challenge evidence, ix) reach a conclusion by relating supporting evidence to the main idea, and x) draw logical inferences.

The content of the reading comprehension test was extracted from one of the textbooks used by EFAL learners in grade 7.

The topic was aligned to the time frame of the CAPS document and was chosen by the teacher of school B. The researcher noticed that the content was relevant to learners' lived experience. The English teacher of each school chose the six learners from each school who were to participate in the reading comprehension test. The range of the questions was from short to longer questions. This was done to obtain the correct responses from the learners.

4.11 Reading skills outlined by the CAPS document for grade 7 EFAL



Table 4. 10: Reading skills outlined by Caps

Skill	Application
Analysing, evaluating and responding to text	Analysing a text is the process of knowing the purpose of why the text was written, who the intended audience is, the type of language that has been used to achieve a purpose, e.g. persuasive, emotive, manipulative language; bias, stereotype. Evaluating the text by comparing it to similar texts.
Background and setting	If learners understand the events that happened at a specific time in history, they can understand why the characters behave and think a certain way.
Character	A character is a person in the story. There are different types of characters in a story: some are main characters, some only have a small part in the story. Characters can be good or bad and the writer often wants the reader to like or dislike certain characters.
Clarifying	Clarifying is the ability to check that the text has been understood by answering certain questions, or by asking key questions or by repeating or summarising the most essential ideas in your own words, rephrasing and repeating the content.
Comparing and Contrasting	Comparing two pieces of similar writing, e.g. reading two poems that both discuss love, perhaps with different viewpoints.
Conflict	The part of the story when the tension is being explained. Conflict can be created by an external event, or an internal personal struggle.
Context Clues	The context is important when trying to work out the meaning of specific words, or the general meaning of the text.
Critical language awareness	The ability to be aware of the choice of words and why they were selected by an author is part of critical language awareness. Knowing that the way a text has been written is just as important as what has been written. The author's own bias, choice of characters to represent a situation, gender bias, historical emphasis - these aspects determine how a reader learns.
Drawing Conclusions	They must draw conclusions through predicting endings, based on the information they have. Learners can also draw conclusions based on their own personal opinions of whether you like a character or not, whether you agree with a moral or not.
Fact and Opinion	In a story, the reader must think about the information that is factual and the information that is only the opinion or belief of someone else. Everyone has different opinions, but facts can be supported by witnesses, evidence, numbers, and experiments

4.12 Conclusion

In this chapter the demographic description of participants of the four participating schools where the research was conducted was provided, including the geographical settings, educator qualifications and classroom settings as well as the challenges they faced due to lack of material and human resources. The researcher had an opportunity of experiencing the day-to-day school programmes and activities at first hand. The challenges these schools faced each day made it almost impossible to operate optimally in CAPS as they had insufficient books, computers, photocopiers or learner teacher support material (LTSM) which resulted in unconducive environments for effective teaching and learning. The specific problems experienced made the researcher mindful and guarded against the one-size-fits-all approach but tried to mould interventions according to the participants' needs and strengths.

The data collected from the three data collection techniques for research was analysed. The findings obtained from the data collection tools were outlined, presented verbatim and analysed to answer the research questions.



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4.13 Summary of the observation at the schools

4.13.1 How does the teacher introduce the lesson to the learners?

Obs A-D: *The teachers started the lesson by asking the learners about the previous topic to refresh their memories prior to the new topic. They also review the homework given.*

4.13.2 How do the learners participate in English reading lessons?

ObsA-D: *Some learners really participated when the educators asked question and when they were asked to read and to confirm some reading comprehension skills examples.*

4.13.3 What teaching method the educator employed?

ObsA-D: *There was no specific defined method or style the educators employed during class lessons. The educators interacted with the learners by*

asking them questions. And during class exercises, they moved from one learner to the other to see if the learners were doing the right thing. Reading was oral, educators were correcting learner's pronunciation and punctuation use during reading.

4.13.4 Learner responsiveness to teaching and interaction

ObsA & ObsC: At these two schools teachers utilised pre-knowledge enquiry. The majority of the learners were quiet when the teacher was talking. There were no learners who interrupted the educators to ask question(s) on the current topic until the teacher asked if they understand or following what they were teaching.

ObsB: Most of the learners were not concentrating on what the educator was teaching. Some were busy talking to one another, banging tables and moving from one place to the other. It was observed that very few learners cooperated with the educator. All the teachers used reading aloud, pronunciation and directed inquiries from teachers to learners.



Noticeable in the classroom interactions employed by the four EFAL teachers in the commencement of reading lessons was the absence of exploring the pre-knowledge of learners by the teachers of school's B and D.

The researcher also observed that the application of comparing of phenomena by teachers of school's A and C took place, again excepting the teacher of school B. The teacher of school A was seen utilizing picture word matching but not the teachers of school C. The researcher was impressed by the learners of school C who were asked to re-tell the story read by their teacher, which was not done by the teachers of school A and B. In code switching activities, only the teacher of school C used it. Even though the teacher of school A tried using a different strategy to teach reading comprehension, this did not necessarily make him knowledgeable on the reading comprehension skills because he confirmed it. He needed to learn more about them and explore since he was not trained on how to utilise them.

4.13.5 Was there any homework given at the end of the lesson?

ObsA-D: *At the end of the lessons, the educators gave homework/exercises to the learners to be submitted on a due date. Furthermore, at school A & D learners were given reading homework as referred to their reader page number and story to be discussed in class the following day.*

4.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the presentation and analysis of data on the views of educators about Grade 7 English First Additional Language' reading comprehension skills in Buffalo City Metropolitan Education District, Eastern Cape. Code switching is defined in chapter 2 pg, as the practice of moving back and forth between two languages or between two dialects or registers of the same language and it occurs far more often in conversation than in writing (Gardner and Chloros, 2009). Findings revealed that this strategy was the most utilised in the EFAL classroom by educators to accommodate learners and stimulates participation. Vocabulary in chp2 pg,55 is highlighted as a cornerstone of additional language acquisition by EFAL learners in township and semi-urban schools. Sporer and Brunstein (2009) both concur on this idea elaborating that it's a crucial element for reading comprehension development and spoken language for future purposes. Parental support is highlighted as playing a significant role in children's social, emotional, developmental, and academic school functioning (Ferrara, 2009; Galindo and Sheldon, 2012). Examples of parental involvement include parent participation in the education of their children through different behaviours, such as volunteering at school functions, communicating with school staff, assisting with homework, attending school events, participating in parent-teacher organizations (PTAs), and attending parent-teacher conferences (Stewart, 2008).

The researcher draws conclusions from the outcomes of the study and makes recommendations for further considerations by all education stakeholders. This study assessed the view of the participants on how as a subject seems difficult for Grade 7 EFAL learners in relation to other subjects, the expected roles of educators in the development of EFAL learners reading comprehension skills in grade7, and possible policy directions needed to motivate learners' interest in the study of English reading

comprehension skills. Employing the qualitative interviews and observations as primary research instruments, themes and sub-themes were developed and discussed appropriately. The next chapter will discuss the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Furthermore, areas for further research will be highlighted.



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CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the themes emanating from the classroom observations and interviews conducted with the teachers individually. It also presents the results of the research findings obtained from fieldwork in all four schools.

5.2 Restating the research questions

- a) Why do teachers claim that First Additional Language learners are not proficient in English?
- b) What challenges do teachers experience with English First Additional Language grade 7 learners?
- c) What effective reading strategies can improve grade 7 English First Additional Language learners' reading comprehension skills?

5.3 Summary of findings of classroom observations



This section summarises the major findings with respect to the views of educators in line with the research questions and objectives of the study. The outcomes of the study are summarised as follows.

5.3.1 Why do teachers claim that First Additional Language learners are not proficient in English?

Educators views

The findings from the participants revealed that many factors have an influence on the teaching of reading comprehension skills in grade 7 EFAL. The educators revealed that the majority of Grade 7 cannot use reading comprehension skills during English lessons or comprehension tests or tasks. They acknowledged that most boys could not try to do reading comprehension because they see it as calling out of words and therefore lost interests in it. This was attributable to the information their parents or senior's friends fed

them with, which in turn affected their participation and performance in reading comprehension in English.

They also reported that learners' negative attitude towards English reading comprehension was because of their previous performances at lower grades, which resulted to reading anxiety. Thus, the learners are often scared of reading because it involves a lot of letter and sound recognition that need to be memorized and, as a result, they cannot engage confidently in reading during English periods. It should be noted that learner positive attitudes will grow a sense of effectiveness and confidence in their ability to perform well in EFAL. This will, in turn, help the learner to willingly participate and learn more in English.

5.3.2 What challenges do teachers experience with English First Additional Language grade 7 learners?

Lack of support



The teachers of all four schools complained about parents' lack of support, refusing to participate in reading with their learners when they are asked to do so, and they further stated that parental support plays a huge role in the learners' reading development. Lack of support by the Department of Education is another challenge educators stated are facing in implementing reading strategies to develop reading comprehension skills. Teachers need a greater availability of support teams (Department of Education, 2008) for learners who need them. These are signs of being under-staffed with no available human resources. Teachers need workshops and training for effective reading. Although they attend workshops on teaching English as first additional language, teachers wanted to observe practical demonstrations on how to implement the strategies with their own learners (Cabinda, 2012).

Despite the Eastern Cape Department's efforts to support public schools with resources and stationary, some schools are still facing limitations, which is a great concern because resources are also seen as contributing to implementing reading strategies.

Fundamentally, teachers need basic resources for their classrooms to implement reading comprehension skills properly with the EFAL learners.

Owing to their social circumstances, not many learners have their own stationary and unless educators provide out of their own pockets, they are unable to do creative activities with learners (Makhubele, 2015). What effective reading strategies can improve grade 7 English First Additional Language learners' reading comprehension skills?

5.3.3 Code switching

Findings revealed that code switching is one of the strategies highlighted by participants as useful in assisting EFAL learners to understand in depth what is taught in class, by switching from one language to another while the language of learning and teaching is in progress. The other two teachers of school A & D have mentioned shared reading, reading aloud and paired reading. These two teachers further reiterated that these methods are working for them.

These issues were raised during the interviews with the teachers individually from schools C & B, who also stated that this strategy also increases learner participation in the classroom during a lesson because learners no longer feel lost. Codeswitching was stated as coming naturally from the more knowledgeable other to assist a learner to gain a better understanding on the concept explained. This strategy has its disadvantages and advantages. This implies that, if learners converse often in their mother tongue more often than in the LoLT, they might lose the essence of expressing themselves in LoLT. Another finding is that a teacher must focus more on a subject matter and utilise LoLT frequently.

5.4 Parental involvement

Findings, however, revealed that points highlighted by researchers in the previous discussion are prominent to education but in disadvantaged schools parents are afraid to participate fully in their children's education, as stipulated. Furthermore, parents of diverse cultures may prefer to engage in different types of activities (Yan and Lin, 2009). For example, Graves and Wright (2011) found that their counterparts (white) parents were more likely to be involved in home-based parental involvement activities, such as reading

to their children, whereas African parents were more likely to be involved in school related activities, such as volunteering at the school.

During these interviews there was an underlying factor of teachers themselves also discouraging parents of lower socio-economic backgrounds from being involved in school, as teachers may base their expectations for parental school involvement on parents' socio-economic background. Teachers are often biased by false stereotypes of poor people, such as thinking poor people are linguistically deficient and that poor parents are uninvolved in their children's learning, largely because they do not value education (Gorski, 2008). Based on these findings, the authors concluded that "policymakers should not advocate a one-size-fits-all model of parental involvement" (Robinson and Harris, 2014).

5.5 Limitations

At the time of research, it was the end of the year, a time at which schools are preparing for the celebrations of the grade 7 learners of that year who were graduating from primary school to enter high school the following year. The duration to collect the data was short, although the schools were in the same circuits and were not miles apart.

An interview with one teacher at other schools was hindered by the awards and farewell arrangements at this school. As a result, no proper response was obtained from the teacher regarding the phenomenon. Teachers at these schools were organisers of these events and that prolonged the process of interviews. As a result, the researcher had to beg grade 7 teachers for interviews. Another limitation to the study was the delay to release the ethical clearance certificate by the Eastern Cape Department of Education so it took two months to collect data from schools.

This had a negative impact on the timeframe and duration of collection of data. The researcher could not get the response anticipated from these teachers due to the time of the year. Time constraints forced the researcher to choose schools close to the researcher's jurisdiction because of transport costs. On availability of funds, the researcher provided the funds for moving to and from these schools.

5.6 Recommendations

5.6.1 Workshops for professional development

- ❖ It is recommended that all grade 7 teachers attend workshops for professional development sessions.
- ❖ The training sessions should focus on the various learner centred strategies for teaching reading comprehension skills to grade 7 because, currently, there is an overwhelming demand for teachers who demonstrate effectiveness in the classrooms.
- ❖ If this happen all grade 7 EFAL learners will have an opportunity for success. They must have teachers who are well trained to teach every student to an acceptable high standard.
- ❖ Remember the changes and improvements that teachers undergo during professional development to stimulate teachers to grow and help them to develop in their profession, interact with learners better and improve their knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs related to their teaching practices (Alutu, 2008:265).



5.6.2 Department of Education

- ❖ The department of education is seriously urged to take the professional development of educators seriously. It is unwise to conduct a workshop of a subject in one day.
- ❖ Workshops should be conducted for the whole week and grade 7 teachers should attend the workshop the whole week. It is better for grade 7 teachers to be absent from class for one week or two weeks for the sake of professional development because teachers will be able to close that gap.
- ❖ It is also advisable that the Department of Basic Education must develop initiatives that have mentoring programmes to boost learners' reading levels across the country.
- ❖ This is not common in South Africa as learners rely on their educators and parents to assist them. According to Dessoiff (2008:54), a mentor is an advocate, a

nurturer, a positive role model, who also promises to come back and check on them the following week.

- ❖ Franke, Hand, Caverly & Radcliffe (2008:398) recommend a cross-curricular approach for improving the reading ability of learners.
- ❖ The proponents of the cross curricular approach emphasise that teaching learners how to read effectively should not be confined to languages only, but should be taught in all school subjects.
- ❖ The emphasis on the teaching of reading in other subjects like content subjects might improve the reading levels of less competent learners.

5.6.3 Subject advisors

- ❖ Subject advisors should make themselves visible at public schools to help and assist teachers because they act as coaches to teachers to help them recognize what they can do and know, and support teachers as they develop. In other words, literacy coaches provide planned support, guiding teachers to progress in their professional learning to build their own capacity (Department of Basic Education, 2009).
- ❖ To build teacher capacity, coaches require strong disciplinary and pedagogical content knowledge of effective planning, assessment and instruction strategies (Toll, 2009:05).
- ❖ The Department of the Eastern Cape must also develop a literacy initiative like number sense that starts in grade 1 up to grade 3 that is monitored well and making good progress where numeracy is concerned. If this is done this will lessen the challenges of language teachers in the Intermediate and Senior Phase and EFAL learners' achievement results will improve.
- ❖ The Department of Education must consider having strategy training courses for English in all aspects, as this will be beneficial to teachers and learners as this might yield development of literacy in South Africa.



5.6.4 Follow up visits

- ❖ The subject advisors should make follow-up visits in schools on their subjects that are thought; this will develop and build confidence to the new arrival in the teaching fraternity.
- ❖ Follow up visits must not be to scare educators but rather to develop them further and assist where assistance is due.

5.7 Further research

It would be ideal if further research could be done regarding improving the current situation of literacy in South Africa. From the findings gathered in the current study, it can be inferred that teachers need to be informed about reading comprehension skills and reading strategies. The suggestion is that emphasis should be to get reading education in pre-service teacher training right, for South Africa to improve and win the literacy crisis. Another view is that research should be done on how repeated assessments have a negative impact on the reading and performance of a learner.



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Research must be further done on a reading module that will inform teachers on how to teach reading, shifting from the traditional way to a modern way of teaching reading but this must start in the foundation phase.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the themes emanating from the classroom observations and an interview conducted with the teachers individually, and presents the results of research findings obtained from fieldwork in all four schools; learner's English proficiency, culture of reading in South Africa and how it influences learning. Overall, the current study demonstrates numerous factors that affect parental involvement in schools, especially schools that are situated in poor background communities; they tend to be affected by the community issues arising like poor learner performance and violence at school. Parental involvement seems to depend on the age of the learner. Schools, circuits and districts should promote parental involvement and inform parents about the importance of it.

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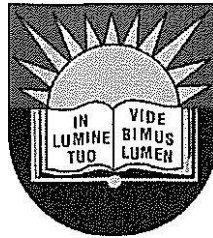
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: UNIVERSITY ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Fort Hare

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ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: GAL061 SRUIOI

Project title: **Exploring reading comprehension amongst grade 8 non-speakers of English in one high school in the Eastern London Education District.**


University of Fort Hare
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Nature of Project: Master in Education

Principal Researcher: Benedictor Ruiters

Supervisor: Dr G Galloway

Co-supervisor: N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the abovementioned 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 o Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected o Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented o Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require o
- The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to

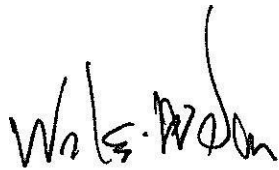
Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.

- 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wilson Akpan', written over the printed name.

Professor Wilson Akpan

Avg-Def of Research 02 February 2017



University of Fort Hare
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APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

University of Fort Hare

50 Church Street

East London

5200

The Principal

Masakhe Primary School

East London

5201

Dear Sir/Madam



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Benedictor Ruiters and I am pursuing a Masters Degree in Education at University of Fort Hare under the supervision of Prof G. Galloway. My research topic is: "Analysing reading comprehension amongst grade 7 second language learners in one high in the East London Education District." The purpose of my research is to shed light on learners' reading difficulties and factors that hinder or contribute to their response to reading, as well as activities that take precedence over reading. The intention is to suggest reading strategies that could help in their reading comprehension skills, particularly Xhosa and Coloured background learners.

My target group is grade 7 second language learners. Respondents, particularly learners, will answer a comprehension that will be drafted for them to answer as a questionnaire. I will be considerate of all ethical issues; my research will not pose any physical threat to my respondents. I will provide participants with all information and all details of the research. Participation in the research will be voluntarily and all respondents will be informed of their rights to withdraw anytime during the research process, if they decide to do so; there will be

no fine. The information will be shared with my supervisor. All tapes will be kept away from my colleagues and my family. Further clarification will be done in the invitation letter and the benefits of the research will be explained to participants. I foresee no emotional harm or physical threat; however, I will have arranged emotional support if such moments arise.

I appreciate your help. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information. You may also contact my supervisor at the University of Fort Hare. Her details are as follows:

Prof. G. Galloway Tel 043 704 .Email:ggalloway@ufh.ac.za

Yours sincerely

Benedictor Ruiters Email: bruiters1 @gmail.com Cell no: 0732369576



APPENDIX C: DATA COLLECTION LETTER TO CIRCUIT MANAGERS

50 Church Street

University of Fort Hare

The Circuit Manager

Steve Vukile Complex

Zone 6

Zwelitsha

5200

Dear Madam/Sir

Request to conduct research



University of Fort Hare

I Benedictor Ruiters currently doing Masters Degree in Education through the University of Fort Hare would like to request permission to carry out fieldwork in one school in the East London District. The day to day functioning of the school will not be disrupted because all activities related to the research will be conducted after hours at a convenient time for educators. **MY TOPIC OF RESEARCH: ANALYSING READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF GRADE 7 SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN ONE HIGH SCHOOL.**

The research will be qualitative and quantitative in nature; therefore, I would like to conduct interviews with some educators of grade 7. This will work on a voluntary basis. To ensure confidentiality, the name of the school and persons involved will not be mentioned in the study. I would appreciate it if I could visit Greenpoint Secondary School as they have English First additional classrooms. Permission will also be sought from the respective school principal, educators and parents of the learners who are willing to voluntarily participate in the study. Please treat this request as urgent as time to complete the study is limited.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information. You may also contact my supervisor at University of Fort Hare. Her details are as follows

Prof G. Galloway Tel: 043-704 7102 Email: ggalloway@ufh.ac.za

Looking forward to a response

Yours in education

B. Ruiters (Miss) cell:0732369576 Or 0784224159 Email:200602275@ufh.ac.za



APPENDIX D: PERMISSION LETTER FROM EASTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES

Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape

Private Bag X0032 • Bhisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4773/4035/4537 • Fax: +27 (0)40 608 4574 • Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Enquiries: B Pamla

Email: babalwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za Date: 30 June 2017

Ms. Benedictor Ruiters

50 Church Street



East London

5201

Dear B Ruiters

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A MASTERS THESIS: ANALYSING READING COMPREHENSION AMONGST GRADE 8 SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THREE HIGH SCHOOLS IN EAST LONDON

-
1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.

2. Your application to conduct the abovementioned research in three High Schools in East London under the jurisdiction of Buffalo City District of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:

- a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
- b. institutions 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 of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district; you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;
- D. the research may not be conducted during official contact time; should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;



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building blocks for growth

Ikamva eliqaqambileyo!

Page 1 of 2

- a. your research will be limited to those institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
- b. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 — 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis.

i. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary.

j. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation upon completion of your research.

k. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE document duly completed by you.

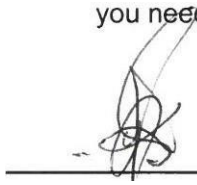
l. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form).

m. You submit on a six-monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation

c. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoE.

d. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.

e. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Ms. NY Kanjana on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email nvkaniana@live.co.za should you need any a


____ any assistance.

NY KANJANA

DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH & SECRETARIAT SERVICES

FOR SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL: EDUCATION

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions for teachers

1. What is your first language?
2. How long have you been teaching?
3. Which language do you use for teaching?
4. Why do you prefer this language?
5. What language do you learners prefer to use?
6. How do you explore reading comprehension?
7. What reading material do you use?
8. Are there set programmes you follow when teaching reading?
9. What are your experiences with teaching reading in English First Additional Language?

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10. Do you face any challenges? If yes, explain.
11. What approaches or methods do you use to overcome reading difficulties?
12. What teaching methods do you use to encourage and promote quality reading in EFAL?
13. Do learners like reading in EFAL?
14. Why do you think so?
15. What do you do to encourage reading?
16. Are there learners that are experiencing difficulties with English as the Language of learning and teaching?
17. Can you explain further?

18. How do you help these learners?

19. Do the learners receive support at home from parents /siblings on reading in EFAL?

20. What kind of support, if there is?

21. What do you think could be done to improve your teaching of reading skills in EFAL?



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APPENDIX F: CONSENT OR REQUEST LETTER TO PARENTS



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TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Teachers views'

REFERENCE NUMBER: 200602275

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Miss. B. Ruiters

ADDRESS: SCHOOL OF GENERAL AND CONTINUING EDUCATION, EAST LONDON

CONTACT NUMBER: 0784224159

Your child (or ward) is being invited to take part in a research project. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the study staff or doctor any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how your child could be involved. Also, your child's participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you or your child negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw him/her from the study at any point, even if you do initially agree to let him/her take part.

This study has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee at the University of Fort Hare and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice and the Medical Research Council (MRC) Ethical Guidelines for Research.

This study intends:

To examine some of the factors associated with Teachers views' grade 7 EFAL learners in South Africa.

To examine the role of educators in learners' attitudes towards reading comprehension skills.

To identify policy directions to develop the interest of learners in reading comprehension education.

Your child has been invited to participate in this study because he/she is currently an English First Additional learner in Grade 7. You are not going to be participating in the study. Your responsibility will only be to give consent for your child's participation. This study is for academic purposes and the findings are important in the improvement of learners' mathematics performance and curriculum development. There will be no risk involved in your child taking part in this research because of the nature of the study. If you do not

ot agree to allow your child to take part, your child will not be affected in anyway. The information that will be collected about your child will not be available to anyone else and will be treated as confidential and protected. If it is used in a publication or thesis, your child's identity will remain anonymous.



Your child's participation in this research will be only in the interview, therefore, there will be no injury in any way, as a result of taking part in this research study.

You or your child will not be paid to take part in the study, but out-of-pocket expenses will be covered for each study visit. There will be no costs involved for you if your child does take part.

You or your child will not be paid to take part in the study, but out-of-pocket expenses will be covered for each study visit. There will be no costs involved for you if your child does take part. You may also: inform your family practitioner or usual doctor that your child is taking part in a research study.

Contact: Prof E.O. Adu at (043 7047176) if you have any further queries or encounter any problems. Contact the Chairperson of the University Research Ethics Committee if you have any concerns or complaints that have not been

adequately addressed by your child's study doctor. You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records

Declaration by parent/legal guardian

By signing below, I (name of parent/legal guardian)
agree to allow my child (name of child) who is
years old, to take part in a research study entitled (insert title of study) I declare that:

language with which I am fluent and comfortable.

If my child is older than 7 years, he/she must agree to take part in the study and his/her
ASSENT must be recorded on this form.

I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately
answered.

I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary and I have not been pressurised to
let my child take part.



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I may choose to withdraw my child from the study at any time and my child will not be
penalised or prejudiced in any way.

My child may be asked to leave the study before it has finished if the study doctor or
researcher feels it is in my child's best interests, or if my child does not follow the study
plan as agreed to.

Signed at (place) on (date)

.....

.....

Signature of parent/legal guardian Signature of witness

Declaration by investigator

I Miss B .Ruiters declare that:

I explained the information in this document to **Participants**.

I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.

I am satisfied that he/she adequately understand all aspects of the research, as discussed above

I did/did not use an interpreter (if an interpreter is used, then the interpreter must sign the declaration below). Signed at

(place) on (date)

.....

Signature of investigator

Signature of investigator Declaration by interpreter (Only complete if applicable) I (name)

..... declare that

I assisted the investigator (name) to explain the information in this document to (name of parent/legal guardian)using the language medium of Afrikaans/Xhosa.



We encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.

I conveyed a factually correct version of what was related to me.

I am satisfied that the parent/legal guardian fully understands the content of this informed consent document and has had all his/her questions satisfactorily answered. Signed at

(place) on (date)

.....

.....

APPENDIX G: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Observational checklist : EFAL reading comprehension skills			
1. Inferencing skills	Good	satisfactory	poor
2. Teacher explains meaning of vocabulary			
3. Teacher and learner interaction			
4. Learner behaviour			
5. learner answers questions	 University of Fort Hare <i>Together in Excellence</i>		
6. teacher asking referential question			
7. teacher gives instructions and directions			
8. teacher explains a grammatical point			
9. learner talks to another learner			

10.period of silence or confidence			
11.teacher praises			
12. teacher asks display questions			
13. teacher explains functional point			



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APPENDIX H: EDITORIAL LETTER

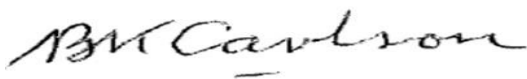
8 Nahoon Valley Place
Nahoon Valley
East London
5241

18 May 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that I have proofread and edited the following master's mini-dissertation using the Windows 'Tracking' system to reflect my comments and suggested corrections for the student to action:

Teachers' views on Grade 7 reading comprehension skills amongst English first language learners by Benedictor Ruiters, a dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education at the University of Fort Hare.



Brian Carlson (B.A., M.Ed.) Professional Editor

Email: bcarlson521@gmail.com

Cell: 0834596647

Disclaimer: Although I have made comments and suggested corrections, the responsibility for the quality of the final document lies with the student in the first instance and not with myself as the editor. In this particular case a second proof-reading and editing may well be in the student's best interests.

BK & AJ Carlson Professional Editing Services

APPENDIX I: LANGUAGE EDITORIAL LETTER

EDITING/PROOFREADING CERTIFICATE

To whom it may concern

This serves to certify that I, Jabulani Mkhize, have edited Mrs. B. Ruiters' Masters' dissertation to ensure that the language, grammar, punctuation and spelling are academically sound and appropriate, by rectifying errors, wherever these have been identified, and rephrasing sentences that would possibly make one lose sight of the flow of the argument.

Title of the dissertation: "Teachers' views on Grade 7 Reading Comprehension Skills amongst First Language Learners: A Case Study."



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Editor's : Jabulani M

Name: Jabulani Mkhize

Signature :

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jabu Mkhize', written over the printed name.

Date :

5 March 2019

Contact Details: jmkhize@ufh.ac.za

Qualifications: PhD (English)