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**STRATEGIES TEACHERS USE TO ENHANCE GRADE 7
LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS IN FIRST
ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE: FOUR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN FORT
BEAUFORT.**

By

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Education in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education.**

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Declaration

Having read the Code of Conduct and Academic Responsibility as contained in the Student Handbook of University of Fort Hare, I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work where all references were duly acknowledged and listed on the reference list. I also declare that this thesis has not been submitted partially or wholly to any other university in partial fulfillment of the requirements of any degree (s).

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my family for their unconditional love and support throughout my studies. They stood as a pillar of strength beside me encouraging me to never give up. My family members supported me morally and financially where it was due.

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My humble gratitude goes to God Almighty who gave me wisdom, strength and courage to persevere, leading and guiding my way throughout my study. It has not been an easy road, but God's mercy and His grace embraced me throughout this period.

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Abstract

This study focused on the strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in English First Additional Language at Fort Beaufort District. This study was impelled by low performance of learners in English language, where learners were unable to read and answer questions promptly due lack of understanding what they read. This study is qualitative in approach and underpinned interpretive paradigm position. Fort Beaufort Education District used as a case study whereby four schools were purposively selected and each with six grade seven learners, teachers and Subject Advisor. Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, observations and documents analysis. Interviews and focus groups discussions were taped, transcribed, analysed and the data was categorised into themes. The findings of this study disclosed the weak correlation between teachers' knowledge and teaching practices and lack of support from the district. The participating teachers had limited understanding of reading comprehension strategies; as a result, they regarded teaching reading comprehension as a challenge since they do not know what comprehension strategies are, and how to apply them. Teachers lack theoretical knowledge and practice concerning the teaching of reading for comprehension resulted to a negative attitude and a total neglect towards teaching reading for comprehension. The participants showed dissatisfaction with the intervention of the Department of Education and the policies they impose on them. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement has no clear guidelines on how to teach these strategies of reading comprehension, rather it places reading comprehension under three phases, namely: Pre-reading, During- reading and Post-reading. As they lack appropriate techniques to teach English comprehension effectively, more workshops should be done to empower them in order to become competent teachers. Teachers need more training on active approaches in order to change their comprehension instruction and to select texts that are relevant to

learners' life situations or experiences, in order for them to relate with the text and thus would cause them to read with understanding.

Keywords: English First Additional Language; Reading comprehension; Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS); Active Learning; Teaching Strategies; Collaborative Learning and Constructivism.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Reading comprehension is fundamental to child's understanding of the text, which leads a learner to interpret and analyze a text as expected. However, learners in rural schools fall short in that explanation hence they experience a diversity of learning problems, of which, one is poor reading comprehension. Such learners are from extremely poor communities and families; as a result, they lack a culture of learning and motivational push. Because of the context in which rural learners are living and learning, they have limited English proficiency. Furthermore, most schools in rural areas reflect poverty with poor conditions of infrastructures, which are also a demotivating factor to learners, and lack of textbooks. Above that, rural schools are highly affected by the shortage of appropriately trained teachers who are over-burdened with multi-grade teaching. These conditions cause low pass rate and high drop out of learners in rural schools.

It is in this regards that this study serves to explore strategies of English reading comprehension that could enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills. This is very important for learners to know how, when and where to use a particular strategy. It also examined experiences that teachers and learners encounter in the implementation and understanding of reading comprehension skills in the rural schools at Fort Beaufort District. The problem statement; research questions; objectives and delimitation of the study would be presented in this study and discussed below. In addition, the significance of the study would be discussed and the definition of relevant terms too and followed by the conclusion and outline of this study.

1.2 Background of the Study

1.2.1 Reading Comprehension Skills Internationally

Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) refer to reading comprehension as the essence of reading and an interactive process of finding meaning from a text where the reader simultaneously extracts and construct meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. In addition, comprehension is defined as a process that involves three elements: reader, text, and activity. It results from the interaction of a person (reader) engaged with linguistic materials (text) for a self-generated mind and text in order to interpret and comprehend the text (activity), (Bouazi& le Roux (2010). The reading of English texts by learners whom English is their First Additional Language (EFAL) speakers has been highlighted as a major problem because learners read the text without understanding even in the developed countries.

Chaka (2015) states that reading comprehension among learners is a great concern; as a result, reading interventions are mounted at different intervals in the United State of America (USA) and in the United Kingdom (UK). In some schools in the USA, learners who are EFAL speakers have difficulties in comprehending the text as they are exposed to unfamiliar language and teachers are required to repair more gaps in the strategies they use to derive meaning from text. The National Centre for Education Statistics (2010 & 2014) report that in the US and in the Netherlands, a large number of elementary school children also read below the minimum required of reading comprehension.

Based on the argument above, learners should be able to extract meaning from texts by being exposed to strategies such as making connections, predicting, questioning while reading, monitoring, inference, visualizing and summarising should be practiced and implemented in the classroom continuously, (New South

Wales Department of Education and Training, 2010). Learners need competent teachers to assist and support them step by step in applying those strategies. Oakley (2011) reveals that teachers do not expose the learners to the basic strategies that are necessary for reading. This has been reported by some of the teachers during the interviews that they do not teach any of the Reading Comprehension Cognitive Strategies (RCCS). This is because the teachers claimed not have relevant knowledge and skills to expose the learners to the expected reading strategies that are their level of education. Therefore, teachers lack appropriate approaches to teach English reading comprehension effectively in the classroom due to lack of support and exposure from the Department of Education.

In Malaysian schools, teachers do not often focus on all types of reading comprehension skills and there is little work done regarding developing modules for EFAL teachers to teach reading comprehension at school. Teachers lack appropriate guidelines for teaching reading comprehension. In this regard, the learners get affected, as they are dependent on their teachers. In addition, learners even in high schools are not aware of or do not have effective strategies to comprehend English reading materials. This is because the teaching of English language focus on grammar (Sementin & Manian, 2015; Abdul, 2016). The benchmark report on reading comprehension scores in Malaysian rural schools reports that learners are below the standard and 20% learners are termed as “Academic warning”(Eng., Mohammed, Ismail, 2016).

1.2.2 Reading Comprehension Skills in Sub-Saharan Africa

One of the important skills teachers are expected to master and teach their learners is how to develop comprehension skills and comprehend whatever they read; be able to recall information and apply such appropriate skills later in life.

Kolawale, Jire-Alao (2014) & Adenji (2010) agree that teachers in Nigeria do not seem to have fully mastered the skills and techniques of imparting an appropriate comprehension knowledge and skills into their learners. They lag behind in their approach to teaching reading comprehension, hence learners are unable to comprehend effectively and do not perform well in tests, and, subsequently do not do well in most situations where comprehension skills are required.

In this light, most of the teachers lack methods of imparting reading comprehension skills to pupils that would help to equip learners to comprehend English texts. This resulted in learners who develop a negative attitude towards English as their First Additional Language. This is because most of the EFAL teachers lack suitable materials to facilitate EFAL teaching and learning as learners have different reading abilities (Javed, 2015). This makes a classroom to be passive than active as there is no proper interaction between the learners and the teachers because learners' needs are not catered for. This resulted in lack of inclusivity and diversity during English lessons where comprehension is concerned.

Mejia (2010) in the National Baseline Report in Malawi states that comprehension strategies are the stepping stones to be able to comprehend even non-fiction texts. Without the ability to use strategies such as predicting; self-questioning; self-monitoring and summarising, learners are likely to comprehend at surface level only. In view of this, the results shown by the National Baseline Report indicates low performance in reading comprehension in grade 7. The UWEZO results in Uganda (2012) shows that nationally, learners' performance in English comprehension was poor, where learners attained low marks. In Zimbabwe, though the quality of education seems to be very high, there is a low pass rate at secondary schools especially at 'Ordinary' level where English was one of the subjects with low marks (Muchemwa, 2014).

In view of this, this is bad as literacy is seen as learners' key to master education curriculum. Thus learners could become literate in terms of proficiency and competency only if their teachers are willing to initiate their growth in reading by equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge where comprehension is involved. This suggests that immediate measures should be taken to improve the teaching of reading comprehension in grade 7. Ntereke (2016) states that in Botswana the teaching of strategies of reading comprehension are neglected in the primary schools and if this problem is not handled in the primary schools, the possibility is, students in high schools and at tertiary would be highly affected as they would not be able to answer higher order questions that need them to comprehend, deduce meaning, interpret, summarise and make associations of meaning between different parts of a text.

The students' ability to comprehend a text relies on the role of the teacher as it is the teachers' responsibility to teach reading comprehension strategies. The researcher agrees with the scholar's argument above because this is what is happening in the Eastern Cape. The researcher is one of a high school teacher who receives learners who are unable to read and write from the primary schools, more especially those in rural areas because most of the teachers are underqualified and they do not get any support and guidance to implement these strategies in the classroom. Based on the above argument, the researcher revealed that professional development is important in order for teachers to obtain adequate information on reading comprehension strategies suitable for different learners and to present and model them in the classroom. In other words, the success and effectiveness of RSI partly rely on the training of teachers in reading comprehension strategies.

1.2.3 Reading Comprehension Skills in South African Context

Comprehension is the main reason for reading and it is a critical part of the reading process. If readers could read words and do not understand what they read, then reading is not taking place because readers would fail to respond as expected. In

this regard, the instructions in a comprehension could help learners understand and remember what they have read. Thus, comprehension could be improved by teaching the learners to use specific concrete strategies or to reason strategically when they encounter barriers to understanding what they read. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011, Grades 7 - 9) on reading process and strategies, state that reading instruction may involve three steps to enhance the understanding of texts, such as Pre-reading, During – reading and Post-reading activities, and strategies such as skimming and scanning; inferring; summarising and making inferences should be used.

Zimmerman & Smit (2014) affirm that teaching of even one comprehension strategy could improve learners' comprehension. Strategies such as activating background knowledge, generating questions while reading, inferring, predicting and summarising could be used by teachers in order to improve reading comprehension. Some primary school teachers teach the skill of summarising, although many learners and some teachers find the skill quite challenging. In addition, in most South African primary schools much emphasis is placed on teaching decoding skills since teachers assume that learners would be able to comprehend when they decode, little attention is paid to reading comprehension.

However, Brennan (2015) denotes that there is little comprehension instruction in upper elementary grades and teaching strategies for comprehension, rather, teachers ask comprehension questions at the end of the text to test the pupils. In this regard, Klapwijk (2012) agrees with other scholars that teachers seldom teach reading strategies explicitly in South African schools and may not know how to teach comprehension, as Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (2012) does not give clear explanation of the strategies which teachers must use to enhance learners in reading comprehension in grade 7. In this light, the teachers show limited understanding of reading comprehension strategies as they regard teaching comprehension as a challenge because they do not know what comprehension strategies are and how to apply them. Thus, teachers spend little

time on reading comprehension with learners, with no uniform approach on how to teach reading comprehension. This is what triggered the researcher to embark on this research in order to find out what could be done to assist teachers for the benefit of the learners where teaching and learning comprehension strategies are involved.

Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ III, 2007) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS, 2006) assessment, both showed poor results in South African grades four and six in English texts, where learners lacked interpretive, inferential and critical reading skills (Spaull, 2013). Research conducted by Pretorius & Spaull (2016) found out that poor performance in South Africa is caused by much neglect in the teaching of reading comprehension as teachers focus on code-based reading activities in the classroom neglecting meaningful literacy practices. Reading Association of Ireland (RAI) (2011) emphasizes the importance of using a strategic approach to the teaching of comprehension from the earliest stages of children's reading development.

The National Education and Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) (2012) results of Grade 5 clearly showed that students performed extremely poor on silent reading comprehension test, despite the fact that the text used in comprehension test was equivalent to Grade 4 in terms of ease of readability (Spaull & Pretorius, 2016). The first survey of post – Apartheid South African Language Board (PanSALB, 2000) found out that English comprehension seldom exceeds 30% among speakers of African languages. In view of this, the learners lacked vocabulary appropriate for the grade, despite the efforts done by the teachers to fulfill the requirements of the curriculum. The Department of Education (DoE) Annual National Assessment (ANA) results in English First Additional Language of grades 4, 6 and 9 in 2014 reveals low performance due to the inability of learners to interpret and analyze the text.

The Eastern Cape is the second poorest province in South Africa, and thus impedes the learners to read critically the text and their success in school. Children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds also face general linguistic deprivation. Such learners have few or no real encounter with or experience in using English (as a second language/additional language). The learners found reading and comprehending written information and freely writing their own interpretation using correct grammatical constructions extremely challenging, as a result, the Eastern Cape Comprehensive Systematic Evaluation Provincial Report (2014) revealed that the Grade 9 learners' average score was 35.7%. At the district level, that is Fort Beaufort District, whereby the learners obtained 30.1% in Grade 9 English language. This suggests that more groundwork should be done in this district to assist teachers and learners in order to improve English language. Fort Beaufort District does not lag behind in getting band results only, but it always falls at the bottom of the list even in Grade 12 results in the entire Province of Eastern Cape. The inability of learners to read English text with understanding cost the grade 12 results in Fort Beaufort District.

Nonetheless, the Department of Education (DoE) is doing its utmost best in empowering and strengthening teachers in teaching English First Additional language(EFAL). Motshekga (2014) reveals that the DoE works in partnership with the British Council where primary and secondary school teachers are pursuing their studies in order to strengthen English language. They also take into account the research reports such as PIRLS that speak into the need to strengthen the language of teaching in order to improve outcomes, as English is the main language in which examinations are being delivered and the language medium of instructions. Therefore, there is a dire need to strengthen the learners' capacity and ability in English.

1.3 Problem statement

Based on the background above, there is evidence of the lack of comprehension skills, which forbids learners from focusing on and retrieving explicitly stated

information. This is echoed in the Assessment of comprehension made by PIRLS (2006) of grade 5 learners whereby the majority of learners were unable to reach even the low international benchmark and their achievement for higher- order comprehension question was particularly problematic. This has also impacted negatively on the learners' ability to make straightforward inferences, interpreting, integrating ideas and information, and to examine and evaluate content. In view of this, most high schools in rural areas are faced with the problem of learners who are unable to read English texts for comprehension. Such problems emanate from primary schools. Fleish (2008) indicates that the majority of South African primary school children from disadvantaged schools complete their primary schooling without being able to read in their instructional language.

In addition, the study revealed that some learners in grade 8 are able to read English passage with understanding, but some have no understanding of what they read. The majority do not have the ability to distinguish information relevant to the comprehension activities required from irrelevant details in the reading passage. The lack of exposure; lack of vocabulary and learners' lack of foundational knowledge from their primary schools cause a barrier to the successful teaching of English text at a high school. Thus, learners who read without comprehending have fewer chances of succeeding academically than learners who read with comprehension. More so, English is the language of learning and teaching in South Africa (Cekiso, Madoda, Madikiza & Nophawu, 2014).

This is a major challenge that triggered the researcher to focus on grade 7 learners, the critical class that should be prepared for high school work, to seek strategies that would help the learners to comprehend texts they are required to read in grade 7, and to seek for methods that could assist teachers in order to promote reading comprehension skills to grade 7 learners, especially where EFAL is concerned. Moreover, English is a language of learning and teaching in South Africa (LoLT).

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 Main Research Question

The study seeks to answer the following main research question;

What do teachers use to enhance learners' reading comprehension skills in English First Additional Language in rural schools?

1.4.2 Sub- Research Questions.

- What informs teachers' use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension?
- How do teachers perceive those strategies during comprehension lesson?
- How do learners perceive the effectiveness of the approaches used by teachers during reading comprehension?
- What framework of teaching comprehension could be suggested?

1.4.3 Research Aim

The aim of the study is to determine what strategies teachers use to enhance and improve learners' reading comprehension skills in English First Additional Language.

1.4.4 Research Objectives

The study seeks to fulfill the following objectives;

- To identify what informs teachers' use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension in EFAL.
- To explore how teachers perceive those strategies during reading comprehension lesson.
- To explore how learners perceive the effectiveness of the approaches used by teachers during comprehension lesson.
- To examine what the framework of teaching comprehension could be suggested.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore strategies teachers use in the classroom that could assist and improve learners' skills in reading comprehension in English First Additional Language, as well as, improving teachers' competence in teaching comprehension skills.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study wishes to come up with strategies that may enhance learners' reading comprehension skills and assist the grade seven EFAL teachers by exposing them to strategies of reading comprehension that could be beneficial to their teaching.

The study hopes to improve learners' reading of English texts with understanding. The findings of this study may be helpful to teachers since they are involved in the teaching of comprehension. In addition, this study might be helpful to policymakers to broaden the curriculum by incorporating the most effective strategies that could be used to assist learners in reading English text with understanding.

1.7 Delimitation

The study focused on four primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District of the Eastern Cape Province. Only grade seven classes with reference to English teachers, learners, Head of the Department of English language, and the Subject Advisor formed part of sampling.

1.8 Operational definitions of terms

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

English First Additional Language: This is English taught to learners whose first language is not English (Curriculum 2005 Policy Document). 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, 2011).

Reading: Reading is a means of the understanding meaning of printed page or written material as a way of communication, language acquisition means of sharing information and ideas (Reutzel & Cooter, 2010).

Reading comprehension: It is the result of the interaction of a person engaged with linguistic materials for self-generated mind and text in order to interpret and comprehend the text (Bouazi & le Roux, 2010).

Reading comprehension strategies: Strategies of reading comprehension are specific, deliberate, goal-directed mental processes or behaviors, which control and modify the reader's efforts to decode a text, understand words and construct the meaning of a text (Mistar, Zuhairi, Yanti, 2016).

Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS): CAPS aims to ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

Active Learning: an Active learning is a tool that improves learners' engagement, attention, academic performance and increases conceptual understanding, developing critical thinking skills and improve teamwork (Drake, 2014).

Collaborative Learning: Collaborative learning is commonly illustrated when groups of learners work together to search for understanding, meaning or solutions or product of their learning (Jayne, 2015).

Cooperative: Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy that is highly successful in the classroom because of its increasing need for interdependence in all levels, providing learners with tools to effectively learn from each other (Jayne, 2015).

Constructivism: Constructivism is a theory for developing different approaches to pedagogy and curriculum and learning instruction in order for teachers to get the best response to educational purposes (Taber, 2011).

1.9 Chapter Outline

The study is structured as follows:

Chapter 1

This chapter gives a background of the study, the problem statement, research questions and the significance of the study. In addition the delimitation and definition of key terms used in the study.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 present the critical discussions of the relevant literature that highlight concepts, ideas, and experiences relevant to the research study. The theoretical framework is also provided in the basis of the reviewed literature.

Chapter 3

This chapter focuses on the research methodology that was followed when conducting the research. The chapter focuses on research paradigm; research approach; research design; sampling procedures; data analysis; trustworthiness and ethical issues.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 deals with data analysis and presentation. In this chapter, all participants' responses are presented according to the themes and questions formulated from each them.

Chapter 5

Discussion of the Findings.

This chapter presents a discussion of the results of the data and key themes that emerged from data gathered in chapter 4.

Chapter 6

Recommendations and Conclusions.

This chapter offers recommendations for teachers, subject advisors and policymakers. The recommendations are discussed at length and suggestions are offered to improve the state of reading for comprehension.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, this study focused on how teaching comprehension strategies are taught to Grade 7 learners in rural schools, and identified different aspects of reading comprehension that are relevant to this study such as the role of language proficiency in reading comprehension; reading in additional language; acquisition of comprehension skills, and, to identify what informs teachers' use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension internationally, Sub-Saharan Africa and in South African context. The study further looked at that would assist the learner to read with understanding, as that would unlock the potential of learners and empowering the teachers as well. In addition, the researcher viewed the new modern teaching approaches that could enhance learners to comprehend the text better.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

It is important to implement the teaching methods together with the relevant teaching resources that allow the multiple ways of approaching the reading comprehension lessons in English First Additional Language in order to accommodate the different learners with diverse learning needs. Thus, classroom interaction as a learner-centred method serves as a vehicle for the enhancement of communication competence in reading comprehension in English First Additional Language (Maja, 2015).

In view of the above discussion, theoretical framework underpinning this study is the Socio Constructivist Theory, specifically by the ideas of Vygotsky (1986) and

the Social Cognitive Theory of Learning. The ideas of these theories were linked to the reading comprehension strategies identified. Both these theories focus on: (a) people learn from their social environment, (b) social environment influences cognition through language, and (c) learning from others via modelling is highly recommended for instructional purposes. The link between these theories and reading comprehension is a cognitive process which takes place in the mind and it becomes overt when a person speaks about his/her thought processes. A learner would not be skilled in all strategies of reading comprehension unless a teacher scaffolds the learner and provides guidance and support in the task given, as well as the support of more capable peers (Bruwer, 2013).

Alipio (2014) states that constructivism is a theory of learning and knowledge that attempts to approach how people get information and how it is constructed. In constructivism, the central idea is that human learning is constructed and learners are urged to be actively involved in their learning. Learners should participate actively in class, joining in interactive language learning tasks and becoming autonomous learners in order to promote socialisation among them since they acquire and understand language easily when they socialise with their peers (Linake, 2015). Consequently, learners would be in a position to construct their own logic from the information given. In the constructivist classroom, both the teacher and the learner think of knowledge as a dynamic, ever-changing view of the world and the ability to stretch and explore that view (University College Dublin, 2016). In this regard, a learner is not an individual living in an island, but act as an active member of the society.

In addition, new knowledge is built upon the current knowledge the learner has. For example, when learners read, they could form mental pictures of what the author describes and visual images emerge. This means the background

knowledge is activated. Thus, the teacher could use the schema that learners already have to help them to understand text better. It is important that the teacher engage learners in learning that would bring their current understanding into action. Learners can coin or compare their knowledge with the new incoming information. However, Ausubel agrees with Vygotsky (1986) in that learning occurs because of relatedness of what learners know and what they learn. Background knowledge is one of the reading comprehension strategies of monitoring whether learners are actively involved with the text by evoking what they already know about it (Bruwer, 2013).

According to Vygotsky (1986), it is also important for teachers to scaffold their learners in each strategy they introduce to learners. Scaffolding involves the provision of support that is focused on a learner's particular capacities within ZPD. When teaching comprehension strategies to Grade 7 learners, teachers need to assist them to a certain level and shift the responsibility gradually to learners so that they learn to master their own learning. Learners must learn to be observant, imitate practices and self-regulate themselves and create meaning from written text by using strategy appropriately so that they become confident, knowledgeable and capable of working independently (Mudziwela, 2012).

The main activity in a constructivist classroom is solving problems. Thus, teaching should allow learners to ask questions, investigate a topic or text given and build their own concepts and strategies to find answers and solutions to the task given contrary to teacher centred approach.

As learners are engaged with the text, they have to learn to ask themselves questions that will lead them to required information, understanding and predicting what will happen next. Now, the constructivist teacher act as a guide, providing

learners with opportunities to test the adequacy of their understanding (Bruwer, 2013 & UCD 2016).

The socio-constructivist theory says that learning happens primarily through social interaction with others, such as teachers or learners' peers. This theory is informed by the ideas of Vygotsky (1986) who developed the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is described as the area between a learner's present actual level of functioning and the learner's potential performance; and the social cognitive theory of learning which suggest that learning takes place when learners solve problems beyond their current developmental capacity with the support of their teacher or their peers. Vygotsky stressed that interaction with other people in the environment stimulates development processes and foster cognitive growth (Bruwer, 2013).

The constructivist believes that learners learn much better, when they are actively involved since the learner is viewed as one who acts on objects and events within his or her environment and in the process gains understanding and meaning of those objects and events. It is therefore evident that the best learners learn when they construct their own knowledge, as constructivist theory stipulates that learning is an active process creating meaning from different experiences (Linake, 2015 & Foncha, 2013).

This means that the learner brings individual understanding to share with a partner, group and the whole class. The approach as constructivist learner-centred, allows the learner to become the master of his or her own learning. Learners have the autonomy to construct their own understanding and share it with their peers.

Collaborative and cooperative approaches are the main factor in this approach. Both collaborative and cooperative learning bring positive results such as deeper understanding of content, increase overall in grades, and improve self-esteem and

higher motivation to remain on task. The teacher functions as a facilitator who guides and clarifies the not-understandable matter arising in the learning and exploration of the learners (Maja, 2015, & Pugach, Marleen, Johnson & Lawrence, 2015).

According to Vygotsky(1986), cognitive development is the result of the individual's social interaction with the environment through language that control mental behaviour such as higher forms of human memory, selective attention, mental functions such as logical decision making and comprehension of language (Brame, 2016 & Bruwer, 2013). In addition, cognitive theory refers to mental functions as central cause of learning that result in remembering, focusing and processing information that a learner learns through reading comprehension strategies such as monitoring comprehension, summarising, generating questions, graphic and semantic organisers to make meaning. If teachers can show a learner how to process information while reading, through the application of reading comprehension strategies, then the difficult task of reading becomes easier (Mudziewelana, 2012).

In this view, teachers need to guide and scaffold learners to interact with the comprehension text and taking initiative in the task as active participants. The researcher adopted this theory as it focuses on learner-centeredness and develops deeper levels of thinking; cooperation among learners that would improve their reading comprehension as English First Additional Language Learners.

2.3 Reading in an Additional Language

Many Researchers have shown that many schools in South Africa have adopted English as the first additional language and it is used as the Language of Learning and Teaching (**LOLT**) from Grade 4 onwards, not considering the challenges of learning through the medium of an additional language. Based on the argument

above, Linake (2015) agrees that English as a first additional language is challenging to learners since it is not their native language and most of the learners have little or no exposure to English out of school. This becomes a barrier as it affects learners' progress academically.

However, the **(LOLT)** remains English, resulting in many learners learning in a foreign language, that is not their home language and which is often unknown to them. This situation has created numerous teaching and learning challenges contributing to low achievement (Navsaria, 2011). Heugh (2006) states that the majority of learners especially in poor socio-economic communities where literacy levels are low, require at least six years of quality learning and teaching of a second language before they are ready to use the language as a LOLT, and also to strengthen their Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), (Cummins, 2008).

A learner who is not yet developed CALP through reading and writing in their mother tongue (L1), and is expected to use the second language (L2) exclusively, would suffer deficits both in L1 and L2. L2 would suffer because it cannot develop adequately because L1 has not yet reached the stage of DE contextualisation (Cummins, 1999). The reduced exposure to L1 instruction puts learners in rural schools at a disadvantage because they switch to a new LOLT without having fully acquired their L1, which is spoken in the community that would be of great help to learners to make sense of what they learn at school (Mashie, 2011).

In this light, the learners' negative attitude towards English poses a great barrier for effective teaching. This negative attitude emanates from the fact that learners have limited competence in English language, therefore preventing them from participating actively in the classroom. The minimal learner participation leads to levels of underperformance in English language (Anyiendah, 2017). In this view,

learners are engaged in a challenging and painful process of understanding and decoding in a foreign language.

2.3.1 English as Lingua Franca

Iftimie (2015) reveals that it is a common knowledge that from among all languages in the world, English has acquired the status of 'lingua franca' as it is the language that is used in international communication across countries, the language that enables people of different ethnic, national and cultural backgrounds to share with others their ideas and culture. English as an international language has resulted in a growing number of people who learn and speak this language. That is the main reason it is used as LOLT in all South African schools to enable the learners to become competent worldwide.

Special status given to English has influenced other countries to use English as a second language (ESL) in the educational system and as an official language. Thus, it has to be mastered as early as possible because of special role. Subsequently, TESOL (2008) revealed that English is viewed as an essential language, no longer optional as it has become the most widely taught language in the world, and numerous countries have instituted English as a required subject for all learners starting from an early age. In light of this, learners need to be equipped with the linguistic skills to communicate internationally and develop competence in the language (Linake, 2015 citing Nunn, 2011; Rohmah, 2005; TESOL, 2008). This is what triggered the researcher to perceive how reading can lead to competence in an additional language.

The dominance of English worldwide has caused most countries to drift away from their culture to Western culture. As a result, teachers and learners in the classroom learn and communicate in English as a second language throughout the lesson. Learners feel motivated, find communicating in English interesting, and put them at par with native English speakers. In addition, the idea of communicating in

English improves their vocabulary, which also contributes in their reading skill. Because of English dominance, South African schools have adopted English as a Language of Learning and Teaching.

2.4 The role of Language Proficiency in Reading Comprehension.

According to Yoshiyuku (2016), language proficiency is defined as knowledge, competence or ability in the use of a language, irrespective of how, where, or under what conditions it has been acquired. However, Pretorius & Mampuru (2007) state that second language proficiency is the ability to speak or perform in an acquired language. CAPS (2011) indicate that by the time the learners enter Senior Phase, they should be reasonably proficient in First Additional Language regarding to both interpersonal and cognitive academic skills. Racca & Laseten (2016) state that educators agree that proficiency in the English language is the basis for success in academic pursuit. Thus, language proficiency in English is significant and related to academic performance. This means that the language plays a significant role in critical and analytical thinking required in all subjects learnt by the learners.

In this view, the more the children are proficient with English language, the more they are likely to perform well in their academic subjects as all the subjects are tough in English. However, the reality is that many learners are still not proficient in English language and unable to read English text with understanding and this makes them to lose the interest in their studies and develop a negative attitude towards English as their First additional Language Hence resulted to a low pass rate and high rate of dropout from schools.

Krashen(1981); Waring& Nation(2004) both reveal that learners need more exposure to extensive reading in order to acquire more vocabulary that will develop their language proficiency. The vocabulary that learners would be able to acquire in this way, would also help them to read a text with understanding. However, Krashen (1996) argues that for second language learners to gain proficiency in the

second language, they should acquire it rather than be taught. He feels that language should not be taught directly in primary school classrooms and he believes that speech will emerge when the acquirer has received and accessed enough comprehensible input. In contrary Cummins (1981) recommends the early and gradual introduction to English in primary schools in order to allow the learner sufficient time to acquire Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which is needed to master the upper primary and secondary curriculum.

Yoshiyuku (2016) points out that there are two levels of language proficiency, namely, Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency. BICS refer to informal conversations, which is an everyday conversational ability. It is natural and deals with ordinary matters requiring speakers to react and respond to each other, meanwhile, CALP is a type of language proficiency that is needed for academic settings. The CALP concept is related to literacy skills in the L1 or L2. Both higher levels of language and cognitive processes are required in order to develop the language proficiency needed for achievement in school.

Sibanda (2015) citing Cummins (2005) stipulates that in order to be proficient in a second language (L2), the learner must have reached a certain level of competence in his/her home language (L1). It is argued that all languages develop through use, and the more one uses a language, the more likely it is developed. Therefore, lack of proficiency in L1, constraints the acquisition and development of the L2.

Sibanda (2015) further argues that some rural learners have low competence in both languages and they perform very poorly. Research has revealed that most South African learners, especially at lower primary level, do not attain mastery levels in their L1. Such learners who lack English proficiency, as well as their home

language proficiency are expected to engage critically with an English text given and ought to understand it.

2.5 Acquisition of Comprehension Skills

Yahya & Nor Hashimah (2014) denote that comprehension skill is one of the main skills which need to be acquired by primary school learners since they are expected to achieve the necessary level of reading fluency. Although research indicates that some learners are able to read fluently but cannot comprehend what they read, and that can cause the potential for a learner to acquire knowledge to be jeopardised. Thus, the acquisition of comprehension happens in three categories namely: literal, inferential and critical-creative to low and high achievers (Yahya & Nor Hashimah, 2014). The literal comprehension refers to the memorization of facts in the reading texts. Learners are required to identify and memorize the subject discussed by the writer in the text. In other words, the literal comprehension involves learners' ability to obtain the overt information from the texts. The literal comprehension needs the low level of thinking which will be the basis for the higher level of thinking. It focuses on:

- Identifying the meaning of a word in a sentence;
- Identifying the main idea;
- Making comparisons; and,
- Identifying the sequence of ideas/events.

The inferential comprehension refers to the ability of learners interpreting meaning. Learners at this stage are expected to summarise and interpret the text. Inferential comprehension needs high level of thinking.

This is the level of thinking that is lacking to the majority of learners. The inferential comprehension skills include the following:

- Interpreting the main idea; and,
- Interpreting the important points.

According to Perfetti, Landi & Oakhill (2005), comprehension requires that the reader make inference that bridge elements in the text, making coherence and sense in the text. The critical-creative comprehension integrates the students' ability to do overall evaluation towards a certain information or idea which is read, and make a conclusion about the given information or idea. This skill focuses on:

- Evaluating – where the learners are required to give opinions or support an idea and contributing towards problem solving (Yahya & NorHashima, 2014).

Perfetti, Landi & Oakhill (2005) state that higher level of comprehension requires the reader to apply a high standard of coherence to understanding of the text.

2.6 CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA)

Janks (1996) highlights that Critical Discourse Analysis stems from a critical theory of language, which sees the use of language as a form of social practice.

Linake (2015) citing Fairclough (2000) defines CDA as the use of a collection of techniques for the study of textual practice and language use as social and cultural practices, while van Dijk(1993) sees critical discourse analysis as a social practice that wish to understand, expose and resist social inequalities.

Fairclough et al. (2011) believes that language shapes our identities and interactions, knowledge systems and beliefs. He further explains language as a form of social practice, where language is part of the society and not an external factor. In addition, language is seen as a social process and finally, it is a socially

conditioned process (Fairclough, 2003). He further contends that all linguistic aspects are social but not all social aspects are linguistic in nature, which means that all norms, beliefs and values are socially constructed and language in this case, is a tool or instrument for construction.

Blommaert & Bulcaen (2000) echoed in Mpiti (2016) state that CDA should look at the social aspects of theories in discourse analysis. To them, discourse is socially constructed and conditioned and can be made visible and transparent by CDA. They refer to Fairclough's (2003) three dimensions for analysing discourse: discourse-as-social-practice which looks at the ideological effects and power obtained through different classes or groups; discourse-as-discussion practice, where discourse is something produced, circulated, distributed, and consumed in society; and discourse-as-text, which focuses on the choice and patterns in vocabulary, grammar, coherence and how the text is structured.

Fairclough & Wodak (1997) view CDA as being concerned with the detailed analysis of a text. This means that texts are taken to be social actions, meaningful and coherent instances of spoken and written language use. CDA includes interdiscursive text analysis (which includes the different genres, discourses and style) as well as linguistic and semiotic analysis of text.

That is, particular kinds of texts attempt to 'do things' in social institutions with predictable ideas and material effects. These include functional written texts (for example, business letters, forms, policies, textbooks), spoken face-to-face interactions (for example, clinical exchanges, service exchanges, classroom lessons), and multimodal visual, electronic and gestural texts (for example, internet home pages). This view of the critical discourse analysts is meant to suggest that

a text is anything we see and from which we can decode meaning. It can be visual, spoken and written (Michael, 2002; Linake, 2015 & Mpiti, 2016).

However, it correlates with the above argument that learners in the class should be allowed to analyse texts in terms of their sequenced structures of propositions, their textual macrostructures before the actual reading takes place. The structures of spoken and written narratives have identifiable segments, movements or 'chunks'. In the case of learners' reading, the sequencing and the mixture of key actions, portrayals and claims follow an identifiable order. The resultant text structures tend to operate as large-scale grammars of actions and events chained together, as expressions of a cultural logic and taken for granted assumptions about historical and human agency, social and natural causality. This strategy helps and improves student-reading skills to develop their interests towards reading (Linake, 2015).

Critical Discourse Analysis as an established academic discipline with the same rituals and institutional practices is known to improve learners' literacy skills and as such can put them in a good position to respond and interpret texts properly with a better understanding, therefore, becoming academically competent. In view of the above, work in pragmatics, narratology and speech act theory speculate that texts are forms of social action that occur in complex social contexts. Research and theory in systemic functional linguistics show how linguistic forms can be systematically related to social and ideological functions.

In this regard, critical discourse analysis uses analytic tools from these fields to address persistent questions about larger, systemic relations of class, gender and culture. In educational research, this work has been turned to the examination of how knowledge and identity are constructed across a range of texts in the institutional "site" of the school (Michael, 2002 cited in Linake, 2015).

Critical discourse analysis relates to this study since it begins from the assumption that systematic asymmetries of power and resources between speakers and listeners, readers and writers can be linked to their unequal access to linguistic and social resources (Linake, 2015). This suggests that personality traits of the learner can be seen as determining success or failure in a language-learning situation.

Apart from the advantages that CDA presents, some weaknesses need to be stressed. There is no single method that is consistent in CDA, therefore, it lacks unitary theoretical framework. In addition, it fails to focus on language but deals more with the social problems, linguistic characteristics and cultural processes and structures.

2.7 What Informs Teachers' use of Strategies in Teaching Reading

Comprehension Internationally?

Research indicates that reading comprehension and strategies for reading comprehension are a concern to teachers, hence they need to be informed about new educational reforms meant to develop effective teaching. More focus is on equipping teachers with any reform designed to improve the quality of teaching comprehension (Learner-Centered Teaching, 2010; Bui & Fagan, 2013; UNESCO).

In this regard, effective schools and classrooms require teacher professionalism that embraces new norms and expectations for students' learning. Therefore, teachers need external and delivered professional development resources in order to enhance the teaching and learning strategies during reading comprehension lessons.

Thus, external learning resources such as attending workshops; education training programmes, networking, forming partnership with universities, collaborating with colleagues inside and outside the school, are means of equipping a teacher with modern approaches and allow them to learn new competencies. For example, in China, teachers are exposed to on-going professional development opportunities, including in-service training workshops where they are introduced in peer learning such as study groups, as well as school-based professional support where they are mentored (Peng, et al, 2014). They are also trained in collaborative lesson planning and are shown on how to apply modern approaches in the classroom, grouping learners in pairs or small groups, and such activities are helpful.

Researchers indicate that before teachers were developed through workshops and in-service trainings in learning approaches, there was poor performance among teachers associated with less than adequate outcomes in the teaching of reading comprehension more especially in the rural areas where there were insufficient teachers compounded by lack of certain subject expertise (Peng, et al, 2014). Therefore, investing in teachers can transform the teaching-learning situation in the classroom and inform teachers with new teaching approaches that could be implemented in the teaching of comprehension.

In United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, educational policies and policy documents are used to guide teachers in the implementation of new approaches.

When teachers attend workshops, they are given support materials such as teachers' manual and learner material to enable them to teach comprehension text using strategies that support the learner. In addition, the schools have comprehensive curriculum with systematically planned lessons aligned with the national curriculum, which include the use of textbooks and other instructional

materials aligned with the teaching of comprehension (Learner-Centered Teaching, 2010).

Based on the above argument, effective reading comprehension instruction has caused educators to understand that learning to read is a complex process requiring knowledge, strategies, skills and awareness to be developed continuously.

2.8 What Informs Teachers' use of Strategies in Teaching Reading

Comprehension in Sub-Saharan?

It is undisputable that teachers are the keys to the success of curriculum reform. Their knowledge, beliefs and perceptions play a fundamental role in understanding the reforms. For teachers to implement new reforms of curriculum, they need to understand those reforms and facilitate successful curriculum implementation in the classroom and future curriculum (Bantwini, 2012). In this view, training teachers to provide the tools to address the reading of English text with understanding can yield important learning gains particularly in low-income countries. Thus, teachers who receive quality professional development may be more effective (Schwartz, 2012).

In Ethiopia, the teachers are required by the policy to employ learner-centred approach; active learning and problem-solving approaches in different contexts in their classes. Workshops and short-term training programs are organised for learner-centred approach and active learning to enhance quality of learning. Cluster programs are also organised so that teachers share resources as well as experience in teaching strategies of reading comprehension. Such efforts happen in some districts, while others are left without any training in active learning. The

policy demands teachers to employ this teaching-style although some teachers lack understanding of it (Teresa & Desta, 2015). The researcher agrees with the scholar, as this problem occurs even in the Eastern Cape where other areas are well-informed about the new reforms of teaching, and some areas are neglected more especially rural areas.

In Uganda, Namibia and many other developing countries throughout the world have based their educational curriculum on the learner-centred approach of active learning on the notion that they offer an effective alternative to the teacher-centred didactic practices (Rajcoomar, 2013). In Botswana, educational system has put in place many strategies to improve active learning in schools by focusing on improving materials and physical facilities, teacher qualifications and ability to deal with mixed- ability groupings, curriculum development and learning assessment (Rajcoomar, 2013 citing Adedoyin & Shangodoyin, 2010).

2.9 What Informs Teachers' use of Strategies in Teaching Reading

Comprehension in South Africa?

National Education Policy Act (1996) defines a teacher as any person who teaches or trains other person at an education institution or assists in rendering educational services.

The report by the Department of Basic Education Magazine (DBEM, 2013) confirms that teachers are the cornerstone of Government's commitment to provide quality learning and teaching to all learners in South Africa. Therefore, South Africa needs constructivist teachers who work enthusiastically with high self- efficacy, modelling positive learning attitudes for learners inculcating engagement and participation during learning using new approaches (Maja, 2015).

Research indicates that through workshops teachers are trained in the use of the new approaches. The district offices organise workshops, where teachers are developed professionally and given support material to assist them in the teaching of strategies for reading comprehension. Teachers are encouraged to develop links between their own prior knowledge and abstract knowledge (Bantwini, 2012 & Schudel, 2012). They are also encouraged not to concentrate too much on teaching concrete facts but to push their learners into abstract world as a means to assist them to deal with complex tasks (Maja, 2015). Unfortunately, in my district, these workshops are a once off training, which leaves teachers still unsure about the new curriculum, and its new approaches, sometimes there are no workshops at all or support from subject advisors. The World Bank (2015) stipulates that if teachers have not seen, or be informed and experience a different way of teaching comprehension, they cannot be expected to implement new reforms or new teaching approaches.

National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) (2014) uses conferences and seminars to update teachers with the new approaches in teaching and developing teachers professionally. Language specialists are invited to present in the workshops to empower teachers in the use of group teaching and group work; giving insight to teachers on CAPS and new approaches in teaching reading comprehension strategies.

They further equip them on how to use small groups, peer groups in the classroom, and engage the learners with critical thinking exercises. In view of this argument, not all teachers are members of NAPTOSA, in as much as, not all members of this union attend those conferences. That means more teachers lag behind in getting empowerment concerning new educational reforms. However, in the new South Africa, the Department of Education designed policy documents such as the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) endorsing the new educational approaches that inform teachers about

new reforms in the teaching of languages (UNICEF, 2010), while in 2011, the DoE introduced Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

2.9.1 The Revised National Curriculum Statement

Curriculum is a structured document that comprises of goals, objectives, learning experiences, instructional resources and assessment for a specific educational program (DoE). Therefore, curriculum operates as road map or a guide, framing what must be taught. The South African curriculum used learning outcomes to give specific focus to particular kinds of knowledge and skills, and to make them clear and understandable. In 2004, the South African Department of Education (DoE) recognised the reading literacy as one of the most important priorities in education and more attention was given to reading in order to improve reading comprehension (Baruthram, 2012). The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS, 2002) introduced both critical and developmental outcomes aiming at developing and equipping the learners with the outcomes throughout their school careers. The critical outcomes include core life skills for learners such as communication and critical thinking (D'achada, 2007). The International Baccalaurate (2012) defines critical thinking as a mental process involving paying attention to details, selecting relevant information, analysing carefully and sceptically, making judgements and metacognitive thinking such as reflection and higher-order planning.

With regard to grade 7, in RNCS, the learners are expected to demonstrate high levels of competence in listening, speaking, reading and thinking. In Learning Outcome 3 (LO 3), Reading and Viewing: The learner is able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts, while in Learning Outcome 5 (LO 5), Thinking and Reasoning: The learner should be able to use language to think and reason, access, process and use information for learning. Furthermore, the learner should know and be able to use words and the grammar of the language to interpret texts. In addition, RNCS recommends that learners in grade 7 should be able to reason

independently through language; be able to read and write a range of more complex texts with a greater degree of independence since they are introduced in English language at the lower grades (Robson, 2007).

Mudziewelana (2012) states that in RNCS, more teaching time was allocated to English language to train learners to read a text fluently and with understanding. More so, teachers needed to be effectively taught and trained to implement the critical outcomes as shown in the language policy and the development of learning programmes in grade 7. Reading comprehension skills remain the critical aspect throughout the curriculum as learners are expected to read various texts with understanding and to use the information on various situations. However, teachers had no guidelines as to how reading comprehension should be taught and facilitated in the classrooms; also, teachers did not know which strategies to use before, during and after reading the text. In this view, it seems that teachers are left out of place regarding the knowledge and implementation of the curriculum.

2.9.2 The National Curriculum Statement

RNCS was revised and renamed the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), which was introduced in an attempt of teaching reading (DoE, 2006). The NCS contains learning programmes, work schedule, lesson plans and the assessment guidelines for a specific subject. The learning outcomes explain the knowledge, skills and values that learners should acquire and during learning process. In languages, the learning outcomes are, listening, reading and viewing, writing, thinking and reasoning and included is language structure and use. Each learning outcome describes what a learner should know and be able to demonstrate. For this study, the learning outcomes that the researcher focused on are – Learning Outcome 3 and Learning Outcome 5.

In order to know that learners have achieved LO 3, reading and viewing, the Assessment Standards highlight that learners should be able to read a text with meaning and for information, identifying the main points and summarises the information from the text. In LO 5, thinking and reasoning, a learner through assessment standards should use language for thinking, collecting and recording information in different ways (DoE, 2002 & Mudziwela, 2012). In this regard, even NCS had no clear vision on how to teach reading comprehension, and which strategies to use during reading the text.

2.9.3 The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (2011) amended and readdressed the imbalances in RNCS and NCS. It developed and provided clearer specifications of what is to be taught and learnt and guide teachers with new approaches to teaching. More so, attention is drawn to reading comprehension. CAPS in grade 7 put more emphasis on close and critical reading of the text; understanding the text comprehensively and that a learner demonstrates independent reading for information and learning.

Learners are expected to engage in extensive reading of shorter text for comprehension at a word level; sentence and paragraph level and reading for comprehension at a whole text level; summarising and note taking. To summarise a text, learners should know and use skimming and scanning for main ideas and theme; separating main ideas from supporting details and paraphrase the main idea (DoE, 2011).

In viewing CAPS regarding reading comprehension, more strategies are left out that could be beneficial to learners in improving their reading with understanding, making learners to be more engaged with the text. Nonetheless, Zimmerman

&Smit (2014) stipulate that teaching of even one comprehension strategy can improve learners' comprehension. Research indicates that in most primary schools in South Africa teachers do not teach reading comprehension, meaning that learners are not exposed to even one strategy of reading comprehension hence learners reach high schools being unable to read English text with understanding, yet, the grade 7 learners are also expected to apply their knowledge of genre and formal text study to understand the meaning, intention and effect of the whole text (CAPS, Grades 7-9). This is the reason I trace reading comprehension within the curriculum policy to examine if attention is drawn in the teaching of comprehension and strategies during teaching. Lenyai (2011) denotes that the implication of these policies is that teachers must have good knowledge and skills to guide learners to develop reading skills in English first additional language. With learners' lack of understanding English texts, it evident that teachers have no expertise to teach English.

2.10 Reading Culture

Linake (2015) defines reading as a way of recognizing letters, words and be exposed to phonemic awareness to get meaning from the text. In line with this argument, one reads, when combining letters, which can be used to form different words with different meanings in other languages. Spaul (2013) also defines reading as the ability to read accurately and with meaningful expression. He further highlights that for learners to read a text with accuracy and understanding, they also need exposure to guided reading, vocabulary and fluency that can build and enhance them during reading. This means reading successfully is a complex interaction of language, hence teachers should involve learners in guided reading, shared reading, reading aloud and develop learners to become independent readers as CAPS requires (Linake, 2015 ; Pretorius,Jackson,McKay, Murray & Spaul, 2016, Spaul, 2013).

Although CAPS specifies the reading approaches, many teachers have not been trained to use these approaches and they are overwhelmed with the task and lack of knowledge and skills to teach reading, nonetheless, teachers need to understand the purpose of reading, know about the different components of reading and how they relate to one another (Pretorius, Jackson, McKay, Murray & Spaul, 2016). Being able to read is the key to all learning, yet reading has proved to be a great problem to many learners worldwide, even in South Africa. Therefore teachers have to put more emphasis on teaching reading and appropriate strategies to read, knowing that learners in rural schools have deficiency in reading (Muchemwa, 2014).

The National Reading Strategy in South Africa tried to promote reading across the curriculum and that every South African learner become a fluent reader who reads with understanding and for achievement. It focused on encouraging reading among teachers, learners and parents making them understand the role of improving and promoting reading, even to the broader community. If these are not supportive to the learner, definitely learners will experience problems in reading (Muchemwa, 2014, Linake, 2015, Mudziewelana, 2013).

Oyetunji (2011) asserts that reading ability is important to a nation's social and economic advancement, while at the individual level it is a gateway to personal development, social and civic life, and in the school setting, reading is a powerful tool for academic success since it provides learners with access to information. In line with arguments above, there is a dire need to teach and motivate learners to read in order to venture into the world of information.

It is evident that learners can develop a positive attitude towards reading if they can get support at the early stage from the surroundings where they could be exposed to different strategies, which would make reading become interesting and part of their lives. However, the DoE(2008) highlighted many challenges with regard to the implementation of reading programme such as, lack of teacher competency in teaching reading and still unable to make a conducive environment for reading to the learners(Mudziwelana, 2013). In this regard, teaching reading and reading strategies can improve reading comprehension. In light of this, the key to reading is for the reader to understand the text and put meaning out of it even though it seems quite complex to understand without proper exposure. This is what triggered the researcher to investigate students' reading and response in English FAL in order to promote the 'reading to learn' where possible. In this regard, this study viewed reading as a social practice.

2.11 Comprehension Strategies

Researchers define strategies as learning tools and plans that are specific, conscious, intentional which are used deliberately to control and modify the reader's efforts to decode a text, understand words and construct the meaning of a text (Davis, 2012; NICHD, 2002; Marshal, & Mudziwelana, 2012). On the other hand, (Davis, 2011; Block & Presley, 2002) perceive comprehension strategies as learned procedures that foster active competent, self-regulated and intentional reading that guide learners as they attempt to read and write. They are conscious steps that a reader uses to make sense of the text and to develop independent reading (Caskey, 2008). These strategies make learning more effective, efficient and emphasise reasoning.

Reading comprehension strategies provide insight in the reading for comprehension. They give a reader a platform for expressing their thinking and

monitoring their thoughts as they read the text. Readers use strategies to make sense of the text, remember critical ideas and integrate new learning into existing schema or prior knowledge. A good reader uses many strategies in order to understand and discuss the text and relate it to other situations. When learners understand comprehension strategies, they learn to monitor their reading comprehension and show growth in metacognitive thinking skills (Houck, 2016; Marsha, 2015, & Mudziewelana, 2012). Moore (2013) denotes that comprehension strategies provide learners with rich and meaningful opportunities to take control of their reading. Thus, learners should be trained to use comprehension strategies in primary schools to develop careful reading of a text with a purpose to gain meaning, to recognise and solve problems, delving deeper into the text to make connections and inferences (Marsha, 2015).

In order for learners to be able to extract meaning from texts, they need strategies such as, identifying the purpose for reading, activating background knowledge, summarising and synthesizing (The Centre for Cognitive Development, 1995), while, Davis (2011) & Ribbens (2008) agree with the NRP (2000) in America that there is a dire need of teaching seven strategies of reading comprehension from Grade R-12. Therefore, for learners to comprehend a text, they should be introduced to the following strategies while in primary school:

- Activating background knowledge/ activating prior knowledge/making connection;
- Monitoring comprehension;
- Generating questions;
- Graphics and semantic organisers/visualisation;

- Making inferences; and,
- Summarising.

In this regard, the researcher is eager to know if EFAL teachers in grade 7 introduce the learners in these strategies.

2.12 Strategies Selected as Suitable for Grade 7 Learners

Mudziwaelana (2012) citing Philips, Norris & Vavra (2007); Kirby (2007) & Shanahan (2006) denotes that comprehension strategies are important in the lives of learners, and without them, learners will have no means of increasing the sophistication of reading.

Teachers need to use research-based strategies in the classroom as they bear scientific evidence of success stories. This means that a sound explanation of comprehension strategies is vital and central during the teaching of comprehension. Israel & Duffy (2009) stipulate that a teacher can narrow down the teaching of strategies for the benefit of the learners. Among the many strategies for reading comprehension researchers have identified and recommended for grade 7, the researcher has selected to focus on the following:

- Activating background knowledge;
- Monitoring comprehension;
- Generating questions; and,
- Summarising.

These strategies can boost the low performance of grade 7 learners in English language since they are associated with higher-order thinking. Furthermore, the researcher has chosen these strategies because they can cause learners to engage and interact with the text and stimulate thinking, developing an independent reader, more so, learners can improve their comprehension of texts.

2.12.1 Activating Background Knowledge

Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) state that activating background knowledge helps learners to comprehend what they read. This knowledge consists of individuals' experiences with the world together with their concepts of written text work, involving word recognition, print concepts, word meaning, and how the text is formed.

Paola (2010) state that when activating prior knowledge, learners are asked to think about what they already know about a particular topic that is read. In addition, activating background knowledge is activating learners' memory and reminding them of what they read (Oyetunji, 2011).

However, activating prior knowledge is critical to the comprehension process and gives learners opportunities to connect their lives with the text. This is important because each learner brings a different worldview and knowledge about the topic depending on his/her prior experiences, culture and language that a teacher should take into account when designing instruction. Furthermore, the influence of using previous knowledge on comprehension empowers the readers to fill the incomplete information and assist them to create a mental picture that helps for remembering what was read and understood (Klingner & Urbach, 2010; Oyetunji, 2011).

2.12.2 Monitoring Comprehension

The IRIS Center (2012), defines monitoring comprehension as a process, which learners determine whether they understand what they are reading. If they realise that they cannot articulate the main idea of the passage or make meaning of the passage, they can take steps to repair their comprehension before continuing to read. Mudziewelana (2012) citing Routman (2000) further defines monitoring comprehension as a metacognitive process which is affected by person's strategy and task variables and is essential for reading as it directs the reader when trying to make sense of a text. Good readers use metacognitive strategies to think about and have control over their reading. Moore, McClelland, Aleff & Vogel (2016); Lehr & Osborn (2003) agree that comprehension monitoring strategy is effective because learners notice what they do understand, identify what they do not understand, and use appropriate 'fix-ups' to resolve problems or confusions that arise.

This strategy teaches learners to pay attention to areas, which they are struggling to understand. The IRIS Centre (2012) reveals that some learners can decode every word, but do not comprehend what they are reading. Even learners who are typically competent readers may not self-monitor certain comprehension texts, which they find it challenging.

Research shows that instruction, even in the early grades can help learners become better at monitoring their comprehension. Learners may use comprehension-monitoring strategies to:

- Identify where the difficulty occurs;
- Identify what the difficulty is;
- Restate the difficult sentence or passage in their own words;

- Look back through the text; and,
- Look forward in the text for information that might help them resolve the difficulty.

It is evident that comprehension monitoring is an essential strategy that can lead inefficient EFAL learners to successful reading comprehension.

2.12.3 Generating Questions

In this strategy, readers ask themselves pertinent questions while reading the text. This strategy assists readers to combine information, recognise main ideas, and summarise information.

Asking appropriate questions permits successful readers to concentrate on the most important information of a text. Creating relevant questions helps good readers to concentrate on difficulties they encounter with comprehension and to take the necessary actions to solve those problems (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Adler (2016) states that by generating questions, learners become aware of whether they can answer the questions and if they understand what they read. Learners should learn to ask themselves questions that require them to combine information from different segments of text. Self-questioning enables learners to monitor their reading comprehension and increases their ability to learn independently.

The IRIS Centre (2012) state that one way for learners to increase their reading comprehension is by generating questions about the information they encounter in the text. This practice helps them to check their understanding and to remember important details. Learners can generate questions before, during and after reading a passage to:

- Make predictions about what they will read;
- Identify key facts or concepts;
- Anticipate the ways in which they might be asked to demonstrate or apply their learning.

2.12.4 Summarising

Summarization is a strategy that requires the reader to extract important information from the text, and reconstruct the meaning in a more succinct, generalised form. Writing a summary requires conscious thought, judgment and much effort as the reader distinguishes between important and unimportant text. The reader constructs meaning of the text at a deep level while making many decisions. To summarise, a reader must identify the main idea, decide which content to include and how to restate it using his or her own words, and ensure that the summary is complete, but also brief. This process involves complex metacognitive skills, which learners do not automatically use, but which can be taught with explicit instruction and practice (Braxton, 2009). Li (2014) further explains that summarising help learners on how to discern the most important ideas in a text and learn to determine essential ideas and consolidate important details that support them.

It improves learners' memory for what is read. It enables learners to focus on key words and phrases of an assigned text that are worth noting and remembering. Subsequently, Adler (2004) emphasise that writing a summary involves taking notes of important facts and details that explain and support the main idea of which

the learners are expected to be aware of. The use of summarising strategy is seen as effective strategy for building learners' comprehension. More so, this strategy could be used in any learning area (Palinscar & Brown, 1984). Adler (2004) further states that clear instruction in summarising help learners:

- Identify or generate main ideas;
- Connect the main or central ideas;
- Eliminate unnecessary information.

Summarising a passage keeps a learner-focused, interacting with the text developing critical thinking, as CAPS in grade 7 put more emphasis on close and critical reading of the text; summarising and note taking. When summarising a text, learners should know and use skimming and scanning for main ideas and theme; separating main ideas from supporting details and paraphrase the main idea (DoE, 2011). Although summarising strategy is challenging, learners should be accustomed and teachers teach this strategy as it develops independent reading and learners' CALP.

2.13 Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies in Grade 7.

Klapwijk & Nel (2003) claim that learners in disadvantaged areas should be taught strategies that would include repetition of what has been read and that may promote remembering the information more effectively, re-reading certain parts of text that could assist them in retrieving information and making notes to enhance text recall.

2.13.1 Teaching Prior Knowledge/Background Knowledge

Teachers have to know that learners come to the classroom with prior knowledge that must be addressed if teaching is to be effective. If what they know and believe is not engaged in the text, learners may fail to grasp the new concepts and the information that will be taught (Klingner&Urbach, 2010). Therefore, it is important that teachers desire to know what learners think, understand, and connect their experiences with what is taught. Teaching prior knowledge can help learners to improve their comprehension. Before the learners read, the teacher must preview the text with them. As part of previewing, ask the learners what they already know about the content of the text (Ambruster, Lehr & Osborn, 2003).

Ambruster et al., (2003) further state that prior knowledge can be activated in three ways (a) the teacher asks probing questions, (b) the teacher holds a class discussion, where they discuss important vocabulary used in a text (c) the teacher makes a list or graphic organisers to write down the information students already know about the topic or show learners some pictures to prepare them for what they are about to read. If learners are not familiar with the text, provide background information, explain major terms and set the focus for learners reading (Saaris, 2016). In this view, building a rich background or activating prior knowledge benefits learners to understand the text easily.

2.13.2 Teaching Monitoring Comprehension

The teaching of comprehension is important as it assist the learner to become aware of and realised that when they read, they read to understand. Ambruster, et al., (2003) explain that in teaching comprehension monitoring strategy, the teacher needs to demonstrate awareness of difficulties of understanding words, phrases, clauses or sentences. For difficult words they encounter in the text, learners should use dictionaries for meaning and generating understanding. Learners are taught to think what is hampering their understanding. They can think aloud, re-read, slow

down and look back in the text to try to solve a problem. In addition, learners should be trained to use meta-cognitive strategies to have control of their reading.

Learners should be taught to monitor their understanding before reading, adjust their reading speed to fit the difficulty of the text and fix any problems they encounter. Fix-up strategies identifies where they experience difficulty in the text and they have to re-read the sentence or passage on their own looking back and forward through the text (Mudziewelana, 2012 citing Lehr & Osborn, 2005). The IRIS Center (2012) stresses that it is not effective to merely tell learners to monitor their reading comprehension; rather, teachers should teach how to monitor their comprehension.

This requires explicit instruction with sufficient modelling and guided practice. In this regard, the researcher seeks to know how teachers implement this strategy in the classroom.

2.13.3 Teaching Generating Questions

Ambruster, et al., (2003) state that teaching learners to ask themselves their own questions improve their active processing of text and their comprehension. This strategy enforces learners to engage with the text. Learners could be taught to ask main idea questions that relate to important information in a text. According to The IRIS Center (2012), teachers should directly teach and model for learners how to use their textbooks and other material to generate questions and answer a particular level of a question. Teachers should provide opportunities for guided practice, encouraging learners to explain their thinking, reminding them to use the steps of generating questions, and check their work against the text. Furthermore, question-generating strategy encourages learners to be actively involved and learn to own the text, thus improving their ability (The IRIS Center, 2012; Mudziewelana, 2012). When teaching learners to generate questions independently, it may be necessary to provide scaffolder instruction:

- Breaking the text into smaller sections at first then gradually increasing the length;
- Providing passages with some facts already underlined;
- Offering a suggested number of questions to generate for each section;
- Indicating what types of prior knowledge would be helpful in making a connection to the passage; and,
- Regularly sharing students' questions and providing feedback (The IRIS Center, 2012).

However, Mudziewelana (2012) further explains that during the teaching of question-generating strategy, teachers need to ask learners to generate questions while reading a passage. The questions should integrate information across different parts of the passage. Teachers should also ask learners to evaluate their questions checking if they covered important aspects of the text and whether they could be answered based on what is in the text. The teacher should provide feedback on the quality of questions asked or assist learners in answering the questions generated. It is evident that in this strategy, learners will definitely engage and concentrate to the text so that they ask relevant questions.

2.13.4 Teaching of summarising

Braxton (2009) states that summarisation is a higher level of comprehension strategy that can improve long-term retention of information and impact positively on learners' studies. It is one of the most difficult strategies for learners to master, and one of the hardest to teach, nevertheless, it is an extremely useful strategy, as it is a life-long skill that will help a learner when studying at higher levels. Teaching learners to summarise not only improves the quality of their written summaries but also significantly impacts learner's achievement. Summarisation is beneficial to the

comprehension and recalling of information by lower- achieving learners. This strategy is suitable for learners in rural and urban schools in training them to recall information.

When teaching summary, the teacher has to make a careful selection of a text whereby learners can easily relate to it more especially English first additional language learners (Guthrie, et al., 2004). If it is the learners' first encounter with the strategy, the teacher should choose texts that will not make heavy demands to learners (Duke & Pearson, 2002).

Learners should be taught thoroughly how to locate keywords and key ideas in a text. If learners are well trained, they gain confidence in working on their own. The teacher should model; explain the strategy and give learners opportunity to practice summary strategy, scaffolding them before they apply it. Summary will enable learners to process the text deeply and better retain their knowledge of the text. It is critical that teachers help their learners create meaning from the text they read (Presley, 2000; Mudziwelana, 2013).

Teaching how to summarise, a teacher can use a rule-governed approach where learners are taught to follow a set of systematic procedures:

- Rule 1: Delete unnecessary material;
- Rule 2: Delete redundant material; and,
- Rule 3: Compose a word to replace a list of items.

Through teacher modelling, learners can work in pairs or in groups where learners will read the text, each write the main ideas and read those ideas to each other and

discuss them, and later on learners practice individually, learners can learn to apply these rules to create brief summaries of texts given (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Mills, 1987). In addition, a teacher can use guiding questions that will assist learners to get the information required in each paragraph. A teacher can train learners to summarise using different organizers such as, mind maps and flow charts to identify key points and ideas, which will help the learners to understand what they read. If such strategies are developed in the early years of learners, they become lifelong skills, which they will use whenever they encounter a challenging text.

Therefore, it is the duty of the teacher to model appropriate techniques using appropriate approaches that will enhance learners to quickly understand how to come up with accurate facts when summarising.

2.14 Active learning approach

The last quarter of the 20th Century have witnessed a growing interest in the school curriculum based on different pedagogical approaches. One of these interests is related to the need of transforming teaching, as well as assessment, taking as base the learners' sentiments or needs, their spontaneity in knowledge production and their individual differences. This approach is called active learning which is a learner - centred teaching (Alipio, 2014). Active learning approach put learners first in the planning and execution of the education process whereby the learner is engaged fully in decision about what is learnt and how the learning occurs. It focuses on the learner's needs, abilities, interests and learning styles with the teacher as a facilitator of learning. Thus, classroom-teaching methods acknowledges the voice of the learners as central to learning experience and requires learners to be active, responsible participants in their own learning (State University College of Education (S.U.C. E), 2011). Therefore, active learning shifts the focus of instruction from what the teachers delivers, to what the learners are able to do with the material.

De Loatch, 2015& Drake, 2014 agree that active learning takes into account the different learning styles that learners have, and provide activities that may better engage their visual, logical, social and solitary learning. It increases academic performance, content knowledge and understanding, critical and creative thinking, problem-solving abilities, positive attitude towards learning and improving teamwork. Thaman, Dhillon, Sagggar, Gupta & Kaur, (2013) reveal that active learning increases enthusiasm for learning in both learners and instructor; improves perception and attitudes of learners towards information literacy (Delton, Booker, Serenko & Julien, 2012). Eison (2010) denotes that active learning instructional strategies could be created and used to engage learners in: (a) speaking with a partner/peer, in a small group or with the entire class; (b) expressing ideas through writing, exploring personal attitudes and values, giving and receiving feedback, and reflecting upon the learning process. It can help create an excitement and engagement in the class, which help build a desire to gain more knowledge (De Loatch, 2015). It should be noted that students in either a classroom or out-of-the classroom (Eison, 2010) could complete active learning instructional strategies.

Active learning involves learners in doing things and thinking about what they are doing. Approaches that promote active learning focus more on developing learners' skills require that learners read, discuss, and write (Brame, 2016). Learners are expected to cooperate fully in the class and collaborate with each other. This means learners learn more actively when they participate in the process of learning. Furthermore, NCS and CAPS also encourage active and critical approach to learning rather than rote learning and uncritical learning (Mnguni, 2013).

2.14.1 To Explore how Teachers Perceive Active Learning in Reading Comprehension Internationally.

In UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, teachers who were engaged in the training and attended workshops sees active learning exciting as it encourages learners to interact. Applying active learning approaches caused teaching to be more interesting and meaningful. Some teachers perceive active learning as a form of progressive education, expecting the learners to learn by themselves or in groups with the teacher acting solely as a facilitator.

Subsequently, some teachers in UK, Australia and New Zealand face a challenge of inadequate materials, equipment, workload and the number of periods per week affects their ability to implement active learning to their utmost best (Cambridge International Examinations, 2015 & Momani, Asiri & Alatawi, 2016).

A great hope is invested in various modes of training and support for teachers, but this is inadequate or inappropriate. In poverty-stricken areas like Trinidad and Cambodia, this approach is based in the elite minority world, as it is a far lived experience in most teachers and learners in the South. Classroom realities create challenge for learner-cantered approach. The lack of textbooks and furniture in making collaborative learner-work becomes impossible in large classes, while teachers with more training and less crowded classrooms believe that active learning is a solution and it brings better results as learners are eager and interested to learn (Momani, Asiri, Alatawi (2016) and Schweisfurth, 2011).

In Latin American, Caribbean schools, teachers find limitations in implementing active approach successfully. Teachers' attitudes and practices are shaped by multitude complex factors ranging from their cultural contexts; their own learning experiences; the speed and complexity of the change, and the strategies used to support and monitor the process. The implementation plans consistently belie the magnitude of the task, as well as the governments' desire to make visible, positive modern changes that drives policy forward at a pace which practice cannot match. The researcher agrees with argument as most South African teachers have

conceptual and misunderstanding of active learning approach (Schweisfurth, 2011).

2.14.2 To Explore how Teachers Perceive Active Learning in Reading

Comprehension in Sub – Saharan Africa

To some African developing countries, active learning approach has brought solutions to existing problems. According to Sikoyo (2010), teachers in large underfunded classrooms felt that active learning is vital for enhancing learners' reading text for understanding. Successes in large classroom environment are achieved when pupils are given learner-based activities in which teacher involvement is minimal.

Teachers in Uganda who taught large classes with limited resources such as textbooks and other instructional materials reported that collaborative group work is an essential strategy in learner centred education (Rajcoomar, 2013). It is evident that learners need to engage with one another in order to experience deep and meaningful learning whereby they will be responsible for their decisionmaking.

In addition, in Ethiopia, teachers who were embarked on teacher development programs perceive active learning as an effective approach because it has led to improved quality and success in teaching, which expands learners' horizon of thinking, and are able to generate their own ideas. This new approach has made teachers to know their students better (Teresa & Desta, 2015). On the other hand, the teachers who were never trained in active learning feel that little attempt is made by the policy document and other subsequent education strategy documents to give elaborations and to indicate how it can be translated into the teaching learning process at the classroom level. In addition, teachers feel that even learners' textbooks should consist of carefully sequenced sets of guiding activities designed for active learning. In view of this argument, this is bad because all

teachers need to be empowered for any changes happening in the curriculum so that they become effective in teaching and learning environment (Teresa & Desta, 2015).

Although active learning is adopted by many countries, schools experience problems. A research conducted in Namibia revealed that although some teachers made an effort to implement active learning when teaching comprehension in their classrooms, very little success was observed in the critical areas of cooperative learning and use of higher-order thinking skills (Rajcoomar, 2013). Another challenge teachers' facing is large classes.

Whenever the teacher opted for group discussion activities, they had large groups, which constrained close follow up and guidance resulting in unproductive learners' involvement (Mtitu, 2014 and Marias, 2016). In this light, the researcher agrees with the scholars that group discussion without proper supervision by the teacher cause a chaotic situation resulting to unproductive practice.

Moreover, the lack of in-service training in some teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa is a challenge. Teachers require continued in-service training to adapt to the instructional changing needs and build a deeper understanding of what active learning means in different perspectives and instructional contexts (Mtitu, 2014). Most teachers recognise learner-centred approaches in principle but they are unable to do so because of lack of confidence or knowledge about what such approaches may entail because teachers were not properly oriented before they resume their teaching and learning, as well as lack of textbooks and other supporting material at schools, thus posing hurdles in the improvement in learning outcomes (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2016 & World Bank, 2015).

2.14.3 To Explore How Teachers Perceive Active learning in Reading

Comprehension in South Africa.

Teachers' attitudes and practices of active learning are shaped by multiple complex factors ranging from their own learning experiences.

Most teachers in South African schools, both rural and urban areas were not trained in their institutions about active approaches that CAPS demands thus, it is not easy for them to align with the new approaches especially where reading comprehension is concerned. The reason been they are confined to 'chalk and talk' instructional method (Marias, 2016) rather than engaging the learners to the lesson. Furthermore, the rapid speed and complexities of the change of curriculums and teaching approaches leaves teachers confused, as they are unable to master any of these reforms (Schweisfurth, 2011).

Thus, the lack of understanding the new approaches by teachers is a hindrance to positive change and implementation. Feelings of uncertainty and lack of profound understanding of new approaches is aggravated by a lack of ongoing professional development that would ensure that teachers understand what is required of them. Teachers complain about their infrequent meetings with their subject-advisors (Bantwini, 2012). Based on this argument, teachers in the rural areas hardly get training on active approaches that can assist learners' understanding in reading comprehension.

Teachers' perceptions and the meaning attributed to active approach in the classrooms is to do group work, allowing learners to take control of their learning. It is evident that most teachers lack confidence in the new approaches and hardly understand the vision of RNCS and CAPS (Bantwini, 2012) due to lack of proper exposure and a Top-down approach from Education Authorities. This resulted to lack of CAPS implementation in the classroom, especially where reading comprehension strategies in English First Additional Language are concerned.

Sometimes, teachers are trained in active learning methods, but that training is ineffective, with no follow-up or support from authorities. Van Rooyen & Jordaan (2009) assert that South African teachers are unaware of their responsibility to meet the language related needs of learners support this. On the other hand, teachers lack the training and specific methodological skills to promote effective learning of reading English text with understanding. Based on this argument, teachers in the rural areas hardly get ongoing training and support on active learning approaches that could assist learners' reading comprehension. Other challenges posed by teachers in urban and rural schools are: large classes and lack of textbooks that cause the teaching of reading comprehension more difficult, as well as forming groups for discussion.

This resulted into learners not being active participants in the lesson and teachers being unable to cover much content in the class (Eison, 2010). None-the-less, teachers with more training and less crowded classrooms believe that active learning is effective in the classroom as it is easy for them to control the learners in their discussions.

2.14.4 Active Learning approaches that could be used by Teachers during the Teaching for Reading Comprehension.

In order to enable the teachers to use active learning, they should know that collaborative and cooperative learning techniques are used to actively involve the learners in the lesson. During cooperative learning, learners are held accountable for their contribution, participation and learning. Cooperative learning as a form of active learning is a set of classroom methods, which involves learners, working together as partners or small groups to help one another and teachers providing

scaffolding, and modelling the comprehension strategies (Schwartz, 2012 & Davis, 2011).

Smith, Wood, Krauter & Knight (2011) state that a teacher can use peer grouping during classroom activity since that encourages learners to verbalise their thinking and interact with their peers to arrive at an answer. The learners discuss the activities with the peer. Eison (2010) denotes that peer grouping is a thinkpairshare, which is a collaborative learning strategy and is effective in large classes. It encourages learners to be reflective about the task given; allows learners to formulate their thoughts before sharing them with the class and foster higher-order thinking skills. Peer grouping can help teachers cope with challenges such as limited instructional time.

In addition, it provides opportunity for close interaction between learners as they work together to solve a problem, teaching something new to a peer explaining their learning to each other. In this light, peer teaching and learning can group together learners working at a similar cognitive level or task-specific level or could enable opportunities for a more able learner to support another (Davis, 2011). This means that peer grouping is an affordable option that benefit all learners involved. Thus, those activities where children work together in a learning task may help learners to develop their sense of self-esteem and responsibility.

However, through small groups, the teacher explicitly teach learners what they need to know about reading comprehension, keeping them engaged and motivated through hands-on-work activities that promote inquiry and critical thinking. In this regard, active responses during small-group activities increase learners' engagement and motivation to participate. Subsequently, small groups enable children to have access to high-quality interaction with their teachers (Wilson, Nabors, Berg, Simpson & Time, 2012). In addition, small groups enable teachers to

focus on their planning, selection of texts, assessment, questions and follow up tasks on specific needs of their learners (Schwartz, 2012 & Davis, 2011).

Maja (2015) highlights that classroom interaction is part of the collaborative learning process which involves discussions and class participation. Buchanan (2011) also affirms that discussion is classroom discourse, which is shared between two or three individuals; it may include multiple perspectives and may not include the teacher. In contrast, Bean (2011) argues that the teacher guides the discussion encouraging learners to appreciate and manage complexity. Buchanan (2011) further argues the idea that discussion creates a unique location for learners to develop their own ideas and learn from each other.

Discussion in the classroom helps the teacher to decide if additional practice is needed, whether the teacher needs to re-teach or whether the teacher can move to the next part of the lesson. Discussions encourage learners to link what is discussed with their own experiences. Thus, discussion is an interactive activity that can enhance communicative competence in the additional language (Muja, 2015). In addition, discussion is an effective way to measure learner's knowledge, to assess how well an idea or concept is understood through reading and determines the type of questions that would be necessary to extend learner's understanding and teaching (Davis, 2011). Although discussion is time consuming if managed properly by the teacher it has fruitful results. In this regard, the research wants to perceive if teachers are accommodating collaborative and cooperative approaches in their classrooms.

2.15 Scaffolding

Scaffolding refers to supporting learners to a certain extent until the degree of acquiring new skill is attained. Furthermore, it is a support from teachers and peers to help learners to grasp a text before tackling it independently; hence, it is a

powerful tool in socio-constructivist teaching. It could support to bridge a gap between what learners know or can do to what they do not know and cannot do. Scaffolding plays a more significant role with less proficient learners.

However, scaffolding does not last forever; it stops once learners are able to master tasks on their own, even tasks that are beyond their capabilities. In addition, scaffolding is an opportunity for learners to learn how to solve problems, do certain tasks and transform information rather than memorising (Chi, 2007 & SafeinSalem, 2017).

According to McGill-Franzel & Allington (2011), there are two types of scaffolding. The first one is a careful sequencing of skills so that concepts and skills build gradually upon a strong, coherent foundation. Secondly, it must be an ongoing teacher-learner dialogue that demonstrates directly to the learner the kind of processing or thinking that must be done in order to accomplish a particular task successfully. When their teachers guide learners to some extent, their performance improves (Safein-Salem, 2017). Scaffolding is vital in reading comprehension, as reading is viewed as a problem that gets readers involved in a process of meaning derivation from connected discourse of written language.

Reading comprehension is referred as a cognitively demanding skill involving careful attention, memory and comprehension process. It requires more than knowledge of vocabulary and syntax, rather it needs the ability to perceive the nature of the passage being communicated. Learners have to understand facts or what is written between the lines. Through scaffolding, learners can acquire a broader perspective of reading material to improve their comprehension (SafeinSalem, 2017). In this view, it is evident that learners need the support of the teacher in order to improve reading comprehension.

2.16 Conclusion

As reading comprehension is well known that it is a challenge to learners, therefore there is a dire need for teachers to enhance learners in this journey of learning nurturing them to read a text with understanding. There are strategies of reading comprehension that can be applied during the teaching of comprehension and could be helpful to learners. Such strategies should be taught thoroughly so that a learner can be able to know which strategy to use for which text. For learners to reach that point, they need the support of the teachers to build a strong foundation towards reading comprehension, although research revealed that South African teachers lack understanding of teaching reading comprehension.

It is therefore of utter importance that teachers are equipped to teach reading comprehension strategies. It needs a competent teacher to impart knowledge of strategies to learners and show them how to apply those strategies during reading. It is the duty of the teacher to train and encourage learners to engage with the text using strategies such as monitoring; generating questions while reading; making use of background knowledge and summarisation.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was the literature review that attempted to paint a broad picture and in-depth understanding of comprehension strategies. When examining the literature on comprehension strategies, the researcher identified a number of

studies focusing on the importance of strategies relevant to comprehension. The literature provided insights on how the nature and knowledge of comprehension strategies and the methods to develop them could be understood. Most importantly, the literature reviewed confirmed the theoretical framework that guided this research.

This chapter would presents the research approaches and methodologies selected and used in this study during data collection. Hlethwa (2013) define research methodology as a study of a research process in all its broadness and complexity, whilst McGregory & Murnane (2010), state that methodology is a branch of science concerned with investigating the potential and limitations of particular techniques or procedures of scientific enquiry. It refers to how each of logic, reality, value and what counts as knowledge inform research. On the other hand, approaches embrace various techniques and procedures followed when one is conducting research. These techniques and procedures would remind the reader about the research goals and research questions of the study.

In this regard, the researcher's aim was to explore the teaching strategies of English reading comprehension to grade 7 to *IsiXhosa* speaking learners. Constructivism is the underpinning research paradigm of this study. The essence of this research is to construct realities during the teaching of English reading comprehension in Grade 7 classrooms. This study is qualitative in nature and used an interpretive paradigm to understand how teachers use reading comprehension strategies during the execution of the lesson. Thus, the study entailed and ensured that the participants (Grade 7 English teachers, HOD's, and the Subject advisor) that were interviewed individually were not denied their subjective views on the phenomena of being studied. The interviews with the teachers were centred on teachers' understanding of the concept of English reading comprehension and the strategies they use before, during and after reading, as well as documents used.

In addition, the learners from different schools were interviewed in the form of Focus Group. The study also entailed classroom observations. During the classroom observations, the researcher acted as a non-participant observer. The main aim of the classroom observations was to establish whether the teachers taught English reading comprehension strategies, and which strategies teachers used before, during and after reading. This was helpful practice in order to detect learner's progress in understanding the English texts. In this chapter, the researcher would present and explain the following instruments and tools used during data collection systematically per participants: face - to - face teacher's interview, classroom observations, focus group interviews with learners and document analysis. In addition, the study covered the procedures involved in sampling, methods of data collection, data analysis, and issues related to validity and ethics.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Muguwe (2015) state that a paradigm is a basic and comprehensive belief system that guides research practice in the field, and it is a way of looking at the world while Nkome(2014) sees a paradigm as an assumption and intellectual structure upon which research and development in a field of inquiry is based. Muguwe (2015) further highlight that paradigms are models or conceptual frameworks that guide the organisation on views, thoughts and beliefs into a logical whole and eventually inform research. In this regards, the research process has three major dimensions namely: ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Ontology is the study of claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, which is something that exists. Thus, ontological assumptions about social reality focus on whether a person sees social reality or aspects of the social

world as external, independent, real or socially constructed or because of human thought as expressed through language (Nkome, 2015 citing Eusafzai, 2014). Researchers within this paradigm believe that reality is socially constructed and as the result, there are many ways of viewing the world (Cohen, et al., 2011).

Creswell (1989) also views ontology as the nature of reality which, is explored through the researcher's answers to the problems such as what is the nature of the world, including social phenomena; if the reality is orderly or lawful; if reality is fixed and stable or constantly changing and if reality can be constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation. Therefore, researchers should take a position regarding their perceptions that explain how the world is experienced and constructed by the people who live in it. The researchers need to understand the philosophical underpinnings that inform their choices of research questions, and methodology to be used (Matthews, 2014 and Nkome, 2015).

Epistemology is the science or the theory of knowledge. Thus, epistemology assumptions concern the nature and form of knowledge and what it is possible to know and understand. It refers to the views about the nature of knowledge and is concerned with creating knowledge - what is known about reality (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Richards, 2003 and Nkome, 2015). This means that epistemology refers to beliefs about what is possible for one to know and the relationship between the knower (researcher) and the known (researched) (Mafuwane, 2012 and Richards, 2003). Nkome (2015) further explains that the purpose of doing research is to get knowledge and to communicate that knowledge often with the ultimate view of informing practice or policy and improving things. In this case, researchers hold the assumption that those in the research process socially construct knowledge and that it is the duty of the researcher to understand the complex experiences from the point of view of the participants (Mbanjwa, 2014). Based on the discussion above, Cantrell (2006) identifies three basic

research paradigms namely: positivism, critical science and interpretive. This study adopted interpretive paradigm and it would be discussed in details below.

3.2.1 Interpretive Paradigm

Mack (2010) argues that interpretive paradigm was influenced by hermeneutics, which is the study of meaning and interpretation in historical text and phenomenology, which is based on the study of human experience and their perception of the world. Thus, interpretive paradigm was established because of meaning-making process. This study is underpinned by observation and interpretation. To observe, is to collect information about events, while to interpret is to make meaning of that information by drawing inferences or by judging the match between the information and some abstract pattern. It strives to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them (Linake, 2015 and Mudzielwana, 2012). In this regard, the researcher had an advantage of trying to understand the interaction between the teachers and the learners, by gaining insight and creating meaning to what they were doing in the classroom.

In addition, this paradigm assisted the researcher to understand and interpret teachers' actions when teaching reading comprehension to Grade 7 learners in English First Additional Language. It cleared the researcher's understanding of teachers' knowledge and experiences about teaching reading comprehension. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2013) interpretive paradigm centres in understanding subjective world of human experiences. It emphasises the ability of the individual to construct meaning and interpreting their real life-worlds, also to gain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated. Linake (2015) supports the idea that reality could be explored, and constructed through human interactions, and meaningful actions to discover how people make sense of their social world in the natural setting by means of daily routine, conversation and writings while interacting with others around them by relating to the texts they are exposed to.

In addition, interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. They use meaning versus measurement-oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects. It focuses on the complexity of human in making sense, as the situation emerges. The purpose of interpretive paradigm is to understand the world from its individual's viewpoint and attempt to observe ongoing processes to better understand individual behaviour (Linake, 2015; Mudziwela, 2012 and Adam, 2014). In this view, during observation, the researcher was able to perceive and understand the teachers' behaviours or actions when teaching reading comprehension in their classrooms using English as the First Additional Language. Subsequently, the researcher thoroughly looked at the relationship between their knowledge, experiences and behaviours as well as how do they interact with the learners. Cohen et al (2011) further affirm that interpretivism's main idea is that research should be observed from inside through the direct experience of the people and can never be objectively observed from the outside.

In addition, Cohen et al. (2011) argue that the role of the scientist in the interpretivist paradigm is to 'understand, explain and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants. Thus, this study focused on understanding the real life world of humans, and aimed at explaining the reasons and meanings that lied behind social action. Therefore, the researcher made use of interpretive paradigm to observe learners' engagement with the text and their participation in the classroom, as well as, observing teachers when teaching strategies for reading comprehension, trying to understand and make meaning on how they teach reading comprehension in grade 7 class in English as First Additional Language.

Muguwe (2015) state that the researcher and reality are inseparable. The knowledge gained through observing lived experience meant that reality lies in the

eyes and ears of the beholder. In this view, the researcher wanted to experience reality concerning the teaching of strategies for reading comprehension in grade 7 class. In addition, the face-to-face interviews and focus groups made it possible for the researcher to obtain in-depth information from the responses of participants.

However, Rahman (2017) believes that interpretive paradigm has its disadvantages in the sense that it uses a very small sample size for a large population and that could be unreliable. Therefore, the world and the people's voices are seen through the eyes of a small sample. Furthermore, the data is not statistically representative, but dependent on interviewer's skills and interpretation. In this light, the data is based on the individual's perceptions and experiences.

3.2.2 Research Approach

Research approach is a plan and procedure that consists of the steps of broad assumptions to detailed method of data collection, analysis and interpretation. There are three common research approaches, namely: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Qualitative research focuses in understanding people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviour and interactions. It is concerned with understanding human behaviour from the actor's own frame of references. It is descriptive and tends to be more holistic and inductive in its approach. It concerns itself with understanding and interpreting real life situations, as well as, attitudes, experiences and behaviour (Nxumalo, 2016).

Mafuwane (2016) adds more by highlighting that quantitative research is a research approach aimed at testing theories, determining facts, demonstrating relationship between variables and predicting outcomes. Thus, quantitative is considered as being external to the actual research and results are expected to be replicable, no matter who conducts the research. Nxumalo (2016) also view

quantitative research as an approach that generates numerical data or data that can be converted to numbers. It answers questions about relationships between measured variables. However, quantitative research has some limitations, where it fails to ascertain deeper underlying meanings and explanations. It cannot count how the social reality is shaped and maintained, or how people interpret their actions. It has a tendency of overlooking the respondents' experiences and perspectives in highly controlled settings because of the lack of direct connection between the researcher and the participants when collecting data (Rahman, 2013).

Mafuwane (2012) citing Schwardt (2007) defines mixed methods as a method that includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in a parallel form. It uses mixed data (numerous and text) and alternative tools (statistics and analysis).

Mafuwane (2012) further state that mixed methods research is more than collecting both qualitative and quantitative data; it implies that data are integrated, related, or mixed at some stage of the research process. The underlying logic to mixing the research methods is that neither qualitative nor quantitative methods are sufficient in capturing the trends and details of the situation, hence they complement each other. None-the-less, mixed methods have their own challenges. The researcher using this method needs to be proficient and competent in both qualitative and quantitative. This means that the researcher has to learn multiple methods and be able to know how to mix each method appropriately and effectively. Moreover, mixed method is more expensive as it requires more resources to collect data and it is time consuming due to its duplicity content (Mahmood, 2013).

This study is qualitative approach. Qualitative research is based on the social sciences, which involves the study of people. It is defined as a collaborative human activity, in which social reality is studied objectively with the aim of gaining valid understanding of it (Hlethwa, 2013). Social science research is reputed to be the systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of social phenomena,

guided by theory and hypotheses about the presumed relations between such phenomena (Hlethwa, 2013).

According to (Creswell, 2008&2014 and Mafuwane, 2012) qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture formed with words, reporting detailed views of participants conducted in a natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring out of their experiences. Thus, qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions. In other words, qualitative research is concerned with the meaning of human behaviour and experiences, and its social functions (Linake, 2015 and Mudzielwana, 2012).

In this regard, the researcher relied on the views of the participants, asked broad and general questions, collecting data, which consisted largely words to describe their experiences.

Adam (2014) further explain that qualitative research is intended to penetrate to the deeper significance that the subject of the research ascribes to the topic being researched. It involves naturalistic approach to its subject matter and gives priority to what the data contribute to important research questions or existing information, thus enabling the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In view of this, the researcher has employed qualitative research since it involves in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, as the researcher wanted to know how teachers use strategies during English reading comprehension.

For the researcher to gain in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, qualitative research used different methods such as, teachers' interviews; focus group

interviews with learners, observations and document analysis. These methods were employed to help the researcher to gather information, interpret and analyse it. In addition, to understand the meanings people attached to social phenomena; to build strength of each data collection and elucidate the mental processes underlying human behaviours. Silverman (2010) highlights that qualitative approach produces detailed description of participant's feeling, opinions, and experiences and interprets the meanings of their actions. Now, the researcher's aim was to explore how teachers teach reading comprehension and how they engage learners during their lesson execution in the classroom. Furthermore, the researcher wanted to know how learners reacted when given instructions and training in reading comprehension (Linake, 2015 and Mafuwane, 2012).

Adam (2014) indicates that qualitative research involves naturalistic approach. It engages naturalistic inquiry, studying the real- world settings inductively to generate rich narrative descriptions without any intentional encroachment meant to change the setting (Maree, 2011). Based on this view, the participants were seen in their natural setting, which is the classroom to gain understanding in the teaching of reading comprehension. The qualitative research enabled the researcher to obtain real, rich, deep data, which illuminates everyday pattern of action and meaning from the perspective of those being studied. This assisted in making the credibility and validity of the results (Linake, 2015 and Madzielwane, 2012).

Mafuwane (2012) indicate that the purpose of qualitative research is to provide the researcher with the perspective of targeted audience members through immersion in a culture or situation and direct interaction with the people under study. Therefore, this approach collected evidence and sought to understand the research problem from the perspective of the population involved. It analysed data from direct observation. In this case, learners and teachers were the population whom the researcher observed during the teaching of comprehension in grade7,

and gained a broader perspective on how teachers approached reading comprehension at grade 7.

Using a qualitative methodology, the researcher was able to employ a variety of methods to investigate the strategies, methods and texts used by grade 7 English First Additional Language (EFAL) teachers to teach reading comprehension in their classrooms, with no interference or manipulation by the researcher. In light of this, the adopted approach was appropriate for investigating the teachers' expressions and deeds, analysing the collected data using variety of methods and reporting it in a narrative and descriptive manner (Simanga, 2011).

Rahman (2016) maintain that using qualitative approach has some benefits, since it produces detailed description of participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences and interprets the meanings of their actions. Hlethwa (2013) affirm that qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, and meaning that people assign to them. Therefore, qualitative approach is concerned with meaning, particularly how the respondents make sense of the world and how they experience events from their perspective. In this view, the voice of the researched and gaining first-hand information regarding the lived experiences of the researched on a particular subject is of utmost important.

Sudeshna & ShrutiDatti (2016) argue that in the event of describing participants' feeling and interpreting the meanings of their action, the researcher's personal feelings and knowledge might influence the observations and conclusions related to research problem. The researchers further explained that qualitative study requires thoughtful planning to ensure that the results obtained are accurate, as this type of research is based more on the opinion and judgement than the results. Furthermore, qualitative approach sometimes leaves out contextual sensitivities and focuses more on meanings and experiences (Silverman, 2010).

None-the-less, Mafuwane (2012) denote that qualitative approach involves employing multiple data gathering methods such as, direct observation, document analysis, especially participants' interviews, and uses data analysis extracting its concepts from the mass of particular details, which constitutes the database. These methods are designed to help researchers to understand the meanings people assign to social phenomena and elucidate mental processes underlying behaviours (Mafuwane, 2012). Weinreich (2009) affirms the strength of qualitative approach that it generates rich detailed data that leave participants 'perspective intact and provide a context for the phenomena being studied.

Weinrich (2009) further states that the purpose of qualitative research is to provide researcher with the perspective of targeted participants through immersion in a culture or situation and direct interaction with people under study. Thus, in qualitative paradigm, the researcher becomes an instrument of data collection, and results may differ greatly depending on who conducts the research.

In this view, the study adopted the qualitative research methodology since it is naturalistic in approach and based on constructivist philosophy that assumes that reality is a multi-layered, interactive social experiences interpreted by individual to gain in-depth opinion from the participants (Hlethwa, 2013 and Mudzielwana, 2012). Therefore, qualitative research method is perceived suitable for this study because the researcher had the ability to infiltrate the world of teachers and observed in detail how they teach the strategies of reading comprehension in order to enhance and improve learners' reading comprehension skills in grade 7 using EFAL.

Scholars, researchers and critics had a different perspective in mind about the use of qualitative approach. Some believe qualitative approach rely on comparing data

that may be similar or different in order to develop conceptualisations of possible relations between various pieces of data. However, the purpose of qualitative research is to generate knowledge about common patterns and themes within human experiences (Thorne, 2000). In addition, Denzin & Lincoln (2005) justify the use of qualitative research since it is a multifaceted research method involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to subject matter. The multifaceted nature of qualitative research enables researchers to develop a holistic picture of the phenomenon in question. The descriptive nature of qualitative research enables readers to understand the meaning attached with the experience, the nature of the problem and the impact of the problem.

3.3 Research Design

A research design is the logic that links data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of a study (Yin, 1984). It is a blue print of research, dealing with at least four problems: what questions to study, what data are relevant, what to collect, and how to analyse the results (Mouton, 2005). Various designs that are used by qualitative researchers are as follow:

Action research, Case study, Grounded theory, Phenomenology, and Historical Research.

They all differ according to the purpose of the study, the nature of the research questions and the resources available to the researcher. Therefore, research design maps the pathway that one has to follow when conducting a research project. In this regard, this study has employed case study approach. Simanga (2011) defines case study as a holistic research method that uses multiple sources of evidence to analyse or evaluate a specific phenomenon or instance. Yin (2003 & 2009) define a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real - life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, whilst Stake (1995) defines a case study as the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances.

Linake (2015) comments that case study is good in bringing an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. Therefore, case study seeks in-depth information about the entity, and offers detailed empirical investigations into a complex issue. In this view, case study was a suitable plan to address the complex issue of English reading comprehension.

This study adopted case study design since it played a vital role in data collection, as it allowed the researcher to explore in-depth understanding of a program on one or more individuals in a manner of gaining meaning from those involved. It further provided insight into a theme or issue with the intention of revealing it. Maree (2011) explains a case as objects whose behaviour or characters studied on real situations. Patton (1990) cited in Simanga (2011) argue that a case can be a person, an event, a program, a time period, a critical incident, a department, community or organisation. In this regards, qualitative case study seeks to describe that unit in -depth and detail, in context, and holistically. Thus, the researcher put more focus on a real situation, which was teaching, with real persons, the teachers and learners in order to answer the research questions.

In addition, the use of the cases such as, teachers and learners helped the researcher to explore the extent of reading comprehension challenges and to develop understanding of the causes of these challenges, and explore the strategies employed by the teachers when teaching reading comprehension in grade 7 EFAL classes.

Hlethwa (2013) adds that in a case study, the researcher collects extensive data on the individual(s), programme(s) or event(s) on which the investigation is focused. Such data includes observations and interviews. The researcher may

spend an extended time on site and interact regularly with the participants, recording details about the content surrounding case, information on the physical environment and any social factors that have a bearing on the situation. The purpose of observation is to probe deeply and to analyse critically the diverse phenomena that comprised the life cycle of the component with a view of establishing generalization about the wider population to which that component belongs (Linake, 2015).

The researcher managed to observe the execution of the lessons in the classrooms and the engagement of learners with the text, their behaviour and characteristics in order to gain the in-depth of information and analysed the phenomenon about the truths that emerged through observations.

Leedy & Ormrod (2013) highlight that the strength of a case study concentrates on a specific activity, how it is interconnected or related. Mudzielwana (2012) also indicates that the value of the research design is intrinsically related to the motivation for selecting it as the most appropriate plan for addressing the research problem. In this view, the researcher used the case study since he/she dealt with a single case with specific activity, looking at how teachers use strategies of reading comprehension in grade 7 EFAL classes as to improve learners' reading comprehension skills at Fort Beaufort district in the Eastern Cape.

The major element of this research was to gain in-depth understanding of their viewpoints and decisions that the teachers took regarding strategies of reading comprehension as highlighted earlier on. Mudzielwana (2012) claims that case studies could be limited by investigator's sensitivity and integrity, although rich, thick description and analysis of a phenomenon maybe desired. However, Linake (2015) citing Yin (2009) states that critics of the case study design believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or

generality of findings. Others feel that the intense exposure to the study of the case biases the findings (Mpiti, 2016). Some dismiss case study research as useful only as an exploratory tool. Yet researchers continue to use the case study research method with success in carefully planned and crafted studies of real-life situations, issues, and problem.

3.4 Description of Research Site

The research was conducted in four rural primary schools for investigation at Fort Beaufort District. This district is largely composed of villages and farms, which do not have strong productive base. It is therefore a poverty-stricken area with very low human settlement. This district is characterised by high unemployment rate and high dependency on welfare and government social grants. The researchers used false names for the primary schools where the research was conducted. The schools were given the following names: school A, B, C and D. The school buildings are in good conditions, as the government to create a conducive learning environment, except for one school that is still in the process of renovation, has renovated them.

Although the schools look great, they do not have libraries that could assist in the teaching and learning of languages except for school D that has a library that was not appealing during the period research was conducted. Among the schools the researcher visited, only one school that had a problem with space, as the classroom was overcrowded. Other schools had enough space but they lack furniture, as a result, three learners occupy the same desk. These are some other contributing factors towards reading comprehension, as the teacher cannot reach out all the learners during the lessons, (see appendix 9.

In South Africa, schools are categorised in quintiles, starting from quintile 1 to 5. Quintile is a system used to categorise schools based on the relative wealth of their surrounding communities. Schools in the poorest communities are classified as Quintile 1 (Ally & McLaren, 2016). The primary schools the researcher visited were categorised into quintiles 1. Schools in quintiles 1 and 2 are both no fee schools. Quintile 1 schools receive more funding since they are rural schools in the poorest communities.

The high rate of unemployment in the rural areas and that causes schools to qualify as Quintile 1. During the time the research took place, School A had an enrolment of 103 learners with 4 teachers, School B had 93 learners with 3 teachers, School C had 167 learners with 5 teachers, while School D had 107 learners with 4 teachers.

Most learners are from extremely poor families where the main source of income is the old age government grant and children grant. Learners live with their grandparents who could not afford to buy those reading materials, so they were not exposed to English text outside school even in their own home language; therefore, such learners were faced with linguistic challenges especially in English Language that became the main barrier to their studies, as it is their FAL.

The teachers and learners are *isiXhosa* speakers, which mean that *isiXhosa* was the dominant language and English remains the Language of Learning and Teaching. This affects the learners' academic performance as the teacher also teach the entire subject using *isiXhosa* instead of English as a medium of instructions.

3.4.1 Information of Teachers

The participated teachers caused the researcher to gather important information on the teaching of reading comprehension. Their academic and professional qualifications were an indication of a quality teaching and learning executed in the classroom. It was also the indication of how well informed teachers were concerning their subjects of specialisation that's, English. That also helped the researcher to assess if teachers understand the dynamics of teaching reading comprehension. This information was so vital since the researcher needed it for data interpretation.

The identified teachers qualified to teach grade 7 as they had qualifications to teach at a primary school with the exception of one teacher from School A who is qualified to teach at a high school. In order for the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the participants, she/he collected data on their teaching experience, qualifications and their area of specialisation. The table below present the information of the teachers.

TABLE 1: Teachers' Information

Teachers	School A	Gender	Qualifications	Area of specialisation	Experience in teaching Grade 7
Teacher 1	School A	Male	B.A. and PGCE	Music& History	2yrs
Teacher 2	School B	Female	PTD	English and History	10 yrs

Teacher 3	School C	Female	PTC; ACE; B.A.	trained to teach all subjects; Life skills; isiXhosa & Criminology	12 yrs
Teacher 4	School D	Female	PTC upgraded to PTD	Trained to teach all subjects	22yrs

The information gathered in Table 1 above, regarding teachers' qualifications and experience revealed how well trained are they in teaching English language. In addition, their qualifications and experience revealed the knowledge and skills the teachers have in teaching of English reading comprehension.

Briefly, quality education and training are needed in South African schools in order for teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. The more teachers empower themselves with the learning area/s they teach, the more they become effective, confident and knowledgeable. In this regards, the longer the teaching experience in a particular learning area, the more the teachers understand the methods and strategies to be applied in a particular learning area. Hence, there is necessary to place them in a better position to become effective and efficiency. Regarding the teachers that were visited, three of them qualified to teach at the primary school with the exception of the teacher from School A.

3.5 Classroom Seating Arrangement

The physical setup of seating arrangement and presentation in a classroom could significantly influence learning. Instructional communication theory suggest that seating arrangements could impact how the instructor communicates with learners and how learners interact with one another, impacting engagement, motivation and focus(mcCorskey and McVetta, 1978). In this view, classroom-seating arrangement poses an important role in teaching just as the curriculum. Perfect seating arrangement fits the teaching style, learners and classroom space, which is conducive to teaching and learning environment. In most cases in primary schools, the classroom seating arrangements are traditional rows /columns and cluster/group or seating learners in pairs, but there was one primary school that adopted Modified U(or Horse shoe) seating arrangement, **(see appendix 10 A).**

3.5.1 Traditional Rows or Columns

The traditional setup consists of rows and is a fixed setting. Learners face the teacher with their backs to one another. This is the most common classroom arrangement in schools. This type suit class structures that revolve around teacher-centred approach. At this stage, teachers are more concerned about learners understanding the content. Learners are more focused on schoolwork and work independently. In this arrangement, the chances of learners to cheat are minimised. Although most teachers like this arrangement, it has its flaws, as it disadvantages learner- to- learner communication. In addition, learners who seat at the front row will participate and benefit more than those at the back as benefit the lose focus (Rands and Gansemer-Topf, 2017 and Harvey & Kenyon, 2013), **(see appendix 10 B).**

3.5.2 Cluster/ Group or Pairs

Clustering the desks into small groups promotes learner-to-learner interaction. Learners develop skills such as communication, problem solving and collaboration.

Clustering is also advantageous in skill growth development where learners develop a certain set of skills that rely on cooperation and teamwork or group work and allows pair sharing. These clusters save floor space and accommodating more desks. In addition, it offers safe and comfortable environments for learners to share ideas. This comfort, however, cause off task behaviour and large increase level of noise and distraction (Linake, 2015; Harvey and Kenyon, 2013), **(see appendix 10 C).**

Some researchers highlighted that many educators adhere to the belief that a balanced teaching has a healthy mixture of both presentations where a teacher centred approach and learner centred approach are accommodated in the classroom, and classroom arrangement can be changed to suit the teaching approach of that lesson.

3.5.3 Modified U or Horseshoe

Horseshoe arrangement requires either a large space or fewer numbers of learners, this means, and space and class size are major concerns for this style of seating. The U-shape method of seating promotes learner centred approach. It is suitable for cooperative learning, involving learners more in the learning process. Interaction in this arrangement is greatly facilitated. All learners are in direct eye contact with the teacher and fellow learners, thus allowing them to communicate as a unit and encouraging learners to listen to other learners. This arrangement provides positive environment where learners are able to share their views and discuss freely. In addition, this seating arrangement is also convenient when learners work independently with their desks far away from each other. Learners tend to talk less when they are spread out. The horseshoe arrangement allows free movement of the teacher during teaching. The teacher is able to see every learner and be able to help him or her, as the arrangement provides a large space (Watson, 2008), **(see appendix 10 D).**

In as much as this arrangement has more positive impact in the teaching and learning, it could be detrimental to shy learners who do not want to talk when many eyes are looking at them (Watson, 2008). The teacher in school C preferred this seating arrangement because it motivates learners to speak and shifts the teachercentred approach to learner-centred approach. This seating arrangement assimilates the seating arrangement in the parliament, and during discussions, the learners have in mind that they debate just like the members of parliament. Learners like this arrangement and they are able to assist each other more especially during reading. In addition, when learners do group work they easily shift the desks so that they work together in groups.

3.6 Sampling Technique

Sampling Technique refers to the act, process, or to the selection of suitable people, settings, events and processes. The sample size is taken from a larger population with the intention of representing the particular population and to detect the unknown piece of information in order to answer a particular research question, as it is related to purpose of the study and the availability of information-rich participants (Mpiti, 2016). The researcher needs to investigate a particular group to which conclusion could be drawn (Vosloo, 2014). There are two more important principles of sampling technique, namely probability and non-probability sampling.

The two techniques differ in the sense that with probability sampling, each member of a given research population has an equal chance of being selected. It involves literally the selection of respondents at random from sampling frame, having decided on the sample size that will be adequate to draw valid and generalised conclusions (Singh & Masuku, 2014). Examples of probability sampling are random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. Non-probability, the population does not have an equal chance of being selected; instead, the participants are selected according to their knowledge and experience

(Vosloo, 2014). Examples of non-probability sampling are purposeful sampling, convenience sampling, snowball sampling and quota sampling. In this regard, the researcher used non-probability sampling whereby, purpose sampling was adopted as it allowed the researcher to select the participants according their involvement in teaching English first additional language in grade 7, as well as, their knowledge and experience.

However, Bryman (2012) argues that it is generally assumed that probability sample has more representative sample of population and that the main aim is to reduce the sampling error, but it is very costly and time consuming, while nonprobability has a small sample with low cost and is assumed to be much less accurate, but more convenient(Linake, 2015). Linake further explain that it is not always possible to study the entire population, but what is important is to select a population that is accurate and will provide accurate information. None-the-less, non-probability sampling is used mostly in qualitative research to gather detailed data; hence the researcher found it convenient to this study.

3.6.1 Sampling Method

The researcher employed purposive sampling for this study as indicated above. Purposive sampling is a process used to select participants who could offer an authentic account and rich cases for in-depth information of the phenomenon under study, who share sufficient common experiences with others as to represent a group (Yin, 2013). In addition, purposive sampling takes place when the researcher deliberately selects whom to include in the study based on their ability to provide necessary data (De Langen, 2009). It is commonly used in qualitative research and seeks cases rich in information, which could be studied in great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research.

In this view, the researcher selected deliberately four English teachers in grade 7 based on their experience and qualifications; a focus group of learners (consisting of six learners from each school; two strong learners; two average learners and two weak learners), the HOD's and the Subject Advisor. The HOD's and the Subject Advisor were selected since they are directly or indirectly involved in teaching English.

Moreover, they are the ones who ought to have rich information on teaching English language, supporting, monitoring and motivating the teachers. In addition, the teachers and learners were also selected as they were directly involved in the teaching of reading comprehension in the classroom and their views were relevant to this studies. These participants were the ones experiencing the challenges of reading comprehension and from them an authentic report and information was gathered.

Pitse (2010) states that in purposive sampling, a particular case is chosen because it illustrates some features or a process that is of interest for a particular study. It is based on the judgement of the researcher in that as ample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population. Mudzielwana (2012 citing McMillan & Schumacher,1997) denote that purposeful selection of choices of cases is a strategy to choose individuals likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon of interest. In this regard, the researcher selected grade 7 English first additional language teachers since she/he had an interest on how they teach reading comprehension in that grade, and strategies they use. In addition, those teachers were selected with the assumption that they had massive information and were knowledgeable about the learning area that would be beneficial to a larger population.

Mudziewelana (2012, citing Maxwell, 2005) highlight that the choice of cases is a decision about where to conduct the research and whom to involve is an essential part of the research process. In this light, the researcher chose rural primary schools that were at close range to her/his work place to gain easy accessibility to those schools. The selection of all the participants had assisted the researcher in identifying the root problem and how it could be resolved in order to close the gap. Thus, the population was sufficient and enough information was provided to enable the reliability and validity of the study.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection refers to the process of gathering information related to research, which involves identifying sources of data and selecting methods. It consists of a variety of methods of data collection in quantitative research. This includes observations, textual or visuals analysis (e.g. from textbooks or videos) and interviews (individual or group) (Gill, Steward, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). Thus, the researcher used different methods for data collection and tools in order to get relevant and sufficient information for the study and to explore the research questions. Information from the tools such as texts in language classrooms was used for enrichment of the study. In addition, different methods such as, Semistructured interviews, observations, focus groups and documents were employed in this study and would be presented and discussed thoroughly below as indicated earlier on.

3.7.1 Interviews

Linake (2015) views an interview as a face-to-face exchange of information between two or more people. Akinyeye (2012) states that an interview implies an exchange of views between two or more people, a direct verbal interaction between individuals on a certain topic in details to collect data (Borg, Gall & Gall, 2003). Therefore, the interview should be a conversation based on the theme and mutual interest between two partners in order to elicit information from the interviewee's

point of view on an issue using the participant's own words (Akinyeye, 2012). In this regard, the researcher arranged interview with particular primary schools where the researcher interviewed grade 7 teachers face to face.

According to Cohen et al (2000), an interview could be used as the principal means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives

Rule & John (2001) emphasise that the interview should focus on the objectives and the content intended to be covered. In the study, the data was collected from the grade 7 teachers to gather detailed information on their experience on the teaching of strategies of reading comprehension. Fontana & Frey (2005) cited in Besman (2012) state that the interview is a widely used tool to access people's experiences and their inner perceptions, attitudes and feelings of reality. It produces in-depth, insightful and detailed data that can be readily validated and that will most likely provide the sought for understanding (Denscombe, 2005 cited in Besman, 2012). In this regard, the grade 7 teachers were interviewed and they were expected to share their experiences, attitudes and feelings towards the teaching of English reading comprehension strategies.

Researchers used interviews widely because they are considered as research data technique with a purpose of gathering data by means of spoken words with planned series of questions (Zengele, 2007). Interviews encourage open-ended dialogue between the researcher and the participants, which assist the researcher to see things in a new perspective (Cohen et al., 2000). However, interviews could bring forth limitations and scepticism regarding the quality of responses, since their reliability and validity depend on the interviewer (Cohen et al., 2007). Gratton & Jones (2004) identified four categories of interviews namely; the structured,

unstructured, focus group, group and semi-structured interviews. This study employed semi-structured interviews as a strategy for data collection as it allowed respondents to express themselves at some length.

3.7.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are used to gather focused, qualitative textual data. It uses flexible, sensitive and reflexive methods that explore the personal experiences and interpretations that participants attach to events while assuring that stress and potential harm are minimised (Sonubi,2011). In order to be consistent with all participants, the interviewer has a set of openended questions. These questions are pre-planned questions for guidance such that the same areas are covered with each interviewee, and allow their views to be open and their new ideas to be brought up during interview (Hall, 2017). During the interview progresses, the interviewees were given an opportunity to elaborate or provide more relevant information in a number of broad questions related to the reading comprehension strategies used in the classroom.

MacDowell (2001) states that the best place to interview people is where they feel comfortable and familiar with the surroundings. The familiarity of the location puts an interviewee at ease. Based on this statement, the researcher, therefore, conducted the research with all the participants at their own different schools where they were all comfortable since they were familiar with that environment. During the interviews, the researcher made special arrangements prior with the participants in order to avoid confusion. Thus, the researcher was given the free periods of the teachers and HODs to interview them, to avoid intervening and disturbing tuition times. The learners were interviewed during break time and the Subject Advisor was interviewed in his office. The researcher chose those surroundings in order to provide a conducive environment and create a social

relationship with all participants so that they could communicate freely, in a relaxed atmosphere.

The researcher asked for permission from the participants to tape-record them so that she/he would be able to replay the conversation repeatedly refreshing the memory on how the participants responded to certain questions and to compile an authentic report. The participants granted the researcher the opportunity to taperecord them. MacDowell (2001) further explains that the environment where participants are interviewed should have good conditions for recording sound. Linake (2015) concurs with this whereby she highlights that the recording of interviews allows for data transcription for the purposes of presenting an unbiased view of the interview data. During the interview sessions, the researcher remained calm and neutral as Hopkins (2008) advises that during an interview, the researcher should remain calm and neutral so that participants might understand that there is no right or wrong answer in the discussion.

Subsequently, the researcher used open-ended questions because she/he wanted to gain access to teachers' experiences of teaching comprehension. The duration of individual interview was 30minutes for teachers, HOD and the Subject Advisor, but for the focused group, the duration lasted for an hour. This allowed the researcher time in between the prepared questions to ask supplementary questions to clarify certain points and ask for more details where necessary. The opportunity to probe deeper helped the researcher to gain valuable information. During the interview, the researcher listened carefully to the participants as they related their experiences, and kept on asking more probing questions to get more details and in-depth data. Hall (2017) highlights that open-ended questions are flexible and allow the interviewer to probe more on issues that diverge from guiding questions. This assisted the researcher to get the rich information concerning the teaching of English reading comprehension.

Furthermore, the researcher used open-ended interviews, as he/she wanted the participants to describe what was meaningful or important to them using their own words rather than being limited to prearranged categories; thus participants felt more relaxed and were communicating freely. This helped the researcher to get exactly the information he/she was looking for due to the manner in which questions were planned. In this light, the researcher interviewed four English teachers in total from four different schools, the Subject Advisor from Amatole West Education District, and twenty-four Learners in the form of focus groups.

The interview was advantageous to the researcher since in a face-to-face interview, the interviewer has an advantage of keeping the interviewee(s) focused and on track, in addition, the interviewee's emotions and behaviours can be captured (Wyse, 2014). In this regard, to provide a conducive environment for interviewees, the researcher used a classroom that was not occupied and conducive for the use of audiotape to capture all the responses of the participants. The learners were interviewed in isiXhosa although at times we mixed with English. That was done in order to make learners feel free to express their views. In addition, with the teachers both languages were used to get rich information.

Throughout the process of data gathering, the guidelines of conducting an effective interview was followed. The researcher listened carefully and responded appropriately to let the person knows she/he was being heard. The researcher had to make an effort to maintain neutrality towards the content of what the respondents would say, as it would be their knowledge, experiences, attitudes and feelings. However, interview methods have advantages and disadvantages. According to Becker & UBA- Team (2011), the interviewer could stray slightly from the questions

and help the participant to understand the question and thus the interviewer give directives leading the participant to the required answers.

This means that questions could be changed and inappropriate questions could be omitted for a particular interviewee based on the researcher's perception. Nonetheless, interviews are best methods to gather detailed information. Linake (2015) further state that the strength of this approach is to increase the comprehensive nature of the data and make data collection more systematic.

Below are the teachers' interviews.

3.8 Teachers' Interview Questions

The researcher managed to interview four grade 7 EFAL teachers at the primary schools in order to get in-depth information to strengthen the study and to understand if they teach reading comprehension strategies to enhance their learners to read with understanding. Below are fifteen questions, which were designed and administered by the researcher to the teachers, **(see appendix 4)**.

1. What is the duration of a period in your school?
2. Do you think the duration of a period is enough? If yes/no, please substantiate your answer.
3. Do you have an interest in teaching English language? Explain your answer in details.
4. How do you support and encourage your learners to like English?

5. Do you teach English comprehension in your class? If yes please indicate the step you follow when teaching.
6. Do you like teaching reading comprehension? Please explain your response.
7. Can you state why you like or dislike teaching comprehension?
8. What types of text do you use when teaching reading comprehension? Please highly the reason for using them.
9. Do learners understand the texts chosen? If not, how do you to assist them to understand?
10. Are you familiar with comprehension strategies? If yes, please mention them.
11. Is the teaching of reading English comprehension part of the curriculum?
Please explain your answer.
12. Are text types, strategies and approaches clearly stated in the curriculum?
Please explain.
- .
13. Are there any measures to empower teachers in teaching English comprehension strategies?

14. Are you competent in teaching English comprehension after attending workshops or seminars?
15. Which strategies seem to be a challenge to learners?
16. When you find a challenge in teaching reading comprehension strategies, where do you get the support?

3.8.1 HOD's Interview Questions

The HOD was interviewed in order to discover whether he/she monitors the English teachers to make sure that the teachers do not ignore the component of teaching reading comprehension strategies. Moreover, the HOD was interviewed to investigate if he/she is aware of the challenges faced by his/her teachers during the teaching of reading comprehension, and how did he/she assist the teachers concerned. Below are twenty-one questions posed to the HOD by the researcher, **(see appendix 5).**

1. What is the duration of a period in your school?
2. Do you think the duration of a period is enough?
3. Do you have an interest in teaching English language? Please explain your answer.
4. How do you support and encourage the teachers to develop interest in teaching

English?

5. Do you teach English comprehension in your class?

6. How do you teach it?

7. Do you like teaching English reading comprehension?

8. Can you state why you like or dislike teaching English comprehension?

9. How do you encourage English teachers to teach comprehension and use?
different text types when teaching it?

10 How many English periods per week? Substantiate your answer.

11 . What strategies do teachers use during English reading comprehension?

12 Are text types, strategies and approaches clearly stated in the curriculum?
Explain your answer.

13. Do you have any seminars and workshop to for teachers to improve their
strategies in teaching? If yes, indicate how often, and if no, explain why.

14. Are you and other teachers competent enough to teach English comprehension after attending workshops and seminars? Comment briefly.
15. A teacher in your department tells you that he/she is struggling with teaching reading comprehension. How do you support him/her? What do you do if your support is not effective?
16. How do you ensure that quality teaching of English comprehension is embedded in your department?
18. Do you have weekly or monthly departmental meetings where you discuss on challenges faced by teachers during the teaching of reading English comprehension?
19. How do evaluate that teachers to use new approaches/ active approaches when teaching English reading comprehension that are in Curriculum?
20. In your own opinion, what do you think is the solution to the problem of reading English comprehension?
21. What do you do to promote reading culture in the school?

The HOD was interviewed within the school during break time. The researcher posed the questions above. The HOD expressed his/her views about the English teacher and was not happy with his/her attitude.

The responses were recorded and the notes were taken and compiled at the end of the interviews for analysis.

3.8.2 Subject Advisor's Interview Questions

The Subject Advisor was interviewed to explore whether he/she played a vital role in strengthening teachers' instructional practices in their schools. Below are fourteen questions posed to the Subject Advisor by the researcher, **(see appendix 6)**.

1. Briefly describe the performances of rural schools in English first additional language in grade 7.
2. Is the performance satisfactorily. If yes, please give the figures, and if no, please give the reasons.
3. What are the challenges?
4. What are CAPS requirements concerning the teaching English reading comprehension?
5. Are teachers able to use the curriculum?
6. What part have you played in developing EFAL teachers concerning reading comprehension?

8. Do you have any adequate administrative measures or supervision to ensure that teachers use the curriculum? If yes, please explain them.
9. Do teachers have their own copies of the curriculum document in English?
10. How do you evaluate the curriculum?
11. How do you assess the effective teaching of English reading comprehension?
12. Is there an adequate professional development to support teacher's success in teaching English reading comprehension?
13. Are teachers aware of the strategies for English reading comprehension?
Explain your answer.
14. To what extent are you committed to enhance the well-being of teachers where EFAL is concerned.

The intention of the interview was to get the real experience and challenges encountered by the Subject Advisor when performing workshops with the English teachers, and how he/she dealt with the major challenge of teaching English reading comprehension strategies.

3.8.3 Focus Group Interviews

Silverman (2016) stipulates that focus group is a way of collecting quality data, engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion, focused around a particular topic or set of issues. It offers dynamic insight into human dynamics in the situations they are studying. He further indicates that the aim of the focus group is to make use of participants' feelings, perceptions and opinions. Focus group involves a discussion between four to ten people on a specific research topic (Ritchie & Lewis, 2010). This technique could be efficient because the researcher could gather information about several people in one session.

This group is usually homogeneous, such as a group of learners, an athlete team, or a group of teachers, meaning members of the focus should have something common, which is important to the investigation (Thomas, Nelson & Silverman, 2012). In this regards, the researcher used a group of learners in grade 7 with the intention of finding out about learners' understanding of strategies for reading comprehension; how effective were those strategies, and challenges they encounter during the teaching of English reading comprehension.

Thus, the focus group interviews were used in this researcher as they were guided by a list of questions and rich data emerge through interaction within the groups, for example, sensitive issues that could be missed in individual interviews, were captured in a focus group. The group members might hear what others in the group have to say, which might stimulate the individuals to rethink their own views. In a group, people develop and express ideas they would not have thought about as individuals (Mudziwaelana, 2012; Thomas et al, 2011). Indeed, the learners stimulated each other, ideas came flooding, and complimenting each other, as a result, more information was gathered related to research questions. The researcher's main aim was to uncover emerging issues that affected the teaching of comprehension. The interview was tape-recorded and took notes.

Focus group interviews in this researcher were used to elicit data from a group of learners to get the general overview on the issue of learning comprehension strategies. The researcher used four focus groups from different schools and each school comprising of six learners. Maughan (2003) recommended that an ideal focus group range from six to twelve participants. This helped the researcher to choose six participants in each group for discussion. In addition, focus group discussion helped the researcher to gather information from the participants in an environment where the participants relaxed and comfortable in one session. In this light, learners had an opportunity to share their views freely and openly in their groups in their natural setting.

Learners were interviewed after the lesson on English reading comprehension to get comments from different individuals. Focus groups had proven to be a highly insightful research technique for engaging a group of people with a question, product or idea (Linake, 2012). This allowed the researcher to gain information and views of the learners concerning English reading comprehension, and identified some issues emerged as they were discussed in the group. Thus, the learners were interviewed in isiXhosa although at times, it was mixed with English and this interview lasted for an hour. That was done in order for learners to feel free to express themselves during the interview process. This technique worked well because the researcher managed to get in-depth information to the study. Contrary to this, Mudzielwana (2012) highlight that the results obtained from a group could be unreliable as one group could be unresponsive and reluctant to participate. In this regard, certain learners, more especially the weak learners were reluctant to respond to certain questions. Below are the questions, which, were used during the focus group interviews.

3.8.4 Learners' Interview Questions

The interviews were carried out from four different schools with twenty - four learners (six learners from each school) in grade 7 class where the programme was carried out. They were selected according to their performance and they were grouped into three: Strong Learners, Average Learners and Weak Learners. They formed a sample of the entire grade 7 learners in each school. During the interview, the researcher mixed both languages, IsiXhosa and English so that the learners could understand. The researcher applied semi- structured interview questions to the learners. The researcher administered eleven questions to the learners during the focus group interviews in order to get in-depth's information to strengthen the study. Below are eleven questions made out to learners **(see appendix 7)**.

1. Which grade are you?
2. Is English the medium of instruction in your school?
3. Do you enjoy being taught in English? Yes or No – please indicate why?
4. Do you have any reading material at home? Reading material such a newspapers, storybooks, novels and poetry? If yes, how often do you read them?
Please explain your answer.
- 5, Do you enjoy reading comprehension in the classroom? If no/yes, why?
6. Which strategies does your teacher use during reading comprehension?

7. Are those strategies helping you to understand what you read? Please indicate how.
8. How is the seating arrangement in your class? Are you seated in rows or in groups? Why is it like that?
9. Do you assist each other during reading comprehension? Whether Yes or No, please give a reason.
10. How does your teacher assist you during reading comprehension?
11. How interesting or boring are the texts you read for comprehension? Please explain your answer.

Similar questions were asked to each focus group to check for validity. All focus group interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. This task was beneficial to the researcher as he/she found out the gaps learners revealed during interviews. These interviews were time-consuming and expensive to conduct compare to the other ones from the teachers, HODs and Subject Advisors, as learners needed more time to think, discuss and share ideas before they responded.

3.9 Observation

Observation is defined as a natural process, through which judgements could be made, as well as, the researcher could see what the participants were doing rather

than what they say and do (Creswell, 2013; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). In addition, observation is when the researcher takes field notes that are detailed, non-judgemental, and concrete of what observed on the behaviour and activities of an individual at the research site. In these field notes, the researcher would record in activities taking place at the research site (Creswell, 2014& Marshall, 2006). In this regard, the researcher took field notes during observation in order to remember and record the activities and events happened in the classroom during English reading comprehension lesson.

During observation, the researcher had an advantage of directly evaluating how teachers taught reading English comprehension, as well as, learners' involvement and engagement in the learning environment. When the environment is researched, it provides valuable background information that may inform other aspects of the research, such as, seating arrangement in the classroom whether it caters for class discussions and group work. The researcher explored how learners learn; how they interpreted and made sense of the subject, where they stumble, and what they do when they do not understand the text. This means that the researcher observed the learner's engagement with the text throughout the lesson. Therefore, the researcher had first-hand information with the participant as field notes were taken as the lesson unfolds in the classroom.

In addition, the researcher as an observer looked at how the teachers approached English reading comprehension as a three-phase activity namely: pre-reading; during reading and post reading activity. In pre-reading phase, the researcher observed whether the teacher activated prior knowledge, stimulated interest and motivated learners during lesson execution.

During reading phase, the research observed whether learners engaged with the text, asking themselves questions and a continuous monitoring of comprehension. In the post reading, the researcher looked at how learners viewed and assessed

the text as a whole, and how they synthesised ideas, summarised and expressed their own opinions about the text.

Observation gave the researcher a privilege of taking notes in a natural setting on how teachers taught English reading comprehension; to see clearly what they did in the classroom rather than what they report they were doing. Another advantage in observation was that the researcher observed the interaction between the learners and teachers during lesson progression in the classroom, and recorded the information as it occurred. However, observation has disadvantages. One of its disadvantages is known as a 'The Hawthorne Effect' where the presence of the observer changes the behaviour of those observed. In addition, it could be subjective, expensive and time consuming (Sadik, 2013). None-the-less, the researcher preferred to use observation as it was beneficial for this study and it was executed in four different schools. The findings would be presented in chapter 4.

3.10 Assessment(s)

Oakley (2011) defines assessment as a highly effective means of checking the thinking learners do when attempting to construct meaning in a text, while Linake (2015) sees assessment as a process of making a judgement or forming an opinion, after considering something or someone carefully. Assessment takes many different forms and does not need to be limited to tests and examinations since it should take place at every stage of the learning process and that it should be frequent. It provides information about progress in learning.

Comprehension assessment relates to two categories, assessing factors within the reader that affect comprehension and assessing learners' knowledge of the text features and structure. Researchers are aware that reading comprehension is positively affected when learners are interested in the reading materials, and the reader's awareness of how well he /she understand the reading material, as well

as, the reader's ability to control his/her own thinking including the use of comprehension strategies to improve understanding of the text(Reutzel & Cooter, 2015).

The learners were given comprehension activity as part of assessments in order to check student's progress academically and to prepare them for the exam. The comprehension activities had marks allocated next to each question as a guide on how much information was needed when responding to the question. The comprehension activities were categorised according to learner's different performances. Learners were categorised as strong, average and low achievers. Two comprehensions were done during the reading lessons whereby two different texts were used as samples of the class activities done by learners. The questions from the texts used for comprehension provoked thinking and needed learners with a background knowledge of the stories and a rich vocabulary in order to answer and describe certain situations as required by the questions, **(see appendix 8 B)**.

3.11 Documents

Flick (2015) states that documents are tools used to provide information in a written text or electronic form, which is relevant to the issues and problems under investigation. Once a written source has been created, for whatever reason, it becomes a potential historical fact and therefore documentary data. Furthermore, the researcher treated the document like a respondent or informant that provides the researcher with relevant information.

The researcher used documents such as policy documents, **CAPS** and other relevant documents that would be presented and explain in details below, **(see appendix 9 A & B)**.

The document analysis was done on South African policy relating to the teaching of English reading comprehension in grade 7. The document analysis helped the researcher to know what guides the teachers on what to teach and how it assists teachers on how to teach reading comprehension to grade 7 learners. It was easy for the researcher to get an access of these documents from the teachers and they contained information required that would helped to answer the research question. Mudzielwana (2012) confirms that documents are a good source of information in qualitative case studies because they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated. The documents provided valuable data bringing out background information on teaching English reading comprehension strategies in grade 7, and validated my study as they were based on reality. Below are the relevant explanations on documents and activities the researcher found out during data collection.

3.11.1 Texts in Language Classroom

Halliday & Hasan (1976) define text as a linguistic object that is referred to any passage spoken or written and is best regarded as a semantic unit, a unit of meaning. Texts could also be described as a set of expression that makes some knowledge explicit while other knowledge remains implicit. Texts have real values that contain ideas and information. They give clear direction to the study (Beaugrande & Dresher, 1981). According to Linake (2015), texts are a vehicle for information with a pedagogical purpose in mind and there are authentic texts that a teacher can select since they contain many examples of a particular feature of language. Therefore, a good selection of texts by teachers might assist the learners to understand and put meaning to what they read **(see appendix 8 A)**.

In this study, the researcher observed reading texts that were given to learners based on teaching English reading comprehension as highlighted on earlier on. Some texts used were related to learners' experiences and they gave learners the ability to express their views. The teachers seemed to have less information on different approaches to use as to expose learners to different text types and

activities in order for them to understand what they read. The researcher observed how teachers implemented pre-reading, during reading and post reading activities in the classroom in order for learners to engage with the text to acquire reading skills and to read with understanding. The texts formed part of data in this study and the finding would be presented in chapter 4 under observation heading.

3.12 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a major strategy for quality control in qualitative research, thus helping the researchers to reflect continuously on how their own actions, values and perceptions impact upon the research setting and can affect data collection, data analysis and discussion of the findings (Lambert et al, 2010; Berger, 2013). It is described as a process of deliberate retrospection that is used in data analysis. This means that the process of retrospection involves revisiting data analysis conducted in order to examine how subjective insight were, either suppressed or overshadowed institutional, epistemological, and ontological influences operating at the time. Reflexivity allows revealing new truths about the data (Hsiung, 2008).

Wilkie (2015) explain reflexivity as a process of reflecting on you, the researcher, to provide more effective and impartial analysis. It involves examining and consciously acknowledging the assumptions and perceptions the researcher brings into the research and that therefore shape the outcome. Lambert et al (2010) state that being reflexive involves self- questioning and self-understanding. Reflexivity reminds the qualitative inquirer to be attentive to and conscious of various issues that may affect the research.

In this regard, the researcher kept a reflexive journal throughout the research, as that would be a reminder of the researcher's observations, giving the researcher a better understanding of the situation. McNiff & Whitehead (2010) affirm that a reflexive journal acts as a record of events, and as a record of the thinking about those events which would remind the researcher during data analysis.

Reflexivity is a process that challenges the researcher to explicitly examine how his/her research agenda and assumptions, subject location(s), personal beliefs, and emotions enter into the research. The main objectivity of doing reflexivity in qualitative research is to acknowledge and interrogate the constitutive role of the researcher in research design, data collection, and data analysis and knowledge production. Reflexivity requires the researcher to examine any pre-conceived perceptions that could be held, reflexivity cannot be learned passively (Hsiung, 2008).

Doing reflexivity entails arriving at a critical turning point where the researcher turns the investigative lens away from others and towards him or herself. Reflexivity makes the researcher conscious of how his/her field notes are not observations concerning interactions of others, but are rather interpretations of such interactions. Berger (2013) further states that the researcher has to move from the position of an outsider to the position of an insider. Linake (2015) confirms that the researcher cannot investigate something without having contact with, or completely isolated from it. In this view, the researcher needs to be in the research site and closer to the participants to obtain first-hand information for accurate analysis. This means that the information the researcher obtained from the participants does not express surface meaning only, but also underlying deep information about the nature of the study.

Reflexivity involves an epistemological paradigm shift. It is a process wherein the researcher makes a conscious and deliberate effort to interrogate his/her subjective self in relation to the research subject. Reflexivity in qualitative interviewing, therefore, requires a deliberate pedagogical intervention that challenges the tendency of technical aspects of interview skills, while overlooking their epistemological foundation. Doing reflexivity in practice is facilitated and mediated through text, whether in the form of a personal journal, field notes, or an

interview transcript (Hsiung, 2008). Roller (2013) highlights that reflexivity is an important concept because it is directed at the greatest underlying threat to the accuracy of qualitative research outcomes, that is, the social interaction component of the interviewer-interviewee relationship, as reflexivity seem to influence outcomes to be more likely and less predictable.

Linake (2015) further state that it can be very difficult for researcher to avoid ambiguities even as an insider because of the intimate relationship between the researcher and the researched. Linake (2015) further explain that the participants' observation requires both involvement and detachment achieved by developing the ethnographer's role of stepping in and out of a society. The act of reflection enable the interviewer to thoughtfully consider this relationship and speculate on the ways the interviewer-interviewee interaction may have been exacerbated by presumptions arising from cultural background or political orientation (Roller, 2013). In this regard, the researcher tried to limit influencing the participants throughout the research process by using well-planned standardised questions with simple language that would cause the participants to understand what was required, thus causing the researcher not to explain too much but control the response of the participants. However, Linake (2015) states that the specificity and individuality of the observer are present and need to be acknowledged explored and put into creative use.

3.13 Data Analysis

Data analysis is defined as a process of reviewing or evaluating documents in order to make sense and meaning out of the data collected, gaining understanding, developing knowledge and interpreting the responses from the participants and what the researcher has seen and read (deVos, Strydom, Fouche&Delport, 2013; Bowen, 2009). Furthermore, the process of data analysis is an on-going process throughout one's studies (Linake, 2015). The data was analysed from the initial

stages throughout the research process using teachers' interviews, classroom observations and focus group interviews.

After gathering relevant information from various sources mentioned above, the researcher repeatedly read the transcribed interviewed notes and the field notes to construct meaning from them, as a result, the responses of the participant were analysed and interpreted. In addition, the responses of the participants were categorised and coded into themes. O'Leary (2014) & Bowen (2009) agree that the data collected would be analysed by breaking up the texts into manageable themes or patterns that emerge and make them into categories used for further analysis. It includes careful, focused reading and re-reading of data as well as coding. This study employed a thematic technique to analyse the collected data.

Linake (2015) & Mudzielwana (2012) further state that in order to make decisions regarding the data collected and identifying emerging themes and recurring patterns in the middle of the process, the key information should be coded and classified according to main themes. Such themes would be placed into appropriate categories and would be logically labelled according to the data collected. The emerging codes and themes might serve to integrate data gathered by different methods. In this regard, the response of the participants regarding their experiences, meaning and understanding attached to the teaching of strategies for reading comprehension were coded and categorised into themes.

According to Shank (2006), thematic analysis searches for patterns in data. The researcher compared the relationship between the research findings and the information from literature review and presented them in relation to the research questions. Therefore, the responses of the participants were identified and classified according to similarities and patterns. The researcher further looked at the unexpected input from the participants and reported it, as Koshy (2005) recommends that when analysing data it, is important to examine unexpected

outcomes and report them. In this regard, findings were generalised to a larger population where twenty-four learners, four teachers, HODs and Subject Adviser formed participants groups in the interviews. The researcher would return to this in the following chapters whereby the information would be presented in details.

3.14 Ethical Issues

The researcher had a responsibility to ensure that the research is ethical: that it is carried out with respect towards persons, respect towards democratic values and respect for the quality of educational research (British Educational Research Association (BERA), 2011). DeVoss et al, (2013) state that it is highly professional to consider ethical codes when dealing with individuals. Therefore, the researcher assured all the participants about their rights to privacy and that their identities would remain anonymous. They were further assured that they would be protected from harm; be indemnified against any physical and emotional harm. Avoiding harm to the participants, the researcher informed them beforehand about the impact of the investigation and offers them opportunities to withdraw if they wish to do so without any prejudice.

To conduct investigations, the researcher requested an ethical clearance certificate from the University of Fort Hare in order to undertake the research at the Fort Beaufort district, **(see appendix 1)**.

The researcher further required a letter from the District Office permitting her/his to conduct a research to the targeted primary schools, as well as the English Subject Advisor **(see appendix 2)**. To access the research sites at schools, the researcher had a meeting with the principals of the primary schools informing them about the nature of the study and highlighted its purpose. The permission was granted to the researcher to write a letter addressed to the principals and the SGB on which parents are represented **(Appendix 3 A & B)**. In this regards, the researcher was guided by the University's code of conduct pertaining to research, in so doing the

researcher was guarded against manipulating participants or treating them as objects or numbers rather than individual human beings. The study made use of consent forms, which illustrates what was expected from the participants, and certify that they allow the researcher to collect data from them (Cohen et al, 2011).

The researcher ensured the confidentiality of the data collected as it is of utmost importance and that their names and school names would not be revealed in the thesis or at any time subsequently. Instead, pseudonyms were used that did not link the participants to the research and, no one, other than the researcher and the supervisor, would have access to or make use of the data (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2011 and Linake, 2015). In addition to the above discussion, as ethical issues demanded that participants should be protected and respected, the researcher assured the participants of anonymity and confidentiality.

3.15 Data Trustworthiness

Mpiti (2016) states that trustworthiness is the corresponding term used in qualitative research. It is obtained when it accurately represents the experiences of the participants where they might recognise the findings to be true. Therefore, the data and data analysis are believable and trustworthy to the extent.

Lincoln & Guba (2000) affirm that authenticity and trustworthiness can be implemented by using four strategies: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

3.15.1 Credibility

Anney (2014) explains credibility as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. It is the ability of the researcher to produce findings that

are convincing and believable. In addition, it is the goal to demonstrate that the enquiry is conducted in a manner that the subjects are accurately identified and described (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; De Vos, 2005). Credibility could be achieved through prolonged engagement with data sources, persistent observation, adequate checking of the raw data with their sources. To demonstrate the credibility of the findings, the researcher used semi-structured interviews and the participants were quoted verbatim in order to give substance to the findings. Furthermore, the researcher returned the findings to the participants and asked them about the correctness of the report in order to determine its accuracy (Hlaithwa, 2013).

3.15.2 Transferability

Babbie & Mouton (2001) state that transferability is achieved through producing detailed and rich descriptions of the contexts. In this regard, transferability was essential in the context of this study in that, the research process enabled the researcher to acquire the detailed data and thorough report about the teaching of reading comprehension strategies.

Furthermore, transferability indicates the extent to which the findings could be applied in other contexts or with other participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The strategies for achieving transferability comprises of thorough thick description and purposive sampling (Anney, 2014; Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

To ensure thorough description, detailed descriptions of data are provided. Purposive sampling was applied within this study because of its tendency to maximise the variety of the information that can be obtained within a specific context.

3.15.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of findings over time. It involves participants evaluating the findings, the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants of the study (Anney, 2014). Dependability is established by using code-recode strategy. The code-recode strategy is referred to as code agreement whereby the research process allows multiple observations by the researcher. This helped the researcher to gain a deep understanding of data patterns and improves the presentation of participants' narrations. According to Yin (2004), dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings indeed occurred as the researcher say it did. In this regard, the researcher interacted with the teachers, HOD's, and the learners in different schools through observations and interviews, as well as interviewing the Subject Advisor. The participants acted differently and expressed their different opinions about English reading comprehension strategies.

3.15.4 Confirmability

Anney (2014) states that confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of an inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers. Lincoln & Guba (2000) also explain that confirmability refers to practice by researchers to go back to the researched work with a view to verify whether initial interpretations by the researchers are correct or not. In view of this, the researcher went back to the participants after the initial analysis had been done to check whether the findings were accurate.

Furthermore, other studies suggest that confirmability of qualitative inquiry is achieved through an audit trail. It offers visible evidence from process and product to validate the data, whereby the researcher accounts for all the research decisions and activities to show how the data was collected and analysed. In this light, the

researcher conducted a thorough audit trail by keeping the following documents for checking the enquiry process: interviews responses, observation notes, documents and scores for comprehension activities.

3.16 Limitations

Teachers had fears in participating in the research with the view that the researcher was there to spy on them. Some thought that the researcher was sent by the Department of Education to see how they operate in the schools and if teaching was done effectively. In this view, the researcher had to motivate them to participate, as this study would be beneficial to them as well. The fear of being spied resulted to teachers being reluctant to give the rich information needed for the entire study.

The lack of training of proper skills on teaching reading comprehension strategies in their training institutions was the major factor that caused teachers unable to teach English comprehension strategies. Although CAPS introduced strategies of reading comprehension, teachers had challenges since they were not trained on how to teach reading comprehension, and this resulted to them having no confidence in teaching English reading comprehension. Some teachers are not qualified to teach English nor trained to teach at the primary schools. In addition, the three schools were observed had no HOD either for English or for all languages as HODs were operating for all the subjects offered in schools.

In addition, the lack of English textbooks and dictionaries posed a serious problem during lesson execution, as two or three learners had to share a textbook or a dictionary if it is available. In light of this, the researcher had a technical challenge in the transcription of interviews, as some of the participants were inaudible, and that resulted in omitting important information, which could be beneficial to this research. The researcher had to interview those participants again for another day

to get relevant information needed by the study. Furthermore, some of the learners were shy and could not give honest opinions about the teaching of strategies for English reading comprehension because they were afraid of being victimised by their teachers.

3.17 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the reader with methodological choices made in this qualitative research project. The researcher explained qualitative research and shown how appropriate it is for the study. The tools used for data collection were interviews, focus group, observation, documents, and the focus groups that were tape-recorded. The researcher further discussed the sampling of the participants in the research together with attempt were made for ethical issues. These methods were chosen for their suitability for the research project. The next chapter presents the analysis and the interpretation of data drawn from the methodological tools.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined methodology and all the instruments used in this research during data collection and they are fully explained. This chapter presents and analyses the data of the research conducted in four primary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. The data that was collected focused on the teaching of English reading comprehension, and it was gathered through the interviews, focus group, and document analysis using the following participants: four teachers, one HOD one Subject Advisor, and twenty-four

learners. In this regards, the researcher would present the responses that emanated from observations during data collection from all the participants highlighted earlier on and interpretations and analysis.

Thus, the teachers, Subject Advisor, and HOD professional qualifications would be presented below in a table form.

4.2 Teachers' Information and Qualifications

The researcher decided to include professional qualifications of participants in this study since this information was so vital for better understanding and analysing the data, as their qualifications and experience might influence their teaching of English reading comprehension.

Almost all the teachers teaching in the primary schools, who were observed, qualify to teach at the primary school since they have a primary teachers' qualification, and with a wealth experience in teaching grade 7 learners, except for one teacher from one of the schools selected in this, who overqualified as he/she has a high school teachers' qualification. These qualifications revealed that some teachers are holders of other degrees, which are not directly involved with primary school teaching. This could be an indication of a system that does not follow a particular route to develop its teachers professionally and channel them to specialization of certain learning areas. People are left at their own choices as long as they develop themselves, for instance, a teacher majoring with criminology which is not a teaching subject and that does not help in developing knowledge and skills of teaching a learner.

Looking at the range of professional qualifications of participants, the researcher was able to see the types of expertise that were held by the participants. Muguwe (2015) states that the quality of education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and their work. The quality of any educational system depends largely on the quality of teachers in terms of academic and professional qualifications, experience, competency as well as their dedication to their teaching. Although the findings revealed that some teachers who participated in the study were qualified to teach in the primary school but they lack information and exposure to the new approaches specified in the policy document that would ensure effective teaching. In this regards, improving teachers' qualifications and teaching effectiveness have a positive impact to foundational skills and knowledge to learners at intermediate phase, as this is the most critical phase to learners to get a proper foundation. Their professional qualifications belong to the old traditional system where they were trained to teach all subjects in the primary schools, therefore they need further training in order to know new reforms in teaching English and be in line with the current curriculum (CAPS), **(see appendix 9)**.

The table below presents the information of the teachers, Subject Advisor, and HoD as highlighted above.

TABLE 4. 1: Teachers' information

Participants	Schools A - D	Gender	Qualifications	Area of specialisations	Experience in teaching Grade 7
Participant 1	School A	Male	B.A. and PGCE	Music & History	2yrs
Participant 2	School B	Female	PTD	English and History	20 yrs

Participant 3	School C	Female	PTC ACE B.A.	trained to teach all subjects Life skills; isiXhosa & Criminology	27 yrs
Participant 4	School D	Female	PTC & PTD	Trained to teach all subjects	22 yrs
Participant 5 – HOD	School D	Female	PTC; BA BEEd ACE Med	Trained to teach all subjects. English & isiXhosa Specialised in teaching English Management	22 yrs
Participant 6: Subject Advisor		Male	B.A; PGCE ACE	English & History Specialized in English teaching	12yrs

Table 4.2, outlined the coding system the researcher used throughout the thesis for easy reference to all the participants.

TABLE 4.2: Coding System

Pseudonym of schools	Pseudonym of teachers	Explanation	Pseudonym of learners	Explanation

School A	TCHA	Teacher A is from School A	e.g. LNR 1 A-S LNR 3 A –AV; LNR 5 A- W	Learner 1 from School A- S stands for a Strong learner. LNR 3 from School A – A Stands for Average Learner. Learner 5 from School A- W stands for Weak learner
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School B	TCH B	Teacher B from School B	LNR 1 B-S LNR 3 B- AV LNR 5 B-W	Learner 1 from School B- Strong learner. Learner 3 from School B Average learner. Learner 5 from School B- Weak learner
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School C	TCH C	Teacher from Sol C	LNR 1 C- S LNR 3 C-AV LNR 5 C-W	Learner 1 from School C- Strong learner. Learner 3 from School C- Average learner. Learner C from School C- Weak learner.
School D	TCH D	Teacher from School D	LNR 1 D –S LNR 3 D-AV LNR 5 D-W	Learner 1 from School D- strong learner Learner 3 from School D- Average learner. Learner 5 from school D- weak learner.
School D	HOD- D	Head of the department		
	SA	Subject Advisor		

In this chapter, the researcher would present the responses from all the participants in this study below with regard to the questions raised during the interviews and focus group interviews. Thus, the responses would be interpreted and analyse thereafter by using the relevant codes according to different themes. The study used nine themes in total with regard to the research questions per participant. The following themes were adopted: Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum; Teaching strategies of reading comprehension; teaching comprehension;

teachers' knowledge of active learning approaches; time allocation; English language proficiency; motivation of learners; and assessment and documents.

4.3 Themes

Below is theme 1 and 4 relevant questions that are more on teachers' knowledge on the curriculum.

4.3.1 Teachers' Knowledge of the Curriculum

During observation in **SCH B** and **SCH C**, the participants highlighted that they were exhausted with what is happening with the Department of Education. They were introduced to different curriculums within a short period without any induction and workshops. This confuses them making them masters of none without any relevant skills and knowledge expected during teaching and learning. However, for teachers to know the curriculum, they ought to familiarize themselves with the policy document.

In the process of observation, the researcher noted that not a single teacher referred to the policy document, as they were engaging learners with the text. There was no policy document even on their tables. The fact that teachers could not perform well in the teaching of English reading for comprehension, meant that they do not consult the relevant document that is curriculum for guidance, as it gives a clear direction on what to do and what to achieve at the end. CAPS (2011) demands that learners should be introduced to close and critical reading of the text, understanding it comprehensively knowing text features, titles and illustrations. In addition, teachers should train learners to be independent readers and develop critical language awareness whereby learners would be able to see the hidden meaning and message in a text. Unfortunately, learners were not engaged to that extent during the observation.

The interview of the teachers from different schools revealed that they have limited knowledge of the curriculum more especially in the teaching of strategies of English reading for comprehension. However, with their vast experience in teaching English in grade 7, they should be familiar and know CAPS requirements by now. This behaviour showed lack of commitment and a relaxed attitude. The teachers' lack of knowledge about the curriculum is revealed during the interviews. The following are the questions and teachers' responses to data collection from all four schools selected for this study.

The questions that follow below were administered with the intention to check whether the teachers understand and adhere to the requirements of the curriculum for senior phase.

1. Before teaching or giving learners a comprehension text, do you consult your curriculum?

Responses:

TCH A: 'Yes..... sometimes (uncertain)'.

TCH B: 'Yes, sometimes'.

TCH C: 'Yes, I do'.

TCH D: *'Yes, I do, although it is not clear to me,' (Appendix 4).*

2. Does your curriculum demand the teaching of English reading comprehension?
Elaborate.

Responses:

TCH A: *'I think so, to tell the truth, I do not spend much time on CAPS for languages because I have too much workload. I teach many learning areas. I teach SS, NS, and Technology from grade 6 – 7.'*

TCH B: *'Yes, but I do not follow it. If only I can be taught because these things are new and we were never trained on how to teach comprehension.'*

TCH C: *'Yes, CAPS demands the teaching of comprehension that I know because I refer to it before teaching.'*

TCH D: *'Yes because even on the exam, the comprehension is compulsory and it is the first question in a language paper,' (Appendix 4).*

The responses of the teachers on question 1 and 2 showed that even if they consulted the curriculum or not they did not understand it. Seemingly, the curriculum is not talking to them, they could not relate to it. It is evident that teachers are not familiar with the curriculum document due to lack of exposure. It does not improve their teaching nor bring any solution to their problems of teaching English comprehension. This means that the teachers do not follow the requirements of CAPS (2011) concerning reading for comprehension. During observation at

schools, the researcher noticed that teachers had no clue of what is happening with CAPS (2011) document. What TCH C said during interview did not correspond with what happened in the classroom. It is unfortunate that three schools did not have English or language HOD's to support them. Such teachers are in dire need of assistance and support from their district office to empower them with the current curriculum. TCH D has a HOD but the attitude she posed would be a stumbling block in understanding what the curriculum entails and requires. To her, the teaching of reading for comprehension was not what the curriculum requires, but it was a requirement for examination purposes, meaning if it was not for examination purposes, learners would never be taught comprehension.

The following question was administered to the teachers where the researcher wanted to know if the teachers had a passion for the English language. The responses of the teachers with the same perspective are grouped together.

2. Do you have an interest in teaching English?

Responses:

***TCH A:** 'No, English is not my major subject and I was never trained to teach it. Since there is a shortage of teachers at my school I had to teach English.'*

***TCH D:** 'No, I do not. My problem is I have never been properly trained to teach it. I rely on advice from other teachers. I am not confident in teaching it,' (**Appendix 4**).*

In this instance, the response of the teachers revealed that they found themselves enforced to teach English, the learning area they dislike and that caused discomfort to them as they were not confident at all to teach it due to lack of relevant knowledge and skills. The teachers agreed that they were never trained to teach English. Teachers who never had proper or no training in teaching English feel helpless and have no idea of where to start. **TCH A** is not qualified to teach at the primary school, and moreover to teach English language, and that was the reason caused low levels of competence. **TCH D**, although she qualifies to teach at primary school, her training course as a teacher is an old traditional teaching that makes her a misfit in this new curriculum. Beruba (2002) suggests that even little appropriate training can go a long way in preventing and improving negative teachers' attitude during the class.

To add to their frustration, these teachers were trapped in a situation where they have to teach many grades (known as multi-grade teaching) with different learning areas causing them not to have proper focus in teaching English. The effect of redeployment and the situation where teachers who left the system were not replaced, left schools with shortages of teachers and those left behind had to fill in the gaps, teaching-learning areas they were not trained for, and they hardly cope with those learning areas.

TCH B: *'Yes, I like English, at the college, I majored in English and History. I am trying my best.'*

TCH C: *'Yes I do, although I have old primary teachers' course, I have interest in English,' (Appendix 4).*

Contrary to the perception of **TCH A** and **TCH D** regarding teaching English, these two teachers showed enthusiasm and dedication in teaching English. They have the potential that needs to be attended to. In view of this, if such teachers could have ongoing support from the department of education (through the district office) and equip them with relevant tools to address the issue of teaching English language, then the problem of many learners who lack language proficiency can be lessened.

With such response from the teachers, the researcher interviewed the subject advisor who explained to the researcher that the post had been vacant for some time and was appointed towards the end of the year and he had only five months experience in the post, still undergoing a training that empowers him with necessary skills to use during workshops. He further explained that he is willing to assist and equip teachers with necessary information that will develop them to be competent teachers.

The researcher asked the following probing question to the Subject Advisor with the intention of knowing whether teachers were well informed and competent to teach English using the new curriculum.

4. Are teachers qualified in teaching English and prepared to teach the curriculum?

Responses:

SA: *'It differs from institution to institution. I can say 60% of teachers are qualified to teach English, some are not. What happens is this, teachers who are not trained to teach English, in fact, who never majored in English from their colleges or universities are forced to teach English due to insufficient teachers at schools. This multi-grade teaching is a problem. Most teachers teach English of which they do*

not have any interest in it and to such teachers the curriculum is difficult. (Appendix 6).

Unfortunately the subject advisor is newly appointed for the post and has not yet visited the primary schools, especially the rural schools. In his assumption, he thought that 60% of teachers are qualified to teach English, therefore they had all the skills and information to teach the learning area, but shock is awaiting him because the majority of teachers in primary schools are not qualified to teach English; they have insufficient information and are unable to interpret even the curriculum. The participants that the researcher interviewed and observed are close to their pension, except for **TCH A**. However, the three participants have a primary teacher's course, and know how to deal with little children but they are not specialist in teaching English as they were trained to teach every subject whether they knew or liked it or not.

The subject advisor revealed the crisis of multi-grade teaching that is affecting most schools and which is the cause of learners to underperform. The workload that teachers experience caused them not to do justice in any learning area. More so, teachers are forced to teach English, the learning area they have no in-depth understanding of it. This is a big challenge to both teachers and learners as they are dealing directly with this, hence they become victims where English is concerned as it is regarded as a Language of Learning and Teaching (**LoLT**).

Below is theme 2 and 7 relevant questions that are more on teaching strategies of English reading comprehension during English lessons.

4.3.2 Teaching Strategies of English Reading Comprehension

Davis (2011) ; Block & Presley (2002) perceive comprehension strategies as learned procedures that foster active competent, self-regulated and intentional

reading that guide learners to decode a text, understand words and construct meaning. In this light, the teaching of English reading comprehension strategies is as vital as they give a purpose of learning to learners. The researcher posed the same question to all teachers from different schools as well as the **HOD**. The responses of teachers with the same view are put together.

When interviewing the teachers, **TCH B** and **TCH C** indicated that they taught learners how to summarise. Summarization is a higher level of comprehension strategy that can improve long-term retention of information (Braxton, 2009). Furthermore, Klapwijk & Nel (2003) claim that learners in disadvantaged areas should be taught strategies that would include repetition of what has been read to promote remembering information as strategies are tools to assist learners to make sense of the text.

The teaching of summarization needs to be modeled by the teacher and scaffold learners in grade 7 until they feel comfortable and be able to work independently. A teacher could also train learners to summarise using guiding questions and different organizers such as mind maps and flow charts to identify key points and ideas in a text.

The following question was asked of the teachers to know if they were aware of the strategies of English reading comprehension.

1. Are you familiar with comprehension strategies? If Yes, please mention them.

Responses:

TCH B: *'No, I am not familiar at all with strategies of reading comprehension but I taught my learners how to summarise.'*

TCH C: *'I do not know much about strategies for reading comprehension. I only know summary writing and I also taught them how to use a dictionary,' (Appendix 4).*

During classroom observation, **TCH C** gave learners a text to read and instructed them that after finishing reading they will do summary not in writing but orally. Learners were given 20 to 25 minutes to read the text using dictionaries to verify the meanings of unfamiliar words. Learners were never reminded of the steps to follow when dealing with summary, as a result, instead of selecting facts from the text, learners started to retell the story. Learners depend on their teachers; they reproduce what they had been taught. This means that if teachers are confused, also the learners would be confused.

At this stage, the teacher confused retelling with summarization strategies. Observing in **SCH B, TCH B**, barely taught English reading comprehension strategy in my presence. The teacher mentioned the word 'summary' when she instructed the learners that they should do summary as a homework after answering the question. In this view, the researcher could not prove whether learners were taught the strategy and understood it or not, although when interviewing, the learners revealed that they were taught how to summarise. This showed a confusion among the learners as they do not what is right and wrong.

The following is the response of **TCH A and TCH D** regarding the same question above.

TCH A: *'Not really. I only know skimming and scanning, although I never taught my learners to use those strategies when they do comprehension.'*

TCH D: *'I cannot say I am familiar with all strategies, but I tried to teach summary writing,'(Appendix 4).*

The responses of the teachers revealed a shallow understanding of the strategies that could be used for reading comprehension. Both **TCH A and TCH D** did not teach any strategy of reading comprehension during observation, although **TCH A** stated that he knows scanning and skimming. This could mean that the teacher knew scanning and skimming for himself and never introduced learners to such strategies. The teacher never reminded the learners to scan and skim the text before the actual reading took place. It is evident that learners were never exposed even to one strategy of English reading comprehension. Such learners would reach high schools not knowing a single strategy of reading comprehension.

The same question was also administered to the **HOD in SCH D** since she leads the department of languages and is supposed to be clear about the content so that he/she could be able to assist English teachers.

2. Are you (**the HOD**) familiar with comprehension strategies?

Responses HOD:

'Yes, I am familiar with the strategies of reading comprehension although I used one strategy which is summary writing. I chose it because to me it is very important. For instance when I teach summary I use questions for each paragraph in a comprehension text that directs them to what is important in that paragraph. Since I teach grade 6 I do not give them difficult comprehension text because I am training them to identify facts in those simple texts. Although I do all the effort, the truth is learners have a problem with English language. It is not easy. Learners in rural areas are not exposed to the language,' (Appendix 5).

The **HOD** seemed very confident and showed understanding of strategies of English reading comprehension. Based on **HOD** responses, the researcher was unable to observe her class during the presentation of the strategy taught, the explanation on teaching of the strategy to young ones is so effective. If learners can grasp this strategy, understand it, then that could yield to good results. None the less, the **HOD** complained about the learners who were not compliant and find it difficult to understand English language. This is a disturbing situation in rural areas whereby learners are slow to grasp and understand English as most of the teachers teach and emphasis in Isixhosa during English lessons. It is also disturbing to find a teacher who is well versed in the learning area but unable to coach other teachers to become competent and knowledgeable because of attitudes that are displayed by teachers.

Similarly, learners were interviewed on the same subject about English reading comprehension strategies. The researcher wanted to know whether learners were taught the strategies of reading English comprehension. Learners from different schools with the same level of understanding were clustered together in the form of **Focus groups** except for the **focus group** from **SCH A**.

The following question was asked in order to identify whether relevant teaching strategies are taught in schools during English reading comprehension.

3. Which strategies were you taught by your teacher during English reading comprehension? (e.g. summary, inferring etc).

Below are the learner's responses in a **Focus Group** from different schools whereby they were giving a chance to discuss in the group and then answer according to their own performances as highlighted above.

Responses:

Lnr 1B -S: *'I only know how to summarise.'*

Lnr 2C-S: *'Teacher taught us how to summarise. The summary is not that difficult.'*

Lnr 1C:-S: *'I know how to use a dictionary and to summarise.'*

Lnr1D-S: *'We did a summary, and I like it although it is difficult. It is not easy to search for important information in a text.'*

Lnr 2D-S: *'Teacher taught us a summary. If the story is easy summary is not difficult,' (Appendix 7).*

The above is the response of strong learners from each school whereby they indicated that they were taught summarization. Their honest response revealed that though they know and understand summarization, but it is not an easy strategy to master. If the strong learners have noted that summarization is not easy to grasp, it is evident that the average and weak learners would not cope well with this strategy. However, summarisation might not be easy but the teachers have tried to expose their learners even to one strategy. It is unfortunate that the researcher could not see the process of teaching English reading comprehension strategies and watched the journey learners went through until they showed the understanding of summarization. For these learners to eventually understand summarization, they should be given more activities on summary writing until they understand it clearly and become confident to apply the relevant strategies.

The following were the responses of the average learners from different primary schools to the question asked above.

Responses:

Lnr 3B-AV: 'Teacher taught us a summary, but it is difficult.'

Lnr 4B-AV: 'Summary, mhmm.'

Lnr 3C-AV: 'We were taught summary but I do not understand it. It's difficult to summarise.'

Lnr 4C-AV: 'Summary writing is difficult.'

Lnr 3D-AV: 'We did a summary.'

Lnr 4D-AV: 'Teacher taught us summary. (Appendix 7).'

When interviewing the average learners, it was clear that they found summarizing very difficult. This means that they have not grasped the strategy hence it will not be easy for them to apply it even in other learning areas. Teachers claimed that when they teach English comprehension, they used simple passages for learners so that they understand what they read. If that was so, then that could mean their learners were very weak or they had no interest in English language which could develop a negative attitude towards English language. The researcher assumed that if the texts were simple, average learners should at least understand and immediately saw the facts in a text. The average learners form the majority in the classroom and it is where the teacher should assess how effective his/her teaching

is. The response of the learners to this question showed that the teachers lacked good approaches to use during the teaching of English reading comprehension. The following are the responses of the weak learners from those different primary schools on the same question asked above.

Responses:

Lnr 5B-W: *'I don't like a summary. I don't understand. I don't understand English.'*

Lnr 6B-W: *'I do not understand summary writing. To summarise is too difficult.'*

Lnr 5C-W: *'Summary kodwa intima. [Summary, but it is difficult.]'*

Lnr 6C-W: *'Summary.'*

Lnr 5D-W: *'We did a summary but it is too difficult.'*

Lnr 6D-W: *'Summary. I do not like it. It is difficult.'* **(Appendix 7).**

This group of learners openly stated that summary writing was difficult. Their responses showed that they had a challenge of not understanding the English language. Once the English language becomes a barrier, then it would not be easy for weak learners to understand summarization, as it is not an easy strategy hence

it needs different strategies to apply in order to accommodate all the learners in the classroom as a way of applying diversity and inclusivity. in this regards, the learners could have a glimpse of what was taught. Braxton (2009) says that summarization is the most difficult strategy for learners to master, and one of the hardest to teach. As indicated above that the focus group from **SCH A** will be dealt with separately. Below are responses of the learners still using the same question above.

Responses:

Lnr 1A-S: 'I do not remember being taught a strategy.'

Lnr 2A-S: 'No, we have not yet been taught strategies, maybe he is still going to teach us.'

Lnr3A-AV: 'No, we haven't done that.'

Lnr4A-AV: 'No, I haven't heard about strategies.'

Lnr 5A-W: 'I do not know.'

***Lnr 6A-W: 'I do not know.'*(Appendix 7).**

The learners' response showed that they were never taught any strategy to use when dealing with English reading comprehension. It is a pity that these learners have not been prepared for massive texts they would encounter at high schools and beyond; that is why they found high school work too difficult for them because they have no techniques to deal with a text in all learning areas. The responses of the learners exposed the challenge regarding the teaching of English reading comprehension. Zimmerman & Smit (2014) confirm that teaching of even one strategy can improve learners' comprehension.

The following question was asked to probe whether learners apply those strategies during reading comprehension. The responses of the learners with the same view were grouped together according to their abilities as highlighted earlier on.

4. Are those strategies helping you to understand what you read?

Responses:

Lnr 1B-S: *'Yes, I even do a summary to other learning areas, and that makes my studies easier.'*

Lnr 2B-S: *'Yes, I am able to write again what I have read.'*

Lnr 1C-S: *'Summary helped me to look for important information from the comprehension.'*

Lnr 2C-S: *'Yes, summary taught me to read with understanding because at the end I have to summarise what I have read.'*

Lnr 1D-S: ‘Yes, I can say they help, although summary is difficult but I learned to do my notes when reading.’

Lnr 2D-S: ‘Yes I know now that when I read I must concentrate.’(Appendix 7).

The response of the strong learners showed that they understood the strategy taught and they knew that they could apply it in other learning areas. This suggests that they have no problem with the English language, therefore, they understand the texts given. Probably they have a rich vocabulary that allows them to understand English. During observation at **SCH C**, the learners did not know the difference between retelling and summarization, but their response during interview contradicted with what happened in the classroom.

The following are the responses of the average learners from various primary schools on the same question highlighted above.

Responses:

Lnr 4B-AV: ‘I still have a problem with summary writing.’

Lnr 3B-AV: ‘No, I do not use that strategy when reading my books.’

Lnr 3C-AV: ‘I never thought of using that strategy when reading, so I cannot say it helps.’

Lnr 4C-AV: *'It was so difficult for me to summarise so I don't use it when reading my books.'*

Lnr 3D-AV: *'I do not use the strategy we were taught when reading.'*

Lnr 4D-AV: *'I do not use a strategy when reading. Yes,' (Appendix 7).*

The reflection of the average learners indicated that learners did not understand clearly the strategy taught, as a result, they were unable to apply it even to other learning areas. In addition, their response showed that they had a challenge with the English language. Since they lack English proficiency, it would be difficult for them think in English and be able to select important ideas in any text they read and be able to respond to questions appropriately.

As indicated above, a focus group from **SCH A** would be dealt with in isolation. Here are their responses to the same question above.

Responses:

Lnr 1A-S: *'We haven't yet been taught the strategies, so I cannot say they helped me.'*

Lnr 2A-S: *'I cannot say strategies help, I do not know them.'*

Lnr 5A-W: *'I do not know the strategies.'*

Lnr 6A-W: *'I do not know.'*

Lnr3A-AV: *'I cannot say they help, I do not know them.'*

Lnr 4A-AV: *'We were not taught strategies.'* (**Appendix 7**).

Learners at **SCH A** voiced out their frustration of not knowing anything about strategies of English reading comprehension.

Learners do not know what is expected of them in the curriculum, therefore, they are not aware of what should be taught or not. This is a bad reflection to the teacher concerned who is not willing to improve the state of the learners. The responses of the learners at **SCH A** revealed a total neglect of the teaching of English reading comprehension strategies.

When observing the teachers, the researcher noted that they knew nothing about strategies of English reading comprehension; therefore, it could be difficult for them to impart any information concerning strategies of English reading comprehension to learners. It is evident that a teacher cannot teach what he/she does not know and understand. In that case, teachers would produce learners who will be unable to retrieve and retain any information. Their learning would become ineffective and these type of learners would never be competence and independent. For instance, **TCH A** has deprived his learners the information that could be beneficial to them. The impact of neglecting learners from primary schools becomes a lifelong problem as learners depend on their teachers to equip them with relevant knowledge and skills that could improve their learning and become critical thinkers in future. In this case, a thorough teaching of strategies of English reading comprehension could improve the situation of learners who read without understanding.

Apart from summarization, which **TCH B**, **TCH C**, and **THC D** mentioned, there are several strategies which could be helpful to learners such as activating background

information/knowledge, monitoring comprehension and generating questions while reading. It is important that teachers use different strategies for teaching English reading comprehension as learners need different kinds of intervention to suit their diverse needs.

The National Reading Panel in the USA confirmed that professional development is important in order for teachers to obtain adequate information on reading comprehension using suitable strategies for different learners and model them in the classroom. All teachers observed by the researcher did not teach any strategy of reading comprehension. They explained that they were not competent in teaching strategies of English reading comprehension because they were never taught how to teach it from their institution. If teachers missed the opportunity of being trained on how to teach and apply strategies for reading comprehension in their institutions, the District Office has to offer them workshops that would assist them in teaching these strategies in order to acquire relevant knowledge and skills needed for the teaching and learning. Thus, the researcher asked a probing question to teachers in order to find out if they were assisted by the District Office in teaching of strategies of English reading comprehension. Below are teachers' responses in relation to question 5.

5. Do you attend workshops done by the department so that you may know how to teach strategies of reading comprehension?

Responses:

TCH A: 'No, in the period of two years in this school I had never attended any workshop in English since we have no Subject Advisor.'

***TCH B:** 'It's been longtime since I attended a workshop. We have no Subject Advisor for Inter-Sen.'*

TCH C:** 'It's been quite a long time since we attended workshops.'**(Appendix 4).

TCH D:** 'No. We do not have workshops for grade 7. We have no subject advisor, but as a cluster, we meet to discuss and help each other. Unfortunately, in our cluster group, no one is an expert in teaching comprehension, we all have the same problem.'**(Appendix 7).

All the teachers insisted that they have never underwent any training or received any assistance from their District Office preparing them to teach English reading comprehension. The teachers further acknowledged that they have a challenge in teaching reading comprehension strategies and they also experienced a challenge of learners who cannot read, write and understand texts. This could be the reason that caused teachers to develop inferiority complex. In view of this, teachers are frustrated as they have no solution to the problem. Klapwijk (2012) states that teachers seldom teach reading strategies explicitly in South African schools and may not know how to teach comprehension, as CAPS does not give a clear explanation of the strategies which teachers must use to enhance learners in English reading comprehension in grade 7. This means that if teachers are not developed through workshops, seminars and in-service training in teaching reading comprehension, there would be poor performance among teachers which, result to poor performance of learners. The researcher asked a probing question to **SA (Subject Advisor)** to find out if he has plans for professional development of the teachers concerning teaching strategies of English reading comprehension.

Below are the responses of SA to the following questions:

6. Are teachers aware of the strategies for reading comprehension?

Responses:

S A: *'I do not think so, but I cannot conclude at this stage because I haven't met the teachers, like having a workshop with them and see what is actually happening.*

In my own experience as a teacher, I had never taught my learners strategies of reading comprehension. I am also a victim; I was never trained in my institution how to go about with comprehension. But these programmes the department trained us with, will definitely assist the teachers in reading comprehension,'
(Appendix 6).

7. To what extent are you committed to enhancing the well-being of teachers?

Responses:

S A: *'I will do my best, what is more, important to me is to motivate teachers, increase subject knowledge, and visit them at their schools.'***(Appendix 6).**

The responses of the **SA** on question 5 and 6 showed that he was aware of the problem of English reading comprehension and showed commitment in developing teachers as he has a plan of empowering them because it is the duty of the subject advisor to bridge the gap of the subject content for the teachers. It is evident that teacher training colleges and universities should train their student teachers on how to use strategies of reading comprehension, as this is the essence of reading.

The following is theme 3 with 4 questions based on teaching comprehension.

4.3.3 Teaching of Comprehension

CAPS (2011) requires teachers to have knowledge and skills on how to teach reading comprehension. There are three main basic teaching and learning strategies that should be implemented during reading comprehension, namely: pre-reading, during/while reading and post-reading skills. The pre-reading activity helps learners to make connections or associations with their own experience and alert learners to surface features of the text type hence background knowledge is vital at this stage. During reading, there are several strategies that teachers could apply such as summarization, self-questioning and monitoring in training learners to engage with the text. In post reading, learners should be able to answer questions, draw conclusions or draw their own opinions about the text and develop critical language awareness.

During the classroom observations, teachers never applied the methods of teaching reading comprehension as stipulated in CAPS, the three basic steps namely :- pre-reading, during reading and post reading skills, instead they applied the traditional approach where the teachers would read aloud the text first and ask learners to read the text three times silently and answer the questions. Learners were not taught how to engage with the text. They did not teach the learners how to answer the questions or how to identify main ideas in the text. It is evident that all the teachers observed by the researcher failed to develop critical language awareness to learners. Kapinga (2012) stipulates that teacher's knowledge of subject matter and teaching methods are all important elements of teacher effectiveness. Due to lack of knowledge and how to implement the curriculum as

indicated above, teachers lacked interest in teaching English reading comprehension, as they do not get any support to develop the skills and knowledge they already have.

The following questions were asked to the teachers to probe whether they have any interest in teaching English reading comprehension. Below are teachers' responses related to the questions asked.

1. Do you like teaching English reading comprehension? Elaborate.

Responses:

TCH A: 'I had no idea on how to teach English comprehension. What I do I give them a comprehension passage and I tell them to answer the questions after finishing reading it.'

TCH C: 'No, as a result, I do not give my learners more activities in it.'

TCH B: 'No. I give learners comprehension because it is a must.'

TCH D: 'No, although I know that it stimulates thinking but I don't like teaching it. I really do not know how to teach it and learners fail to understand it,'
(Appendix 4).

2. Can you state why you like or dislike teaching English Comprehension?

Responses:

TCH A: *'I do not like teaching it since I have no clue on how to teach it.'*

TCH C: *'I do not know any method of teaching comprehension except following what the textbook requires.'*

TCH D: *'Most learners do not understand English, so it becomes difficult for them to understand the questions, they just answer,' (Appendix 4).*

The responses of the teachers on question 1 and 2 showed lack of knowledge and skills in the teaching of English comprehension. This is a contributing factor towards the negative attitude they displayed. When teachers do not know what to do, that affects the learners' progress. Teachers do not lack only knowledge about teaching comprehension, but they also lack relevant methods and techniques of teaching English reading comprehension and making it interesting to learners. The fact that the participants experienced problems in teaching English comprehension was an indication that the teaching comprehension was too complex for them. The World Bank (2015) affirms that if teachers have not seen, or be informed and experienced a different way of teaching comprehension, they cannot be expected to implement new reforms or new teaching approaches.

Most scholars shown that in most primary schools in South Africa, teachers do not teach English reading comprehension. Furthermore, the fact that learners do not understand English makes teachers to lose interest in teaching comprehension, as

comprehension is an act making meaning out of the text, and learners fail to reach that point of making meaning in a text.

When asking the same probing question to the **HOD**, the response was as follows:

Responses:

HOD: *'Yes I do, but learners do not understand. Learners have to understand the Language before knowing the content. The lack of exposure to English is a barrier to our learners.'*

HOD: *'Yes. It makes learners think, but there will always be learners who makes you feel you are not doing anything or you are not doing enough.'*

They just don't understand English and we do not get any support from the parents to help us in this situation,' (Appendix 5).

When interviewing the **HOD**, the researcher saw disappointment all over her face that showed she was facing a great challenge for the learners and the problem was acute. This suggests that it is not easy to teach in rural schools as the situation demotivates the teachers more especially when the parents are not involved. Swartz et al., (2016) state that English language problem is aggravated as learners proceed to higher grades where greater demands are made of their limited English proficiency in terms of reading comprehension.

The responses to the question below strive to identify whether the activities given to learners were effective or not. Learners with the same capabilities were clustered together.

3. Did you enjoy reading English comprehension in the classroom? Elaborate.

Responses:

Lnr 1 A- S: *'Yes, I like reading stories and I understand English.'*

Lnr 1B-S: *'I understand the stories we usually read.'*

Lnr 1C-S: *'Most of our comprehensions are simple stories, so I enjoy reading them.'*

Lnr 1D- S: *'It depends on the story we read.'*

Lnr 2D-S: *'The stories we read are not that difficult.'*

The responses from strong learners above seemed to be comfortable with the text given to them as they showed confidence that they understand English. Almost all learners indicated that *'they read stories'*, which means that they were exposed to one form of text and that is narrative. Academically, these learners were not developed to think beyond. Their teachers had formed a certain level for them that they could not move abreast the level of stories. The subject advisor who stated that *'teachers have low expectations for their learners'* confirms this attitude. Learners in grade 7 need to be exposed to more than one text form in order to stretch their imagination and thought. In addition to this, it is the duty of the teachers

to develop the cognitive academic skills of the learners by engaging them with texts that are more literary.

The more the learners are engaged with texts, the more the imaginative and reasoning ability develops in their English first additional language.

Below are the average learners' response to the same question above:

Responses:

Lnr 3 C-AV: 'Yes, if the story is interesting.'

Lnr 3 B-AV: 'Yes, but some stories are difficult.'

Lnr 3 A-AV: 'Sometimes the story is boring,' (Appendix 7).

Lnr 3 D-AV: 'No, I do not like it that much. If it is an interesting story, it becomes better,' (Appendix 7).

The response of learners showed clearly that they did encounter problems with comprehension text, their understanding of the text depended on how interesting the story was, and if the story was not interesting one loses interest. Their teachers needed to explain to them that not all texts would be exciting and interesting, but they have to read for information.

A large number of learners in the classroom are average learners, which mean that they need to be motivated by their teachers so that they could perform better and elevate them to join the stronger learners.

The following is the weak learners' response on the same question asked above:

Responses:

Lnr 5 A- W: *'No. I don't like comprehension it's difficult.'*

Lnr 6 B- W: *'Mhmmm! The questions at the end are difficult.'*

Lnr 6C-W: *'It usually has difficult words that make it not easy to read and understand,' (Appendix 7).*

Lnr 6D-W: *'No. I do not like it.'*

The reflections of the weak learners indicated that a lot of work should be done. They experience challenges with the English language. The frustration they encounter concerning the English language is portrayed in their negative attitude towards English. The reality about these learners is that they are unable to read and comprehend. In this view, some are not prepared to read at all, and thus resulting in reading without understanding. Beruba (2002) reveals that some learners suffer neurological and physiological disorder, which hinders them from reading, as there is no proper exposure to the culture of reading.

Looking at the response of **LNR 6B-W**, suggested that his/her understanding of reading English comprehension was to answer questions only. This could suggest that the learner has compounded challenges, firstly, the reading problem and secondly, the fear of answering questions at the end, as she/he does not know how to respond to the question without understanding a text read. Questions are meant to show whether learners understood what they read, and they challenge the ability of learners exposing those who are able or unable to use their cognitive skills. Some weak learners might find that the text has too much information and high level of vocabulary for their level and thus make them read without understanding. Cummins (1981) is of the opinion that learners should be introduced early to English in primary schools in order to allow the learners sufficient time to acquire Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency that is needed to master the upper primary and secondary curriculum.

In addition, it seems that these learners had not acquired the skill of engaging with the text where they can extract and construct meaning out of it, as Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) refer to reading comprehension as the essence of reading; an interactive process of finding meaning of the text, whereby the reader extract and construct meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Such learners need teachers who could adjust and be flexible enough to give them a text with a suitable register to their low comprehension levels. Unfortunately, many teachers lack that skill, as they have never been exposed to and lack a support from the Department of Education.

The following question was posed to the **SA** to find out about his plans to develop the teachers. Below is his response:

4. 'What part have you played in developing English First Additional Language (EFAL) teachers concerning reading comprehension?'

Responses:

SA: *'I intend to implement programmes such as NECT (National Education Collaboration Trust), 'How I Teach" to develop teachers. In addition, I will demonstrate how to do a lesson plan,' (Appendix 6).*

The response from Subject Advisor showed commitment and enthusiasm to help teachers to know how to teach comprehension. The programmes he mentioned are good in developing and empowering the teachers. If he could succeed in his plan, there would be a great change to teachers in their ways of teaching English reading comprehension.

The following is theme 4 and 4 questions on teachers' knowledge of active learning approaches during English lessons.

4.3.4 Teachers Knowledge of Active Learning Approaches

Active learning is an effective approach that can lead to improved quality and success in teaching which expands learners' horizon of thinking and is able to generate their own ideas (Teresa & Dosta, 2015).

In order for teachers to use active learning, they should know that collaborative and cooperative learning techniques are used to actively involve the learners in the lesson. Cooperative learning as a form of active learning is a set of classroom methods, which involves learners working together as partners/peers or small groups to help each other and teachers providing scaffolding, and modeling of the comprehension strategies (Schwartz, 2012 & Davis, 2011). Thus, the researcher asked a probing question to teachers trying to find out if they comply with active learning approaches, as CAPS requires.

The following are teachers' responses on questions pertaining to the seating arrangements in their classes that could lead to the implementation of active learning approaches. The views of the teachers with the same seating arrangement in the classroom were grouped together.

1. 'I saw that your learners are seated in rows. Why did you choose that arrangement? Do you allow them to work in pairs or in groups?'

Responses:

TCH A: *'I arranged them like that so that they see me when I teach. Also, this arrangement reduces chances of copying when they do their work.'*

TCH B: *'Firstly we do not have enough desks and chairs that is why they are three in a desk. The seating arrangement helps them to see clearly on the board,' (Appendix 4).*

During observations, in **SCH A and SCH B**, learners were seated in rows and in pairs. Some were three in one desk because of the lack of furniture and space. As they engaged with the comprehension text, learners did not use the opportunity of seating in pairs and discussed the text and questions that needed to be answered at the end. Their teachers did not instruct them to work in pairs; instead, they were timed and again reprimanded not to make any noise.

TCH A and TCH B showed resistance to change and promote individual or independent working as learners learn better, when they interact with others by sharing different ideas.

Teachers had their reasons for letting their learners' seat in rows. They argued that they were minimizing chances of learners copying someone else's work. Learners had to exercise working independently because during examinations they would work as individuals. Unfortunately, the learners who could not cope with the text were weak learners that needed assistance from other learners.

In addition, **TCH A** showed the researcher three boys who were seated at the back of the classroom that had a severe problem in English language; as a result, they could not finish their activity on time. Such learners who needed more attention are left out to work alone without any assistance either from the teacher or from their peers. Based on this argument, learners in **SCH A and SCH B** missed an opportunity of sharing ideas, discuss them so that even the weaker learners could be actively involved, and gain information as well as stimulating their thinking.

The seating arrangement in **SCH A and SCH B** did not accommodate active learning approach, where learners can discuss the task before writing it down, and assisting those learners who cannot manage or strong enough to work independently. The study revealed that there are teachers who still use traditional methods of teaching and seating arrangement in their classes.

It is imperative for schools to adapt to curriculum planning and its implementation because it provides a clear specification of methods or approaches to be used in the classroom. In this light, teachers should consider the seating arrangement in the classrooms as it could inspire learners to have interest in their learning process.

The following are the response of **TCH C** concerning the seating arrangement in her classroom:

2. Why did you choose a U-shaped seating arrangement for your class? Do you allow them to work in pairs or in groups?

Responses:

TCH C: *'I wanted an eye-to-eye contact. As they are seated, I see all of them and they also see me. No one can hide. As they are seated they work in pairs. I usually put those weak learners between better off learners so that they get help,' (Appendix 4).*

The U-shape seating arrangement done by **TCH C** was not a bad idea. With that arrangement, she was able to capture the attention of all learners and the learners could see each other. The two approaches (i.e. teacher-centered and learnercentred) had been fused together in this classroom. The aim was to allow learners to discuss their tasks and activities assisting each other. Unfortunately, during observation, learners were working independently and the researcher was unable to see the group/pair teamwork or the parliament style of discussion in operation.

That was the part the researcher wished to see and so curious to watch how the discussion is conducted in that manner. None-the-less, the seating arrangement was great. It could be a motivating factor to learners as their teacher confirmed that it made, *'them to think they are great'*.

Below is **TCH D's** response to the same question relating to the seating arrangement in the classroom.

Responses:

TCH D: 'Yes, the learners are seated in groups so that they discuss and work together. In each group, there is a strong learner. Sometimes I group them according to their abilities.'

From her response, the teacher seemed to know what was expected concerning the effect of grouping learners in the classroom. However, concerning what the researcher expected, it seemed as if the teacher was not clear on how to engage learners in groups since the learners did not discuss the text or be given any instructions leading to a discussion of the text. It is evident that teachers require continued in-service training so that they adapt to the instructional changing needs of the curriculum and build a deeper understanding of what active learning means in different perspectives and instructional contexts. Marias (2016) stipulates that teachers in South African schools both rural and urban areas were not trained in their institutions about active approaches that CAPS (2011) demands; therefore it is not easy for them to align with the new approaches especially where reading comprehension is concerned.

Below is the response of the teachers that was based on the first question concerning the use of group work.

Responses:

TCH A: *'When they do an activity that wants learners to work in pairs or in groups, yes, I allow them to work in pairs or groups.'*

TCH B: *'They do work in pairs or groups if the activity demands that, but they work independently most of the time.'*

TCH C: *'As they are seated they work in pairs. I usually put those weak learners between better off learners so that they get.'*

TCH D: *'Yes, the learners are seated in groups so that they discuss and work together. In each group, there should be a strong. Sometimes we group them according to their abilities,' (Appendix 7).*

The response of the teachers showed that sometimes they use mixed approaches depending on the activity done by the learners. Some researchers agree with this perception arguing that a balanced teaching has a healthy mixture of both presentations where a teacher-centered approach and learner-centred approach are accommodated in the classroom, and that classroom arrangement can be changed to suit the teaching approach of that lesson.

However, Mtitu (2014); Teresa & Desta (2015) affirm that all teachers need to be empowered for any change happening in the curriculum so that they become effective in teaching and learning.

It is evident that teachers should be trained on how to implement cooperative learning in the classroom and to see the beauty of learners with different levels of ability assisting each other, discussing the text trying to put meaning out of it. It is in that state where even the weak learners start to see the light and realize the effectiveness of learning and develop interest to learning too. Through such discussions, even weak learners are made to understand the text by the peers. It is high time that teachers should not underestimate the power of group work because it yields an atmosphere of accommodating each other and knowing their strengths and weaknesses, and developing their self-esteem.

The learners were interviewed using the same questions asked to their teachers as to get their own version about the seating arrangement in their classrooms. Learners as well were grouped according to their responses in a form of **Focus Groups**.

3. How is the seating arrangement in your class? Are you seated in rows or in groups?

Responses:

Lnrs in SCH A: '(Chorus) in rows.' Lnrs

3 B-AV: 'We sit in rows.'

Lnr 2 B-S: *'Yes, we sit in rows, sometimes in groups.'*

Lnr 1 B-S: *'We sit in rows but we sit in groups when we do group work,' (Appendix 7).*

The physical set up and presentation in a classroom can significantly influence learning. Sitting in rows is a traditional setup and is a fixed setting which revolves around teacher-centred approach where teachers are concerned about being the centre of authority and those learners should understand the content and work independently as teachers have confirmed, while CAPS promotes learner-centred approaches. The lack of understanding of the new approaches by teachers is a hindrance to positive change that can cause learners to be actively involved in their learning. The researcher missed the opportunity of watching learners practising active learning in the classroom. Bantwini (2012) confirms that teachers in rural areas hardly get training on active learning approaches that could assist learners' understanding reading comprehension.

The question bellows try to identify whether learners do work together or not during English lessons.

4. Do you assist each other in reading comprehension?

Responses:

Lnr 2 AS: *'I help when one asks.'*

Lnr 3 A- AV: *'No, I do my work alone.'*

Lnr 5 A-W: *'I work alone.'*

Lnr 6 A-W: 'I work alone.'

Lnr 5 B-W: 'I work alone.'

Lnr 6 B-W: 'I like to work alone.'

The responses of learners showed that they were never trained to work together in groups or peers. In this regard, the learners had missed an opportunity of sharing ideas and discuss them so that even the weaker learners will be able to be actively involved and gain information as well as stimulating their thinking. The teachers have not understood the ideology of Vygotsky (1986) termed as ZPD which is a gap between what individuals can do on their own and what they can do with the help of more knowledgeable others. In addition, CAPS (2011) states that learners should get an opportunity to use language for social and practical purposes.

Active learning embraces cooperative learning, which is important in reading comprehension whereby learners would learn to work together as a team, thinking about what they do together. The study revealed that teachers had not yet grasped the meaning of cooperative learning. They are not aware that cooperative learning is there to fill the gap between the weak and the strong learners and making learners be accountable for their learning process. Active learning focuses on developing learners' skills and requires that learners read, discuss and write their views.

When learners are seated in pairs or in groups, that arrangement is beneficial to them as it promotes active learning that is a learner-centred. Thus, learners need to engage with one another in order to experience deep and meaningful learning whereby they would be responsible for their decision-making. It is vital for enhancing learners to read any English text for understanding (Rajcoomar, 2013).

For example, most learners could not answer higher order questions when they were given a text to work on, if learners were seated in groups and given time and chance to work together, they would have discussed the questions, and come up with better answers. In addition, grouping learners could help teachers to cope with the challenges of limited instructional time.

The following is the learners' response from **SCH C** concerning their seating arrangement:

Responses:

Lnr 1C: 'We are in U- shape.'

Lnr 2C: 'We seat like we are in parliament,' (Appendix 7).

The seating like in a parliament emerges which means that it had an impact on learners. Therefore, if learners were so motivated by their seating arrangement it meant the teacher had a good platform of creating a learner-centred approach that expose learners to critical analysis of a text as a group and monitor it wisely. Those learners could be good in debates and public speaking.

The following is theme 5 that consists of 2 questions on time allocation issues.

4.3.5 Time Allocation

CAPS (2011) requires teachers to be conscious about time allocated for the English language lessons. The policy requires that English should be allocated five periods per week, with duration of an hour per period.

Based on this argument, English is a First Additional Language to all the learners in this province and is a language of Medium of Instructions to all different subjects. Thus, it should be given more periods and time per week in order to assist the learners to get used to it and be able to understand it properly. This poses a challenge to learners because it is not their home language; moreover, learners in rural areas have little or no exposure to English out of school (Linake, 2015). Therefore, English First Additional Language needs more teaching time to train learners to read with a critical mind and with understanding demonstrating independent reading for information as highlighted earlier on.

During interviews, the researcher asked the teachers a question pertaining to time allocation for English teaching time to investigate if teachers were in align with CAPS.

Below is the question and the responses of the teachers:

1. What is the duration of English period in your school?

Responses:

TCH A: 'It's 60 minutes.'

TCH B: 'It is 1hour (i.e. 60 minutes).'

TCH C: 'The duration of the class period is 30 minutes.'

TCH D: 'It is 30 minutes.'

2. Do you think the duration of English period is enough?

Responses:

TCH A: *'Yes, in an hour I am able to finish what I intended to teach and also give learners an activity to do.'*

TCH B: *'Yes, it is enough. I am able to finish my lesson.'*

TCH C: *'No, not at all. Language demands a lot of time more. It is not their home language mind you. What I normally do is when I need more time I talk to the teacher of following period to give me his/her period. English is difficult to learners I really need more time. Also what makes this 30 minutes to be a very short time, I have to code switch for learners to know what I am saying.'*

TCH D: *'No, it is not enough because English is an additional language and the learners need to be thoroughly taught because it is difficult to them. Learners need more explanation.'*

The response of the teachers on question 1 and 2 revealed different perspectives concerning time allocation for English teaching time. For instance, in SCH A and SCH B, **they** allocated an hour for their teaching time and that was in line with the policy, whereas **SCH C and SCH D** did not comply with the policy as their class periods were 30 minutes in their schools.

During the interviews with the teachers from different schools, **TCH A and TCH B** revealed that they were able to utilize the time allocated for English language effectively, but as I observed in their classrooms, their learners were unable to finish on time. **TCH C and TCH D** were aware of the little time allocated for English more especially when teaching reading comprehension since there is a lot involved in it.

Wessel (2010) confirms that classroom time is limited and teachers have to find ways and means to encourage learners to become readers. In this regard, learners in **SCH C and SCH D** were unable to familiarize themselves with the text due to time constraint. Wessel (2010) further explain that time allocation for reading is important to enhance reading comprehension. It is evident that learners should be exposed to the written words. In **SCH C and SCH D**, learners were deprived enough time to be actively involved with the text, and communicate in English in the classroom with the aim of developing their English language. However, the teachers were aware that English is not the home language of their learners, hence it needs more attention.

In addition, learners in rural schools need more teaching time for English, as it is a barrier to them. The challenge faced by rural learners should be taken into consideration. When teachers draft their timetables in their schools, they should priorities that English should be given ample time, as it is a foundation for all learning areas and a problem to learners because it is regarded as Medium of Instructions.

The response of the **HOD** to the same question would be presented below:

Responses:

HOD-D: *'No, it is not enough. English is a First Additional Language is not their mother tongue,' (Appendix 5).*

The **HOD** is aware that the time allocated for teaching and learning at their school is not enough and their arrangement does not tally with what CAPS requires. The reflection of the **HOD** also indicated that learners who study English as an additional language need an ample time to read the language, exposing the learners to English words for them to cope with the demands of the language, more especially to learners in rural schools who lack English language proficiency. Furthermore, teaching English reading comprehension needs more time as it is a challenging matter to teachers and learners.

The following is theme 6 that consists of 2 question on limited English proficiency of rural learners.

4.3.6 Limited English Proficiency of Rural Learners.

Pretorius & Mampuru (2007) define language proficiency as the ability to speak or perform in an acquired language, while CAPS (2011) asserts that by the time the learners enter Senior Phase, they should be reasonably proficient in First Additional Language regard to both interpersonal and Cognitive Academic skills. This suggests that learners should reach a high level of competence in English where they would use the language with confidence in reading and in writing, and be able to respond appropriately.

At this stage, the researcher asked a probing question to learners trying to find out whether they see the importance of being taught in English or not. The researcher received mixed responses from different learners with different levels of competence in English.

The following are the responses from the learners based on the question asked:

1. Do you think it is important to be taught in English? Whether Yes or No – why?

Responses:

Lnr 1 A-S: *'Yes, all learning areas are taught in English.'*

Lnr 1 B-S: *'Yes, I enjoy it. It helps us to speak with people who don't know our language.'*

Lnr 1 C-S : *'Yes, I enjoy English- I know English better than isiXhosa. To me English is not hard. I like it,' (Appendix 7).*

These learners understand the impact of English in their studies and thus motivated them to like English and read it with understanding. It becomes easy to interpret the text and answer the questions when a learner is able to read a text with understanding.

The following is the average learners' response:

Responses:

Lnr 4A- AV: *'English is important, but I want to be taught in isiXhosa so that I understand.'*

Lnr 4B-AV: *'No, I do not like English, I don't understand it.'*

Lnr 3C-AV: *'I prefer isiXhosa. I have a problem with English.'*

The learners showed a strong resistance towards English, to them English could be used in the classroom provided the teacher would mix with isiXhosa. Their understanding of English is when it is translated into isiXhosa hence their teachers resorted to translating questions to isiXhosa. Mpiti (2016) states that teachers themselves lack English proficiency that is necessary for effective teaching in support of English language. This confirms that teachers themselves are not competent and confident enough to teach English, thus resulting in code mixing and code switching. In addition, these were average learners who posed such an attitude, which means that the schools are heading for disaster with more learners reading English texts without understanding.

The response from weak learners on the same question asked earlier on are as follow:

Responses:

Lnr5A-W: *'No, I do not understand English. I want isiXhosa because I speak isiXhosa.'*

Lnr 5B-W: *'No, I do not like English, I don't understand it.'*

Lnr 6C-W: *'I do not like English. No, I do not like it, and I do not understand it.'*

The negative attitude that learners portray towards English caused barrier to their learning. This indicates that learners take English as the worst learning area hence they develop a negative attitude towards it. The fact that they do not understand the language, they become frustrated and loose interest to English hence develop a negative attitude towards the language. In light of this, the learners prefer to be taught in their home language. It is unfortunate that such learners are trapped in English, which the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT), thus is making their lives more difficult. Anyiendah (2017) states that the learners' negative attitude towards English poses a great barrier for effective teaching and learning.

This negative attitude emanates from the fact that learners have limited competence in English language, and this prevents them from participating actively in the classroom even if they know a correct answer. The minimal learner participation leads to levels of underperformance in English language.

The curriculum acknowledges that many learners cannot communicate in English, as well as reading English text with understanding. Since some learners have lost interest and hope in understanding English that developed to a negative attitude towards it, the researcher administered the following question to the **SA** trying to find out whether the subject advisor is aware of this challenge.

Below is the response from the SA:

2. What could be the challenge where English is concerned?

Responses:

SA: *'We have few dedicated teachers to teach English. They are not motivated enough, they need to be inspired. In addition, teachers have low expectations about the children. On the other hand, the challenge is with learners. For learners to read with understanding, they have to master reading. Learners need to be taught by their teachers' letter recognition and phonics so that they recognize words immediately in a text. These learners at homestay with their grannies who are illiterate, who can't assist them with their studie,' (Appendix 6).*

The subject advisor (**SA**) mentioned that there are few dedicated teachers to teach English this suggests that teachers are lazy. What the researcher perceived during interviews and observations was beyond laziness. Teachers are heavily burdened with many learning areas to teach, which means more different lesson plans to do and more administrative work to do, hence the learning area that a teacher dislikes suffers more.

Furthermore, these teachers had no training in the new curriculum in Grade 7, which means that they lacked subject content and teaching practices to meet the needs of learners within the classroom.

The subject advisor raised an important point that for learners to read with the understanding, they should master reading first in order to be able to respond to relevant questions appropriately. According to the curriculum, learners in the senior phase are expected to be well developed in their First Additional Language in all

four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). This means learners should master reading in their intermediate phase, but continue to strengthen it until senior phase (Grades 7-9). During observation, one teacher explained that learners experience severe difficulties in reading during the transition period from grade 4 to grade 5 and if they lose it there, it becomes difficult for them to master reading in all languages. Swartz et al., (2016) highlight that the essential problem emerges when the more advanced level of English is required to understand the subject matter through the medium of English. It is at this stage where teachers fail to cope with this transition and learners flounder. If learners cannot master reading, it is evident that it will be difficult for them to read with understanding.

In addition, it is the duty of the teachers to develop the cognitive academic skills of the learners by engaging them with texts that are more literary. The more they engage with texts, the more the imaginative ability develops in their English First Additional Language. This puts an emphasis on the point that learners should be exposed to English, as it is a foreign language and as the Language of Learning and Teaching (**LoLT**).

The following is theme 7 that consist of 2 questions on how learners could be motivated during English lessons.

4.3.7 Motivation of Learners

Effective and strategic teachers motivate their learners to develop interest in reading any text with the ultimate goal that they read with understanding. The learners' achievement in the additional language is related to their level of motivation to learn the language. The purpose of motivation is to capture the learners' attention and redirect them towards learning. There are two types of motivation namely; intrinsically and extrinsically motivation. An intrinsically motivated learner is driven by passion to learn any text and construct meaning out of it. The learner reads for information and pleasure, more especially if the material

is interesting and challenging. Extrinsically motivated learner studies for a reason. A learner performs in order to get a reward whether it is to pass or be given an award. When a learner has no intrinsic motivation or the intrinsic motivation is low, extrinsic motivation should be used (Mafuwane, 2012). Lee (2010) defines motivation as an internal force that drives an individual to move towards the goal after perceiving a plan, for example, a need for accomplishment. It can influence the interest, purpose, emotion or persistence with which a reader engages with the text (Mudzielwana, 2012).

The researcher interviewed the teachers (**TCH**) and a **HOD** concerning the motivation of their learners. The responses from **TCH D and HOD** would be analyzed together. Below is the teachers' response on how they motivate their learners to develop an interest in the English language.

1. How do you motivate and support your learners to like English?

Responses:

TCH A: *'I usually tell them to read a lot of books to gather information and gain more vocabulary in English, although that is not easy since most learners are unable to read.'*

TCH B: *'I engage my learners in debates and Spelling Bee. We do win in debates and that encourages them more especially my best learners. I also give them story books to read.'*

TCH C: *'I give them story books to read. They also do debate. We normally have competitions for debate in our district. Learners like to compete with learners from other schools. I do not know how to motivate those who cannot read, write and understand English,' (Appendix 4).*

Preparing learners for debates and public speaking consume time, and need teacher's support and motivation. The response of teachers is positive towards training learners for debates and public speaking and that is rewarded by winning during competitions. However, this devotion and enthusiasm teachers showed for debates is questionable, why can't they use the same dedication and energy in trying to search and know how to teach strategies of reading comprehension in order to improve the thinking ability of learners.

This suggests that the teachers were highly motivated for extramural activities and were able to transfer that motivation to their learners. Gardner (2006) explains that learners with higher levels of motivation do better than learners with low levels. If learners are motivated, they have reasons for engaging in relevant activities, persist in the activities, attend to the tasks and show desire to achieve their goals and enjoy the activities. This means that learners are motivated to engage in reading when they are given opportunity that improves their comprehension abilities.

Gardner (2006) further explains that motivation is a combination of efforts and the desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language. The teachers' efforts in encouraging learners to be active in programmes that could enrich them with vocabulary so that they develop selfconfidence and have positive attitude towards English are highly appreciated. Quoting **TCH B** where she stated that, '*We do win in debates and that encourages them more especially my best learners.*' This suggests that learners who were motivated in her English class were the best learners. It is then unfortunate that learners who are shy and weak are usually ignored in programmes such as debates and public speaking activities as these fields need stronger learners with good command of the language.

This showed that teachers are failing to implement inclusivity and diversity in the class especially during English lessons. Thus, teachers have to understand that motivation has emotional values that need to be taken into consideration when dealing with learners, as learners differ in their learning abilities. Mudzielwana (2012) states that it is important that teachers motivate all learners in such a way that they develop love for reading.

During the teaching of comprehension text, the teacher should motivate learners, even prior reading the text for better results. This behaviour could encourage learners to develop positive attitudes towards reading comprehension. It is therefore, the responsibility of the teachers to devise strategies that could motivate learners to like English.

Teachers also indicated that they motivate learners by giving them storybooks to read. This is not effective if the learners were not exposed to reading strategies and they would help them to know how to go about reading and where to start and what to start with. The researcher did not see any books, newspapers or magazine

in **SCH B** and **SCH C** and as the researcher failed to ask **TCH B** and **TCH C** to show her/him where they store the reading books for their learners. **TCH A** showed the researcher a small table with few storybooks. None of the teachers explained to the researcher how they engage learners in the reading programme that would show at the end that learners have gained some information. For example, learners can have exercise books where they write summaries of the stories they read to show that they understood what they read. In addition, they can motivate learners who lack concentration in English by involving them in English games to create interest in English language and develop their thinking abilities gradually.

In **SCH D**, the **HOD** and **TCH D** shared the same sentiment on how they motivate their learners to develop interest in English language. The following are their responses to the same question:

Responses:

HOD - D: *'We have a small library at our school where learners can borrow books to read for fun. Although I found out that, they do not read those books at home.*

We introduced them to magazines and newspapers.

In addition, we give our learners awards for their good performance. We introduced a rotating trophy for best-performing groups in English. There are also debates done by the district, they also partake. There is another program called Spelling Bee, also done by the district,' (Appendix 5).

TCH D: *'The HOD came up with an idea of giving awards to learners who perform well in English. In addition, we have a rotating trophy for groups. The best performing group is given a trophy in whatever task given. So that develops*

competition among learners. Also, there are debates and reading competitions run by the district,' (Appendix 4).

Apart from the activities done by the District Office, **SCH D** managed to be innovative and came up with new ideas on how to motivate their learners, knowing that English language is a challenge to their learners and they lack exposure. This is highly appreciated to see teachers taking an extra mile for learners trying to improve the situation. Where there is high illiteracy, the school has to play a vital role in assisting the learners. Among the schools the researcher visited, not a single school mentioned the use of trophies and giving awards to learners trying to stimulate learners' interest in English, not to mention having a library. With so much effort done by teachers in **SCH D**, but their learners remained weak in English language (see table 4.4).

During observation, few learners were active and giving response to the questions asked. Learners showed incompetence in English language. A learner with minimal or no vocabulary at all has a challenge of expressing himself or herself in English. The lack of motivation at home also limits the learners' interest in reading English. It is evident that learners in rural schools are not motivated beyond the classroom since the community has nothing to offer them due to illiteracy problem.

In this regard, the **SA** was interviewed to find out whether he has ideas that would assist teachers in motivating and creating the interest the English language to their learners. Below is the reflection of the **SA**:

2. To what extent are you committed to enhance the well-being of teachers and assisting them to develop interest to learners to love English as one of the learning areas?

Responses:

SA: *'I want to be busy with them doing even reading clubs, establishing reading activities, storytelling competitions and dram,' (Appendix 6).*

SA sounds optimistic and committed to creating change in this District that has suffered so many years without a proper direction. Teachers have indicated that they were programmes from the District Office they implemented while they had no Subject Advisor and they were handled positively, but their new **SA** has more to add to what they already know. Learners need a variety of programmes that would motivate them to learn English with interest. The storytelling competition would accommodate even the weak learners and that could be stepping stone to change a negative attitude towards English.

Below is theme 8 and 1 question related to the issues of selection of text and assessment used during English lessons.

4.3.8 Selection of Texts and Assessment

Oakley (2011) defines assessment as a highly effective means of checking the thinking learners do when attempting to construct meaning in a text. Assessment takes many different forms and does not need to be limited to tests and examinations it should take place at every stage of the learning process. In this light, CAPS (2011) affirms that forms of assessment used should be age and developmental level appropriate, and must cater for a range of cognitive levels and

abilities of learners. In this regard, the researcher would present and analyse the class activities that were done during observations as a form of assessment. Linake (2015) highlights that texts are a vehicle for information with a pedagogical purpose in mind and there are authentic texts that a teacher can select. During observations, different schools had different texts for their learners although the texts were of the same feature, which is narrative. Learners confirm this.

1. Are texts you read for comprehension interesting?

Responses:

Lnr 2A-S: *‘Yes they are interesting stories, they are simple.*

Lnr 2B S: *‘I understand the stories we usually read.’*

Lnr2C-S: *‘Yes, they are interesting stories.’*

Lnr 1 D-S: *‘Yes. They are interesting,’ (Appendix 7).*

The learners referred to texts as stories, meaning their teachers introduced them to narrative text type. Since these were strong learners, they did not have trouble in reading such texts and that could mean the text they were given were below their level of thinking and therefore could not experience any challenge.

The same question was asked to average learners, below are their responses:

Responses:

Lnr 4A- AV: *‘Some stories are interesting, some are not.’*

Lnr 3B-AV: *'Some stories are about things we know so it becomes easy to understand.'*

Lnr 3C- AV: *'Some are not that interesting but they are simple.'*

Lnr 3D- AV: *'Yes, sometimes they are interesting.'*

The response of the learners revealed that although some stories were not interesting, but still they managed to cope with the text and understood it. It is important that a teacher should select interesting texts so that learners could immediately connect or relate them with their personal experiences, and that would help them to read with understanding. This does not mean that learners should be given easy text that would not challenge their abilities. A good selection of texts by teachers could create critical thinking that would enforce learners to analyse and interpret the text and putting meaning to what they have read.

During observation, in **SCH A**, the story was very short with a picture, but the picture was unclear, even if the learners wanted to relate the written words with the picture they could not.

In **SCH B and SCH C** the texts were also understandable with pictures. The researcher liked the idea of pictures because it could assist learners with understanding of the text. Immediately the learners see a picture they guess what is happening in the story. The pictures ignite their minds and ease the text.

Below are the responses of the weak learners based on the question asked earlier on:

Responses:

Lnr 5A -W: *'No, not interesting English is difficult.'*

Lnr 5B-W: *'I do see the pictures, but I can't read so I don't understand.'*

Lnr 5C-W: *'They are not interesting.'*

Lnr 6D -W: *'Not interesting.'*

The fact that these learners have a challenge with English language, whatever they tried to read could not make sense; as a result, they perceived the text given as uninteresting.

Even the pictures could not activate their schema more especially learners from **SCH A** where the picture was not clear. It is also important that teachers select texts that relate to the learners' real lives so that they could connect with the story easily. In the case of **SCH A**, the text that was chosen by the teacher for the learners was not relevant to their everyday life.

The story was about brothers who were swimmers and liked to practice at the beach. Although learners stay in the village among mountains and rivers, that does

not mean they are swimmers. The terminology used in the text did not suit the level of these rural learners.

The use of the terms such as 'life-savers', 'beach', 'shark's fin', 'butterfly world record', and 'Paralympic' are not common words to them. This is the language used by those who are in this kind of sport and it is not in the rural learners' world of understanding. They might know the beach but they seldom go there. It is not in their exposure that people could use the sea to practice daily for swimming. Looking at the response of the weak learners, it is evident that they did not understand the story, as some of them have severe problems and need to attend special schools. Contrary to **SCH B**, the story was about traveling using a bus. Almost all learners related to the story since they are familiar with the modes of transport. Let alone the fact that the weak learners were unable to express themselves when asked some questions.

4.3.9 Analysis of the comprehension activities

After the teacher conducted the assessment (**Appendix 8 B**), it was marked. The results are shown in the table below. The marks were out of 20 and have been converted to percentages.

TABLE 4.3: Comprehension activity in School A

Highest mark	Median mark	Lowest mark	Average mark
45%	35%	0%	32%

The activity assessed understanding of written English language. The highest score was $9/20=45\%$. The mark reflects that none of learners had a good understanding of the meaning of the text. The median mark was $7/20=35\%$, this mark reflects the majority of the learners and thus suggests that the majority read

the text with little understanding. The learners with the lowest mark reflected that the learners either did not understand the text and the questions or the learners were unable to read at all, hence scored 0/20=0%. The scores that learners obtained revealed that learners had a barrier in English and did not understand the meaning converted by the text hence they failed to comprehend.

TABLE 4.4: Comprehension activity in School D

Highest mark	Median mark	Low mark	Average mark
40%	20%	4%	21.3%

In **SCH D**, the problem was severe, despite all the means teachers seemed to be doing. When learners were assessed, the highest score was 10/25=40%. This was a bad reflection for a strong learner. This suggests that the level of the learners at **SCH D** was very low. The median mark was 5/25=20%, it was unfortunate that the majority of learners fall under this category where learners showed lack of understanding of the text and questions. The lowest mark was 1/25=4%, this mark reflects that the learner was unable to understand the text and interpret the questions.

This reflects that the performance of weak learners was low. In addition, the average mark showed that the learners have poor reading comprehension skills. Seemingly, reading comprehension is a challenge to these learners.

Looking at their scripts, the learners including those who seemed to understand better could not answer higher-order questions correctly. Some could not respond properly to those questions because they could not read and understood the text. Piaget (1968) highlights that reading for comprehension involves cognition, which implies that reading is to understand the written text.

Learners in **SCH D** had complex challenges such as the negative attitude of their teacher towards the English language. That attitude did not assist learners to come out of the ditch or encouraging them to read English with interest and understanding. In addition, the majority of learners are staying with their grandparent who has low levels of education and are unable to help them even with reading at home and that retards their progress.

4.4 Documents

Flick (2015) states that documents are tools used to provide information in a written text or electronic form, which is relevant to the issues and problems under investigation. The documents needed mostly were CAPS document, lesson plans, learners' worksheets or workbooks and class workbooks (**appendix 9 a & B**) and (**appendix 8 A & B**). Through such documents, more information could be covered. Mudzielwana (2012) confirms that documents are a good source of information in qualitative case studies because they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated.

During the researcher's observation, she/he requested to see the lesson plans of the teachers concerned, and no one showed up a lesson plan. The researcher also asked the classwork books of the learners, in **SCH B and SCH C** at least there were activities done by learners but few comprehension activities, of which some were unmarked.

The researcher visited the schools towards the end of the year, and expected to see the learners' class workbooks nearly full with activities to show that much was done. Looking at the quality of class activities given to learners, they were not thought-provoking activities. Most of their class activities were based on grammar.

They were so simple for grade 7 learners who are prepared for high school work. In this regard, this proved that little time and effort is given to the teaching of English comprehension and strategies for reading comprehension.

In **SCH A**, the researcher was shocked to see that learners had done only four activities in English for almost a year. This revealed that the teachers do not take English seriously although the teacher is aware that English is the **LoLT**. If learners are not assisted at school concerning English language, chances are very slim that learners could improve in their academic work. This showed that the teacher had no time to develop English in his school. Learners with low English language proficiency need to be kept busy and be given more English tasks or activities so that they are acquainted with English. This showed that English language is neglected in primary schools. The foundational skills that learners should have acquired in the primary school were not implemented. It is gruesome that grade 7, the exit class in the primary school is not taken seriously, yet it is a grade where a thorough groundwork should be done. In **SCH D**, the researcher expected to see few activities because the visit was done towards the end of January 2018 and the schools were opened in the middle of January.

The researcher requested to see English workbooks that were supposed to be issued by the Department of Education. These workbooks are designed in a manner that they assist the learner with all necessary steps to be taken for any activity including reading for comprehension. They work hand in glove with the English textbooks for grade 7. Three teachers explained that they only have worksheets for grade 6 not for grade 7.

The Department did not deliver the English workbooks for grade 7 to their schools. **TCH A** had no clue about the English workbooks prepared for learners. In this view, it is clear that teachers in rural schools need consistent monitoring. It is a pity that the three primary schools had no **HODs** to supervise the teachers.

4.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher analysed and interpreted data obtained through observations, interviews and documents (text) and more information had been revealed. The responses of the participating teachers showed that they have limited understanding of English reading comprehension strategies, and that resulted to some teachers developing negative attitude towards teaching English as a language. Teachers seemed to be confused with the concept of strategies of reading comprehension; as a result, there was confusion about summarization and retelling. The researcher discovered that some teachers had never done English, as a major subject in their diplomas or degrees, some had no proper training in teaching English. Such teachers are unable to be effective in their teaching. In addition, the multi-grade teaching happening in the primary schools has made teachers to lose focus on their teaching in as much that they were not doing any justice to those learners, instead more damage was done.

For quite some time, teachers in this District had no subject advisor and therefore left neglected. That was the biggest challenge the teachers faced with, to be left alone dealing with the problem of learners who are unable to read at the required level, or write. This was confirmed during observations that teaching reading for comprehension was a challenge, as reading comprehension requires thinking abilities. In addition, the lack of English reading material and textbooks for learners posed another problem. In this light, the Department has failed the teachers in terms of incapacitating them, so that they become competent teachers. The next chapter would provide discussion on the findings of the research study conducted in the participating schools.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 analyzed and presented data from all the participants. The purpose of chapter 5 is to provide a discussion of the findings that emerged from the data presented in chapter 4. The discussion is centered on the themes that formed the cornerstone of the study where English First Additional Language is concerned. These themes emerged from various participants such as teachers, learners and from observations in the classrooms. During interviews, the concern of the teachers regarding the teaching of English reading comprehension and teaching of strategies came into attention. In view of this, the teachers revealed their lack of understanding of the curriculum that was not helpful to them, as they could not interpret it properly due to lack of induction to the curriculum. The parents who appeared not supportive of the education of their children as most of them are illiterate. The teachers expressed their concern about their learners who had difficulty in understanding English text, which results in frustration and negative attitude towards English as their First Additional Language. This attitude resulted in a high drop out of the learners from school, as English is also a medium of instructions to all the subjects.

5.2 Professional Qualifications and Subject Specialization

Khurshid (2008) emphasizes that qualifications on the teacher play an important role in teaching because a trained teacher knows well how to teach effectively and there is a direct relationship between the qualifications of a teacher and the performance of the learners.

The teachers who were observed in the primary schools, do qualify to teach at the primary school because of their primary teachers course, but they are not qualified to teach English, as they are trained to teach all subjects found in a curriculum, and that poses a challenge as English is not the area of their specialisation. Samkange (2015) who argues that subject specialization is viewed as a model to reach every learner with excellent teachers who teach their best subjects supported this argument. In this regards, some teachers in the primary schools openly said that they do not like teaching English (**see Appendix 4**). The responses of the teachers leave a concern about the quality of education these learners are exposed to and the quality of teachers that are trusted to assist these learners throughout their learning process as teachers themselves have a negative attitude towards as a medium of instructions. This affected the learner's interest towards English because their teachers are not encouraging and supporting them where English is concerned.

5.3 Teaching Strategies of English Comprehension.

The literature shows that teachers have a significant role to play in helping their learners overcome the barrier to understand and interpret text through teaching English comprehension skills and strategies clearly and directly (Bouazid & le Roux, 2010). Shanahan et al., (2011) highlight that a strategy is an instructional mental action during reading that improves reading comprehension. It is a deliberate effort used by the reader to better understand or remember what is being read in order to respond appropriately. In light of this, it is crucial that teachers know these strategies of reading comprehension and apply them in their classrooms because they are helpful in learners' academic process.

However, the teachers in the case study showed lack of knowledge about teaching English reading comprehension strategies during classroom observations.

Zimmerman (1998) is of the opinion that teachers should be strategic and accurate in the implementation of the strategies so that they can be helpful to the learners as their success depends on the teachers.

Mudzielwana (2012) suggest that during English reading comprehension, the teacher should provide a clear explanation of the structure of the strategy to be learned and explain why it is used and scaffold learners until they were able to work independently. During observations, the researcher expected to see how the lesson unfolds and what effort and role played by the teacher scaffolding the learners, but unfortunately she/he did not get that experience due to teachers' lack of knowledge of strategies of English reading comprehension (**see Appendix, 4**). As a result, the researcher has many doubts if the teachers had taught even the strategy they maintained that they taught the learners such as how to summarise as they did not even expose the learners to pre-reading skills before they did the actual reading.

Furthermore, Williams (2005) emphasizes the importance of teaching comprehension strategies by stating that the essence of teaching comprehension strategies is that learners derive more meaning from the text when they engage in intentional thinking. That is, when people run into difficulties in understanding what they have read, the application of a specific strategic cognitive process would improve their comprehension. This means that the teaching of reading comprehension is important for enhancing grade 7 learners to read a text with understanding and be able to comprehend thereafter. Thus, the teachers in the case study showed that they had no deeper knowledge concerning strategies of English reading comprehension and they stated that comprehension is always a challenge to learners.

Fullon (1984) stipulates that curriculum implementation involves changes in behaviour, and beliefs and involves the process of learning. This idea is contrary to what the researcher observed in the primary schools where teachers had not been attending any developmental programme for some years and they were expected to change their behavior and manner of teaching. Moreover, they are expected to present high quality of information in their learning areas. In this light, change in the manner of their teaching would take a long time because of the negative attitude they developed in teaching English. If teachers lack professional development or in-service training, they might find it difficult to implement new curriculum (Rogan & Grayson, 2003), yet teachers should become experts in teaching reading comprehension strategies.

The lack of workshops, in-service training and seminars fueled the lack of knowledge and information that could incapacitate teachers to become competent in teaching English reading comprehension skills (**see Appendix, 4**). If they missed the information from their institutions, the district office has a responsibility of updating its teachers with new reforms in the curriculum. It is important for teachers to have a pedagogic knowledge of the reading comprehension strategies and how to teach these. The teachers that the researcher observed had been so unfortunate not to indulge in workshops where they would have been developed in teaching reading comprehension strategies in order to assist the learners. It is evident that many teachers do not know relevant strategies to teach English reading comprehension and they were not exposed to them during their training.

McLaughlin (2002) states that all successful curriculum change projects depend on the implementation of strategies that include effective staff training. Professional development is an essential part of improving the performance of the teacher.

It is important that teachers undergo a specific training in their learning areas, but it is of uttermost important that the subject advisor monitor the teachers by visiting their schools more often. Monitoring involves class visits, observing teachers and provides a feedback with the aim of assisting the teacher during the lesson. Such an exercise should be conducted within the school environment so that the subject advisor could see the challenges faced by the teachers daily and be able to assist where there is a need. In this regards, most teachers were visited by the researcher do not have sufficient information that could make them confident to teach English adhering to CAPS requirements.

Even if some teachers have an interest in becoming good English teachers, but they teach amiss the curriculum requirements. In addition, the HODs for the English language could be helpful to English teachers, although most of the schools that the researcher visited do not have HOD, except in **SCH D** where the HOD for languages serves all the departments in the school. This affects her to the extent that her own department is neglected, as she has to cater for all subjects. During the observation, she displayed confidence in teaching English, as she is an expert in that field (*see Appendix 5*). This means if more HODs could be employed and she get enough time to focus on her field of specialization, she would make a huge impacts to other English teachers.

5.4 Teaching of Reading Comprehension

During observation, teachers showed lack of understanding of teaching English reading comprehension. This is the result of the lack of training on how to teach reading comprehension skills in their training institutions, as they were clueless on how to expose the learners to comprehension texts during the lesson, (*see Appendix, 4*). Although teachers claimed that they apply the requirements of CAPS document when teaching comprehension, their approaches were different from what they are saying during the lessons.

This revealed that they do not have relevant knowledge and skills towards teaching strategies for English reading comprehension. This resulted poor approach during teaching and learning. There was never a single basic step of approaching comprehension done or ever mentioned in the classroom.

Based on the argument above, most of the teachers still applied the traditional method or approach to teaching comprehension whereby learners are given a text to read and answer the questions thereafter with no proper guidance. Teachers focused on answering the questions after learners have attempted the text on their own. The learners were not scaffolded on how to read the text with understanding or how to answer the questions. The teachers never guided learners as they were left alone with the text. McGill-Franzen & Allington (2011) denote that scaffolding must be an on-going teacher-learner dialogue that demonstrates directly to the learner the kind of processing or thinking that must be done in order to accomplish a particular task successfully.

It is evident that learners are not trained in their primary schools to read with understanding and to develop interpretive and evaluative skills whereby they would be able to show their critical analysis skills expressing their different opinions about the texts before embarking on answering the questions. It becomes eminent that the actual teaching of English reading comprehension was lacking and the scores learners supported that obtained during reading comprehension activity. The average mark for both **schools A and D** are so low (**see Table 4.3**). Teachers admitted that they do not know how to teach a comprehension and any help available will be appreciated, (**see Appendix 4**). Spaul (2013) states that teachers are not familiar with the strategies of teaching English reading comprehension, which may be suitable to the learning, approach of all learners.

5.5 Teachers Knowledge of Active Learning Approaches

A learner by virtue has an active role to play in the teaching and learning engagement, therefore learners should not be denied that opportunity in the classroom, hence, CAPS (2011) promotes an implementation of new approaches that are the active learning approaches where cooperative and collaborative methods become the key factors. In this regards, active learning is learnercentered approach and it assigns the responsibility of learning to the learners, as it promotes a self-regulated learner. Killiam & Bastas (2015) agree on the argument above by highlighting that incorporating active learning approaches in the classroom improve learners' engagement. It gives learners an opportunity to discuss and share their ideas about the text and be able to respond accordingly.

Therefore, teachers should adopt constructivist classroom where learners' active participation is ensured. The classrooms should be designed in such a way that learners interpret and construct meaning from the text based on their experiences. As learners work together either in pairs or in small groups, they develop both themselves and their friends (Mustafa et al., 2012). In this view, teachers are encouraged to implement the active approaches as they stimulate the learners' thinking and encouraging them to think and discuss the text given.

5.6 Time allocation

Teaching time that was devoted to reading comprehension was limited more especially at **SCH A and SCH D (see Appendix 4)**. Taylor et al., (2002) and Pressley et al. (1998) indicated that teachers did not give ample time and attention to the teaching of reading comprehension. This revealed that allocating enough time and practicing more reading comprehension activities could improve learners' reading with understanding. Mudzielwana (2012) citing Fielding and Pearson (1994) state that the first benefit of time for reading is the sheer opportunity to orchestrate the skills and strategies that are important to proficient reading including comprehension.

As in sport and music, practice makes perfect in reading too. Secondly, reading results in the acquisition of new knowledge, this in turn, fuels the comprehension process. This means teachers and learners should utilize the time they have effectively in order to master reading skills.

According to CAPS, English First Additional Language (**EFAL**) in grade 7 should have at least 5 hours teaching time in order to have enough time to practice English, including reading comprehension. Contrary, the research findings showed that in some schools they did not follow the requirements of the curriculum as they taught less than 5 hours, (**see appendix 4**). That situation jeopardizes the vision of CAPS in developing a competent learner in English language.

5.7 Limited English Proficiency of Rural Learners

The findings in this study indicated that the majority of learners displayed difficulty in reading English and understand the context of what they read. However, CAPS (2011) indicates that by the time the learners enter Senior Phase, they should be reasonably proficient in First Additional Language regarding both interpersonal and cognitive academic skills. Thus, the language plays a significant role in critical and analytical thinking that is required in all subjects learned by the learners. Thus, the reality is that many learners in rural schools are still not proficient in English language and unable to read English text with understanding. This makes them lose the interest in their studies and develop a negative attitude towards English as their First additional Language and medium of instruction too.

The research literature showed that South African learners lack the skill of retrieving information from texts, as well as the interpretive and critical reading of English text (SAQMEC II, 2000 and PIRLS, 2006).

The contributing factor in learners' limited proficiency in reading comprehension stems from poverty and acute level of unemployment in the rural area, and the probably high illiterate rate among parents and in the community thus not motivating their children to read. This becomes intense for poor children who get little support from their parents and little intellectual stimulation in their broader social environment (Taylor, 2008). Therefore, socio-economic factors could have negative impact in the performance of learners.

Most parents cannot provide books for their children and this affects learners' performance, as they do not have any books to practice reading while at home, especially those from rural schools. Parents who do not have literacy are unable to develop their children's reading and thinking by asking them questions about the text, they read (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). The majority of rural schoolgoing children function at home in an oral society, which is not textorientated (Wessel, 2010). Konza (2011) highlights that children from less literate background would hear more restricted range of words; less access to the vocabulary of books, and would consequently are more likely to have difficulty in acquiring reading skills. This could mean they have less opportunity to use their own reading skills to develop their vocabulary that would assist them in critical reading of a text.

Krashen (1981) and Waring & Nation (2004) both reveal that learners need more exposure to extensive reading in order to acquire more vocabulary that would develop their language proficiency. The vocabulary that learners would be able to acquire in this way, would also help them to read a text with understanding.

However, Krashen (1996) argues that for second language learners to gain proficiency in the second language, they should acquire it rather than be taught. He

feels that language should not be taught directly in primary school classrooms and he believes that speech would emerge when the acquirer has received and accessed enough comprehensible input. In contrary, Cummins (1981) recommends the early and gradual introduction to English in primary schools in order to allow the learner sufficient time to acquire Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which is needed to master the upper primary and secondary curriculum.

Lack of reading culture among learners in rural primary schools is one of the factors that promote limited English proficiency. Teachers are supposed to involve learners in guided reading, shared reading and develop learners to become independent readers, as CAPS requires. The research findings revealed that there were not enough books to read either textbooks or books to read for fun that could assist learners with low morale on reading and develop their vocabulary. Torgersen et al., (2007) & Fleisch (2008) highlight an importance of the availability of variety of reading material for learners. In view of this, if teachers had love for the subject, they would make means to develop English proficiency to their learners. They should not wait for the Department of Education to supply them with reading materials, but try to improvise by collecting newspapers and magazines that could make a difference in their classrooms as a way of enhancing teaching and learning.

The lack of exposure to reading strategies and availability or accessibility to print material causes the situation to be worse. There is a dire need for teachers to create a conducive learning environment in order to combat the burning issue of limited English proficiency in rural primary schools and encouraging learners to reading and acquire more of English words.

During the observation, the researcher found out that there was lack of support and motivation from the teachers to learners where English reading comprehension was concerned as there was no proper guidance on how to attempt to the reading

texts. This affects learners' interest in the reading culture, as they do not know the procedures and steps to be taken before the actual reading. Thus, in rural schools, the only hope learners and parents have lies squarely on teachers to bring about change. Therefore, teachers should be role models in the reading programmes to trigger interest in their learners. Briggs (1987) points out that those children who do not have positive reading role models are likely to read less and struggle with school assignments.

Numerous researchers have shown that the Grade 7 rural school learners have an average reading age of 7 years while their chronological age is 14 years. The situation highlights the fact that such learners would be unable to access information because their cognitive skill is very slow and that could lead to dropping out of school. If teachers were not taking any initiative to expose those learners into a world of words, the situation would hamper the development of comprehension among learners.

5.8 Motivation of Learners

The findings have shown lack of English proficiency among rural primary school learners, which, also emanated from insufficient or lack of motivation. The learners' achievement in learning English First Additional Language is related to the level of motivation they get to learn the language. Motivation is a drive that encourages a learner to be responsible for taking further steps in the learning and sustaining the learning process over a period of years. It is believed that without sufficient motivation, no other factor on its own can ensure learners' achievement (Masilo, 2008).

According to the results of the study, teachers lack relevant techniques and knowledge to implement in order to motivate learners to develop interest in learning in English language. The fact that learners were so adamant to be taught in isiXhosa than English was the lack of motivation in acquiring English language and

reading it with understanding (**see Appendix 4**), hence they did not perform well in the English reading comprehension activities. Teachers should dig deep and search for ways of motivating their learners, encouraging them to develop interest in English. They should be creative and flexible enough to try to reach out each learner's as a way applying inclusivity and exclusivity.

5.9 Selection of Texts and Assessment

During the choice of texts, a teacher should identify texts that are at the level of the learners' education in order to allow an interaction with the texts in a meaningful way and be able to comprehend. Teachers need to be more knowledgeable and skillful about the different text features in order to equip learners with information they could use later in various ways. In this view, texts that were selected by teachers, according to them were simple, interesting and related to the learners' experiences. Even learners confirmed that the texts were simple, although not all were interesting and suitable to their level of education as they failed to interpret them accordingly (**see Appendix 7**).

Linake (2015) states that texts are a vehicle for information with a pedagogical purpose in mind and there are authentic texts that a teacher can select since they contain many examples of a particular feature of language. Teachers in the case study selected one feature of text which was narrative, meaning they failed to venture learners to other text types.

Teachers should expose the learners to variety of texts and different reading activities to enhance teaching and learning in English as medium of instructions and the learners' first Additional Language as it is a major challenge to most of the rural learners who have never been taught in English.

5.10 Lack of Parental Involvement

It emerged from teachers during interviews that the parents have totally dumped their children to them and they were not accountable for their education. In view of this, lack of parental involvement in primary schools is a deep concern and it could no longer be ignored as teachers display frustration in this issue. This needs an urgent attention whereby parents should guide through workshops and be encouraged to participate in their children's schoolwork, as they are the primary care givers of their children.

Parental involvement in homework activities has been shown to be beneficial to learners but inappropriate parental involvement can interfere negatively with learners. Lack of communication becomes a source of stress when parents encounter difficulties in their children's homework and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home, as a result, most parents cannot relate their children's poor performance to their lack of interest in their school work, but turn to blame teachers (Nkome, 2015). In this light, reminding parents about their role concerning the schoolwork of their children is important in order to offer support and encouragement to their children.

Researchers have shown that in black communities, many parents are not involved and do not want to play any role in their children's education. This is more common in rural areas as there is high rate of poverty and illiteracy.

This contributes to the parents to appear as if they do not care and ignorant of the role they should play. Some parents understand the value of a homework, but may not know the importance of reading to their children or talking about their day and checking on their schoolwork.

Thus, lack of essential support from parents at home to reinforce the support provided in the classroom could as well become a main factor in affecting the child negatively. Therefore, parents need to play an important role to support their children in their school work as home environment can encourage or discourage the learner's effort in learning even if they do not know anything, but at least show a concern and interest on what was done at school (Donald et al, 2005).

5.11 Conclusion

English as a First Additional Language poses numerous challenges that have an impact on primary school teachers and learners. This is partly caused by the District officers that lack the capacity to support the implementation of CAPS in grade 7. Such challenges affected mostly those teachers who resist change as they still cling to traditional methods or banking concept rather than using new approaches of teaching. Furthermore, the lack of HOD's in English to support and monitor the teachers, as well as, insufficient training that teachers have is a challenge in the teaching and learning situation hence they develop negative attitude. Thus, teachers are heavily burdened with more grades to teach.

Apart from all the challenges this chapter reflected on, the study aimed at investigating how teachers teach strategies of English reading comprehension in grade 7 to enhance learners in reading with understanding. Other findings showed that the learners have limited English proficiency that caused them to be unable to retrieve information from the text and analyse it.

It is evident that it is difficult to teach English in rural primary schools. This implies that much should be done to assist these learners. The research findings also showed that it is also important that parents should be actively involved in their children's education. If parents take a back seat, that would daunt the achievement of their learners. Lastly, some of the reasons that contributed to learner's

incompetence in English are: insufficient time allocated for the school periods including English and insufficient skills to motivate learners.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the findings that emerged from the data presented in chapter 4. The discussion based on the themes that formed the cornerstone of the study where English First Additional Language is concerned. The current chapter would present conclusion and recommendations for the entire study based on the findings. Four primary schools to investigate how teachers teach strategies of the English reading comprehension to Grade 7 learners in rural primary schools were visited during data collection. The study provided a theoretical background and discussed methodology referring to data collection, presentation, and analysis.

The summary of the study was discussed in the previous chapter relating to the research questions used during data collection from chapter 3. The findings revealed many challenges regarding English First Additional Language (EFAL) emanated from the teachers that are ill-equipped to teach EFAL more especially on teaching strategies of English reading comprehension. The learners' negative attitude towards the English language due to lack of English proficiency which resulted in reading the English text without any understanding would also be included in the discussion. This poses a great concern as it affects their academic progress.

The findings revealed that the majority of learners preferred to be taught in their vernacular Language that is IsiXhosa than in English, as it is not easy for them to master it. As a result, they find it difficult to read with understanding and respond to the questions thereafter. In this regards, the researcher has formulated recommendations about the issues that need to be addressed in the light of the findings of the study. The recommendations emerged from the responses of the teachers and learners who participated in the study, as well as the new insight was

gained during observations. Below is the summary that is based on all the themes captured during data collection.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

6.2.1 Reading Comprehension

The reading comprehension activities that were done by all learners in the four primary schools observed by the researcher showed poor reading ability due to the learners' feedback. Learners were unable to read texts given with understanding and failed to comprehend. The scores they obtained clearly showed that learners' reading comprehension ability was weak almost at all questions. This is a disturbing issue as the mastering of reading is the critical skills learners should know in order to become competent in other subjects. This is an indication that the primary schools in rural areas have a long way to go to develop reading capabilities of learners so that they could read any English text with understanding and be able to respond appropriately.

In addition, the poor performance in English reading comprehension activities that were done in the classrooms was attributed to teaching approaches used by the teachers. Leaving learners with a comprehension text to work individually without any explanation on what the text or story is about could result in a negative attitude towards English more especially those learners that are weak. Giving learners an opportunity to discuss the text in groups before embarking on answering the questions could have yielded to better understanding and results.

The findings also showed that learners in rural schools have no access to reading materials and better quality of teaching because most of the qualified teachers are looking for better jobs in urban areas where there are better facilities and resources. Thus, lack of English reading materials that could assist in stimulating their thinking cause delay in their reading process as well as their thinking process. To ensure the importance of reading to learners, they should be given more texts to read and variety of English reading materials to promote the culture of reading in English.

6.2.2 Strategies of Reading Comprehension

The findings showed that teachers failed to expose learners to relevant strategies of English reading comprehension and that caused the learners to read a text without a purpose. For learners to be strategic readers, they need to be exposed to pre-reading activities, before they do the actual reading in order to develop the interest in reading. This is a way of activating their schema in order to develop interest and focus in reading.

Although learners in rural areas are known to be ‘slow thinkers’, if few strategies of reading for comprehension could be drilled to them, that could make a difference in their studies as their cognitive skill would be activated.

In this view, the negligence of teaching strategies of reading comprehension in the primary schools had an impact in developing learners who read without understanding as they even fail to respond to the questions related to the actual text they have read.

6.2.3 Classroom Observations

The classroom observations were used in four different rural primary schools to draw attention on how teachers present the strategies of reading for

comprehension to grade 7 learners. Paying attention to other features in the classroom provided, some showed why these schools have learners who are weak in English a negative attitude, as they were irrelevant and not motivating the learners to read. One of the findings was the unavailability of English textbooks to be used to practice reading and the lack of print-rich environment. The teachers are also to be blamed, as they should improvise by creating and searching for a variety of English reading materials.

They even failed to create a conducive learning environment in terms of having a relevant print-rich environment that would be attractive to the learners. Thus, lack of print-rich environment in the classrooms revealed a lack of awareness about the importance of enriching the learners with English vocabulary. This suggested that English as a Language of Learning and teaching (LoLT), is not the priority to teachers. Teachers had no time to search for relevant print material for their classrooms with the intentions of motivating their learners to read.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

The main aim of this study was to investigate strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension. The study found out that the teachers' lack of information on how to teach reading comprehension could be viewed as a limitation.

In addition, lack of English reading materials for learners and absence of parental involvement in their learning process had a great influence in retarding the progress of learning. Besides teaching reading comprehension, the multigrade teaching that, result in a lot of administration work to teachers, extra-mural activities have influenced the tuition time.

6.4 Recommendations

The researcher has formulated recommendations about issues that need to be addressed in view of the findings that could be beneficial to EFAL teachers and the subject advisors in primary schools at Fort Beaufort district on the issue of teaching reading comprehension strategies. In respect of this, the researcher would like to make the following suggestions in line with the teaching of strategies in English reading comprehension.

6.4.1 Workshops and In-service Training

The department should provide in-service training for teachers that should be executed at the beginning of the year to equip the teachers with new reforms in the curriculum. Teachers should be given a chance and support to develop themselves in order to improve their qualifications so that they could be competent in the classroom. They should also be part of the school policy formulations and curriculum changes as they are the ones dealing directly with the learners on the ground.

This would help teachers to be well equipped, as they would know what is expected of them before going to the classroom rather than being instructed to go and implement a new curriculum they have never been part of or inducted on. It is important that teachers have knowledge of the policy guidelines before they start implementing the policy in the classrooms. This means that the Top - down Approach should come to the end and inherit the Bottom - up Approach that would include the teachers in any changes and decision making, as they know what is needed in the classroom for the success and better future of the learners.

Furthermore, the Department of Education should provide thorough training through workshops for teachers wherever there are any changes in curriculum or CAPS in order for them to be able to implement it in the classroom with a better

understanding. In addition, there must be follow-ups on the workshops to check whether teachers are coping with the new curriculum in place. In the workshops, teachers should be given an opportunity to identify the areas that need special attention, such as, teaching reading comprehension and strategies of reading comprehension, so that more focus should be on those areas.

The training should be an ongoing professional development until all teachers are confident and competent enough about the subject content. The study showed that the quality of ongoing professional development has a strong influence on learners' performance (NRP, 2000: Shanahan, 2006 & Torgesen *et al.*, 2007). Moreover, the Department of Education should pilot new changes on a curriculum for a period of one to two years in order to check whether it is working or not as this affects both teachers and learners as they are the ones dealing directly with all the changes done by the authorities whom some of them have never been in the classroom before.

Alternatively, the study recommends that subject experts, that is, subject advisors, facilitate CAPS rather than be given to teachers who are clueless. Thus, the Subject Advisors would be able to give the necessary support to the teachers, visiting their schools and give teachers valuable guidelines to assist them. This suggests that Subject Advisors should be more visible in schools to ensure maximum participation of the teachers.

That means, there must be follow-ups and supervision more often after the workshops to check whether the teachers are coping. In addition, the subject advisors should expose teachers to journals so that they stay informed on the latest developments concerning teaching reading comprehension strategies. Mokhele (2013) highlights that intensive school-based professional development programmes can help teachers to increase their knowledge and improve their teaching approaches.

6.4.2 Training Institutions for Teachers

Since teachers displayed lack of knowledge on how to teach English reading comprehension and strategies to learners, the study recommends that teacher training institutions should introduce training programmes that would give teachers better knowledge on how to handle comprehension issues in the classroom, as teachers showed lack of foundational knowledge and skills to teach reading comprehension. In addition, the curriculum at tertiary level should include a range of strategies and lecturers should explicitly teach and model them and student - teachers should practice and use them in order to transfer the information correctly and successfully to learners. Therefore, teacher-training institutions should equip their student -teachers with reading comprehension strategies so that they would be in a position to transfer that knowledge to their learners.

6.4.3 Teaching of Reading comprehension

Learners require exposure to a variety of reading comprehension strategies in order to develop their reading comprehension. This means that teachers' practical knowledge of reading comprehension strategies should be improved and they should display vast knowledge and skills about the phases of teaching reading comprehension strategies in order to improve the learning situation of learners. In chapter 3 the strategies that teachers could use in grade 7 are highlighted and discussed.

There should be a specific time set for teaching English reading comprehension strategies in the school timetable. Teachers should ensure that learners master these strategies in order to develop independent readers. When learners are taught reading comprehension strategies, they are equipped with critical thinking skills. Therefore, empowering teachers would improve the situation as NRP (2000)

stated that comprehension is not just something that just happens, comprehension needs be taught.

6.4.4 Reading Culture

Reading culture should be enforced to all grades in rural primary schools and the Department of Education should provide appropriate materials for reading in order to promote reading culture in schools. The government should support the rural school by providing infrastructures such as classrooms and libraries where learners would get supplementary reading books. In the absence of libraries at schools, teachers should make a collection of magazines, newspapers as these would assist the learners to do a lot of reading, and gradually, they would develop an interest in reading.

In view of this, teachers should be aware that the learners' willingness to read is not enough if they do not have access to print materials. Thus, a variety of English reading materials together with more time should be provided to eliminate these problems. The schools could as well revise and amend the whole school reading programme at least once a week so that learners could see the seriousness in reading. Such programme should be a responsibility of all teachers', not English teachers only.

If learners could be exposed to reading whereby they are given interesting reading materials too, they would gain more vocabulary that would improve their language proficiency, which would result in reading with understanding.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Research

There is a need for research to be conducted on how teachers are taught about reading comprehension and strategies for reading comprehension in their training

institutions for both primary and high school. It would be proper to conduct a study that digs deep in the foundation phase in primary schools, and in the transitional stage where learners are introduced in English while they were used in being taught in their home language isiXhosa, and to know how learners are exposed to English. To search how effective are the teachers in teaching English at this critical point of transition and which strategies could be used to bridge the gap causing learners to love English at an early stage. In view of this, the problem of reading without understanding stems from the lower grades and little could be done at the senior phase hence there are more learners with weak reading abilities in the senior phase.

In addition, a research could be conducted on how to engage parents to participate fully in the education of their learners in rural areas. There is a need to motivate parents to know their responsibilities and encourage their children to read at homes in order to get used to reading which could become their hobbies.

Lastly, in pursuing further research, one may venture into investigating the role of School Management Teams (SMT) in managing effective teaching and learning. Furthermore, a study on the implementation of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement could be explored. Another study might investigate a topic such as public education, former model C schooling, and independent schooling. A case study on e-learning vis-a-vis traditional learning could be explored.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a discussion of key issues that arose in chapter 5. It has highlighted the major challenges in the teaching of reading comprehension and strategies of reading for comprehension and revealed the major problems that prevented rural learners from reading English texts with understanding.

This study has challenged the researcher assumptions about rural primary school teachers. The researcher thought that those primary school teachers were lazy only to find out that it was a deeper problem than that. The fact that teachers had no idea on how to teach comprehension text as they are not equipped on what and how should be taught, raised some concerns and also it merged that they were never trained in their institutions how to teach comprehension text and its strategies. In addition, the teachers were so unfortunate not to get a proper guidance from their district regarding the teaching of comprehension and be properly orientated on CAPS in order to be able to implement the policy in the classrooms. They experienced total neglect and lack of support from the district. Therefore, a wide gap should be filled by the district through workshops to balance the situation.

Apart from being incapacitated by the district, the teachers faced a gruesome situation where they undergo multi-grade teaching leaving them with no choice but to fall short in the demands of teaching the English language, more especially teaching the critical aspect in the English language, the reading comprehension strategies.

Conducting observation in these primary schools was a revelation to the researcher as she/he gained insight into what is actually happening in the classroom concerning the teaching of English.

The study exposed the researcher to the crisis experienced by teachers who are overburden with multi-grade teaching, and that situation left her/him more sympathetic than being judgmental. The case study has shown that teachers of EFAL in rural schools need support in order to make reading successful.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE FROM UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

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

Certificate Reference Number: LIN021SMAT01

Project title: **Strategies teachers use to enhance grade seven learners' reading and comprehension skills in English first additional language: A case of four rural schools in Fort Beaufort District.**

Nature of Project PhD in Education

Principal Researcher: Euphimia Nobuzwe Matakane

Supervisor: Dr M.A Linake

Co-supervisor: N/A

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

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

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

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

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Lindelwa Majova-Songca
Acting Dean of Research

08 September 2017

APPENDIX 2: PERMISSION LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION FROM



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

AMATHOLE WEST DISTRICT – OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

CAPE COLLEGE BUILDING * Healdtown Road * Fort Beaufort * Private Bag X2041 * FORT BEAUFORT * 5720 * REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA * Tel: +27 46 645 7802 Fax: +086 724 6373 * Websit thembela.ndzandze@gmail.com * Date: 08 November 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir /Madam

This serves to inform you that the bearer of this letter **Miss E.N. MATAKANE** had been given permission to use our institutions of learning as sites for his research. The title of her study seeks to, **"Strategies teachers use to enhance grade seven learners" reading and comprehension skills in English first additional language: A case of four rural schools in Fort Beaufort District of Education"**.

She is pursuing her PhD thesis at the University Of Fort Hare. It is hoped that she will favour us with her findings as soon as she had concluded her studies.

Your cooperation regarding the matter will at all times be highly appreciated.

Yours in Education

A/District Director – Amathole West District

building blocks for growth



**DISTRICT OFFICE APPENDIX 3A: LETTER TO THE PRINCIPALS AND
SGBs OF THE
SCHOOLS FOR DATA COLLETION**



**University of Fort Hare,
Faculty of Education,
Alice Campus,
Eastern Cape, South Africa**

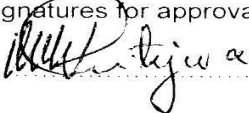
My name is Euphimia Nobuzwe Matakane (Student Number: 8615455), a registered student in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. Currently, I am pursuing my studies in Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Education researching on the following topic: **Strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in English first additional language: Four rural schools in Fort Beaufort**

I humbly request your kind assistance to allow me to use your school as a research site. The goal of the research is to investigate whether teachers use strategies to enhance the learners during reading comprehension, so that learners read with understanding. The methods that will be used to obtain the information will be the following: observation, interviews (interviewing the teacher, HOD if available and learners). These tools will enable the study achieve its stated objectives. The information gathered will be used for the purpose of the study only and under no circumstance will it be used for other reasons. Furthermore, the school, the English teacher in grade 7, the HOD and the learners will remain anonymous in the research report, and information obtained will be treated with outmost confidentiality.

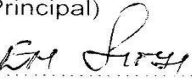
Yours sincerely

E.N. Matakane

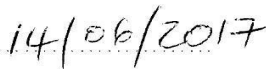
Signatures for approval:


.....

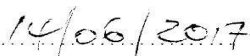
(Principal)


.....

(SGB)


.....

(Date)


.....

(Date)

APPENDIX 3B: LETTER TO THE PRINCIPALS AND SGBs OF THE SCHOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION



University of Fort Hare,
Faculty of Education,
Alice Campus,
Eastern Cape, South Africa

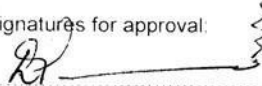
My name is Euphemia Nobuzwe Matakane (Student Number: 8615455), a registered student in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. Currently, I am pursuing my studies in Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Education researching on the following topic: **Strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in English first additional language: Four rural schools in Fort Beaufort**

I humbly request your kind assistance to allow me to use your school as a research site. The goal of the research is to investigate whether teachers use strategies to enhance the learners during reading comprehension, so that learners read with understanding. The methods that will be used to obtain the information will be the following: observation, interviews (interviewing the teacher, HOD if available and learners). These tools will enable the study achieve its stated objectives. The information gathered will be used for the purpose of the study only and under no circumstance will it be used for other reasons. Furthermore, the school, the English teacher in grade 7, the HOD and the learners will remain anonymous in the research report, and information obtained will be treated with outmost confidentiality.

Yours sincerely

E. N. Matakane

Signatures for approval:


.....

(Principal)

2017/06/20

(Date)


.....
(SGB)

2017/06/20

(Date)

APPENDIX 4: TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS



**University of Fort Hare,
Faculty of Education,
Alice Campus,
Eastern Cape, South Africa**

My name is Euphemia Nobuzwe Matakane (Student Number: 8615455), a registered student in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. Currently, I am pursuing my studies in Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Education researching on the following topic: **Strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in English first additional language: Four rural schools in Fort Beaufort.**

I humbly request your kind assistance in answering these questions to enable the study achieve its stated objectives. The information gathered will be used for the purpose of the study only and under no circumstance will it be used for other reasons. Furthermore, information obtained will be treated with outmost confidentiality. Be informed that participation is voluntarily. Therefore, your honest responses to questions are requested. Also, answering in full sentences will be highly appreciated.

The questions below are for the teachers' interviews and written responses

1. What is the duration of a period in your school?

The researcher wanted to know how much time is allocated for English language.

2. Do you think the duration of a period is enough? If yes/no, please substantiate your answer.

The researcher intended to know if the teachers were able to utilise the time given fruitfully.

3. Do you have an interest in teaching English language? Explain your answer in details.

The researcher wanted to know if the teacher has a passion for the language.

4. How do you support and encourage your learners to like English?

The question was asked to know the efforts and means done by the teacher to encourage learners to like English.

5. Do you teach English comprehension in your class? If yes please indicate the step you follow when teaching.

The question was intended to probe if teachers had time to teach comprehension.

6. Do you like teaching reading comprehension? Please explain your response.

The researcher wanted to find out if teachers had interest in teaching comprehension.

7. Can you state why you like or dislike teaching comprehension?

The researcher asked the question to find out the reasons for teachers to like or dislike the teaching of reading comprehension.

8. What types of text do you use when teaching reading comprehension? Please highly the reason for using them.

The question was intended to probe whether teachers exposed learners to different texts or not.

9. Do learners understand the texts chosen? If not, how do you assist them to understand?

The question was asked to investigate whether learners grasped the meaning of the text and get a proper support from their teacher.

10. Are you familiar with comprehension strategies? If yes, please mention them.

The question was asked to know if teachers were aware of the strategies of reading comprehension.

11. Is the teaching of reading English comprehension part of the curriculum?
Please explain your answer.

The question was asked to know if the teachers were familiar with the curriculum.

12. Are text types, strategies and approaches clearly stated in the curriculum?
Please explain.

The question was asked to probe the teachers' understanding of the curriculum.

13. Are there any measures to empower teachers in teaching English comprehension strategies?

The question was asked to know if there were measures taken to assist teachers with more information and training on teaching strategies of reading comprehension.

14. Are you competent in teaching English comprehension after attending workshops or seminars?

The question was intended to probe how effective were the workshops.

15. Which strategies seem to be a challenge to learners?

The researcher wanted to know which strategies were difficult for learners to understand and apply. Also, the researcher wanted to know if remedial was done by teachers to assist learners.

16. When you find a challenge in teaching reading comprehension strategies, where do you get the support?

The question was asked to search the HOD's knowledge and understanding of the strategies of reading comprehension. Is willing to assist, sharing information, developing the language and building teamwork.

APPENDIX 5: HOD's INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS



University of Fort Hare,

Faculty of Education,

Alice Campus,
Eastern Cape, South Africa

My name is Euphemia Nobuzwe Matakane (Student Number: 8615455), a registered student in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. Currently, I am pursuing my studies in Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Education researching on the following topic: **Strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in English first additional language: Four rural schools in Fort Beaufort.**

I humbly request your kind assistance in answering these questions to enable the study achieve its stated objectives. The information gathered will be used for the purpose of the study only and under no circumstance will it be used for other reasons. Furthermore, information obtained will be treated with outmost confidentiality. Be informed that participation is voluntarily. Therefore, your honest responses to questions are requested. Also, answering in full sentences will be highly appreciated.

The questions below are for the HOD`s interview and written responses

1. What is the duration of a period in your school?
2. Do you think the duration of a period is enough?

The researcher intended to know if the HODs were able to utilise the time given fruitfully.

3. Do you have an interest in teaching English language? Please explain you answer.

The researcher wanted to know if the HODs have a passion for the language.

4. How do you support and encourage the teachers to develop interest in teaching English?

The question was asked to know the efforts and means done by the HOD to encourage teachers to like English.

5. Do you teach English comprehension in your class?

The question was intended to probe if the HODs had time to teach comprehension.

6. How do you teach it?

The researcher wanted to know whether the HODs follow the teaching of strategies indicated in CAPS document.

7. Do you like teaching English reading comprehension?

The researcher wanted to find out if the HODs had interest in teaching Comprehension.

8. Can you state why you like or dislike teaching English comprehension? The researcher asked the question to find out the reasons for HODs to like or dislike the teaching of reading comprehension.

9. How do you encourage English teachers to teach comprehension and use?

different text types when teaching it?

The researcher wanted to know whether the HODs have time to discuss and encourage teachers on teaching comprehension.

10 How many English periods per week? Substantiate your answer.

The researcher's intention was to know whether reading comprehension is done weekly or once a month.

11 . What strategies do teachers use during English reading comprehension?

The researcher wanted to know whether the HODs communicate frequently with the teachers and monitor them regularly where strategies are concerned for and for teaching English reading comprehension.

12 Are text types, strategies and approaches clearly stated in the curriculum?

Explain your answer.

The question was asked to probe the HODs' understanding of the curriculum.

13. Do you have any seminars and workshop to for teachers to improve their strategies in teaching? If yes, indicate how often, and if no, explain why. The researcher wanted to know whether there are workshops and seminars to assist teachers to gain more information and be well equipped.

14. Are you and other teachers competent enough to teach English comprehension after attending workshops and seminars? Comment briefly.

The researcher wanted to know if the workshops done for teachers were effective.

15. A teacher in your department tells you that he/she is struggling with teaching reading comprehension. How do you support him/her? What do you do if your support is not effective?

This question was asked to probe whether the HODs were eager to assist and support the teachers when they encounter problems, like getting into the classroom and show them how to handle some of the challenging aspects during lesson.

16. How do you ensure that quality teaching of English comprehension is embedded in your department?

The researcher wanted to know whether the HODs were able to monitor the teachers.

18. Do you have weekly or monthly departmental meetings where you discuss on challenges faced by teachers during the teaching of reading English comprehension?

This question was asked to know whether there were departmental meetings where challenges in the subject could be picked.

19. How do evaluate that teachers to use new approaches/ active approaches when teaching English reading comprehension that are in Curriculum?

This question was asked to probe whether the HODs knew the active approaches that could be implemented in the classroom.

20. In your own opinion, what do you think is the solution to the problem of reading English comprehension?

The researcher wanted to know the HODs had strategies of resolving the problem of teaching reading comprehension.

21. What do you do to promote reading culture in the school?

This question was asked to probe whether the HODs had a burden to develop English language.

APPENDIX 6: SUBJECT ADVISOR'S INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS



**University of Fort Hare,
Faculty of Education,
Alice Campus,
Eastern Cape, South Africa**

My name is Euphemia Nobuzwe Matakane (Student Number: 8615455), a registered student in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. Currently, I

am pursuing my studies in Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Education researching on the following topic: **Strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in English first additional language: Four rural schools in Fort Beaufort.**

I humbly request your kind assistance in answering these questions to enable the study achieve its stated objectives. The information gathered will be used for the purpose of the study only and under no circumstance will it be used for other reasons. Furthermore, information obtained will be treated with outmost confidentiality. Be informed that participation is voluntarily. Therefore, your honest responses to questions are requested. Also, answering in full sentences will be highly appreciated.

Below are questions for interview of a subject advisor:

1. Briefly describe the performances of rural schools in English first additional language in grade 7.

The researcher's intention was to know whether the subject Advisor is taking serious note of the challenge of English as first Additional language to learners in the rural schools.

2. Is the performance satisfactorily? If yes, please give the figures, and if no, please give the reasons.

The researcher's intention was to check whether the subject advisor is aware of the performance of the learners in grade 7.

3. What are the challenges?

The researcher wanted to know whether the subject advisor is aware of the problem about English language and what would the subject advisor consider doing about it.

4. What are CAPS requirements concerning the teaching English reading comprehension?

The researcher wanted to know whether the subject advisor is familiar with CAPS requirements concerning the teaching of English reading comprehension.

5. Are teachers able to use the curriculum?

The researcher's intention was to know whether are well informed and competent to teach using the new curriculum.

6. What part have you played in developing EFAL teachers concerning reading comprehension?

The researcher wanted to know whether the subject advisor conducts workshops for teachers concerning the teaching of reading comprehension.

8. Do you have any adequate administrative measures or supervision to ensure that teachers use the curriculum? If yes, please explain them.

The researcher wanted to know whether the subject advisor have subject meeting frequently with the teachers to ensure that teachers are up to date with the curriculum.

9. Do teachers have their own copies of the curriculum document in English?

The researcher wanted to know whether teachers have copies of the curriculum document so that they plan and teach what is required by the curriculum.

10. How do you evaluate the curriculum?

The researcher wanted to know whether the subject advisor rate the new curriculum as the best and easily understood by the teachers.

11. How do you assess the effective teaching of English reading comprehension?

The researcher's intention was to know whether there are common tasks or tests based on comprehension.

12. Is there an adequate professional development to support teacher's success in teaching English reading comprehension?

The researcher wanted to know whether there are continuous workshops, subject meetings to develop and support the teachers.

13. Are teachers aware of the strategies for English reading comprehension?
Explain your answer.

The researcher's intention was to know whether in the workshops teachers are Incapacitated and equipped with the strategies for reading comprehension.

14. To what extent are you committed to enhance the well-being of teachers where EFAL is concerned?

The researcher wanted to know whether the subject advisor would invite specialists in the learning area and/or be willing to go and assist teachers who experience problems with the teaching of reading comprehension.

APPENDIX 7: LEARNERS' INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUPS



**University of Fort Hare,
Faculty of Education,
Alice Campus,
Eastern Cape, South Africa**

My name is Euphimia Nobuzwe Matakane (Student Number: 8615455), a registered student in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. Currently, I

am pursuing my studies in Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Education researching on the following topic: **Strategies teachers use to enhance grade 7 learners' reading comprehension skills in English first additional language: Four rural schools in Fort Beaufort.**

I humbly request your kind assistance in answering these questions to enable the study achieve its stated objectives. The information gathered will be used for the purpose of the study only and under no circumstance will it be used for other reasons. Furthermore, information obtained will be treated with outmost confidentiality. Be informed that participation is voluntarily. Therefore, your honest responses to questions are requested. Also, answering in full sentences will be highly appreciated.

The questions below are for the focus group participants (learners):

1. Which grade are you?

This question was asked to break the ice between the researcher and the participants.

2. Is English the medium of instruction in your school?

This question was the key to understand the position of the school whether English was used as the medium of instruction.

3. Do you enjoy being taught in English? Yes or No – please indicate why?

The researcher's intention was to know if learners had an interest in being taught in English.

4. Do you have any reading material at home? Reading material such as newspapers, storybooks, novels and poetry? If yes, how often do you read them? Please explain your answer.

The researchers' intention was to know whether learners had any reading material assisting them at home in order to develop knowledge and understanding of English since they learn English as a First additional language.

5. Do you enjoy reading comprehension in the classroom? If no/yes, why?

The researcher has intended to probe whether reading comprehension was taught in the classroom.

6. Which strategies does your teacher use during reading comprehension?

The researcher's intention was to know whether learners were familiar with strategies.

7. Are those strategies helping you to understand what you read? Please indicate how.

The question was asked to probe whether learners apply those strategies when reading comprehension.

8. How is the seating arrangement in your class? Are you seated in rows or in groups? Why is it like that?

The researcher intended to know if their seating arrangement accommodated active learning.

9. Do you assist each other during reading comprehension? Whether Yes or No, please give a reason.

The researcher wanted to know if they assist each other and work as a team.

10. How does your teacher assist you during reading comprehension?

The researcher wanted to know if the teacher was very involved during reading comprehension.

11. How interesting or boring are the texts you read for comprehension? Please explain your answer.

The question was asked to probe if the text given related to their real life situation.

APPENDIX 8A: TEXTS USED DURING ENGLISH CLASSROOM.



2. Read the story carefully. Pay attention to the words the writer uses to describe things.

An extract from "Serena's story"

- 1 It took longer to get to the bus stop in the dark. I wasn't afraid – well, not *very* afraid – but there were very black places in the road and I had to go carefully in case there was anything waiting inside them. I went so carefully that the bus was ready to go when I arrived. The bus driver was tired too, like Gogo. I suppose it is a long way to drive such a big bus from Johannesburg to Polokwane. He was talking to some men who had a small fire and their voices were low and flat, like people who have no hope left for that night.
- 2 "I'm tired," he said. "The boss is too hard. I should sleep here and drive back tomorrow, but the bus must be ready to bring more people. **Timetables**, that's all he cares about, not us."
- 3 "Yes – but the money is good."
- 4 The bus driver **sighed**. "The money is good. But the life is hard." He sighed again, very deeply and stretched his hands out to the flames to warm them. Quickly I **slipped** past the men, hidden from them in the dark shadow outside the light of the fire. I went quietly up the steep metal steps and in through the open door of the bus, and then I **crept** along to the seat at the back where I didn't think the driver would see me.
- 5 It was very dark, there in the bus, and there was the smell of old cigarettes and sweat, and the grey dust that lives inside old things. I took my blanket very carefully out of the plastic bag, pulled it up close to me and tried to go to sleep. There was a loud hiss as the doors of the bus closed and then a **lurch** and a **squeal** from the brakes, as the bus jerked its way out of the parking place and onto the smooth hard road that goes to the city. I slept.

After reading

Read the extract carefully again. Discuss the questions with a partner.

1. Who is the narrator of the story? How do we know this? (2)
2. Look at paragraph 1 and answer these questions.

- a) What adjectives describe the men's voices? (2)
 b) Why are the men's voices like this? **Start like this: The writer says the men's voices are like ...** (2)
3. Look at paragraph 2 and answer these questions.
 a) What words describe the bus driver's boss? (2)
 b) Why is he described like this? (1)
4. Look at paragraph 5. What does the inside of the bus smell like? (3)
5. Describe the sounds and movements the bus makes as it leaves the bus stop. (3)

Total: 15 marks

Glossary

timetables – schedules of arrival and departure times for the bus

sighed – breathed out heavily, moaned

slipped – went past quickly and quietly without being noticed

crept – went quietly, tiptoed

lurch – jerk

squeal – squeaking sound

In the article you will read how he lost his leg.

- The article has direct speech from Achmat
- The article is in the past tense

Activity 3 Read a magazine article

1. **Reading strategy: Word attack.** When you find a new word, read the whole sentence carefully. Look at the picture to help you. Then try to work out what the word means.
2. Read the article on your own.

My leg for my brother

Past tense

Direct speech

When Achmat Hassiem was 24 years old, he was a lifesaver at Sunrise beach in Cape Town. One day, he and his younger brother, Tariq, were practising their life-saving drills deep in the water of False Bay. "I was looking at my brother when I saw a dark shadow in the water," Achmat, now 30 years old, recalls. "It was moving towards Tariq. Then I saw a shark's fin break the surface, and knew it would attack my brother."

Achmat started splashing to draw the great white shark's attention away from Tariq. His heroic act that day saved his brother's life but the shark turned on Achmat and he lost his leg, narrowly escaping with his life. His dream of playing professional soccer ended that day. "People ask me how I feel about losing my leg," he says quietly. "But losing a leg is nothing like losing a brother!"

Six years have passed since that terrible day and Achmat is back on his feet with a prosthetic (false) leg. He is also well on his way to being a great sportsman.



Achmat changed his focus from soccer to swimming and is now the third-fastest disabled swimmer in the world. He is also very close to breaking the 100 m butterfly world record.

In August 2012 during the Paralympic Games in London, England, he will be competing against other disabled swimmers with the aim of standing on the winners' podium. "My goal is to bring back a medal," he says with a smile.

adapted from YOU, 10 May 2012

Activity 4 Answer comprehension questions

Read the article again and answer these questions in your exercise book.

1. How did Achmat know there was a shark in the water? (2)
Answer like this: He knew because he saw ... (1)
2. Choose the best **synonym** for *surface* (paragraph 1): (1)
a) top b) bubbles c) side
3. Before the shark attack, what did Achmat want to be? (2)
Answer like this: Achmat wanted to be ...
4. Read paragraph 2 of the article again. The adjectives in column A are in the paragraph. Match each adjective in column A with its **antonym** in column B. (3)

A	B
heroic	amateur
distracted	cowardly
professional	focused
5. Rewrite the sentence below, replacing the underlined words with **pronouns**. (2)
Achmat felt glad that Achmat saved Achmat's brother.
6. Which swimming event did Achmat compete in at the 2012 Paralympics? (2)
7. In the sentence below, find one example of each of the following nouns: common; proper; abstract; concrete; countable; uncountable. (6)
Achmat does not feel anger towards the shark. (2)
8. What have you learnt from this story? (2)

TOTAL [20]

APPENDIX 8B: LEARNERS' ASSESSMENT AND WORKBOOKS

18 September 2017

9/20

x He saw a dark shadow moving.

1. He knew because he saw a dark shadow moving toward his brother.

2. C-Side.

3. Achmat wanted to be a life-saver.

4. A B
 Heroic - cowardly
 distracted - ~~center~~ Focused
 Professional - Amateur

5. Achmat felt glad that he saved his brother.

6. Disabled swimmers.

7. Common , proper , abstract , concrete , countable,
 The feel towards Achmat Shark
 -Uncountable , Nouns
 Anger. Achmat.

8. I've learnt that it is important to do something in life whether you are disabled or not.

29 August 2017

1. When Achmat was years old he was a life saver at summer in Cape town.

2. bubbles.

3. Achmat started attending splashing to draw the great white started.

4. heroic focused
distracted amateur
professional cowardly

5. He is also well on his way.

6. In august 2012 during the paralympic games in london he will.

7. common, proper, amateur
concrete cowardly
countable
uncountable

8. X X X

18 September 2017

1. He knew because he saw a dark shadow in the water
2. They see bubbles.
3. Achmat wanted to be splashing.

4. A B

Heroic = cowardly

distracted = Focused

professional = Amateur

5. Achmat felt glad that she saved her Brother

6. They compete with podium

7. Nouns: common proper abstract concrete countable uncountable

Shark anger feel ~~that~~ the Achmat does Not

8. I learn that when you have problems don't think
You cannot can't do anything.

29 August 2017

1. The narrator of the story is Serena.
2. a) The voice men's ~~the~~ were low and flat.
- b)

29 August 2017

1. The narrator of the story is Serena.
2. a) The voice of the men's ~~the~~ were low and flat.
- b) The writer says the men's voices are like people who have no hope left for that night.
3. a) ~~He care about, not us.~~ Because The Boss is too hard.
- b) Because she is a man.
4. They smell of old cigarettes and sweat, and the grey dust that lives inside of things.
5. When bus driver sighed and very deeply and stretched.

2.1.

2

1. That women ~~take~~ take a child & to the bus the driver sighed.
 - 2 a) The women that men will be pregnant
b) The women pregnant to distribute a child.
 3. a) I'm tired he said
b) Because these men are exsitate. that bus
 4. It was very dark there in the bus and there was the smell of old cigarettes and sweat and the grey dust that lives inside old things.
 5. There was a loud hiss as the doors of the bus closed and then a lurch and a Squeal from the brakes, as the bus jerked its way out of the parking place and onto the smooth hard road that goes to the City
-

01/25

29 August 2017

1. ~~It was~~ The bus driver want tired too like Gago. 1

2. a) It very dark. X

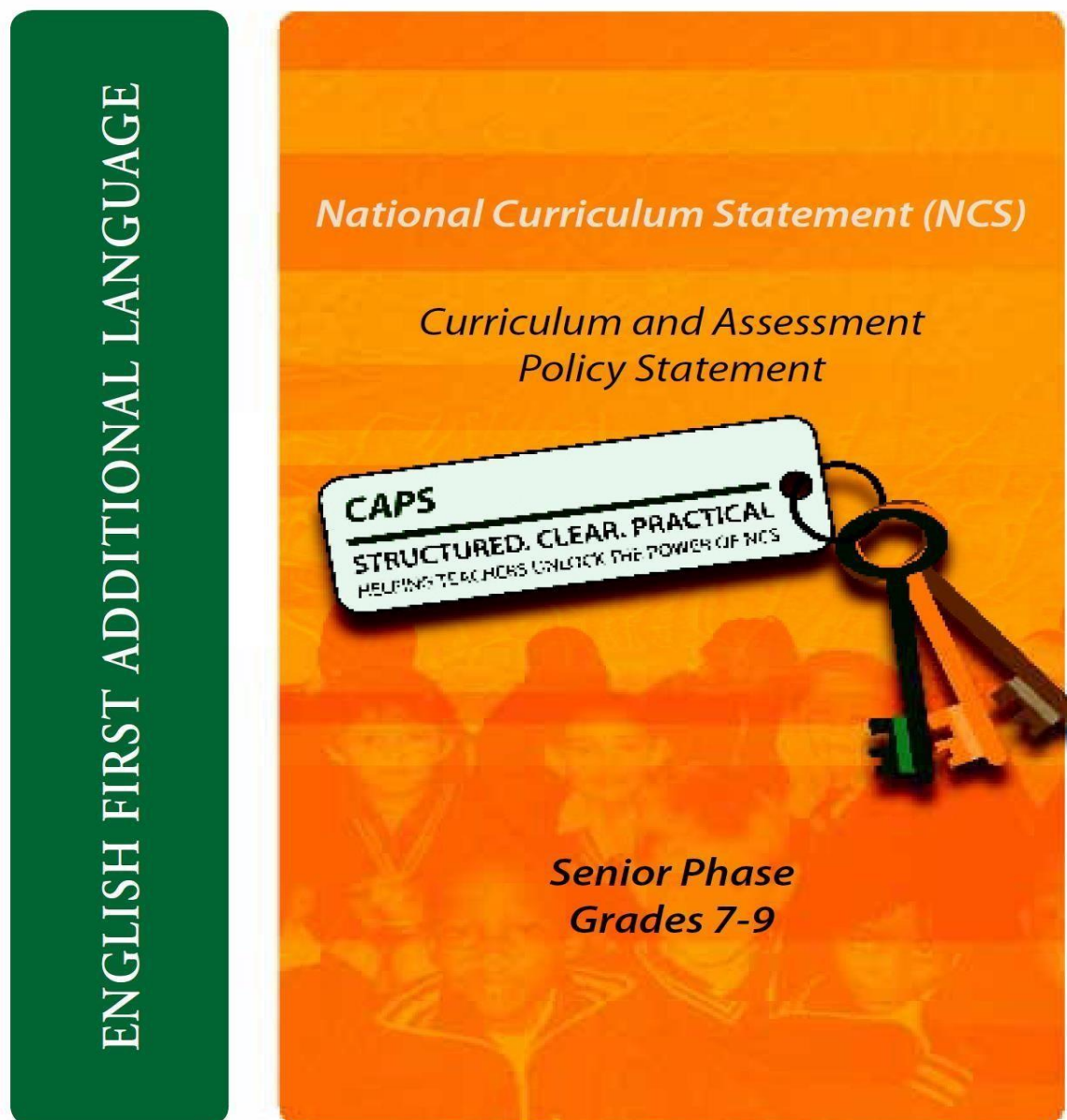
b) Start like this. X

3. It took longer to get to the bus stop in the dark. X

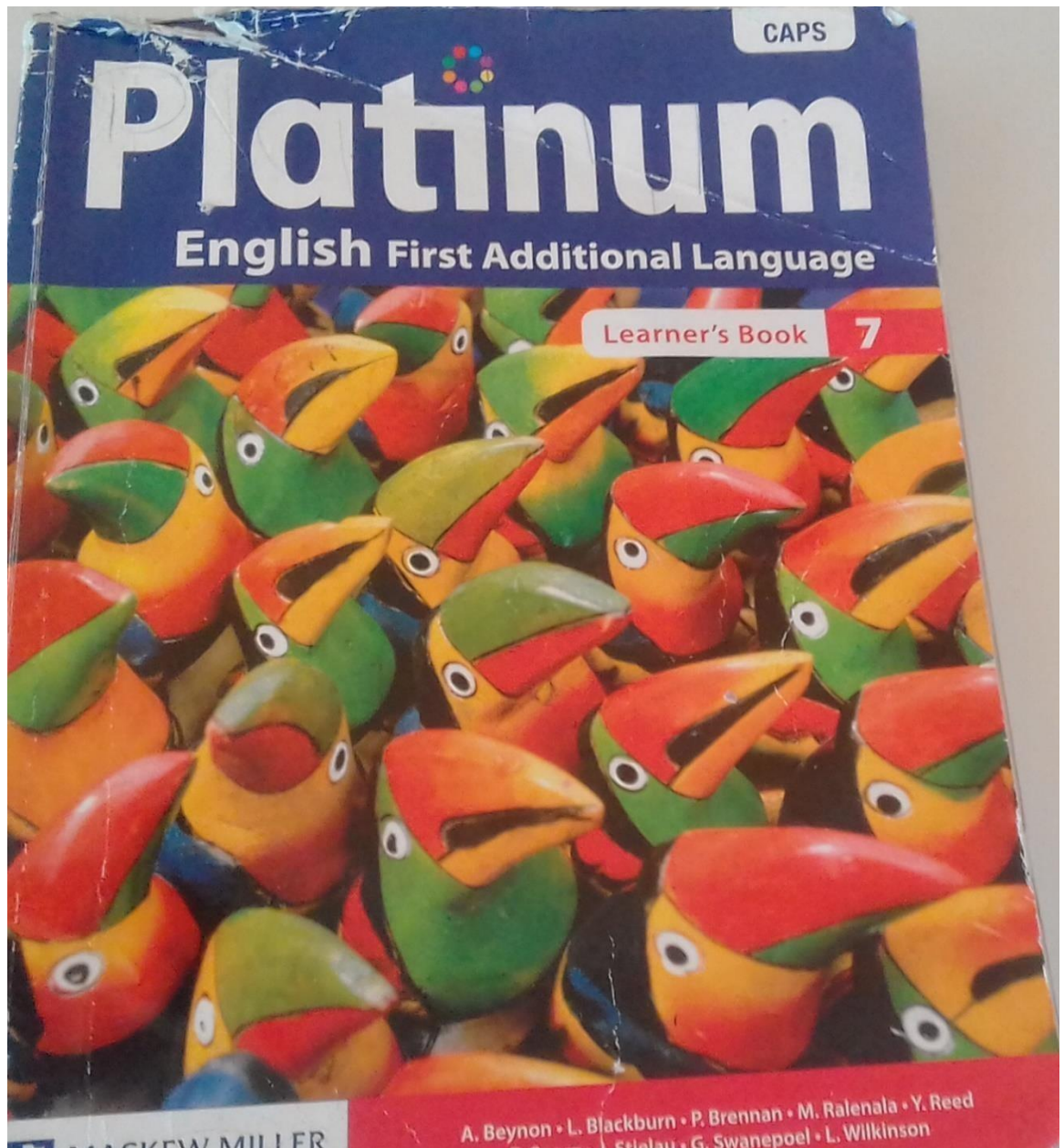
4. There ^(B) was a loud hiss as the doors of the bus closed the parking place. X

5. Quickly I slipped past the men. X

APPENDIX 9A: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT (CAPS).



APPENDIX 9B: LEARNERS' ENGLISH TEXT BOOK FOR GRADE 7



**APPENDIX 10: APPENDIX 10 A: SCHOOL SITE AND CLASSROOM
ARRANGEMENTS**



APPENDIX10B: TRADITIONAL ROWS OR COLUMNS



APPENDIX 10C: CLUSTER/GROUP/PAIRS



APPENDIX 10D: MODIFIED U OR HORSESHOE



APPENDIX 11: LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Department of Development Studies, University of Fort Hare, Private Bag X1314, Alice-5700, Eastern Cape, South Africa Email: arahim@ufh.ac.za

LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

EDITOR'S DECLARATION LETTER

This letter confirms that I edited **MS. EUPHIMIA NOBUZWE MATAKANE** thesis titled: **"STRATEGIES TEACHERS USE TO ENHANCE GRADE 7 LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS IN FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE: FOUR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN FORT BEAUFORT"**.

I provided an editorial service for the thesis, which, she has written for the fulfilment of the Degree for PhD in the Faculty of Education, University of Fort:

Alice.

The thesis was comprised of six chapters covering 281 pages including prefaces. During the process of the editing, the following changes were recommended: syntax structures, punctuation, and grammatical. In addition, consistency in use of abbreviation, referencing style, and the appropriateness of academic meaning of language, capitalization, the formatting of the entire thesis and table of contents were also recommended.

Sincerely yours



Professor A. Rahim