

**Evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of English First Additional Language
reading comprehension in primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary
School, Malamulele North-East Circuit, Limpopo Province**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Nkoka Champman Maluleke, declare that the study titled 'Evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of English First Additional Language reading comprehension in Primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit, Limpopo' is my own work submitted to the University of Limpopo for MASTER OF ARTS. All the resources used or cited have been acknowledged by means of complete reference and all the work has not been submitted to any other institution of examination purposes.

MALULEKE, NC

Signature

Date

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The University of Limpopo research department, for the support they provided for me to conduct research.

The Limpopo Department of Education, for granting me permission to visit the school to conduct the research.

The principal, educators, parents, and learners, for participating in this study.

DEDICATION

This mini dissertation is dedicated to:

- My mother, Lindiwe Gloria Baloyi, and my father, Hlengani “Malombo” Justice Maluleke, you have always wanted me to get educated. You have been such an inspiration throughout this research, you have always been strong pillars when I needed you the most.
- Mr K.S Maluleke, Mrs Thokozile Lydia Maluleke, Mrs Nelly Ngobeni, and her lovely son, BX Ngobeni, for always supporting and caring for me throughout my studies.
- My little sisters, Ntiyiso Ashleen Maluleke, Kurhula Khoza, and Rixongile Request Maluleke. May you follow in my footsteps or pave your own ways to success and prosperity.
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- My closest friend, Tokolo Mohube Mongai, for always being there when I was stressing with my research.
- My friends who made my academic journey to be a breeze.
- All EFAL educator and the school principal who construct environments conducive to EFAL learning under challenging and diverse conditions. May your commitment last forever to persuade others to follow in your footsteps. Likewise, EFAL learners, may your commitment to learning the language continue to motivate other language learners.

ABSTRACT

In rural South Africa (SA), poor reading comprehension skills in English First Additional Language (EFAL) are still found to be the main cause of poor academic achievement. For learners to comprehend the target language they must master the basic reading skills. This remains to be a great challenge for the rural schools in Limpopo. Rural learners are barely exposed to the language of the school, and they hardly have access to the EFAL reading materials or other learning aids. This study aims to evaluate the challenges that are faced in teaching and learning reading comprehension in rural primary schools in SA.

This research study was framed by Cognitive constructivism and Schema theory in teaching and learning reading comprehension. A qualitative case study research design was adopted in the study. The sampled participants (one educator and 10 learners) were purposively selected to give answers to the research questions. The following data gathering techniques were used; observational field notes to gather data from the classroom context during the reading lessons, focus group interviews were conducted with the grade 6 learners, lastly, one educator was interviewed. The results prove the educators and learners are still facing challenges in the teaching and learning of EFAL. The study recommends, that the Department of Education intervenes by conducting more training workshops for the educators and parental involvement is encouraged as well for parents to be part of their children's educational journey.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Teaching, Learning, Rural Schools.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APP - Annual Performance Plan

COVID-19 – Coronavirus 2019

DoBE - Department of Basic Education

DoE - Department of Education

EFA - Education for All

EFAL - English First Additional Language

FAL - First Additional Language

FP - Foundation Phase

IP - Intermediate Phase

HL - Home Language

L1 - First Language

L2 – Second Language

LO – Life Orientation

PCK – Pedagogical Content Knowledge

PIRLS - Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

TREC - Turfloop Research Ethics Committee

UN - United Nations

SA - South Africa

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents the background of the study relating to the challenges faced by EFAL learners in learning of reading comprehension in English First Additional Language (EFAL) in Mahlohlwani Primary School. South Africa (SA) is a country with eleven (11) official languages. The Language in Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 states that all learners have a right to choose at least one approved language as a Learning Area (LA) from Grade 1 and 2. Additionally, from Grade 3 upwards, learners have the right to choose their Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and one additional official language (Matjila & Pretorius 2004; Department of Education, 2004). In this regard, the Department of Education needs to understand challenges occurring in the teaching and learning of EFAL in rural primary schools.

Maja (2015) states that the reading competencies of primary school learners have been a challenge since curriculum transformation was embarked in 1994 in South Africa. In schools, learners are taught in their Home Language (HL) from Grade 1-3. Furthermore, in Grade 4, they transition from Foundation Phase (FP) to Intermediate Phase (IP). This is where the problem starts because they must learn in First Additional Language (FAL). In IP English is used as a LoLT in many schools in South Africa (Department of Basic Education, 2011). Most learners in rural schools communicate with their HL than English at home. This is a problem in the classroom as they only use English First Additional Language (EFAL) in the classroom.

This study focused on reading comprehension challenges faced by grade 6 learners in Mahlohlwani Primary school. During the Intermediate and Senior Phases, learners are expected to continue to strengthen their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. At this stage, most children are learning through the medium of their FAL (CAPS, 2011). It is important for them at this stage to start mastering their EFAL. Reading is a language-based skill which involves cognitive process; hence, it is the most important skill to master resulting in successful learning.

What is more, reading comprehension of both HL and FAL has become the most important issue throughout the country and beyond (Fakude, 2014). Being proficient in reading and understanding the text that learners read is useful for their academic success. O'Reilly and McNamara (2007) argue that the reading skill is defined as the ability to generate a coherent text that matches the target sent a message to the reader. In the same tone, Burns, Griffin, and Snow (1999: 32) refer to comprehension as the understanding of spoken and written language. Therefore, learners must comprehend what they are reading so that learning can take place. Successful comprehension of a text makes learning to be easier.

Additionally, IP learners must be taught how to read and asked whether they have understood the text or not. During this phase, the educator needs to emphasise reading skills and try to build learners' vocabulary so that they can be familiar with English words. Mastered reading skills is vital for learners to be successful in the learning process. Learners develop proficiency in reading and viewing an extensive range of texts. Also, learners recognise how genre and register reflect the purpose, audience, and context of texts. Through classroom and independent reading, learners become critical and creative thinkers" (CAPS, 2011). After reading a text, the learners must evaluate their understanding of the text. Educators must assist them to grasp the meaning of the text. Consequently, these learners would have already learned the reading skills in their First Language (L1) and transfer them into their Second Language (L2). However, this is not an easy task to do since all these languages contain different word structures and pronunciations.

Again, Gove and Wetterberg (2011) "argue that during the early 1990s the world witnessed developing countries is committed to the United Nations (UN) and EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA). This was done to gain universal access to primary basic education and learners' completion of all primary school grades. Since then, the South African Department of Education created massive plans towards extending access to basic education. The progress stopped from additional inputs such as access to classrooms, educators, and textbooks and study materials. This has created the hypothesis that with adequate contributions, learning will naturally proceed well.

However, the increase in the enrolment rates has not always converted into high-quality education or even basic education in SA schools, most especially in rural schools where there are challenges that these schools are still facing until this day.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

This, study aims to evaluate the effects of poor reading comprehension on EFAL pupils/learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School, Limpopo.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The following objectives were used in the study:

- To identify challenges faced by Grade 6 learners on EFAL reading comprehension,
- To suggest solutions on how to successfully teach reading and learning EFAL,
- To intricate ideas on how to effectively cope with EFAL reading comprehension challenges to educators and teachers in Grade 6.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School in EFAL?
- What are possible and effective solutions to help with the reading comprehension of EFAL learners?
- What are the reading comprehension challenges faced by learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School?

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (2016) reveals that South African learners have a problem when it comes to reading comprehension. It should be noted that reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that all learners need for personal success and academic progress. Poor levels of EFAL on the reading comprehension of learners in rural public schools in South Africa remain a great challenge in terms of teaching and learning.

Further, the problem is that learners in rural schools in Limpopo Province hardly have access to necessary reading materials in EFAL. Thus, they are barely exposed to English, which is the language of the school. Lack of reading and comprehension skills in texts written in English is a barrier to teaching and learning. This is particularly the case concerning Grade 6 learners in rural primary schools where English is a second language. Interventions should be made in early grades to help learners gain the necessary reading comprehension skills. This could significantly promote their academic success in higher grades. This study seeks to close this gap in knowledge by examining challenges of teaching and learning EFAL on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School. As far as the researcher is concerned, this gap has not been addressed in literature.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study used two theories, namely, Cognitive constructivism theory and Schema theory. These two theories put emphasis on learners' prior knowledge and how they gain and access them when they interact with a text. This is useful for reading comprehension. In the current study, Grade 6 learners are believed to have a schema appropriate for their level and accessing them for reading comprehension purposes.

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher obtained permission from the Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE) specifically, the Malamulele North-East Circuit to access the school premises. The LDoE clearance enabled the researcher to seek permission from the school principal to conduct research at the school. Additionally, the researcher ensured that informed consent was obtained from participants, namely the Grade 6 educator and learners. Parents' learners were reached to grant consent for their children to take part in the study. Throughout the research, participants' privacy, dignity, and consent were respected, and their right to withdraw from the research was specified.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a form of enquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their setting (McMillan & Schumacher (2006: 4). Under qualitative approach, the researcher used observations with the educator through field notes to

Gather data about the teaching of the reading strategies that are applied in the classroom.

1.8.1 Research design

Blakstad (2008) states that the design ensures that the study obtains relevant evidence that entails specifying the type of evidence needed to answer the research question or to accurately describe some phenomenon. The researcher looked at the challenges between teaching and learning of EFAL reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners in Mahlohlwani Primary School.

1.8.2 Population and sampling

This research paper used Purposive sampling. According to Creswell and Plato Clerk (2011: 6), purposive sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals that are knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon of interest. The researcher employs purposive sampling whereby, participants from Mahlohlwani Primary School were selected according to their accessibility and relevance to the study. Only ten EFAL learners in Grade 6, and one Grade 6 EFAL educator.

1.9 DATA COLLECTION

1.9.1 Instruments for data collection

The researcher used observational field notes to gather data from Grade 6 EFAL learners during reading comprehension lessons. The researcher wanted to find the educator's reading strategies that are applied during the EFAL teaching. The researcher also observed how Grade 6 EFAL educators utilises the reading strategies to help enhance the learners' reading comprehension.

Focus group interviews were conducted among small groups of participants who share common characteristics important to the researcher to answer the research question. The discussions provided the researcher with valuable information about the phenomenon that is discussed. This allowed participants to listen to each other's perspectives and opinions and therefore be influenced by others, this creates a sense of belonging. Learners were interviewed, and the interviews were recorded and transcribed so that the researcher could carefully look for patterns in the participants' responses.

1.10 DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative data namely, learners' focus group interviews, observational field notes from the reading lessons and an interview with the educator and the parents of the Grade 6 learners were transcribed, analysed thematically and documented. Interviews were organised into emerging patterns and categories. The researcher quoted the participants' responses precisely to confirm and give substance to the findings.

1.11 SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

This study is very significant as South Africa is facing reading comprehension challenges, especially in rural primary schools. The research will hopefully be used in understanding the challenges that Grade 6 EFAL educators and learners face during teaching and learning reading comprehension. A study of this nature will provide possible solutions to these challenges. This were needed to be used in conjunction with reading activity to provide readers with the opportunity to understand the meaning of reading the material. This study was helpful to educators, the Limpopo Department of Education, curriculum planners, subject advisors, and teaching and learning support materials.

1.12 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study is divided into five chapters: Introduction and Background, Literature Review, Research Methodology, Discussion and presentation of findings, and lastly Summary, recommendations, conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This chapter introduces and defines the research problem. The chapter reveals rationale and background to the study indicating the challenges faced in teaching and learning in Grade 6 EFAL lessons. The study outlines the aim, objectives and research questions, and explains the significance of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter covers a significant literature review that gives answers to the research questions in the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter examines the research methodology employed in the study for data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter discusses and presents the finding of the study in line with the research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION

This concluding chapter summarises the findings of the study and makes recommendations and implications for further research. Lastly, it draws conclusions based on these findings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents reviews of literature and studies that are related to this study. To fully understand the study to be done, a synopsis of the theoretical framework was presented first. The researcher also attempted to peruse educational research, articles and internet sources both locally and internationally to review the challenges of teaching and learning of English First Additional Language (EFAL). Attention will also be given to possible and effective solutions that might help with the reading comprehension of EFAL by learners.

2.2.1. Cognitive constructivism theory in reading

Piaget used Cognitive constructivism theory in 1953. It focuses on how an individual constructs knowledge. This theory has two major components that predict what learners understand at different ages. It focuses on development and describes how learners develop cognitive abilities (Piaget, 1953). The theory believes that learners build their knowledge through experience. Experiences enable them to create schemas. Powel and Kalina (2009:243) are in support of Piaget's (1953) theory incorporates the importance of educators to understand the need for learners to obtain knowledge and learn at his or her own pace. So, educators need to observe the level of each learner to provide the necessary assistance. This prepares and allows effective classroom interaction in the target language to take place.

What is more, Piaget's (1952) theory of cognitive constructivism proposes that humans cannot be given information that they immediately understand and use; instead, humans must construct their knowledge. The individual learner must be assisted in constructing his or her understanding to build on what he or she understands during the classroom interaction. This would be useful in assisting learners to gain skills for reading comprehension. Besides, this theory would be useful in the current study because it will enable the teaching and learning of EFAL in Grade 6 to take place with

ease since it is learner centred. This would also be useful to understand the challenges in teaching and learning reading comprehension.

2.2.2. Schema theory in reading

According to Chen and Jiaming (2002), the concept Schema was first put forward by Immanuel Kant in 1804. The theory did not focus on how learners read but how they imagined the world. Later, Schema theory was popularised by Piaget in 1923. Piaget focused on how learners should learn according to their age. The modern schema theory was popularised by Bartlett. Bartlett, (1932) considers schema as an active organisation which controls the past reactions or past experiences.

According to schema theory, comprehending a text is an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge and the text. Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate textual material to one's knowledge (Rumelhart, 1980). Schema theory emphasises the importance of general knowledge and concepts that will help to form schemata. In the educational context, the task of educators would be to help learners to develop new schemata and establish connections between them. Furthermore, due to the importance of prior knowledge, educators should make sure that learners obtain or have it. This is very useful in reading comprehension.

According to Widdowson (1983), schema is the knowledge structure of known things or information that are stored in the mind. Whilst Cook (1989) believes that schema is the reflection of typical scenarios in the brain. According to these explanations about schema, when people understand new information, they should connect that new information with known concepts and previous experience. Schema emphasises that memory structure allows readers to rearrange reading materials. In EFAL reading comprehension, the text-only provides directions for readers on how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge (An, 2013). When the learners retrieve this information, reading comprehension takes place.

Moving forward, the central principle of the schema theory assumes that a written text does not carry meaning by itself. Piaget (1926) states that complex learning techniques are related to cognitive development, especially of lower-level children. In addition, Rumelhart (1980) supports Piaget's Schema "theory by stating that

comprehending a text is an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge. This also applies to learners when they read texts. An (2013) states that text only provides directions for readers on how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge.

According to Lui et al., (2010), the schema theory of reading is classified into three categories, namely: Language Schema, Content Schema and Form(al) schema. Jafri (2017) refers to Language schema as one's knowledge of lexicon, syntax and semantics. Language schema is very important in reading comprehension because it is the mastery of reading material, identifying the letters, words and sentences of the reading material. Lui et al (2010) add that without language schema, a reader cannot utilise content schema and form schema in the brain by information and clue provided, not to mention comprehension of the reading material. Therefore, language schema is a requirement for reading comprehension. Language schema is the basis for content schema and form schema.

Additionally, Jafri (2017) defines Content Schema as the reader's world knowledge. Lui et al (2010) reveals that content schema consists of two aspects. One is situation schema that relates to reading material, the other is background knowledge schema previously possessed by readers. Background knowledge schema is knowledge and the reader's experiences stored in the reader's brain; this helps with reading comprehension. The content schema can help readers to predict and choose information, to eliminate ambiguity and raise reading speed, or even can make up for the shortage of language knowledge. In the case of the current study, Grade 6 learners should have adequate content schema to comprehend the grade reading material level.

Content schema is the reading comprehension background. This is supported by Jafri (2017) who states that readers who possess or are given appropriate background knowledge about a text are more likely to understand and recall contexts of the text than those who have little background knowledge about the text. Learners from rural schools have a problem of comprehending many reading materials since they cannot relate to them. Therefore, educators need to encourage learners to read. This will increase their content schemata to enable them to comprehend texts with ease. Carrell (1983) cited in Jafri (2017) defines formal Schema as the rhetorical structure

of the text. In support of the above study Jafri (2019) research about how readers' expectations on the rhetorical organisation of the text affect their comprehension.

Furthermore, formal schema is also known as textual schema that encompasses the background knowledge relating to the formal and rhetorical organisational structures of the different types of texts. The schema in mind allows readers to predict later development. As a result, educators should train their learners to have different knowledge of different types of texts and genres, for example, reading a short story, newspaper or poetry. This will help with their reading comprehension.

Besides, theorists like Palmer (1981) have always been interested in how a learner reads texts and how it is structured. The concept of story grammar attempts to explain the underlying principles of story development or text structure by investigating the steps that readers follow while reading or listening to a story or text. These two theories put emphasis on the learners' prior knowledge and how they gain and access them when they interact with a text. This is useful for reading comprehension. In the current study, Grade 6 learners are believed to have a schema appropriate for their level and they access it for reading comprehension purposes. Educators should find convenient ways of helping their learners in accessing schemas so that they can comprehend the text that they are reading.

When a learner reads, he or she constructs meaning in different ways and reading literacy is viewed as a constructive and interactive process. The meaning is constructed through the interaction between reader and text, this leads to reading comprehension (Kintsch, 2013; Rumelhart, 1975). Again, when a learner reads, he or she draws on a collection of effective reading strategies and reflects on the reading experience. Therefore, good readers are good comprehenders. Klapwijk (2011) states that prior experience and background knowledge that learners bring to a text help with the comprehension of what they are reading. Schema plays an important role in learners reading comprehension.

2.2.3. Teaching reading comprehension

Reading subsequently uses stored knowledge kept in one's mind, schema. A reader retrieves the stored information, this makes reading to be easy to read and comprehend. The stored background knowledge is the key to schema theory. Reading

Comprehension is achieved when the reader's background knowledge and text meet (Zhao & Zhu, 2012). Zhao and Zhu (2012) confirm that the reading process, therefore, involves identification of genre, formal structure and topic, all of which activate schemata and allow readers to comprehend the text.

Additionally, pre-reading is a step that an educator takes to prepare learners they read the whole text, especially on their own (Azizifar, 2015). Azizifar further points out that in reading comprehension, pre-reading begins with an educator introducing keywords, concepts or pictures to stimulate learners' interest in the text. The main purpose of pre-reading is to motivate learners to read and to prepare them for the text. Consequently, this study hopes to find better ways to improve the teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension. Educators can use pre-reading to help learners to comprehend texts especially when they are supposed to read on their own. This will help them to activate their background knowledge to help them comprehend the text as educators do pre-reading strategy before learners read on their own.

Smith (2009) states that talking precedes reading and that talks make reading easier and more exciting. Educators must make sure that learners will also learn to talk through pictures because pictures help learners to comprehend the text that they are reading. Educators should provide learners with various pre-reading techniques to help them with reading comprehension (Azizifar et al., 2015). This assists learners with reading and allows them to make sense of it. This will also help learners anticipate the text using their schemata. An educator should apply pre-reading technique to help learners to comprehend the text with ease.

What is more, pre-reading strategies allow learners to think about what they already know about a given topic and predict what they will read or hear. Before learners read any text, educators can direct their attention to how a text is organised, teach unfamiliar vocabulary or other concepts, search for the main idea, and provide learners with a purpose for reading. Most importantly, educators can use pre-reading strategies to increase learners' interest in a text (Brassell, Danny & Timothy Rasinski, 2008). Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) (2011: 15) state that skimming, and scanning should be taught and used inside the classroom when pre-reading for ideas and supporting details. This is because this keeps learners interacting with the text and keep them interested in what the text is all about

Nieman, Swanepoel and Venter's (2004: 108) highlight the importance of language teaching suggesting that glancing and skimming chapter titles, subheadings, tables of Content help to recall superior knowledge relating to the text. The emphasis here is that educators should help learners when it comes to reading.

The above study found that as learners are reading, they meet unfamiliar words and ask themselves questions. Educators should help them to comprehend their texts. They should check if these learners are following by posing questions or help them visualise what they are reading. Another recommendation is that an educator can ask questions like, "what do you already know about the text?" and, "what more would you like to know?".

Moreover, educators assist learners during reading, this will help learners to be confident in their reading and motivate them to know more and gain knowledge (Tsebe & Scherman, 2020). Educators should read the text aloud while learners are following, this will increase their confidence in reading and introduce them to words that they do not know and grasp the pronunciations of new or difficult words. This is known as modelling learners to read. When educators use this model, it demonstrates to learners how they should read fluently and most importantly, with a clear understanding.

During -reading, an educator should encourage learners to skim and scan some texts for certain words. Learners can also be given a jigsaw puzzle and ask true or false questions in the reading process to check their understanding (Ibrakhimovna, 2016). Moreover, this study recommends that, during reading, an educator should engage learners in coaching them, promoting, and questions learners. This will activate, sustain, and keep track of the learners' thinking. This process makes teaching and learning make more sense.

During the post-reading period, an educator should ask purposeful questions to the learners concerning what they were reading (Ibrakhimovna, 2016). This method is used to determine if learners understood the text through posing relevant, questions to provoke their responses. Educators can ask one of the following questions: "What did you learn?" or "What interested you?". By posing such questions to learners, an educator will know if comprehension is achieved. An educator should proceed to re-read the texts and allow learns to join in, this, in turn. This will increase the level of

Comprehension and enjoyment of the text. Educators are encouraged to retell or summarise what they have just read.

Additionally, Ibrakhimovna (2016) refers to post-reading purpose as helping their learner use their acquired knowledge in similar readings, to have them integrate their reading skills both with other language skills: listening, speaking, writing and with the foreign culture. Learners can be requested to write a summary of what they have read to evaluate the level of understanding. This will encourage group work and teamwork. In their study, Maja (2015) suggests that educators should also allow learners to take turns reading some part of the text and give them a chance to clarify new words. This can be done by asking each other questions and reading the words in the sentence.

2.3. SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION HISTORY

There have been educational reforms and curriculum transformation processes since 1994. After apartheid ended, South Africa's ruling party abolished Bantu Education, which had been in place since 1953. There were also numerous policy changes, primarily to ensure that previously excluded learners could attend school. Following the end of the apartheid era, South Africa's democratic government implemented a slew of curricula to replace the heinous education system that had been in place (Morgan, 2001). Many curricula were adopted through trial and error until recently, when the country's curriculum was revised. Changes in values occurred, new curriculum was introduced over time, and new development, equity, and technology outlined how educators should teach and learners learn. Economic necessity dictated that new curriculum be developed to benefit everyone.

Bantu Education was replaced by Outcome-Based Education (OBE) in 1997. OBE refers to competence rather than pass or fail, outcomes rather than goals and objectives, and assessment criteria rather than aims and objectives. OBE, as a model, was chosen as the most likely to address the crisis in South African education. Assessment criteria are provided at the outset so that learners understand what and how they were evaluated. OBE is primarily concerned with focusing on what learners learn and how well they learn it, rather than what learners are supposed to learn (Makhubele, 2015). As a result, many educators believe that the implementation of the OBE curriculum is to be blamed for the difficulties in teaching reading and writing in primary schools.

What is more, educators in the OBE were required to plan lessons based on the learning outcomes of the learning areas, with a focus on achieving the critical and learning outcomes. In this regard, educators must have a thorough understanding of the relevant curriculum model and learning area. The OBE was introduced in South Africa with the expectation that it would lead to an improvement in the quality of education received by South African learners in schools. Educators' responses to this question indicate that they still require extensive training in OBE curriculum development. This was a problem to the Department of education sector.

Again, educators have experienced challenges in implementing and comprehending previous numerous curriculum policies such as Curriculum 2005. C2005 was named to reflect the process of introducing the OBE philosophy into the school education system (Ramrathan, 2015). The curriculum was defined by outcome statements, which stated what learners should know, demonstrate, and value. It was necessary to integrate knowledge. The importance of content and context in determining what needed to be learned cannot be overstated. As a result, subjects were replaced by Learning Areas (LA). The C2005 promoted pupil-centred approach to teaching and learning. Educators, learners, parents, and the general public all had to learn a new language as part of the school curriculum.

The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) was introduced in 2004. According to the Revised NCS Policy, it is critical in a multilingual country like South Africa for learners to achieve high levels of proficiency in at least two languages and to be able to communicate in other languages. The Revised National Curriculum Statement (NCS) replaced the OBE. These changes led to uneasiness and anxiety among educators. NCS came into being in 2007. It was implemented from Grade R to Grade 9.

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS), the next iteration of OBE, was introduced into the school education system in 2012. DBE made it a necessity to CAPS. CAPS is the current curriculum that is being used to alleviate the historical challenges and disadvantages (Moodly, 2013). CAPS in Intermediate Phase (IP) aims to provide educators with guidelines on how to use the IP document, content, concepts and skills that need to be taught inside a classroom. It also provides time allocation, requirements for the Formal Assessment Activities (FAA). The Department of Basic

Education (2014) suggests that informal assessment and lists of recommended resources per grade. Educators in CAPS are given a handbook that contains all these details, including assessments, and are expected to implement this curriculum in their Schools. According to CAPS (2012), educators must understand the required content knowledge, how it should be taught, and when it should be taught.

The preamble to the South African Schools Act, which became law in November 1996, explains its rationale as follows:

“...this country requires a new national system for schools which will redress past injustices in educational provision, provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people’s talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools.”

Pretorius and Spaul (2016) reveal that the South African government has approximately 15 % of total government expenditure is spent on education, making it the largest single line-item in the budget. This is a large amount of money put into a failing department. Funding of public schools, especially for poor learners such as those in rural areas, must be enough. The Department of Education (2001) covers the cost for all the necessities required for quality education. However, it is still failing to provide adequate EFAL reading materials for rural primary school learners.

Additionally, Cekiso and Madikiza (2014) conducted a study which reveals that the learners from selected school were not using a wide range of reading strategies and as such found it difficult to understand the printed text. There is an extensive body of knowledge indicating that teaching learners how to use reading strategies can enhance their reading comprehension.

In South Africa, the lack of adequate resourcing and infrastructure in historically disadvantaged schools continues to contribute to a widening educational gap between

The urban middle-class, black townships and poor, rural villages schools, contrary to the democratic government's educational goals of equity, access, and redress.

2.4 READING

Sulistami et al. (2018) cite Wallace (1993: 4) who defines reading as interpreting or reacting to a written text as a form of communication. Learning to read is a lifelong process that starts at a young age. Reading is an important part of English language instruction, and it has evolved into a skill that learners should be able to master. Many learners in rural primary schools, Grade 6 learners, have some difficulties with English, especially reading comprehension. It is apparent that many learners struggle to understand the main idea or content of a text because they lack adequate reading comprehension skills. This is caused by poor vocabulary and grammatical structure. This also causes them to fail to master their grade-level reading material.

Reading is an active process, according to Tarigan (2004) cited in Sulistami et al. (2018). This implies that a reader will switch between sources of information, elaborate meaning and strategies, and focus their response on the social context. It means that readers can express their thoughts on the text's content based on their schema and experience when they read it. Reading comprehension is something that learners need to work on. Learners are influenced by problems that occur, such as learners who are not interested in reading, who have been taught that reading a text is boring, and who are lazy to read because they have no desire to do so. Due to a lack of vocabulary, learners have difficulty comprehending the information in the text.

According to studies, most learners do not have the ability to read by the sixth grade. This is difficult because the ability to read is by far the most important factor in excelling in other subjects when it comes to academic work. Learners should be able to read fluently by the end of Grade 6 because reading skills are taught in primary school. Most reading studies' findings indicate that most learners are unable to read at the grade level expected of them. Inadequate teaching can lead to reading difficulties. Educators have a lot of work to do for many learners to become fluent readers. Environmental factors can also contribute to reading difficulties. Consider the home and school environments. It was extremely difficult for a child to develop an interest in

Reading if there is no one to motivate him or her at home or at school. In addition, educators have their own ideas about what causes reading difficulties.

2.5. VOCABULARY

Kulo et al (2019) states that acquisition of adequate vocabulary is essential for reading and understanding the text. Learners' vocabulary plays an important role in reading comprehension. Lack of vocabulary development for learners can affect the teaching and learning process. Learners' poor vocabulary leaves educators with a huge gap to fill when it comes to the teaching of reading. Educators need to teach learners how to improve their vocabulary because this help with text comprehension. This was supported by Nation (2015) who argued that, during the teaching and learning of vocabulary, learners lack vast vocabulary negatively and this affects the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, it is evident that learners are having a problem with reading. As a result, more attention should be put in helping learners to read. When educators assist learners with reading it build up their vocabulary which is very effective as it will help learners read well and comprehend (Farrokh, 2019). During reading a lesson, an educator's input is equally important for learners to learn unfamiliar words. This means that educators should ensure that their learners learn new words daily

Hence, vocabulary is not a significant skill that will help with the thorough explanation of reading comprehension. On other hand, it is a better indicator of oral language than listening comprehension. Therefore, in this study, the researcher examined the contribution of linguistic ability to reading compression using a measure of vocabulary knowledge. This choice is also supported by a recent regression modelling study (Braze et al., 2016) which indicate that a significant amount of variance in reading comprehension is captured by measures of vocabulary. These measures allow learners to comprehend the text well if they understand the words that they are reading.

The influence of vocabulary knowledge on reading comprehension can occur directly or indirectly either through its effect on the semantic processing of the text or through its effect on word reading skills (Catts, Hogan, & Fey, 2003; Jenkins et al., 2003). Children with specific reading comprehension difficulties can read words relatively

Accurately but show poor reading comprehension skills and have been characterised as having poor vocabulary in addition to poor oral language comprehension skills.

Further, a study conducted by Kulo et al. (2019) found that educators hardly engage learners in reading and reading comprehension. Apparently, this has led to learners Not being frequently exposed to new reading materials to build their vocabulary. Learners in EFAL must master reading skills as it is used as the LoTL throughout their academic journey, not only in Grade 6. Their exposure to the target language may be limited to the classroom context hence, they must expand their reading to add on to their vocabulary bank.

The Department of Education's (2008: 16) stipulated the following three steps for educators when they are teaching vocabulary to their learners:

- Inside the classroom, educators should read to their learners regularly or allow learners to listen to texts that interest them. They should dedicate 30 minutes weekly to read aloud to their learners. This is also recommended by the CAPS (2011). This will introduce learners to new words and build their vocabulary. For difficult words, educators should explain or demonstrate difficult or new words to their learners.
- Educators should encourage learners to do independent reading at home. Learners should be advised to read aloud each time. Learners can help each other, in shared and guided reading sessions, this will allow learners to help each other and learn new words. Learners should be given new words to learn at home.
- When learners come back to the classroom, educators should do a follow up on these words. Educators should arrange for learners to have a workbook in which they are going to write every new word they have learned at home and inside the classroom. These steps will help learners with building on their vocabulary.

Learners learn new words by encountering them from a text (Stahl, 1999). The quantity of reading is crucial for improving the vocabulary knowledge of learners, which subsequently increases their ability to read more complex text. Learners will fail to comprehend a text that has too many unfamiliar words. Vocabulary improves the

Comprehension of what is read. Children who frequently read texts acquire a larger and richer vocabulary and therefore reach improved levels of reading comprehension.

Hlalwetha (2013) reinforces that the aim of teaching vocabulary is to support learners in their thinking and to articulate this to other people. This means that when learners are failing to comprehend what they are reading, the reading process were unsuccessful. Vocabulary plays an important role in reading comprehension. Educators should ensure that their learners are given tasks to ensure that they gain new vocabulary, regularly.

2.6. LEARNERS' INTERESTS, ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATION IN READING

A large body of studies has corroborated that learners' reading motivation is a key factor associated with their reading performance (Logan, Medford & Hughes, 2011; OECD, 2016). Lack of motivation in learners can affect learners reading comprehension. Motivation can be categorised as autonomous and controlled motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Learners lose interest in many things easily, learning included. Educators should try to motivate learners to learn in every class. This makes learners to be motivated in reading and this can be conducive to teaching and learning.

According to Huang (2016: 187), learning motivation held by learners is another reason for learners failing to comprehend, this is because their mindset is not focused on learning. Learners whose parents hold a positive attitude toward L2 are usually more motivated to learn and vice versa.

Additionally, learners should be motivated to read on their own to spark their reading interest; this will help them to comprehend different kinds of texts with ease. Yet, Huang (2016) argues that this positive attitude might become a negative force if it is overdone. In this sense, learners should not be forced to read, because it might affect their desire to read on their own, as it will feel like a punishment. Consequently, parents need to give their children space to learn on their own.

Most learners' comprehension depends on their level of interest and purposes for reading, as well as on their background knowledge of text topics (Kintsch, 2013). When learning to read learners acquire, organise, elaborate information, and further reflect on and guide one's text comprehension. This plays an important role in reading comprehension (Andreassen & Bråten, 2011). Lerkkanen et al. (2016) state that

Learners can be encouraged and motivated to read, but they should read what they are interested in sometimes. When they are given freedom to choose reading materials, it will motivate them to become habitual readers, and this will increase their comprehension skills.

2.7. READING COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension is defined by Snow (2002:11) as the process of extracting and constructing meaning simultaneously through interaction and involvement with written language. Furthermore, reading comprehension, according to Mikulecky and Jeffries (2007), entails making sense of what readers read and connecting the ideas in the text to what they already know. Reading comprehension, according to Duffy (2009:14), is the essence of reading because we are not reading if we do not understand the message.

Research findings from the works of Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016) about reading comprehension in South African schools show that many South African schools' learners still have a challenge with poor level of comprehension. This consequently affects the teaching and learning process. This study reveals that there are multiple reasons for the poor levels of reading comprehension in the country. Besides factors like high levels of poverty, low parental literacy levels, poor governance in many schools, poorly resourced schools and poorly qualified educators. There are also factors associated more closely with language and reading literacy that relate to poor reading comprehension. This remains a challenge in teaching and learning a language. Without serious intervention from the government, this will remain a problem in South Africa, regardless of the new curriculum in place.

EFAL learners are still found to be unable to read effectively and frequently fail to comprehend the text. In South Africa, a study was conducted by Cekiso and Madikiza (2014) on understanding and implementation of reading strategies which revealed that the learners were not using a wide range of reading strategies. As a result of the latter, learners were having difficulties comprehending text. This shows that learners were learning without comprehending. They went on to say that most of the strategies were not understood by educators and therefore, their implementation was compromised. Educators should strive to ensure that learners read and comprehend the texts that they are reading.

Besides, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) has recurred every five years since 2001. Howei et al (2017: 6) state that PIRLS aims to provide the best policy-relevant information about how to improve teaching and learning and to help young learners become accomplished and self-sufficient readers. PIRLS has been a moving force that revealed that South Africa is still failing dismally. The Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) then became the National Research Centre for PIRLS 2006, PIRLS 2011, PIRLS 2016. South Africa participated in all these international assessments study of reading literacy. PIRLS investigates how well learners read in a national-wide comparative study. The results show that South Africa is struggling to develop the competencies necessary to make a successful transition to using reading as a tool for learning and academic success (Zimmerman, Howie & Smit, 2013).

The (2006) and (2011) PIRLS results prove that the South African learners who did the comprehension tests in their African home language performed most poorly of all (Howie et al. 2008, Howie et al. 2012). Even in 2016, South Africa scored the lowest amongst the countries. All these years in the South African Department of Education (DoE) has been investing much money to improve the standard of education. Howie et al.'s, (2017) research found that DoE is failing to get a high rating in their quality of education. They should find ways to help learners improve their literacy levels. This were good because it helps improve learners reading comprehension.

The PIRLS (2016) results provided a shred of overwhelming evidence that the South African Grade 4 and 5 learners still struggle with reading comprehension. South Africa was ranked the lowest in the world. The PIRLS study shows that 78% of learners from grade 4 cannot read nor comprehended what they are reading. This shows that literacy is a huge problem in the country. This shows that reading comprehension is much neglected in South Africa. A large-scale PIRLS results certainly reveal poor comprehension abilities in both L1 and L2 readers. On the other hand, poor comprehension inevitably raises questions about basic reading abilities. Pretorius and Spaul (2016) say that poor literacy performance in South Africa from PIRLS naturally evoked no small measure of rational self reflection and an acknowledgement of the glaring fact that comprehension is a much-neglected area. So, educators should put much attention in ensuring that they teach reading comprehension effectively.

2.8. LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION LEVEL

Shanker and Cockrum (2009: 2) agree that:

All learners should be taught and should practice, reading at an appropriate level of difficulty so that they can experience frequent success and that, all too often, learners are expected to read material that is much too difficult for them and from these experiences they learn only frustrations instead of learning how to read successfully.

Learners should be given text based on their level so that they can read. This gives them a huge chance to comprehend the text. According to the research by the National School Boards Association (2015), failure to read proficiently by the end of the third grade is linked to ongoing difficulties in school and failure to graduate. Reading is a means through which further learning takes place. Though their exposure to the target language may be a limited one out of the classroom, they must expand their reading to add on to their vocabulary bank. Learners need to know how to read well so that they can understand what they are learning with ease. In SA, learners have a low reading comprehension level. This was also revealed by PIRLS 2016 when SA was ranked second lowest in the literacy tests.

Furthermore, the Annual National Assessment (ANA) reveals that SA schools are failing to read and comprehend what they are reading (Department of Basic Education, 2011). Likewise, the Department of Education's National Reading Strategy (2008) agrees that South African learners are failing to read at age-appropriate level. This is a challenge in teaching and learning. It is even a greater challenge since they are failing to read English because from Grade 4, it is their LoLT. They should have all the necessary skills in Grade 6.

Nel, Nel and Hugo (2012:101) state that a number and types of errors that learners make during oral reading, is an indication of the learners' reading level and that learners come to class with different levels of readiness, interest and learning profiles. For educators to improve the learners' reading levels, the reading material needs to suit the learners' reading level. This implies that more effort should be put in ensuring that learners read for comprehending to take place. The above study proves that educators are failing to develop learners' basic reading skills that support comprehension. This remains a challenge since learners rely mostly on their educators

When it comes to teaching and learning. The research reveals that learners should be always reading and developing their vocabulary. This will make their comprehension easy.

Furthermore, Whitten, Labby and Sullivan (2016) argue that learners who choose to read self-selected literature for pleasure would experience greater academic success than their non-reading peers. This is because when they do this, they develop a reading hobby, and this increases their reading comprehension levels. On the other hand, educators should also encourage their learners to read, even if it is not prescribed books, but reading for pleasure. Hence, CAPS (2011) states that IP learners should be allocated at least 30 minutes daily to read for enjoyment. Learners should be given the freedom to choose books to read, they should have a choice, this will encourage them to read more often.

Again, Shole, Setyosari, Cahyono, and Sutlioni (2019) conducted a study on EFL learners' reading comprehension. Their research evidence reveals that habitual reading can lead to an increase in learners' reading ability and comprehension. Learners who read much demonstrate greater competence in some aspects of literacy and this affects the growth and competence of reading habits and leads them to have a higher level of education. The study concludes that when learners read voluntarily, their reading comprehension increases because they enjoy reading. As a result, educators should try to get their learners to read voluntarily. By doing this, they will eventually increase their reading levels, and this were conducive to teaching and learning reading comprehension.

2.9. CAPS TIME ALLOCATION FOR EFAL GRADE 6

Sebetoa's (2016) study shows that EFAL time at the Intermediate phase is not adequate for learners to learn English reading comprehension. On the other hand, the DBE (2011) states that it is imperative that a substantial amount of time be devoted in English inside the classroom. Recommended teaching time per week for EFAL is given 5 hours a week.

Table 1: CAPS time allocation per two-week cycle

Skills	Time Allocation per Two-week Cycle (Hours)		
	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
*Listening & speaking (Oral)	2 hours	2 hours	2 hours
*Reading and Viewing	5 hours	5 hours	4 hours
*Writing & Presenting	2 hours	2 hours	3 hours
Language Structures and Conventions	1 hour	1 hour	1 hour
	*Language Structures and Conventions and their usage are integrated within the time allocation of the four language skills. There is also time allocated for formal practice. Thinking and reasoning skills are incorporated into the skills and strategies required for Listening and Speaking, for Reading and Viewing, and Writing and Presenting.		

Adapted from: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 4-6 (CAPS) (2011)

Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016) investigated whether educators in South Africa are getting CAPS right. The research shows that teachers are failing to stick to the allocated time by the Department of Education. Again, it was found that they use the most reading time to teach writing and pay no attention to reading comprehension. This is a problem because if learners do not spend this time developing their reading skills inside the classroom, learners are unlikely to reach high levels of reading ability. Educators do not spend recommended reading time as per CAPS requirements, if time is not spent on developing reading in and out of classrooms, learners are unlikely to reach high levels of reading ability (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). Educators spent more time focusing on reaching decoding skills rather than meaning and comprehension.

Hlalwetha (2013) investigated reading difficulties experienced by learners. The results show that many educators in South Africa have an underdeveloped understanding of teaching reading, and most do not know how to teach reading. Too often educators

Are familiar with only one method of teaching reading and do not suit the learning style of all learners. This is a challenge to teaching and learning. Educators should try to use a variety of ways to teach learners reading and help them comprehend. The research suggests that educators must be guided on how to teach reading. They can Also use the policy documents when preparing to teach learners so that they can keep up with educational innovations. It was further recommended that educators should be motivated to further their studies through incentives or rewards after completion of their studies to realise that teaching is a noble profession that is worthy to lure the young generation.

2.10 EDUCATORS TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION

Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016) did a study on South African primary school educators' teaching reading comprehension. The study found that educators are not giving reading comprehension the attention it deserves. The focus was on the educators' perspective, in terms of what educators think about and do with teaching literacy. How they talk about it, the sense-making and valuing that goes on inside their heads, and how they teach it. The research findings conclude that literacy in South African state schools is generally not well taught. This is a problem since learners learn through reading and comprehending texts.

Moreover, Theron and Nel (2005:237) in their qualitative research on South African educators reveals challenges faced by educators when they are teaching. Their research shows that most educators lack the training, knowledge, tools, and time to support learners with limited English proficiency. The above can be done to ascertain if these learners achieve their full potential. This is a problem for educators who are supposed to help learners to be good readers and good comprehenders. English proficiency has been a great problem for black rural educators.

What is more, Irvine-Niakaris and Kiely (2015) analysed educators' pedagogical content knowledge. The results showed that experienced EFAL educators' pedagogic knowledge is very closely tied to their content knowledge of the language, texts, and assessment. Subsequently, this means that to be effective in reading, educators need to know how to approach reading and how to teach it. Educators also need to be skilled readers themselves so that they can teach better. They also need to be familiar with different genres of text.

According to Brown (2007), educators should constantly encourage learners to read aloud. Oral reading can serve with the following three tasks; firstly, as an evaluative check on bottom-up processing skills, secondly, a pronunciation checks and thirdly, with extra class participation if the educator intends to highlight a short part of a reading text. Allowing learners to read aloud and asking them questions concerning what they just read is a good thing in learning and teaching. This evaluates whether learners comprehend what they are reading or not. However, there are some disadvantages to reading aloud. Moats (1999: 10) argues that classroom teaching for reading instruction must be the central focus and should be considered the critical factor in preventing reading problems. This implies that educators should have high levels of content knowledge about reading and know how to teach it. Simply telling educators what to teach in terms of reading and how to do so does not turn them into good reading educators. An educator should strive to ensure that learners learn and master reading. This will help them with reading comprehension enabling them to teach better.

In addition, Pretorius and Knoetze (2012) conducted a study on how a book club for educators was used to help build educator literacy capacity in a disadvantaged primary school. The results show that when educators have their reading club, they tend to be better reading comprehension educators. When educators are good readers, they can pass their skills to their learners. The educators did little reading in their personal lives and were unfamiliar with the genre of learners' literature. Educators' understanding and teaching of reading may be linked to their reading practices. Large class size, traditional examination, personal beliefs of educators' and learners' roles play an important role in teaching and learning.

There are several benefits and drawbacks for educators in South Africa. Educator-trainees lacked the knowledge and skills to administer different reading comprehension assessment tools. Nel (2011) suggests that educators do not know how to use assessment data to inform their teaching, or how to communicate effectively with parents concerning their children's reading progress. Educators should involve different stakeholders in EFAL teaching and learning. This will help learners to pay much attention to their reading comprehension skills.

The current pre-service educator-training courses do not adequately prepare educator trainees with knowledge and skills to teach and assess reading comprehension. Most

Trainee educators hardly read, and they do not possess adequate skills and experience to teach reading comprehension. This remains a challenge because the government is not doing enough to help them become better, if not great educators.

In support of the above, Ellis (2015) writes that language learners vary on several dimensions. This has to do with personality, learning style, motivation, aptitude and age. This means that learners learn differently, and new educators should consider that when they are teaching learners reading comprehension. Rimensberger (2014) suggests that in-service and new educators are unlikely to become effective educators in the field when they are teaching reading comprehension as most of them lack an intrinsic motivation to read and have reading passion. If an educator has a good reading habit and a poor understanding of reading in general, he or she cannot become a good educator to teach reading comprehension (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). As a result, educators should help build a reading culture in their classrooms.

Furthermore, research conducted by Barnard (2017) proves that old educators are having difficulties when dealing with cognitive understanding in the change of the old curriculum to the new one. The research further reveals that even in schools with well-qualified and experienced educators, there is a knowledge gap between what they know, trained to teach and the change of curriculum. Old-educators' training institutions have trained them to approach teaching in a manner that is different from today's pedagogy style. Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) has changed drastically in recent years.

Again, Barnard (2017) states that educators, especially those who have taught for fifteen years and more, feel that they have enough experience in teaching EFAL not to be affected by the demands of the new curriculum. educators feel that they have mastered PCK needed to teach.

Non-native English-speaking educators can be in a job for more than ten years in the teaching field and yet, they have no will practise nor need for improvement. The study goes on to say that educators need to improve their command of the language so that they can use it more fluently, and above all, be more confident in the classroom. In addition to improvement and practice, Sebetoa (2016) states that educators, especially old educators need to attend workshops and study further so that it can help

Them to master English as a subject taught in schools. Educators should always find innovative ways to ensure that all their learners master EFAL reading comprehension.

A study was conducted on the practices of intermediate phase educators when teaching reading comprehension. The findings show that educators were complaining about insufficient resources in their Home Language (HL) to support reading or to help educators to teach reading in HL and EFAL. Furthermore, although they had attended workshops on reading, they did not experience a positive outcome (Mudzielwana et al., 2012). This is a problem; the Department of Education is trying to create training and workshops for old educators. But they are still struggling to get used to the new curriculum demands. Educators' knowledge and skills play a major role in how educators conduct classes, even how they approach teaching and learning of reading comprehension.

Fine-grained qualitative research is scarce into reading as meaning-making from an educator perspective, in terms of what educators think about and do with literacy, how they talk about it, the sense-making and valuing that goes on inside their heads, and how they teach it (Gains, 2010; Verbeek, 2010). Nel and Nel (2012) state that comprehension is the most difficult part to teach in primary schools. Educators need to use a gradual-release-of-responsibility approach. When they are teaching reading comprehension, the responsibility of comprehending must move slowly from the educator to the learner. DoE (2011) argues that educators should direct learners to actively engage with and derive meaning from the text as they read. Learners should be involved in teaching and learning. This makes them learn EFAL reading comprehension with ease.

2.11. READING CHALLENGES IN SCHOOLS

According to the World Development Report, education is in a learning crisis, as many countries are failing to provide learning for all. This is due to low levels, high inequality and slow progress (World Bank, 2017). Nonetheless, the recent international expansion in education is regarded as impressive but may not be contributing to the challenges experienced with quality in many systems.

There are claims that schools are failing learners as the struggling education systems lack key school-level ingredients for learning; prepared learners, effective teaching, learning-focused inputs, and the skilled management and governance that pulls them

All together (World Bank, 2018). According to PIRLS (2017), about 56% of 387 million children of primary schooling do not reach the minimum proficiency required for Reading. This applies specifically to the learners' respective grades. This affects their reading comprehension and makes it difficult for them to learn.

Several studies argue that of the challenges for teaching English as a FAL is often overcrowded classrooms. There is a lack of parental support and a lack of proficiency in the mother tongue. The Minister of Education barred the participation of South African schools from all similar surveys for a period of four years, that is from 2008 up to 2011 (DoE 2008). Evidence is seen in the international literacy survey where South Africa came last because they were underperforming, owing to e poor performance of the South African learners.

2.11.1. READING MATERIALS

Reading materials is one of the most supportive factors in the development of teaching reading. It is valid to say that one of the main problems in many schools is the lack of reading materials that can create an ineffective learning environment (Junius:2009). Høien and Lundberg (2000) discovered that reading is not a natural process in child development, but rather a culturally determined phenomenon. It is determined by teaching methods and the child's experiences with the printed matter. Most rural schools' learners are not exposed to print-rich environments. As a result, their reading level were lower than that of their peers in advanced and well-resourced schools.

What is more, EFAL teaching, and learning can be assisted by child's early reading activities at home with reading materials and schoolbooks. These must be always available in different formats. Most Limpopo schools only have access to hardcopy texts books. Meanwhile, reading should be an interesting and enjoyable learning experience for young children. In the reading process, the readers must create meaning through their creative thinking by combining their background knowledge, experiences, and situation with the information which is stated in the text (Egiyantinah et al, 2018). CAPS do not recommend grammar and audio-lingual methods; it regards the two as suitable for teaching language structures and pronunciation. However, the Department of Basic Education (2010) suggests that they should be taught incidentally as part of reading and writing. Most rural primary schools do not have access to

Computers and internet and books. They lack resources that can assist them in the teaching and learning process.

2.11.2 Lack of Infrastructure

Pretorius and Mampuru (2007) claim that only 27% of schools have libraries and the Department of Education (DoE) has noted that some learners are enrolled in schools that are ill-equipped, overcrowded, and in desperate need of renovation. Crowded and derelict classrooms hinder the implementation of individual attention to learners experiencing reading problems. Furthermore, Howie et al. (2017) state that schools in South Africa still suffer serious shortcomings, ranging from poor access to water, telephones, and electricity, to add to this the poor condition of many school buildings despite significant investments in infrastructure.

In South Africa, the lack of adequate resourcing and infrastructure in historically disadvantaged schools continues to contribute to a widening educational gap between the urban middle-class, black townships and poor, rural villages schools, contrary to the democratic government's educational goals of equity, access, and redress (Probyn, 2006). More schools found the educational changes more challenging than others. In the past, there were always concerns that South Africa's rural areas were marginalised and under-resourced (Msike, 2010). In many schools, learner-educator ratios with poor physical conditions and inadequate facilities for teaching and learning, schools with neither library nor print-rich environments will make reading a difficult task for learners (DoE, 2008). Lack of infrastructure can never be the main reason for learners' poor performance, there are several aspects to investigate.

2.12. STRATEGIES

Madikiza, Cekiso, Tshotsho, and Landa, (2018) analyses the implementation of reading strategies by English First Additional Language educators in the South African context. The results prove that there is a need for reading strategy instruction to be implemented especially with learners who are found to have poor reading performance at the primary, high school and tertiary levels.

O'Malley et al (1985) classifies three learning strategies namely, Metacognitive strategies, Cognitive strategies and Socio-affective. The first strategy, the Metacognitive strategy, involves reading a text, planning for learning, thinking about

The learning process as it is taking place, monitoring one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an Activity is completed. Cognitive strategies include repeating, translating, grouping, note-taking, deducting using, imagery, auditory representation, keyword, contextualisation, elaboration, and Transfer. Finally, Socio-affective strategies feature social-mediating activity and transacting with others. O'Malley et al (1985) emphasises that language learners without metacognitive strategies have no direction or ability to monitor their progress, accomplishments, or their future learning. Among these strategies, metacognitive strategies are assumed as the most important in developing learners' language skills.

2.13. READING FLUENCY

Álvarez-Cañizo, Cueva, Cuetos, and Suárez-Coall (2020) conducted a study about reading fluency and reading comprehension. The findings of the study indicate that reading aloud had a more proven advantage over silently reading a text. Reading aloud is more effective when it comes to comprehension.

Hence, Paige (2011) advocates that reading fluency is a crucial skill for children if they are to achieve satisfactory academic performance. When a reader lacks the necessary ability of quick analysis, the task of reading shall be a difficult task for him/her and therefore his/her mind will fail to comprehend easily (Uysala & Bilgeb, 2018). Reading fluency as an automaticity process that occurs after repeated reading is not a correct approach either.

Further, National Reading Panel (2000: 15) articulates that reading fluency implies appropriate speed, accuracy and expressiveness in reading. The development of reading fluency and reading comprehension begins at an early age, which is why it has been studied too much with primary school children. This means that educators must teach learners to read properly from early grades. It is a problem when educators fail to teach learners how to read. When Teaching fluency, educators should start with reading the texts that are too easy for the learners to understand (Nel & Hugo, 2012). Text reading fluency, although highly related to word reading fluency, also captures factors that originate from context. Text reading fluency mainly reflects the effortless processing of the syntactic and semantic cues present in the phrases and sentences of connected text. This type of processing is crucial to sentence comprehension and text comprehension.

Reading fluency comprises three dimensions: accuracy, speed, and prosody (Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009), but for the present study, the researcher will focus on accuracy and reading rate of reading fluency. Children with specific reading comprehension difficulties can read words accurately but show poor RC skills (Fernandes et al,2017). To get a gist of what reading fluency entails, the upcoming passage includes detailed definitions of accuracy and reading rate.

2.13.1. Accuracy

Learners need to effortlessly and accurately comprehend the text that they are reading with ease. LaBerge and Samuels (1974) say that 'automaticity' means that a reader recognises words automatically without the need for decoding. Samuels and Flor (1997) explain how important automaticity is in reading comprehension. They indicate that educators could use it to see if learners can automatically recognise words.

In reading accurately, a reader should be able to recognise words, select a proper meaning stored in the schema, and comprehend text accurately without facing challenges. This makes reading comprehension to be easy.

2.13.2. Reading rate

Fluency is associated with the readers' reading rate. Fluent readers read at a rate that is conducive to thinking. Learners in Grade 6 should be able to read accurately without struggling to comprehend the text. In contrast, non-fluent readers read slowly, with a dull tone, and a lack of confidence. They often stop and stare at words or sound them out, sometimes incorrectly (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp, & Jenkins 2001; Spear-Swerling, 2006). Reading rate increases reading comprehension on learners.

Additionally, the reading rate can be measured in different ways, namely, timed reading of a list of words of increasing length and complexity. Secondly, through a timed reading of a list of nonwords (to assess decoding without lexical access); and thirdly with a timed reading of a text like reading in context. This gives a score of Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM), thereby reflecting both accuracy and speed (Pretorius & Spaul, 2016). In these richer contexts, the EFAL learners seem to read about 25 WCPM slower than their L1 grade peers (Jimerson et al., 2013). Learners should read fluently. Reading fast and slowly sometimes make learners fail to comprehend the text

That they are reading. In Grade 6 reading comprehension, learners should maintain a consistency reading rate. This will help them with reading comprehension.

In support, Chang and Millett (2013) reveal that an increase in fluency and comprehension when learners engage in repeated reading intervention. Educators should encourage learners to revisit and read old texts. This will not just allow learners to read accurately, but also help them gain confidence in their reading abilities. This will also help them approach new reading materials with a positive mindset and have a better WCPM while reading.

2.13.3. Prosody

The final concept is prosody or phrasing and expression. Fluent readers read with phrasing and expression. Even in their heads, their interpretation of the EFAL text is like their HL. Expressive readers use their voices to support and extend the meaning of texts. Reading with an expression requires active comprehension to take place so that the text can be read meaningfully (Glasswell et al, 2016). For instance, a skilled reader may get louder or softer to create an atmosphere in a text. They may read more quickly or slowly to indicate the speed of action in a story or vary the pitch of their voice to represent different characters in a story or indicate surprise or anger in a dialogue. Kocaarslan (2019) states that reading prosody is one of the most important variables relating to reading comprehension.

2.14. STRATEGIES USED IN TEACHING READING

Most educators believe that they do not have to teach reading but facilitate the process for learners to teach themselves to read (DoE 2008: 8). Educators need to use various reading strategies to teach learners how to read and comprehend.

The CAPS in Intermediate Phase (IP) divided the requirements for reading into Shared reading, Group guided reading, Paired and Independent reading.

2.14.1. Shared reading

Rule and Land (2017) define shared reading as when an educator is reading a short text aloud to the class and then getting the class to repeat that. On the other hand, Moss and Loh (2010) in their research found that shared reading is a strategy that scaffold learner reading the textbooks they may not have read themselves. So, this is

A way of introducing learners to how to read well but also teaching them the way to gain a deep understanding of what they read as they read together. This strategy makes reading process easier because learners comprehend a text and grasp words or attain new vocabulary. Shared reading does not just motivate and but also train learners to read independently (Gusneli, Kristiawan, Asvio, & Hafulyon, 2016).

During reading lessons, an educator is a leader, he or she should create a relaxed learning atmosphere for learners to read. Learners share the reading activities with the educators and then they gradually take over reading themselves (Maja, 2015).

2.14.2. Guided reading

The Department of Education (2008) recommends that guided reading to educators because it involves the directed approach in the reading activity. During the reading lesson, an educator is supposed to support a small group of learners as they read the text. READ Educational Trust (2004) suggests that this group of learners should at least be at the same reading level. An educator should guide learners on how to read and help them to comprehend the text.

Saunders-Smith (2009) add that educators should try to help learners comprehend what they are reading by attaching schemata and use them in the reading process. Hence, the educator's role is to build scaffolding that connects schemata to the text. This means that educators should always ask questions that relate to the text. This is to find out whether the learners are comprehending the text that they are reading. Learners can either respond to the text questions orally or in written form, this will allow the educator to check the learners' reading comprehension.

2.14.3 Group reading

Read Educational Trust (2004) emphasises the importance of encouraging group reading. This enables learners to work in small groups and to read the same texts. These groups usually consist of six people or less. The group should read the text aloud and each learner should take turns in reading. This can be a problem in many disadvantaged schools due to overcrowded classrooms. It is also time-consuming to work with many learners. One educator cannot manage a classroom or pay attention to a single group at the time.

Evidently, reading plays an important role in the learners' academic career. Learners should be empowered to practise reading inside and outside the classroom context at the same time. This will encourage learners to read and be motivated by their classmates during reading lesson. This method of reading is not perfect, because some learners will hide behind other learners. Learners who can read well on their own will excel and poor readers were left behind. An educator will not have an opportunity to test if poor readers can read and comprehend the text well since their attention were on the learners who are good readers.

2.14.4. independent reading

Research conducted by Maja (2015) views independent reading as a purposeful planned activity whereby learners with educators' guidance chooses their books according to their interests and abilities. In Grade 6, CAPS is given 30 minutes of reading time, which is not enough for learners to master reading. So, this means that educators should encourage learners to read independently. Learners should be given a chance to read on their own for enjoyment. This will draw their interest to reading and result in them knowing how to read properly.

Moreover, educators should encourage their learners to read any book of their choice and record the title on a record card. This will allow educators to keep a track of who is reading and who is not. This practice can be done to an individual, pair, or group depending on the class size and their reading comprehension level.

Again, educators should encourage the learners to read for fun and to be entertained by what they are reading. This allows them to learn how to comprehend different kinds of texts. Besides, educators should gradually allow their learners to do more independent reading in their spare time (Maja, 2015). This will make them get used to reading on their own without anyone's supervision. This is very important, and schools should try to integrate independent reading within the allocated reading time as per the curriculum.

2.15. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Nkekane (2018) conducted a study on parental involvement in learners' learning. The research reveals that parents should be directly involved in the education of their children. The school and the educators should involve parents in the learning process

Of their children. This implies that for teaching and learning to be conducive, educators and parents should work together in ensuring that learners are progressing. Landsberg (2008) insists that parents should provide educators with information regarding the children language development such as how old they were when they were confronted with a new language, whom they communicate with at home, whether they are exposed to reading materials and television. This allows them to learn how to read easily resulting in reading comprehension.

Further, Garcia and Thornton (2014) study discovered that the involvement of family members in learning helps to improve learners' performance. It reduces absenteeism when parents become involved in children's education. They also found out that some parents think that their children need less homework, more playtime and life outside the school. This is a challenge since the current study supports the notion of learners reading any form of text in the home context.

A study by Ntekane (2018) on parental involvement in children's education reveals that a great challenge is that most African parents are illiterate in many black villages. The research argues that parental involvement can be achieved through home-based parental involvement like listening to a child as they read. This helps learners to be motivated in reading and improves their reading level. Learners become more focused on their schoolwork when their parents are involved. When they encounter reading difficulties while reading at home, it is hard for them to get help if their parents are illiterate.

In addition, Llamas' and Tuazon's (2016) study found that parents become comfortable when the education system requires their involvement in school activities. Hence, schools must encourage parents to get involved and contribute towards helping the school to achieve its missions and goals. This will help learners and parents to know what is dealt with at school. The latter literature reveals that many parents in public schools are illiterate. This is a problem because not all parents are given the liberty to be highly involved in their children's academic education. Parents are good at motivating their children to study harder. Without parental involvement, learners tend to relax.

Literacy is a problem in South Africa most parents in the villages are illiterate, which makes it difficult for them to assist their children with their studies (Lemmer, 2007).

Many learners are not exposed to early reading literacy activities with their families. Parental illiteracy has a deleterious effect on how learners learn to read. With poor literacy from parents, it becomes a huge challenge for parents to help their children when they encounter reading difficulties.

Parental illiteracy is a great challenge in many disadvantaged communities, and harms language teaching and learning.

2.16. READING MODELS

2.16.1 Bottom-up Model

Xue (2019) says this model pointed out that in the reading teaching, the process should teach from the identification of the smallest unit of letters in the English language and words to understand the overall meaning of syntax and discourse.

Further, this was supported by Suraprajit (2019) research where bottom-up model to reading comprehension, as it focused on the importance of first mastering foundation skills such as decoding, word recognition, and fluency before understanding the overall meaning of the text. Xue (2019: 61) adds that vocabulary is the key to reading comprehension. If a reader wants to fully understand the meaning of the text, it is necessary to grasp every word in the text. Educators must work tirelessly to help learners read better by having them learn and effectively use these basic skills. Xue (2019) says this strategy has limitations if people understand articles by understanding the meaning of every word, phrase and sentence to know the meaning of the whole article, which is not only a waste of time but also impractical.

2.16.2 Top-down Model

The top-down model was developed by Goodman (1967) who believes that the reading comprehension process is a psychologicistic guessing game. This means that a reader uses schema to predict the text meaning. Goodman was well supported by many researchers, most importantly by Smith (2004) who highlights the important role that a reader plays in interpreting texts into meaningful messages by utilising schema on the topic and experiences of how to read to either confirm or modify their pre-expectations. Cohen (1990) expanded the top-down reading model by adding text

Sampling, this confirms that when reading, a reader does not need to understand every single word and sentence in the text.

Furthermore, Tracey and Morrow (2017) explain that the top-down model focuses first on the role of the readers and their understanding of the overall text rather than the elements of the text itself. This model is the overall understanding of the text. Learners make sense of the text from their schema and make sense of what they are reading. On the other hand, Mondesir and Griffin (2020) reveal that using a top-down model in reading comprehension that a reader begins by trying to understand the message of the entire paragraph before focusing on words, phrases, and sentence that comprise the paragraph. Educators should let learners read a text until they understand, this will help them to comprehend different reading materials with ease.

The top-down model plays an important role in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension. It premises that learner are important, in teaching and learning. Mondesir and Griffin (2020) encourage educators to keep their learners at the centre of teaching and learning. This is very important as educators can track their learners if they are comprehending or not.

2.16.3 Interactive model

Research conducted by Almutairi (2018: 24) states that Interactive model emerged to address weakness and limitations that were found in both bottom-up and top-down reading comprehension models, it tends to integrate features of each. Additionally, González and María (2017: 163) argue that the interactive model assumes that all bottom-up and top-down processes interact. This happens when reading; the interaction between the two models create comprehension. This is supported by Xue (2019: 3) who says that during reading comprehension, to correctly understand an article, the readers not only have low-level skills, so that they should be capable to identify words and sentences, but also have the high-level Knowledge about general knowledge. Effective reading, according to Rumelhart (1977: 77), necessitates both top-down and bottom-up decoding. Top-down reading can help L2 readers compensate for deficits in bottom-up reading. They use their schemata to compensate for the lack of bottom-up knowledge in order to find meaning (as cited in Ahmadi & Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2012: 25). Hence, it was stated that the interactive model

Concludes that any in reading comprehension, it is the combined result of the top-down model and the bottom-up.

2.17. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the chapter has represented a discussion of the knowledge bases for effective ways of teaching and learning English First Additional Language (EFAL). Proper implementing of challenges of teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension can make the process of teaching and learning to be more effective and fruitful. The Department of Education should prioritise educators' training and Workshops that were accommodative to old and new educators. These programmes should also focus on using necessary resources to help their learners with reading comprehension. The reading theories of cognitive constructivism and schema theory are offered to provide a clearer explanation of how reading comprehension should be taught in schools.

The next chapter presents the methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, literature review was outlined. This chapter examines the study's research methodology for evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of English First Additional Language (EFAL) reading comprehension in Grade 6. Methodology is a theory of how the inquiry should proceed, embracing philosophy, and assumptions about validity, and sometimes preferred methods (Schwandt, 2007). The discussion in the chapter is structured around the research design, population sampling, data collection and data analysis. Ethical considerations and measures to provide trustworthiness are also discussed.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Myers (2009) defines research methodology as a strategy of enquiry, which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design, and data collection. This study used qualitative methodology. According to Domegan and Fleming (2007), qualitative research aims to explore and to discover issues about the problem on hand because very little is known about the problem. There is usually uncertainty about the dimensions and characteristics of the problem. It uses 'soft' data and gets 'rich' data. According to Myers (2009), qualitative research is designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Furthermore, such studies allow the complexities and differences of worlds-under-study to be explored and represented.

According to Burns and Grove (2003), research methodology includes the design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, and the data collection and analysis techniques in a study. This study focuses on the challenges faced by educators and learners in teaching and learning reading comprehension in EFAL, which could be best be investigated through qualitative methodology that seeks to comprehend these challenges from both the educator's and learners' perspective. The reason for choosing qualitative method is that it will help the researcher to analyse the effects of

Teaching and learning of EFAL on the reading comprehension of grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School, in Limpopo.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Mouton (2005) describes a research design as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct research. On the other hand, McMillan and Schumacher (2006) see it as the way that the research was conducted. The design in this research refers to evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of EFAL reading comprehension in Grade 6. Design ensures that the study obtains relevant evidence that entails specifying the type of evidence needed to answer the research question or to accurately describe the phenomenon under study (Blakstad 2008). The researcher chose a research design best fit for this study.

This research uses a Case Study. Merriam (1998:19) states that qualitative case studies are often framed with concepts, models, and theories. Yin (1993) explains that a case study is a method used when a phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context. Delport (2005) says that using case studies researchers get to understand the experiences and perceptions of their respondents.

3.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Wahyuni (2012: 1) defines a research paradigm as set of beliefs about the world and how it should be understood and studied. Creswell (2009: 26) restates the importance of determining the philosophical view in which a study is rooted and states that “although philosophical ideas remain hidden in research, they still influence the practice of research and the need to be identified”. This study used a constructivist pedagogical paradigm.

Schunk (2008:235) stated that constructivism is an epistemology, a learning or meaning-making theory, which explains the nature of knowledge and how learners learn. The constructivist pedagogical approach states that learning takes place in the contexts theory of learning that focuses on learners being engaged in doing, rather than passively engaged in receiving knowledge (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) added that it maintains that individuals create or construct their new understandings or knowledge through the interaction of what they already know and believe and the ideas, events, and activities with which they come in contact. Participants become

Active and involved in the phases of the research and see to understand the world that they are living and working in.

It also reminds educators to look for different ways to engage the individual learner, develop rich environments for study, and prepare clear problem sets and challenges That focus the model building effort, produce and communicate learner perceptions and interpretations (Cannella & Reiff, 1994; Richardson, 1997). For this study, constructivist pedagogical approach qualitative methodology was employed as it is believed that the participants would construct knowledge and meaning of phenomena through their shared beliefs and values, and their personal experience within the research scope and context. The researcher sought to find out the challenges faced in teaching and learning English First Additional Language (EFAL).

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Sampling is a process used in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations is taken from a larger population (Creswell 2009; Cresswell, 2014; Gay et al., 2009).). It involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest and they represent the larger group from which they were selected.

This research paper used Purposive sampling. Purposive “sampling technique is a non-probability sampling method in” qualitative. According to Creswell and Plato Clerk” (2011), “purposive sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals that are knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon of interest. Sarantakos (2013) states that this purposive sampling technique allows the researchers to choose purposely subjects who, in their opinion, are relevant to the project. The researcher employed purposive sampling whereby, participants from Mahlohlwani Primary School were selected according to their accessibility and relevancy to the study. Only ten EFAL Grade 6 and one Grade 6 EFAL educator.

3.5.1 Educator’s profile

The educator is 49 years old, female. She has a senior primary teacher’s diploma, Diploma in management (ACE) and she completed her Basic Education (BED) Honours in Education. She majored in Xitsonga (Home language), English First Additional Language (EFAL) and Life Orientation (LO). She has been teaching EFAL

In intermediate phase for the past seventeen years. The educator was working in Mahlohlwani Primary School in 1998 until 1999. She left to work at another school. She came back to the school from another circuit. This is because she wanted to work closer to home. She has been teaching English at the intermediate phase for over seventeen years.

3.5.2 Learners' profiles

Below is a table showing learners gender and age of the learners participated in this study.

	Gender	Age
Learner one	Female	Twelve years-old
Learner two	Female	Thirteen years-old
Learner three	Female	Twelve Years-old
Learner four	Female	Twelve years-old
Learner five	Female	Thirteen years-old
Learner six	Male	Thirteen years-old
Learner seven	Male	Twelve years-old
Learner eight	Male	Thirteen years-old
Learner nine	Male	Fifteen years-old
Learner ten	Male	Thirteen years-old

Table 2.1 Learners age and gender.

Table 2.1 shows the age and gender of the selected learners. As explained in Chapter 3, section 3.5. The recommended maximum of selected focus group learners is ten. Homogeneity in focus group interviews means that participants should also share common characteristics such as social and cultural background, socio-economic background, citizenship status, age group, and school grade level. The researcher insured that there is a gender balance. Five female and five male learners participated in this study.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

Creswell (2007) stresses that data collection is a series of manageable and interrelated activities aimed at collecting good information to answer the research questions. For this study, open-ended interviews and observations with field notes were used as data collection tools.

Creswell and Clarke (2011) advise that a researcher must allow the research participants to share their attitudes, preferences, views, concerns, opinions and perceptions on the issue under investigation. Open-ended interviews, observations and focus group interviews provided the researcher to gain full knowledge on the challenges faced in teaching and learning of EFAL in Mahlohlwani primary school.

The following methods were used to collect data for the study:

3.6.1 Open-ended interviews

According to Interviewing De Vos (2005: 25), interview is the main mode of data collection in qualitative” research. Phellas et al. (2011: 11) states that face-to-face interviews allow an interviewer to clarify complex or difficult questions to interviewee if necessary. It also allows the researcher to allow participants not to just write only their responses but allows the researcher to see if the interviewee is struggling to comprehend the questions. Züll (2016: 10) explains that interviews can also be used to motivate respondents by giving them an opportunity. This allows the researcher to clarify the question and get better findings.

The researcher will also interview Grade 6 educator. The researcher will conduct one-on-one interviews with the educator to find out how teaching and learning take place. The researcher will also conduct an open-ended interview with the educator to evaluate which challenges he or she faces when teaching reading comprehension, hence factors that hindered or enabled the comprehension of EFAL texts by Grade 6 learners are going to be discussed.

3.6.2 OBSERVATIONS WITH FIELDNOTES

The researcher observes and records behaviours but does not interact or participate in the life of the setting under study (Gay et.al. 2009). Cohen, Manion, and Morrison

(2000) argue that observations enable the researcher to gather data on the physical setting, the human setting, the interactional setting and the programme setting.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 40) observations consist of direct, eye-witness accounts of everyday social actions and settings in the form of field notes. The researcher will use field notes to gather data from observing how the educator teach during reading lessons to find out if he or she applies reading strategies during the EFAL teaching.

Further, during observations, field notes were taken during observation to gather, record and compile information during the study. The researcher I also observed how Grade 6 EFAL educators utilise the reading strategies to help enhance their reading comprehension.

The study was conducted through non-participant observation. As a non-participant, the researcher was not actively involved in any activities of teaching and learning. Hence, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) indicate that observation provides good insights into how different teachers are behaving and interacting during reading. This will enable the research to get insight into how teaching and learning EFAL inside a classroom proceeds. This is supported by Abbott (2009) by stating that in observation, a researcher is “regarded non-participant observers to be physically present with research participants in the same study setting, but do not take part within the process. This gave the researcher the freedom to take a record of all the class activities that took place in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension lessons. Therefore, the researcher observed the EFAL classroom setting to observe the classroom events, activity, content, resources, the materials used, teaching and learning methods and styles, in aim to understand the challenges faced in teaching and learning EFAL.

3.6.3 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Bagnoli and Clark (2010) state that focus groups are used to collect data, especially when involving children. Krueger and Casey (2009) cited in Alder et al (2019) described a focus group interview as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. Focus group discussions will provide the researcher with valuable information about the phenomenon that is discussed, as children feel safer and more

Willing to express their opinion if group members are familiar with them (Fielden, Silence, & Little; McGarry, 2015). The focus group with learners were held at school, after school with their educator monitoring the proceedings.

In addition, Prior and van Herwegen (2016) recommended that focus groups interviews with children should be a duration between 30-120 minutes. In this study, the researcher used sixty minutes (one hour) to conduct the focus group interview with the Grade 6 learners. A digital watch was used to measure the minutes during the focus group interview.

Alder et al. (2019) state that focus group interviews can be used to create a safe peer environment. Krueger and Casey (2009) suggested that the setting should be comfortable, calm, and free of distraction. The researcher ensured that the participants are comfortable, and they are in a safe environment before conducting the interviews.

3.7 TRIANGULATION

Creswell and Miller (2000: 10) defined triangulation as a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources to form themes or categories in a study. The researcher chose to use different types of data collection methods to allow for data triangulation. To ensure that the teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension for both educators' and learners' perspectives on the methods used is elicited.

Jick, in Taylor and Francis (2000) defines triangulation as a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. In this study, the researcher used a range of methods, including lesson observations, focus groups, and educator's interviews to achieve the research paper's triangulation.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) describe qualitative data analysis as being primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns among them. According to Maree (2008), qualitative data analysis involves working with data, organising them, categorising them into manageable units, synthesising them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and coming to reliable

Conclusions about the data. The study will use thematic analysis to analyse the data. Thematic analysis refers to a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Creswell and Clark (2011) add that the model of data analysis was adhered to by putting all the field notes collected to be analysed to form a story. Lesson observations were analysed first, followed by the responses of the EFAL educators. Finally, responses of learners were analysed. The following steps of analysing data were followed:

Step 1: Data collected through interviews were first transcribed and translated.

Step 2: Thereafter, data transcribed were as they are.

Step 3: Talking field notes

Step 4: Translation of field notes.

Step 5: Data matching was done as part of identifying similarities and differences between the data and similar codes were labelled the same; and

Step 6: Data were categorised by formatting them into a story for easy understanding.

3.9 QUALITY CRITERIA

During the data collection process, the researcher frequently used different procedures to ensure that the results were, credible, transferable, dependable, and conformable.

3.9.1 Credibility

The credibility of the research refers “to the value and believability of the research findings” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Polit & Beck, 2006). The credibility of the current study was ensured by developing an early familiarity with the environment and culture of participating schools before data collection. The researcher gained an understanding of the schools and established a trusting relationship with the different stakeholders by visiting the schools before collecting data. It involves two processes: believably conducting the research and being able to demonstrate the credibility of the research. “The credibility of research findings also deals with how well categories and

Themes cover data, that is, no relevant data excluded, or irrelevant data included. Data were presented in categories and themes to ensure credibility. Data was presented truthfully. No information was left out this ensured the credibility of the research.

3.9.2 Transferability

Cope (2014) refers to transferability as sufficient information provided to enable the researcher to assess the findings' capability of being fit or transferable. Trustworthiness in research "also includes the question of transferability, which refers to 'the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other settings or groups'" (Polit & Hungler, 1999). To "enable transferability, the researcher gave a clear and distinct description of culture and context, selection and characteristics of participants, data collection and process of" analysis.

3.9.3 Dependability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), "it seeks means for considering both factors of instability and factors of phenomenal or design induced changes', that is, the degree to which data change over time. The alterations made in the researcher's decisions during the analysis process. To ensure dependability, data collection will depend on participants. Therefore, the researcher ensured that working and suitable tools used to collect data and relevant methods and questions are used at" the research.

3.9.4 Confirmability

Polit and Beck, in Cope (2014) refer to Confirmability as the researcher's ability to demonstrate that data represents the participants' responses and not the researcher's biases or viewpoints. Yilmaz (2013) explains that a study will assume confirmability when the research findings are based on the analysis of the data collected and evaluated through an auditing process. Participants' recognition of the findings regarded as an aspect of credibility" (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). In this study, the researcher ensured confirmability by following correct procedures during data collection and data analyses, and it was justified throughout the study, whether they are appropriate or not.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In research, data should not be obtained at the expense of human beings (De Vos, et al 2006). A researcher should ensure that “ethical issues are the concerns and dilemmas that arise over the proper way to execute research, more specifically not to create harmful conditions for the subjects of inquiry, humans, in the research process (Schurink, 2005). Ethical considerations are inseparable from a researcher’s everyday interactions with research participants and the data. The research followed proper ethical considerations when conducting this study. The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of Limpopo’s ethical committee Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), the subjects must agree voluntarily to participate, and the agreement must be based on full and open information availed to them in the language of their choice. Glesne (2006) adds that the development of an ethical code is important as a guide for people doing field research. When reporting research findings pseudonyms were used instead of their real names. In this study, a Neutral stance can be construed as an ethical issue because it can lead to the objectification of others.

3.10.1 Consent to conduct the study

Firstly, the researcher applied for TRC to ensure that ethics are considered respected. Then the researcher requested permission from Limpopo Department of Education authorities, Vhembe District: Department of Education, Malamulele North-West Circuit manager, and the school’s principal), to the learners’ parents (Mahlohlwani Primary School) to seek permission to research Mahlohlwani Primary School. The circuit manager, the principal and the parents were provided with information on the goals of the investigation and the procedure that were followed in the research.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) add that “ethics involves beliefs about what is right or wrong, proper or improper, and good or bad that is going to be implemented when conducting research.” Since the research sample involves Grade 6 learners, the researcher requested permission from the Department of Education and granted it in writing. Since learners are minors, the researcher also requested parental consent from the learners’ parents. Consent forms were signed by parents or guardians (See

Appendix viii) and the educator involved as participants also signed consent forms before the interviews took place. The researcher must anticipate any ethical issues that may arise during the qualitative research process.

3.10.2 The right to withdraw from the study

Respondents were be informed that they could withdraw from being part of the study at any time if they wished. A researcher will need to protect their research participants by developing their trust; promoting the integrity of the research, guarding against misconduct and any impropriety that might reflect on their organisations or institutions, and cope with new challenging problems. The rights were explained to participants before the interview and Observation can be conducted. This was done to respect and protect participants' dignity when they feel like they are being violated. This right is part of the informed consent. The participants could withdraw from participating in this study whenever they feel like it.

3.10.3 The right to privacy

According to De Vos et al. (2002), "privacy refers to agreements between people that limit the access of others to private information." In this study, privacy was maintained by not attaching a respondents' name to the information. To ensure that the information provided by the informants remained confidential, the researcher ensured that it is used only for research purposes and not accessible to anyone without permission.

3.10.4 The right to anonymity

All participants remained anonymous, and that the information gathered will remain confidential and used for this research purposes" (Creswell, 2009; Henning et al., 2007). The participant's identities were respected to protect their dignity. They were informed about how their responses were used and about the value of the research. They gave their signed consent. Pseudonyms "were used to protect the participants' privacy and they were that the data collected would not be disclosed without their permission. Research required sensitive and deep answers to questions extracting meaning from statements and opinions.

3.10.5 Right to confidentiality

De Vos (2005) recommends that people who are recorded should be given the assurance of their consent and confidentiality. The researcher upheld the participants' right to complete disclosure. The researcher by first communicating the research's objectives and outcomes, as well as the anticipated consequences of the research to them. The researcher's expectations of all participants were communicated to them. The researcher informed them of the interviewing procedures. The respondents were guaranteed to access any part of the recorded information. The respondents were informed about how their responses were used for this specific study.

3.10.6 Right to self-determination

According to Burns and Grove (2001:196), the right to "self-determination is the ethical principle of respect for a person". Participants were briefed on the objectives and purpose of the research during the interviews. The participants voluntarily participated in this study.

3.10.7 Right to safety

Data were collected in a stress-free environment, where the self-esteem of the educators, parents and learners were comfortable for them to give accurate data. This was very imperative in the study. The researcher followed all the Coronavirus disease of 2019 (Covid-19) national regulations, guidelines, and protocols when collecting data. This was done to protect the participants from Covid-19. The government's lockdown level regulations were present at the time of data collection. Facemasks, hand washing, a well-ventilated room, sanitization, and social distancing measures were all considered.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed methodology, research design, and the approaches that were used in this study. The researcher also explained and gave reasons why the qualitative approach is suitable for this study. Ethical considerations and the researcher's roles for this project were explained in detail.

The following chapter focuses on the results of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the study's research design and methodology. This chapter discusses and presents the findings regarding the aim of the study which was to evaluate the effects of EFAL on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School, in Limpopo specifically in the Vhembe North district.

Again, discussion and presentation of qualitative data are carried out in three ways. The first part deals with the interpretation of learners' focus group discussions. The second part deals with the analysis of the data from the observational data from the field notes educator's interview and thirdly, they were presented.

4.2 DATA PRESENTATION

Data were obtained from the focus group interviews with learners and observational field notes and the individual educator's interview.

4.2.1 School's profile

The school is situated in the rural area of Saselamani village, in Limpopo. It is called Mahlohlwani Primary School in the Vhembe district under the North-East Circuit. The school is in Quintile 1. The school runs from Grade R to Grade 7, wherefrom Grade R to Grade 3, the medium of instruction is Xitsonga and from Grade 4 to Grade 6, English (EFAL) is used as the language of teaching and learning. The school has four intermediate classes: two grade 4 classes, one Grade 5 class, and one Grade 6 class which is the main of this research study.

The class consisted of ten learners between the ages of twelve and fifteen years old. The buildings were not in good condition. The school building is old and weary. They need maintenance. Inside each classroom, there were no learning aids on the walls, the classroom space was small, with little room for the desks. It could barely accommodate all the learners comfortably. They use desks and some of the learners sat in twos. The classroom context was very clean, even though there was no notice

Board on the wall nor a reading corner with books in the classroom. The images of the school and the classroom are supplied (see appendix xiv).

There were not reading aids for EFAL. There were no additional learning aids inside the classroom.

4.3 LEARNER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

For the research study, ten Grade 6 learners from a selected school participated in focus group interviews. The focus groups in the schools were made up of five males and five females. Gender equality and balance were considered. Learners' focus-group interview took place after class. During the interviews, the researcher made sure to maintain eye contact, show genuine interest, and listen actively. Each observation lasted an hour.

4.3.1 PRESENTATION OF DATA

The learners were asked to comment on the teaching and learning of EFAL.

4.3.1.1 What do you think about the English language?

During the focus group interviews, the Grade 6 learners were asked what they thought of EFAL texts.

Learner 10: "Learning English is important; I learn to read stories in a language".

Learner 1: "Yes, I find learning English interesting because we learn everything in English."

Learner 3: "Yes, but reading English language is very difficult. There are words that are hard to understand".

Learner 2: "Learning a second language it is good. Because it helps you to know more than one language. It helps you to understand people who are not speaking Xitsonga. It is very good if you can then communicate with people from".

Learner 7: "Yes because we learn everything in English".

Learner 4: "I think it is a cool and awesome language because it allows us to communicate with other people who don't know my language"

Learner 5: "English it is good because it is one of the important languages in the world."

Learner 6: "I think because I can communicate with other people".

Learner 8: "It helps us communicate with others who don't know Xitsonga".

In summarising the responses to the learners responded that the English language was crucial since they all spoke the same mother tongue and utilizing English. Most learners indicate that they love the English language since it allowed them to communicate with other people who cannot speak Xitsonga. They also say that they would use English more frequently in the future because they realised that if they had favourable attitudes toward learning English, they would be affected. As a result, they have the notion that English is very important for communicational purposes. Other learners stated the notion that English is the most important language in the world. They are aware that the English language was used globally.

The research concludes that these learners know that English it has a notion of being known as a well-spoken language on the planet. This is a good thing because it will allow them to compete well in the economy or business world. Therefore, CAPS focused on learners who should know how to read their EFAL in early grades, regardless of their exposure. Learners should be included in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension. This is because they seem to be eager to master EFAL reading comprehension as the interviews showed that they are very interested in it.

4.3.1.2 Do you speak try to speak the English language at home? Do your parents encourage it?

During the focus group interviews, Grade 6 learners were asked if they speak English at home and if their parents encourage it. Below are the learners' responses.

Learner 1: "Yes. They try to help me, so we try to speak English with them".

Learner 8: "Yes, but they do not talk to me in English, they only speak in Xitsonga".

Learner 6: "Yes, they encourage me to try to speak English".

Learner 2: "Yes they try to speak to me in English, I try to speak English with my big sister, she is good at English".

Learner 5: *“Yes, they encourage it. They try to help me know English”.*

Learner 10: *“Yes, they encourage me. They want me to learn to talk and read English”.*

Learner 3: *“Yes, they encourage it”.*

Learning EFAL reading comprehension at home is one option. Learners can learn in whatever way they want at home because it is a calm environment. This is because it is stress-free, low-pressure, and encourages learners to be productive as well as enjoyable. Learners must make time to study regularly and engage in more language contact if they want to quickly improve their English. This is a problem for learners because work, family, and social obligations frequently conflict. Missed classes during the Covid-19 pandemic can result in slower progress, affecting learners' motivation and progress. Learners who choose to learn English at home can make more room for natural skill development. Parental support for language development may have a significant impact on South African learners' academic outcomes. As much as other parents try to encourage their children to practise English learning and reading at home, some learners had different views.

Learner 4: *“No, they do not talk to me in English”.*

Learner 7: *“No, they do not encourage me talking English”.*

Learner 9: *“No, they don't. I think they do not know English”.*

Parents sometimes are not aware that their intervention in their children teaching, and learning process depended on them. They are heavily relying on the fact that their educators will teach them everything. This is a challenge as learners spend more time at home than at school. They do not have adequate teaching and learning hours. Parents can encourage their children to read and create conversations in English. This will consequently increase their chances of mastering EFAL in time. This will also boost their confidence in their reading comprehension skills. At home, it is the children safe heaven, they can learn at their own pace and preference. Even though parental illiteracy is a major challenge in many rural villages. But this does not mean that parents cannot play a part in their children academic progress. They can get the learners siblings or a relative to assist their children. This benefit learners as they become very active in their children's learning journey.

In summary the reading is a skill that some learners may develop independently. A capable and well-prepared learner can make the process of learning to read appear relatively simple. Unfortunately, it does not apply to all learners. Some learners have problems with reading let alone reading comprehension. Children tend to show more interest when parents or guardians are involved in teaching and learning.

4.3.1.3 Do you love or like reading English texts? Why?

During focus group interviews, Grade 6 learners were asked if they love or like reading. Reading is necessary for learning, instilling a love of reading in children at a young age is the key to unlocking the door to lifelong learning.

Learner 3: *“Yes, I do. It is fun. I read because it is fun and reading books helps me to learn new things”.*

Learner 1: *“Yes, I read because my mother wants me to be educated and become a doctor”.*

Learner 5: *“Yes, I love reading... because my parents want me to read for them to see if I can read. My father buys me books to read. He bought me a ‘Lion King’ book on my birthday”.*

Learner 10: *“Yes, love reading because it is fun, I read to know”.*

Reading aloud to children introduces them to books as a source of pleasurable, entertaining, and exciting experiences. Children who appreciate books are more likely to read on their own.

Learner 8: *“No, reading is boring, I prefer it when the teacher read for me, it is not easy”.*

Learner 6: *“No, I don’t. at home, I love playing soccer. I only read at school”.*

Some learners find reading to be boring. They are frequently concealing their own flaws. Perhaps adversity has overwhelmed them. Maybe they do not have the necessary knowledge, or they required incentive to read. One learner said that playing soccer it is better than reading. Not all the learners can read on their own. They need their educator to read for them. Some learners heavily rely on their educators than they own abilities.

4.3.1.4 Do you have reading books at home?

This response may assume that learners in this school do not have access to reading materials at home. Parents in rural areas, where even parents are unaware of the importance of buying reading books for their children to read. This could be due to the parents' lack of a reading culture or their inability to afford to purchase reading books for their children. They rely heavily on those provided by the school.

Learner 1: *“Yes, my mother read magazines and my father read magazines. I try to read them to learn”.*

Learner 5: *“Yes I have books. I have a new Lion King storybook... my dad buys me books when he comes back”.*

Out of ten learners, only two admitted that they have reading materials at home. The rest do not have any reading materials. Learners will achieve fluency, develop syntax and pragmatics, and eventually develop a reading culture if they have access to a wide range of reading materials. Due to a lack of reading resources, such as libraries, at their respective schools, learners find it difficult to read eagerly. This is a serious problem because they do not have access to reading materials even when they are at home. According to the researcher, if learners had access to these reading resources, they would be able to read as many books as possible.

Learner 8: *“No, I don't, I read the books from school”.*

Learner 4: *“No, I don't have reading books at home... my parents don't buy me books”.*

Learner 3: *“No, I don't have any reading books at home. I read the books that I have from school”.*

Learner 10: *“No, I don't have any reading books at home”.*

Four learners answered that they do not have any reading books at home. They also indicate that the only books that they can read at home are from school. Most parents do not take buying reading books for their children seriously. Poverty and parental illiteracy play vital role in this challenge. Parents do not buy books because they do not have a reading culture, or they simply cannot afford buying the reading books for their children.

Many learners admitted that they rarely read at home. This is a challenge in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension. Consistent reading is associated with improved EFAL reading comprehension performance. Parents are children's first teachers, providing an important language environment by talking to them, answering their questions, and assisting them where they are failing. However, this is difficult when parents are illiterate, do not read, or are not habitual readers. Learners are heavily influenced by the people they spend time with. When learners come from homes where there is no reading culture, they are more likely to be non-readers themselves. Regardless of their financial situation, parents believe that assisting their children with academic work is extremely important. Children whose parents read more frequently and provided a more nurturing home environment fared better in school than their peers. Such parental practices appeared to improve children's linguistic and reading skills, allowing them to excel significantly in their academic endeavours. The role that a lack of resources in the classroom plays like a challenge for educators when teaching reading to EFAL learners.

4.3.1.5 Does your parents or guardians help with EFAL reading?

Under this section, learners were asked if their parents or guardians help them with reading EFAL. Parental involvement has always been an essential component of every educator-learner school academic endeavour. It is the responsibility of the educators to train, guide and assist parents so that they can coordinate home learning activities with school instruction. Schools offer homework and other activities to assist parents in helping their children succeed. Three learners said that their parents help them with reading.

Learner 4: *"No, my mother does not know how to read"*.

Learner 10: *"No, I read on my own. My mother does not read for me. She cannot read English well"*.

Learner 9: *"No, my grandmother cannot read. She cannot read English"*.

Parent's illiteracy is always a problem. Some parents are interested in helping their learners, but unfortunately, they cannot read. It will remain a challenge for parents to help their children while they cannot read or write. This is a challenge in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension.

Learner 1: *“Yes, my mother teaches me to read, when my dad comes back from work in Johannesburg we read together”.*

Learner 6: *“Yes my parents sometimes read for me”.*

Learner 3: *“Yes my mother read for me, and my dad read for me when he comes back from work... he works in Joni (Johannesburg)”.*

Parents know very well that curriculum at the school offers EFAL as LoLT, therefore they take initiative to involve themselves in teaching their learners when they are at home. Grade 6 learners were asked if their parents or guardians help them reading EFAL. Few learners admitted that their parents do help them with EFAL reading.

4.3.1.6 Do you think your classmates love helping each other in reading English Texts?

Learners were asked if they think their classmates like reading English texts.

Learner 3: *“No, because they are lazy, and they think that reading is super boring”.*

Learner 7: *“No, I used to hear them complaining about reading English language”.*

Learner 1: *“No, because they play too much”.*

Learner 5: *“No, because they do not participate in English class”.*

Learner 10: *“No, because they are always laughing at each other when someone makes a mistake in English”.*

Learner 6: *“No, they are always playing... they are not serious about school”.*

Most learners do not think that their peers enjoy or appreciate learning EFAL. They assume that they are not serious about their academic endeavours. Some learners realised that their peers do not take classroom participation seriously. Some assume That they do not take teaching and learning seriously. This is because they assume that other learners play too much during teaching lessons.

Learner 2: *“Yes, because they want to know it”.*

Learner 8: *“Yes, because they try to speak English... I always try to speak English with my friend”.*

Learner 4: *“Yes, because they love English⁸⁷ and helping their friends... they want to pass”.*

Some learners are constantly keen to help their classmates improve their knowledge. The proper classroom environment, then any cooperative learning it is useful to learners. learners having a right environment for learners to teach each other. Comfortable talking to their classmates and who may need additional encouragement. Learners should feel more comfortable working with and learning from each other. Learners revealed that they enjoy helping each other.

4.3.1.7 What do you do when you fail to comprehend English text?

When learners were asked on the steps that they take to get help to comprehend the reading text, they said the following:

Learner 2: *“I tell my sister to help me with reading that word”.*

Learner 1: *“I tell my mother to help me”.*

Learner 8: *“I ask my mother or my father to help me”.*

Learner 4: *“My grandparents cannot read, so I ask my neighbour or my friend Xiluva to help me. They can read English”.*

The classroom atmosphere that could be conducive to teaching and learning which should be created by the educator. But teaching and learning does not only take place inside the classroom. The educators should ensure that learners learn even when they are home. Educators should have appositive influence on their learners' attitude in learning EFAL reading at home. This will produce conducive results. But not all the learners have adequate help at home. Some are struggling to learn at home. They do not have help. Other learners said:

Learner 10: *“I read and read again until I understand it on my own. But sometimes I ask my teacher”.*

Learner 6: *“I wait for tomorrow, then I go to my teacher to help me. My parents are not good at reading English”.*

Learner 7: *"I go to the school and ask help from my teacher"*.

Learners stated that they get help from their educator. When they are reading on their own, they face challenges and then ask for help to teach them with reading comprehension. They still face challenge that people who are around them are illiterate or do not take their children learning seriously. Most learners heavily depend on their educators since they are struggling getting help from home. Even though there are illiterate parents, they should encourage their children to do well, when they monitor their language learning performance and when they reinforce any teaching and learning strategy. They should assist with homework or get someone to help their learners. Their involvement could influence learners' attitudes towards their academic work. Their involvement could impact the learners' attitudes towards their academic work as they help them with their challenges.

4.3.1.8 At school, what do you do when you fail to comprehend English text?

During the focus group interviews, Grade 6 learners were asked what they do when they fail to comprehend the text that they are reading. The following is what they answered.

Learner 1: *"I ask my teacher to help me understand it"*.

Learner 2: *"Ask my English teacher to help me"*.

Reading is a critical skill that both the educator and the learners must master to achieve the desired result. There are different approaches that an educator can use in her or his classroom to assist learners to read with comprehension. Educators should always encourage learners to seek assistance from other learners to improve their reading comprehension. This is since learners have preferred educators who can also assist them with reading comprehension. This saves time because the learners can still get help from other educators on the school premises even if the educator is not present.

Learner 3: *"I ask any teacher that I can find, but I love asking my English teacher because she is more knowledgeable in English"*

Learner 9: *"I ask any teacher to help me if my English teacher is not around"*

Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) is the active acquisition of knowledge with the assistance of a friend. To learn and teach EFAL reading comprehension, peer learning and peer assistance are essential. Educators should promote peer teaching as a method of speeding up the learning process. Learners learn more effectively or deal with challenges more effectively when they are taught by more capable peers. This could help EFAL readers understand what they're reading. Peer-to-peer learning is a more versatile method of learning EFAL. Educators should allow strong readers to collaborate with weak readers. Learners will feel more at ease and successful among their peers as a result of this.

Learner 8: *"I ask my friend to help me because he can read English well. He is better than me".*

Learner 4: *"I ask my friend Xiluva to help me read when we are at home. I learn from her how to read".*

Peers also play an important role in the development of a learner's knowledge and skills; thus, communication is essential in the learning process. Educators can guide their learners on how to guide their peers towards their own independent reading. This were beneficiary for all the learners.

4.3.1.9 How does your educator teach reading comprehension?

Under this section, learners were asked: how does your educator teach you English reading comprehension? The answered as follows:

Learner 3: *"When the text is difficult to understand, she gives me more information so that I can understand better, she first read for us and tell us what the words mean before we can read".*

Learner 1: *"She gives us examples up until we understand".*

Learner 3: *"She read, and we read after her so that we can understand".*

Learner 6: *"My teacher makes us see ourselves in the paper that we are reading".*

In primary school grades, reading aloud is a common practice. For learner readers to benefit, they must be exposed to reading aloud. Educators who read aloud not only support reading growth through overall literacy exposure but also model reading

Enjoyment and expose learners to a variety of book types and levels. As educators read, they have a brief conversation with learners around the ideas in the text. This will make learners understand the text with ease.

Learner 5: *“our teacher let us read loud and she helps us to read correctly. She always helps us to know how to read difficult words”*.

Learners 7: *“she makes us read loud, all of us. We all read, and she makes sure that we read every sentence good”*.

Learner 8: *“When I fail to understand the text that I am reading, my teacher asks me to read again and again until I understand. She helps me with difficult words so that I can understand what I am reading”*.

In this sense, primary grades, learners who can read well have mastered phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency, but they face higher demands for vocabulary and comprehension. The educator can visualise the texts that he or she is reading to the learners. visualising helps them to imagine the text for better comprehension. Readers can visualise a text in their heads to better understand the processes they encounter when reading. Educators' intervention is crucial in learners' academic progress. Therefore, the educator tries to let them read on their own and correct them when they make mistakes. This is very important as it helps the learners gain confidence in reading EFAL.

Educators' knowledge of and ability to implement learners' reading strategies are crucial skills for them to master because they were passing this knowledge on to learners. They can only do so if they are prepared with reading skills themselves, according to the educator. They must enable learners to read independently and acquire confidence in themselves. As part of their understanding of reading strategies, educators can use a variety of reading strategies in their classrooms. Most educators mentioned individual, shared group, and even reading aloud for learners as reading strategies used in class. Some teachers went so far as to provide strategies for each stage of reading, including before the actual reading (pre-reading), while reading (during-reading), and after the reading has occurred (post-reading), to share reading Strategies used in class, but it was clear that they knew reading strategies because learners seem to be exposed to them.

4.3.1.10 What ways do you think your educator can do to help learners read better?

During the focus group interviews, Grade 6 learners were asked what do you think their educator can do to help other learners read better? Their answers follow:

Learner 3: *“The teacher can give us easy stories to read”*.

Learner 1: *“Our teacher can give us storybooks to read at home so that we can read at home”*.

Learner 10: *“She is teaching us very well. I can read better because of her”*.

Educators should continuously look for ways to help learners improve their reading comprehension. When learners possess the required skills and competencies for reading comprehension, they can complete their academic demands. Learners who were unsure about their abilities often regard themselves as failures. Educators can work with these learners to build their confidence so that they can succeed in their academics. Learners who are older or repeating a class should receive extra attention to ensure that they pass. Learners should be given enough reading materials to read at home. This will allow them to practise the text at home. This means that they can also prepare in advance before the reading class.

Learner 5: *“She can give us books to read at home”*.

Learner 7: *“Give us books to read for fun”*.

Learner 6: *“Our teacher can give us storybooks to read at home. or any book so that we can practice reading at home”*.

Learners should be provided with reading items that evoke their interest. The materials must be engaging. learners should be taught with materials that gradually get more demanding. Scaffolding can be used by educators. This means that learners will only receive aid in completing academic activities if they are given a reading Comprehension. This will teach learners to read independently and provide them with the tools to complete these tasks on their own.

Learner 3: *“She can ask us to read one by one. Then help us where we can’t read”.*

The educator encourages learners to read independently. When learners are struggling with the text that they are reading, the educator helps them. This is good to encourage independent reading. This encourages learners’ culture of independent reading. The educator gives every learner is given a platform to read and be helped where necessary. This boosts learners’ confidence on their reading skills.

Lesson Observations follows below.

4.3.2 LESSON OBSERVATIONS

When a researcher conducts observations, the participants must first be chosen. The research question, inclusion and exclusion criteria must be determined, the number of participants per focus group must be defined, and the method by which these participants can be approached must be identified. Second, a questioning strategy and an interview guide must be developed. The time and location of the interviews, as well as the length and the total number of interviews, must be determined. Observations were held once in each school on different days. The duration of each observation was one hour. Five observations were carried out. During the observation, the researcher took notes. The researcher then went over the notes and analysed them.

4.3.2.1 LESSON 1 OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

Classroom lessons were observed by the researcher, by reading participants’ body language. That is their eye contact with the educator. Their facial expressions were also looked at for any emotions. They scarcely raised their hands. They answered when sited or stood up after an educator called out their names. In their group discussions, most learners just sat back without interacting with the rest of the group. The researcher noted the involvement most of the time in the group. find it fascinating when reading to learners and learners repeat what the educator has read as a class, as a group and individually.

Learners in both presentations looked disinterested. One of the learners seemed uncomfortable. Some learners kept talking back to the educator but when given a

chance, they kept quiet. The educator persists in asking learners' questions to stimulate their interest in and simplify reading. This was used to examine if the learner were comprehending what they were reading.

4.3.2.2 LESSON 2 OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

The educator used the narrative method, and he was the one who did most of the talking throughout the lesson. The educator asked the learners to do this activity that followed. Most of the learners looked edgy and bored during the lesson. Some seemed uncomfortable as they looked away from the educator. Learners seem to be enjoying listening to the educator than them being actively involved in the lesson.

Some learners tried to respond individually to the previous questions posed during the lesson. The learners did not seem to co-operate become involved in the activity the educator was engaging them in. some learners seemed to be too focused on reading the paper. Maybe they were avoiding the educator's questions. The researcher acknowledges the fact that teaching and learning started from questions and answers and often leads to full participation.

4.3.2.3 LESSON 3 OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

The educator asked the learners to read the text. It was read twice by different individuals. Then the educator read the poem loudly and interestingly. This was to ensure that every learner is comprehending the texts. The educator wanted to ensure that everyone is clear understanding. The educator observed the punctuation marks. The educator ensured that her tone is portraying the story without ambiguity or confusion.

During reading. The learners were constantly looking at the educator, especially where the educator paused and explained. It seemed like they did not comprehend the text. They were depending on their educator to assist them. The learners were observed leaning forward from time to time. These learner's reactions showed that they understood when their educator explained to them. The environment in the classroom was energised through the questioning and answering of questions. The educator was very creative. Learners were seen interacting with each other through discussions.

4.3.2.4 LESSON 4 OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

The educator came to the class and introduced to the learners that they are going to be dealing with reading. The text was from their reading book. The learners were asked to analyse the story. The educator was teaching with confidence, and she ensured that the learners comprehend the text when she read for them. She used a Pre-reading strategy to get learners familiar with the text. Thereafter, learners were given opportunities to read.

Learners seem to be enjoying this approach. Learners were instructed to read in groups and then individually. This was for strong readers to help the weak readers gain confidence in reading. Educator pointed out how helpful are group work to successful reading. The educator allowed groups to read on their own but only aided if required.

4.3.3 ALL LESSONS OBSERVATIONS REMARK AND FIELD NOTES

CAPS (2014) suggest that every child in South Africa must learn to read for meaning by the end of Grade 3. From Grade 4, they must be competent readers. But unfortunately, most South African primary learners still cannot read for meaning in any language by the end of grade 4 (age 10 to 11). With that said, South African primary schools seem to be having a continuous challenge in teaching and learning reading comprehension.

During reading comprehension lesson, the learners' behaviour is appropriate and impressive and learning and teaching run smoothly. There are no EFAL charts pasted on the wall in the classroom. It is observed that Xitsonga occupies much of the time during the teaching of EFAL content in the EFAL period. This is because the educator code switches from English to Xitsonga. This is to ensure that learners understand the context. Code-switching in the second language classroom should be limited. The use of the mother tongue is positive because it helps learners to get the benefit from activities that would have been carried out in the target language. Learners unable to communicate effectively in EFAL. this is evident that reading is of the utmost importance as it assists in comprehending what one has learnt.

Educator's personality plays a role in the way educators are rated on their teaching performance and their effectiveness in teaching. In reading classes, educators should dramatize what they read and answer questions thereafter. From my observations, all the learners had reading skills, but they just did not have the confidence to apply those skills because they lacked the confidence in class. Some had problems using English as the language of learning. The educator indicated the topic for the lesson and explained new words to the learners. Even though the educator tries to engage learners, it seems that learners are reluctant. Learners seemed to be not sure about their own confidence in their English proficiency.

Most learners would respond when asked for solutions as most of them had some did not. Learners are worried about those who are laughing at each other while the educator is assisting them with the correctness of pronunciation of words during reading comprehension in EFAL. Learners sometimes lack the confidence to use those skills in the classroom during the English subject lesson. In most cases, the learners were waiting for other learners to answer some of the questions posed by the educator. Only a few learners tried, some refused to answer them.

The observation of this study reveals that reading aloud is the most preferred reading method in the classroom. Each learner was provided with a copy of the paragraph from which they could read aloud. Reading aloud read-aloud provide rich opportunities for literacy development. reading out loud play a significant role in developing a child's love of reading, as the experience of listening to others read well is a highly motivating factor in the pursuit of becoming a good reader". This was a problem as some learners were not reading but hiding behind their clothe mask. The learners read out loud but somewhere not audible since they had the face mask covering their mouths. It was impossible to track lip and mouth movement under the mask. Some learners were hiding behind strong readers as the educator and the researcher could not point out who was reading aloud and who was not.

Reading a text clearly for learners does not predict whether they understand the text. Most learners read using finger-pointing when reading text. It was observed that educator only deal with reading when they get to comprehension passages. The educator treated finger-pointing as a normal reading skill. This made learners be slow

Readers. They seem to be failing to predict the next words as they heavily rely on their fingers rather than eye movement. This is because they depended on pointing at the Word that they are reading than reading the word before they can pronounce it. This made the learners slow when reading. Learners must be taught the left-to-right eye movement.

The lesson's observation exposed that the educator managed to teach reading. However, some learners were not comprehending the text. The educator played their role in assisting the learners to ensure that her learners comprehended the text they were reading in all the classes. The educator tried to employ multiple teaching strategies to ensure that all the learners understood the lesson. Learners in rural schools' struggle to read. This made the educator spend more time helping them to read better. This delayed the reading process as the educator failed to complete the text within the allocated time. This revealed the educator needed more time to teach those learners struggling with reading.

In reading lessons, each learner can fully participate in the group while educators observe each learner's strength of reading and instructional needs. In other words, learners in the group are integrated; work cooperatively and interchangeably when reading aloud.

Most rural primary schools, learners' problems arise because of limited vocabulary. In schools, learners must be given a purpose for reading. In primary schools, most learners in rural primary schools are still unable to read and comprehend English. Because they cannot relate to some text they are reading because they have no idea on what exactly what is that the text is talking about.

Observation provides ways to check the nonverbal expression of feelings; determine who interacts with whom; grasp how educators as participants communicate with learners and check the amount of time spent on reading during lesson delivery in the classroom. From my observations, some learners had good reading comprehension skills, but lacked the confidence to apply those skills. They lacked the confidence to express their views and suggest solutions. A particular problem was that several learners had difficulty expressing themselves in English. However, some learners had.

4.3.3 EDUCATOR'S INTERVIEW

The collected data were typed exactly as they were to preserve the ideas presented by the participants (Berg & Lune 2012). Interviews were recorded and then completely Transcribed; an abridged transcription is available (Burns & Grove, 2005; Krueger, 2006; Krueger & Casey, 2009). This was done to protect the confirmability and trustworthy of the study.

4.3.1 Rationale feedback (1): Learners' readiness for the grade

In general, learners from rural schools are more likely to struggle with EFAL reading comprehension than those from urban schools. This could be due to learners from rural schools receiving insufficient exposure to EFAL. The current state of literacy in South Africa indicates that Grade 6 learners are not performing at their expected grade levels in literacy, particularly in reading comprehension. When the educator was asked about the learners' grade readiness, the educator pointed out that:

My learners are not read to read grade 6 reading books. They are not well prepared from the lower grades. They passed all these grades without knowing how to read well.

Learners progressed from Grade 4 without being able to read, due to a lack of a foundation in reading comprehension in EFAL. Learners should be proficient with at least two languages (this is their home language and any additional language) when they reach Grade 6. The educator pointed out that learners are not competent to read Grade 6 reading materials. They are failing to comprehend the Grade 6 vocabulary and do not have grade-level skills to read. This affects their reading comprehension skills as they lack the necessary vocabulary. When the educator was asked how come the learners are not competent to read grade-level materials. The educator added that:

The problem is that they fail to learn how to read properly from lower grades. This is a problem because they are being pushed to the next grade and the next. This affects all the grades because they will never know how to read well.

This is a continuous problem. Reading skill is not the only measure that ensures that learners pass to the next grade. If they can learn to read well, they have a great chance to pass to the next grade without many challenges. This is because learners access more information through reading than listening.

According to latter research, learners' reading skills in South Africa, from primary school to tertiary level, are generally underdeveloped. This demonstrates that reading grade level materials continue to be a challenge in South Africa. The government is attempting to enhance the reading proficiency levels of South African learners; however, the researcher has observed that despite government measures to raise reading levels. This challenge persists, particularly in deep rural areas where the researcher is based.

4.3.2 Rationale feedback (2): Learner involvement in teaching and learning

Learner involvement entails role modelling caring behaviour, considerable, and responsible towards EFAL reading comprehension. Learner involvement leads to learner centred classes and contributes to the development of a classroom atmosphere that is more conducive to deeper interesting learning. When the educator was asked about learner involvement in teaching and learning reading comprehension, the educator replied:

I read to my learners, then I let them read on their own. I sometimes let learners help other learners to read. When they fail to read, I correct them until they understand. I make sure that all the learners understand what they are reading, all of them. I make sure that they all read.

The educator reads first and then let learners read. This is good, but it limits the educator to check learners' dependability on their own reading skills. The educator should re-read the text to the whole class and thereafter allows learners to play different roles in their groups as a process of learning reading. Peer involvement encourages learners to work hard for compliments from the effort they gave and their gratification.

Educators sometimes ignore the fact that all learners need to be involved in the lesson. Lack of concentration and, lastly, most of the learners do not understand the English

Language. It is difficult for some learners to read independently, understand the text and write down what they read about. Educators should ensure that teaching and learning are happening at a high-quality level, without leaving behind any child.

Peer support plays an important role in learners' development and learning. Learners should help each other with EFAL reading. Inside the classroom, learners are afraid to read in class because others laugh at them when they are being assisted by educators many times. Learners should be developed to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens. Learners are worried about those who are laughing at each other when they read in front of others. Learners assisting each other can help learners to teach each other easily. This will also create unity and progress in EFAL reading. When the educator was asked if learners work together in teaching and learning, the educator said:

I let learners teach each other, they help each other to read. This is good as they are comfortable with working with each other. They are friends, so they learn better when they are teaching each other.

Peers tend to tease learners when they attempt to speak or read in English, and this causes them to shy away from the language. In teaching and learning EFAL the educator and learners collaborate and provide a flexible learning environment. Peer tutoring provides an opportunity for increased reading comprehension amongst learners. Educators can provide extra reading support using peer tutors. This can help learners to be confident in their reading skills. peer tutoring on oral reading fluency rate. Peer tutoring was effective at increasing oral reading fluency for certain learners. In the process, weak readers made the greatest gains as they are helped by strong readers. Creates unity inside the classroom. Learners will motivate each other to the desire for more independence as they read on their own at home.

Learners working in pairs or groups can help them create L2 reading comprehension beyond their competencies. In teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension, educators guide children and children guide their peers towards their independent learning.

4.3.3 Rationale feedback (3): Parental or guardian involvement

Parent involvement is the support of parents in school activities in and out of school for the benefit of learners' academic achievement and school effectiveness. The school too, just like the home, plays an important part in the reading and comprehension of English. For learners, parental involvement with their children contributes to the learning of English, either positively or negatively. When the educator was asked about the parental or guardian involvement in their children's educational journey. The educator responded that:

Many parents are not educated. They cannot read or write and that makes it difficult for them to help their children in reading English.

Parents have a vital role to play in the development of the reading habit of their children. The educator showed that parents or guardians are not helping their learners improve their reading skills. Parents' inability to assist with their children's homework due to a lack of formal education, causing them to fail to assist their children with their schoolwork. Parental involvement in education is a concern because it has the potential to improve educational access, retention, and quality in schooling for children. But that was not the only reason as. The underachievement of the school in reading comprehension seems to be the result of a lack of collaboration between different educators and parents. The educator added that:

Some parents do not even try to help their children, because they think that it is the educator's work to teach the learners because that is what they are paid for.

Parents' attitudes toward education have a significant influence on their children's learning and academic success. Parental attitudes toward education have a direct effect on learners' academic performance and learning. Parents who read to their children, assist them with their homework, and provide tutoring using resources provided by educators tend to do better in school than children whose parents do not assist their children. Parental involvement is crucial for the academic performance of learners. One way that parents can contribute positively to their children's education is to assist them with their academic work at home. If parents are illiterate, alternative

parenting should be encouraged in schools, this will help the learners in their journey to learn EFAL reading comprehension. Alternative parenting is defined as any person Who takes on the role of a parent other than the learner's biological parent. The educator added that:

Some parents do not care about their children; some learners can come back without doing their homework. This shows that their parents do not check their children's books at all or very often.

Learners who fail to attain this goal become demotivated and lack progress. They make no progress in their reading and comprehension abilities. However, with the engagement of their parents, children can be motivated to develop their reading skills. Some Parents believe they lack English knowledge and skills. According to studies, illiterate parents and caregivers with little or no schooling experience have nothing to offer to their children's learning. The inability to communicate in the English language, which is utilized by the school as FAL. Parents who read to their children, help them with their homework, and provide tutoring using resources provided by educators tend to have their children perform better in school than children whose parents do not help them. Many parents lack time, knowledge or do not make any effort to assist their children with reading activities at home.

Behavioural patterns are learnt and shared by all members of society, and they are passed down to future generations. Thus, if a community feels that the language is not important then it gives a negative influence on the learner. The environment can play an important role in developing a child's reading habits. note that the child's personality is shaped by many different environmental influences and the most important is the child-rearing practices of the parents. Parents can become involved to help their children's reading by providing appropriate reading materials in the home. Families or communities consist of illiterate people or people who did not take their studies seriously, now it is gradually becoming a problem for young learners.

4.3.4 Rationale feedback (4): Lack of educator's training and workshops

The quality of the educator training has an impact on teaching methods and skill development. The primary goal of educator training and workshops is to improve

Educators' abilities to teach in a classroom setting. Some educators have insufficient training to have an Impact on effective teaching and learning. This is a huge challenge because educators have only been teaching for a few days since the Covid-19 Regulations were implemented. This question focuses on the training that the educators received regarding Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), and Grade 6 EFAL's educator training and workshops. The educator said:

Yes, we have received CAPS training or workshops, but they are not enough. We still don't have all the skills to work under this pressure. But we still we need more training because we a are still facing some issue with implementing CAPS.

Educators do attend workshops, but they feel like they are not enough. Since school attending days are few, educators are not well trained to handle workload at a very short time. Such workshops would create chances for struggling educators to seek and get help from other educators. Recently, they have not been attending workshops due to fear of the spread of Covid-19. The curriculum has been altered to suit the few days those learners attend school. When English language educators can work together as a team in teaching reading, they may empower themselves. When the educator was asked if they Received any training to teach EFAL in the COVID-19 pandemic the educator answered. The educator said:

We have not received any training on how to deal with the curriculum and also teaching and learning". The educator added by saying "we have not been trained to deal with teaching and learning in Covid-19 times. Now we cannot even handle classes since learners are coming only one week and rest three weeks.

This proved to be a problem since the curriculum is not designed for this time and the educator is deemed to be rushing the syllabus to ensure that all the grade curriculum is completed. This means that some issues are not taught well but just barely brushed. It is not good for the learners.

Grouping learners provides an opportunity for educators to develop professionally. This may be organised in the form of workshops or seminars where educators come together to share the strategies and methods that are easing teaching in their

Classrooms. Such workshops would create chances for novice and struggling educators to seek help from the more experienced and qualified educators. The Researcher believes that, if English language educators can work together as a team in teaching reading, they may empower themselves. The educator added that:

You can know the content, have many ways to teach the learners effectively. You can know the content, but you may have difficulty in transferring that knowledge to your learners at the given time.

The great change in educators is the expanded broadness of their ways of thinking after training. Despite the training received by many educators, the performance of learners remains very poor. The training was provided, it was too short to equip the educators to implement CAPS smoothly. It is hard to teach CAPS with limited time and resources, and COVID-19 has also added other challenges to the educators. Educators need different special training to be able to manage the new learning processes appropriately in this pandemic.

4.3.5 Rationale feedback (5): Lack of Teaching and Learning Time

Time as stipulated by the CAPS should ensure good quality in teaching and learning. But unfortunately, it is not so. Educators are facing many challenges in implementing the prescribed time for EFAL reading. The CAPS allocated two hours of reading in a week. This is hardly doable as the educator said that:

There is not enough time to cover all the concepts and no time for revision or feedback. This is because we educators do not have enough time to do so. Learners barely come to school, and we have limited time because of the lockdown rules.

This is a problem to teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension because educators hardly have time to ensure that learners learn to read properly as they are focused on ensuring that learners learn as much as possible amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Educators have limited time to impart knowledge reading skills to their learners. The educator added that. This is a problem because learners are not exposed to the English language in their environment. The educator added:

There is not enough time to teach all the reading skills to my learners. CAPS is very demanding and there is not enough time since learners are not coming Every day for learning since Covid-19 lockdown started, now I have to squeeze everything in. there is not enough time to teach reading comprehension as time allocated at the CAPS book. Very little time to finish all activities in the prescribed time.

Time is a serious consideration when evaluating effective teaching in respect of the demands of the CAPS. The educator when was asked about the CAPS time allocation, he felt that there was not enough time to complete all the work prescribed for teaching reading and reading comprehension.

The CAPS document proposes only two reading strategies, neither of which is mentioned in the text itself. These strategies only appear in the glossary:

Rereading – rereading is a reading strategy that gives the reader another chance to make sense out of a challenging text.

Restating – restating is a reading strategy where the reader will retell, shorten, or summarise the meaning of a passage or chapter, either orally or in written form. The educator cannot use these recommended strategies because there is not enough time to implement them in a reading comprehension lesson.

As prescribed for CAPS English FAL, 29 text types are to be taught and assessed in a school year consisting of 42 school weeks. Considering the weeks lost because learners must switch on days coming to school and lockdown hindering learners to come to school. This is a problem to plan to teach learners as South African Covid-19 lockdown levels keeps on changing. The educators are trying to ensure that learners learn as much as possible Before the Government's Covid-19 Respond Council suddenly closes school. CAPS is very demanding and adequate time is not given to thoroughly prepare and teach reading utterly.

4.3.6 Feedback rationale (6): Learners Motivation

The educator should play the roles of a philosopher, friend and guide to the learner. Opportunities should be developed to encourage learners to read English texts. Language attitudes toward reading among learners. Educators should use all available resources to encourage learners to read. This should apply inside and

outside the classroom. The educator, when asked how she motivates her learners, she said:

I try to ask them to read what they love to read, here inside the classroom and even at home. I make sure that when I teach reading it is enjoyable and challenging will entice learners to be motivated in reading. I sometimes ask them to read for their friends and family.

In the teaching of reading comprehension, what educators do to assist learners to feel more confident in their reading abilities is critical in both teaching and learning. Learner motivation, an educator should relate learning to everyday life and stimulate learner curiosity. When an educator structure learning in such a way that learners can experience initial success. Learners compare themselves with their classmates, which can result in an inferiority complex and consequently decrease their motivation to read. Giving learners independent reading time is a simple and effective strategy to improve their learning process. The educator also added that,

I read out aloud, I even act out what I am reading to make sure that they understand what I am reading.

When an educator read out aloud to their learners with facial expressions and body language, the learners understand the feelings, attitudes, beliefs and aims of the characters in the story. This kind of reading improves the learners' reading fluency and comprehension in EFAL.

4.3.7 Rationale feedback (7): Learner reading attitudes and habits

When it comes to reading comprehension, learners' attitudes and habits play an important role in teaching and learning. Learners must establish their own study habits at a young age in order to thrive in their academic lives. To be successful, learners must have effective study habits and reading skills. Regular reading, which is an important component of good Reading habits, will improve learners' academic performance. The educator highlighted that some learners have little or no habit of reading, as explained by the extract below.

Many of our learners do not know how to read well. They only read in class because they are forced to read. They read when it is necessary to read. I do not think they read books at home. Inside the classroom, very few of them seem to have developed a habit of taking a book for enjoyment at home. There are very few that are into those habits. But I believe that some learners read for just enhancing their knowledge, their skills and for the betterment and just for enjoyment.

The educator notes that only a few learners read for enjoyment or to gain knowledge, but that those learners were in the minority. Many learners seem to have a poor habit of reading. If they were developing consistent reading patterns, that would have increased their reading comprehension skills level. The educator highlighted poor reading habits as she elucidated:

I am struggling to force my learners to read. To tell them to try on their own at home and then start to read, start to force the habit of reading and trying to help them but it is not helping. I give them papers to read sometimes, you will find a learner failing to read the text, or even fail to pronounce a word, it is somehow because you expect that learner to practice reading on their own at home.

Reading is a habit that should be practised regularly to expand one's vocabulary. Children's comprehension skills do not develop when they do not read. When learners lack motivation, and learners must be intrinsically stimulated to establish independent and engaging reading habits. It can aid in the improvement of EFL learners' reading comprehension by keeping them actively engaged in reading strategies that enhance their level of understanding. When the educator was asked how often learners read, the educator responded that:

They will only try to read for marks. They do not read unless you tell them that you are writing down their marks. They are worried about passing at the end of the year.

The educator believes that learners will not bother to read on their own, but they will read only when instructed inside the classroom or per assessment. The more learners read the more they become independent and better readers. The researcher believes that the educator can introduce intrinsic or even extrinsic

Motivation to the learners. This will encourage them to take reading seriously, inside and outside the classroom.

4.3.8 Rationale feedback (8): Teaching and learning materials

The adequacy of teaching and learning materials can determine the success or failure of an educational system. Because they stimulate learners' learning while also motivating them, educational resources produce fruitful learning outcomes. Among the resources that should be available for teaching and learning are material resources. The educator stressed on the problem of school textbooks in Limpopo Province as a major setback that effects the quality of teaching and learning. Lack of support materials and resources results in ineffective teaching and learning as alluded by the educator:

We do not have enough teaching and learning materials. There are no teaching aids to help to learn in our school. We do not have charts or reading books. We do not have enough reading materials. The learners do not have other reading materials other than their English workbooks.

Poor learner performance in literacy and other subjects is also caused by the shortage of textbooks. Schools that are better funded and well-resourced in materials and infrastructure perform better academically. The lack of resources makes it difficult for educators in schools to do their work. A little exposure to newspapers or reading materials in the rural areas. When reading, an educator should use graphic or illustrated material this might contribute to promoting a reading culture amongst the learners. The educator further explains the latter:

The lack of support from the department of education in building such library. Using picture books helps learners to develop the reading materials at the same level as their peers from other schools. We do not have libraries; learners cannot read or find anything interesting to read. It is very hard to get them to fall in love with reading books. Lack of basic resources such as stationery, work cards and games posed as a huge challenge on the learners' reading abilities.

The school and the surroundings do not have a library or any book club to help learners to have access to reading materials. Teaching reading comprehension in EFAL, using

Picture books embraces and enables the construction of learners' content knowledge. This improves learners' reading comprehension. During teaching and learning, the availability of resources enhances teaching and learning. Adequate teaching and learning resources play a significant role in the quality of education.

4.3.9 Rationale feedback (9): causes of reading difficulties

Environmental factors seem to play a role when it comes to reading difficulties, that is, according to one of the educators as well as the latter literature. Environmental factors include parents or guardians' illiteracy, poor learning environment and poor teaching. It is important to note that the environment includes the home as well as the school environment. The educator describes the causes of reading difficulties in the classroom in the in following manner:

These learners cannot read. They do not even read at home. I try to teach them, but they are failing. I think it is a problem that started in early grade. They are supposed to know how to read, but now they have come to grade 6, they still cannot read.

Educators were able to identify specific reading errors that learners usually made in reading. These errors include omitting, substituting, mispronouncing and adding words. Once the educator identified a particular learner to have a certain reading error, there was a correlation with that learner's academic performance. If the learner frequently committed reading errors, even the performance in class was most likely to be poor.

4.3.10 Rationale feedback (10): assistance from the Department of Education and other stakeholders

A positive relationship between teachers and stakeholders is essential because it allows everyone to collaborate harmoniously, which benefits learners. To achieve the goal of developing successful learners through teaching and learning, educators must work with school stakeholders to plan and build a school community where learners can thrive while improving their learning abilities. The educator's insight about receiving assistance from different stakeholders included the following:

Yes, I do get it, I get help from my principal and even the SMT and the SGB... As a teacher, I cannot teach the children only, parents and the Department of Education should help. But as teachers, we do not have enough workshops.

Educator's support is imperative in ensuring that learners are performing well academically. Educators who are supported by their School Management Teams (SMTs) put more effort into teaching and learning the subject that they are teaching. The educator added that. The SMTs can employ many strategies to help educators teach their learners better. This is because when educators are faced with challenges, the issue can quickly be dealt with.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided and discussed the findings regarding the challenges faced by educators and learners in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension in Grade 6. The data were analysed to answer the research questions. The data were presented in a thematical system from the participants. This chapter has provided and discussed the findings regarding the challenges faced by educators and learners in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension in Grade 6. The analysis was presented according to the sub-themes and themes that emerged from the participants who are Grade 6 EFAL learners (10) and their educator (1). The sub-themes are, namely: learners' readiness for the grade; learner involvement in teaching and learning; parental or guardian involvement; lack of educator's training and workshops; lack of teaching and learning time; learners' motivation, learner reading attitudes and habits; teaching and learning materials; causes of reading difficulties; and assistance from the department of education and other stakeholders.

The next chapter presents the summary, recommendations, limitations of the study, implications for further research and the research's concluding remarks.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented and discussed the findings attained from the interviews and observations. This chapter summarises the findings that are presented and lastly, the discussed data. In this light, recommendations to the educators, Department of Education (DoE) officials, and Learners' parents were presented to reduce challenges faced in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension.

Underneath is a summary of the key findings of the study.

5.3 SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.2.1 Home Language perception in EFAL teaching and learning

During the study, the researcher noticed that the learners and the educator deemed Home Language (HL) as an obstacle to EFAL reading comprehension competence. HL usage and development can either affect or help EFAL usage. Depending on its usage inside the classroom. Learners and educator argue that using Home Language (HL) during classes is an obstacle to learning EFAL. The CAPS (2012) and DoE (2011), both recommended Code-Switching in teaching and learning. The HL is used as a foundation for learning another language. The HL is viewed as a barrier to the development of EFAL and a limitation to the learners' careers.

5.2.2 Lack of infrastructure

The school buildings are very old but properly cared for with clean surroundings and schools have no well-resourced libraries nor reading books. Educators are unable to keep up with educational innovations due to the lack of technological innovations. They do not have electronics like computers, radios or TVs to assist them with teaching and learning. They do not have laptops or desktops to do all the teaching and learning. They only have access to one laptop and one clerk who is solely responsible for all the school's administrative duties. Meaning that educators cannot print nor create typed reading materials for their learners on their own.

5.2.3 Lack of reading resources

Mengduo and Xiaoling (2010: 63) in Sebetoa (2016: 11) argue that allowing learners to read at any time and in any subject makes them better readers. Learners do not have enough reading materials inside the classroom or even at their homes. This is a problem because they cannot develop a hobby of reading. Constant reading allows learners to get used to reading, not in English, but in general.

5.2.4 Teaching and learning outside the classroom

The study indicates that education is a societal issue and that there is a positive correlation between learners' socio-economic background and the learner's reading proficiency. Learners from poor home backgrounds and unstable environments experience more reading difficulties than those from good stable home backgrounds.

5.2.5 Educator's teaching reading comprehension methods

Learners have low abilities in reading comprehension. Educators mainly prefer to let learners read alone then ask questions later to check if they are comprehending the text. The educator uses only one method to suit every learner. The educator sometimes uses Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS). Inside the EFAL classrooms, educators used code-switching to teach learners to read the FAL. Even though CAPS (2012) allow code-switching, it should be limited to ensure that learners get used to EFAL.

5.2.6 Gender differences in reading abilities

In this study, when it comes to gender, girls were doing better compared to boys. During the focus group and class, lesson observations revealed that gender played an important role in teaching and learning. Girls tend to be better readers than boys. Rathas (2006) cited in Mwanamukubi (2013) reveals that girls generally tend to acquire language and develop vocabulary faster. The study found that boys tend to have challenges with reading and in most cases, their reading skills are below their grade level. During the focus group interviews, girls always raised their hands to answer the question, and they were more fluent compared to the boys. On the other hand, they were more confident. During lesson observations, boys were struggling to read, they lacked fluency and comprehension skills. This was seen when the educator

Asked questions and male readers were hesitant to answer or sometimes, they did not answer at all. Other boys would laugh at each other when one was reading. This affected the boys' reading skills and confidence. While the female learner was reading, the entire class kept quiet and listened.

5.2.7 The impacts of learners low reading levels

Learners struggling with EFAL reading can lower their self-esteem and confidence, potentially affecting other areas of learning. During the observations, the researcher notices that younger learners are more active than older ones. This maybe because they are repeating classes, so they are not really interested or motivated enough.

5.2.8 Educator's training and workshops

A study by Mata (2012: 512) suggests that educators, new or old, should be properly trained and orientated before any change can be implemented in teaching and learning. Classes this year have been problematic, there are plans to cover for the missing time due to the closure of schools. Educators teach what they can and how they can. They are having challenges following the curriculum requirements. Training educators is time-consuming but is very crucial to ensuring that educators are confident in ensuring that learners learn the best way possible. Training is required for meaningful and successful change implementation.

5.2.9 A gap between Foundation and Intermediate Phase

Academically, learners who are having challenges to read EFAL at grade level from grade 4 struggle in all subjects. Such learners need interventions, such as additional assistance by educators with special training, and more time.

5.2.10 Learner engagement in reading comprehension

When an educator engages readers, their cognition is effectively stimulated as they reflect on questions from the text that they are reading. The educator engaged learners during reading lessons. Engaging learners as they read is important for developing attentiveness in learners. This can eventually lead to high performance in learners' reading comprehension.

5.2.11 EFAL reading Classroom management

Classroom management is the process of ensuring that classroom lessons run smoothly despite disruptive behaviour by learners. Educators, particularly those who have been teaching for several years or longer, believe that the educator(s) enough experience teaching English FAL to be unaffected by the demands of a new curriculum or teaching methods. This is irrespective of the demands at this Covid-19 pandemic. It is proven that for educators, years of experience may be the primary source of confidence, but confidence should not be confused with best teaching practices.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the study findings, the following recommendations are provided to guide the Department of Education, educators, learners and parents to improve EFAL teaching and learning for reading comprehension.

5.5.1 Recommendation to the educators

- For learners to develop, love and enjoy reading, they must understand what they are reading. EFAL educators should encourage their learners to use English even when playing around the playground. This can help learners to improve their language.
- Educators should start a programme to assist struggling learners even after school. All educators in a school should be involved in teaching reading, this is because learners have their favourite educators. Therefore, if every educator ensures that they help their learner to master reading will motivate them to read better. Since many Grades 6 learners are faced with challenges of limited English vocabulary in reading comprehension.
- EFAL educators should give learners tasks to look for unfamiliar words so that they can improve their vocabulary. Compiling their class dictionaries were helpful to their learners.

5.5.2 Recommendation to the Department of Education

- The Department of Education should visit rural primary schools to identify educator's needs and monitor the progress in the teaching of reading.

Schools should be provided with more reading books for the learners to read at school. Libraries are essential to improving learners reading abilities.

- The Department of Education (DoE) should build libraries in rural communities. Also, classrooms need to be equipped with digital resources to stimulate reading.
- DoE should involve all the relevant stakeholders such as parents, educators, school Management Teams (SMTs), and learners in teaching and learning to ensure that learners reading comprehension level improves.
- The DoE should provide each learner with an English dictionary so that they can look for unfamiliar words, this can help them gain adequate vocabulary. The researcher recommends minimisation of the use of mother tongue during reading.
- Code-switching during the EFAL lesson should be well regulated. Moreover, educators' training is essential for all the educators that teach learners to read. Encourage parents or guardians to play their roles in School Governing Bodies (SGB). Being in the SGB will ensure that they are actively participating in their children's learning process.
- The DoE should encourage educators to communicate with the learners' parents about their progress. Parents want to see their children succeed in their academic journey. Quarterly reports are not enough.

5.5.3 Recommendation to the learners' parents

- Rural school learners' use English as a language when they are at school and do not get exposure to it when they are at home.
- Parents should try to talk or expose their learners to English reading materials, visuals or audio. This will help with the exposure to English.
- Parents should encourage their children to read independently for pleasure. They should actively partake in roles in their children EFAL learning.

5.6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focussed on challenges faced in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension in Mahlohlwani primary school, Malamulele North-East Circuit, Limpopo province. Educators should follow the CAPS vision of providing all learners with the reading abilities needed to acquire reading comprehension. The study's findings were utilised to enlighten stakeholders such as the DoE, policymakers, education professionals and leaders, and educators.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The essence of the research was to evaluate the challenges of teaching and learning English First Additional Language reading comprehension in Primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit. The researcher Only interviewed ten learners. One educator was interviewed. And only five EFAL reading lessons were observed in one school which will not give adequate information for the entire circuit. Some participants found it difficult to understand some of the questions that were asked during interviews. In that case, the researcher had to explain more about what some of the questions were about. With some participants, it was difficult to secure lesson observations, especially because they were supposed to present the lesson in the researcher's presence, forward their preparation files and learners daily activity books. The researcher had to explain the intentions of observations several times.

5.2 Recommendations for further research and practice

This study focused on challenges faced in teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension government schools. A similar study could be carried out to look at reading difficulties in private schools. This research solely focused on the intermediate phase (Grade 6 only); other faces were excluded. A study can be conducted in Foundation, Senior and Further Education and Training.

5.8 CONCLUSION

Chapter five provided a discussion of all the findings of the study. The data was presented after the description of all the sites, each participant as well as lesson observations. The main aim study was to evaluate the challenges of teaching and learning English First Additional Language reading comprehension in Primary schools.

This was a case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit. Lack of resources contributes immensely to learner's reading difficulties. Most rural school educators are teaching English reading, many challenges are affecting reading development. Most educators teach without reading books to the learners.

The above research study has evaluated the challenges of teaching and learning EFAL reading comprehension in a primary school. The data was presented after the description of all the sites, each participant as well as lesson observations the study achieved its main aim and objectives. The results gained from this research, discussed the challenges of EFAL teaching and learning through the discussions of findings of the study

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7. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3766, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: makoetja.ramusi@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 24 March 2021

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/320/2020: PG - Amended

PROJECT:

Title: Evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of English First Additional Language reading comprehension in Primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North East (Limpopo)


Researcher: NC Maluleke

Supervisor: Ms MD Cele

Co-Supervisor/s: N/A

School: Languages and Communication Studies

Degree: Master of Arts in English Studies



PROF P MASOKO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

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APPENDIX 2: LETTER FROM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PERMISSION LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

CONFIDENTIAL



OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

Office of the Premier
Research and Development Directorate
Private Bag 39483, Polokwane, 0700, South Africa
Tel: (015) 230 9910, Email: moakob@premier.limpopo.gov.za

**LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

Meeting: 27th May 2021

Project Number: LPREC/41/2021: PG

Subject: Evaluating Challenges of Teaching and Learning of English First Additional Language Reading Comprehension in Primary Schools: A Case of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit, Limpopo.

Researcher: Maluleke NC

Dr Theminkosi Mabla

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theminkosi Mabla".

Chairperson: Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee

The Limpopo Provincial Research Ethics Committee (LPREC) is registered with National Health Research Council (NHREC) Registration Number **REC-111513-038**.

Note:

- I. This study is categorized as a Low Risk Level in accordance with risk level descriptors as enshrined in LPREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- II. Should there be any amendment to the approved research proposal; the researcher(s) must re-submit the proposal to the ethics committee for review prior data collection.
- III. The researcher(s) must provide annual reporting to the committee as well as the relevant department and also provide the department with the final report/thesis.

CONFIDENTIAL

- IV. The ethical clearance certificate is valid for 12 months. Should the need to extend the period for data collection arise then the researcher should renew the certificate through LPREC secretariat. PLEASE QUOTE THE PROJECT NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

APPENDIX 3: LETTER TO THE VHEMBE DISTRICT: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box 873
Saselamani
0928
12 April 2021

Vhembe District: Department of Education
P.O Box 2250
Thohoyandou
0928

Dear sir/madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT IN THE MALAMULELE NORTH-EAST CIRCUIT

I am a registered master's student in the Department of English at the University of Limpopo, student number _____. I am writing this to request for permission to conduct a research project at Mahlohlwani Primary School. The research is the "Evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of EFAL reading comprehension in Primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit (Limpopo)".

Since the research it is intermediate phase focused, Grade 6 learners, teachers, as well as parents, were involved. This study will assist the Department of Education to see the challenges that learners face with reading comprehension. This will assist in giving solutions to this problem.

Teaching and learning will not be disturbed. The researcher will not be partaking in the process but just observe. Covid-19 protocols were strictly followed. Covid-19 protocols were strictly followed. Participants were protected, and confidentiality were kept in this study

I hope that this research will be of practical help to Malamulele North circuit and the Department of Education respectably.

Yours faithfully

Mr Nkoka Champman Maluleke

Malulekenc941220@gmail.com

Mobile number: 0764819202

APPENDIX 4: LETTER TO THE CIRCUIT MANAGER

PO Box 873
Saselamani
0928
12 April 2021

The circuit Manager
Malamulele North Circuit
Private bag X1223
Saselamani
0928

Dear sir/madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT IN THE MALAMULELE NORTH-EAST CIRCUIT

I am a registered master's student in the Department of English at the University of Limpopo, student number _____. I am writing this to request permission to conduct a research project at Mahlohlwani Primary School. The research is the "Evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of EFAL reading comprehension in Primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit (Limpopo)".

Since the research it is intermediate phase focused, Grade 6 learners, teachers, as well as parents, were involved. This study will assist the Department of Education to see the challenges that learners face with reading comprehension. This will assist in giving solutions to this problem.

Teaching and learning will not be disturbed. The researcher will not be partaking in the process but just observe. Covid-19 protocols were strictly followed. Participants were protected, and confidentiality were kept in this study

I hope that this research will be of practical help to Malamulele North circuit and the Department of Education respectably.

Yours faithfully

Mr Nkoka Champman Maluleke

Malulekenc941220@gmail.com

Mobile number: 0764819202

APPENDIX 5: LETTER TO THE SCHOOL'S PRINCIPAL

PO Box 873
Saselamani
0928
12 April 2021

The principal
Mahlohlwani Primary School
P.O Box 002
Saselamani
0928

Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a registered master's student in the Department of English at the University of Limpopo, student number _____. I am writing this to request permission to conduct a research project at Mahlohlwani Primary School. The research is the "Evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of EFAL reading comprehension in Primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamuelele North-east Circuit (Limpopo)".

Since the research it is intermediate phase focused, Grade 6 learners, teachers, as well as parents, were involved. This study will assist the Department of Education to see the challenges that learners face with reading comprehension. This will assist in giving solutions to this problem.

Teaching and learning will not be disturbed. The researcher will not be partaking in the process but just observe. Covid-19 protocols were strictly followed. Participants were protected, and confidentiality were kept in this study

I hope that this research will be of practical help to Malamulele North circuit and the Department of Education respectfully.

Yours faithfully

Mr Nkoka Champman Maluleke

Malulekenc941220@gmail.com

Mobile number: 0764819202

APPENDIX 6: LETTER TO THE EFAL EDUCATOR

CONSENT FORM

Dear educator

Nkoka Champman Maluleke, student number: _____. I am a master's student registered in the department of English at the University Limpopo. I am doing research on the effect of English First Additional language on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit.

This research is going to evaluate the challenges that learners face when reading. With your help, this will assist in coming with the solutions to assist learners to comprehend text as effective as possible.

Participation is voluntary, meaning there is no remuneration in assisting the researcher to conduct the research. Your identity will be protected and if you feel like withdrawing, you can withdraw anytime.

For queries or input please do not hesitate to contact me on the following details: Cell phone: 076489202, or email: malulekenc94220@gmail.com

Kindly regards

Nkoka C. Maluleke (researcher)

I, _____ (educator) fully agree to support and willingly to support the researcher, Mr Maluleke on his research title: The effects of EFAL on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School in Malamulele North-East Circuit (Limpopo).

Educator's signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 7: CONSENT FORM TO THE PARENTS

CONSENT FORM

Dear parent

Nkoka Champman Maluleke, student number: _____. I am a master's student registered in the department of English at the University Limpopo. I am doing research on the effect of English First Additional language on the reading comprehension of grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit.

This study is set to evaluate the challenges that Grade 6 learners are facing when it comes to reading comprehension. Therefore, I would like you to partake in this study so that we can find solutions to this problem that your child(ren) is/are facing when it comes to reading. Covid-19 protocols were strictly followed.

Your identity will be protected and if you feel like withdrawing, you can withdraw anytime. Participation in this research is voluntary. For queries or input please do not hesitate to contact me on the following details: Cell phone: 076489202, or email: malulekenc94220@gmail.com

Kindly regards

Nkoka C. Maluleke (researcher)

I, _____ (parent) fully agree to support and willingly to support the researcher, Mr Maluleke on his research title: The effects of EFAL on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School in Malamulele North- East Circuit (Limpopo).

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 8: CONSENT FORM TO THE PARENTS (XITSONGA)

Eka murtswari:

Vito ra mina hi mina Nkoka Champman Maluleke, ndzi xichudeni eYunivhesithi ya Limpopo, nomboro ya mina yauchudeni _____. Ndzi muchudeni exiklweni ya tindzimi. Nhlokomhaka ya dzavisiso lowu i mayelana na ku dyondza naku dyonsisiwa ka ku twisisa ka matsalwa eka ntangha wa ntsevu exikolweni xa xikolo xale hanshi Mahlohlwani.

Dzavisiso lowu u mayelana naku lavisisa leswi swi kavenyetaka ku dyondzisa naku dyondziwisa ka ku twisisa leswi vaswihlayaka eka gireyidi ya ntsevu. Andzita tsakela leswaku mi teka xiphemu eka ndzavisiso lowu leswaku hita kuma Ndlela yaku antswisa leswi vana vanwina va dyondzisaku xiswona loko swita ku hlayeni.ndzi kombela pfumelelo waku mi vutisa swivutiso mayelana na dzavisiso lowu. Swilatelo hikwaswo swa Covid-19 swita landzeleliwa hiku hetiseka.

Kuya hi leswi swi tsundzuxiweke, mavito ya hlayisisiwa na swona ayenge tiviwi hi vanhu. Loko ku fambeni ka ndzavisiso lowu mitwa ingaku ami khomeki kahle, mapfumeleliwa ku tshika. Tani hileswi ku teka xiphemu eka ndzavisiso lowu munhu ati nghenelaku hi wexe anga tshikeleliwi.

Loko miri na swivutisa kumbe ku navele ku tatisa nikumeni lani: riqhingo rale nyongeni: 0764819202, imayili: malulekenc94122@gmail.com

Wa n'wina

Nkoka C. Maluleke (Mulavisisi)

Mina, _____ (Vito ra mutswari) ndza pfumelelea naku seketela leswaku tatana(Mr) Nkoka C. Maluleke (Mulavisisi) eka ndzavisiso ya wena lowu ra: The effects of EFAL on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School in Malamulele North- East Circuit (Limpopo) kurhi uya mahlweni.

Sayino: _____ Siku: _____

APPENDIX 9: PARENTAL ASSENT FORM (XITSONGA)

Eka murtswari:

Vito ra mina hi mina Nkoka Champman Maluleke, ndzi xichudeni eYunivhesithi ya Limpopo, nomboro ya mina yauchudeni _____. Ndzi muchudeni exiklweni ya tindzimi. Nhlokomhaka ya dzavisiso lowu i mayelana na ku dyondza naku dyonsisiwa ka ku twisisa ka matsalwa eka ntangha wa ntsevu exikolweni xa xikolo xale hansi Mahlohlwani.

Dzavisiso lowu u mayelana naku lavisisa leswi swi kavenyetaka ku dyondzisa naku dyondziwisa ka ku twisisa leswi vaswihlayaka eka gireyidi ya ntsevu. Andzita tsakela leswaku mi teka xiphemu eka ndzavisiso lowu leswaku hita kuma Ndlela yaku antswisa leswi vana vanwina va dyondzisaku xiswona loko swita ku hlayeni.ndzi kombela pfumelelo waku vutisa swivutisa eka n'wana kumbe vana van'wina mayelana na dzavisiso lowu. Hikuva n'wana kumbe van ava n'wina avaseva navu hlamuleri naswona avasefikisa malembu ya khume nhungu (18). Swilatelo hikwaswo swa Covid-19 swita landzeleliwa hiku hetiseka.

Kuya hi leswi swi tsundzuxiweke, mavito ya hlayisisiwa na swona ayenge tiviwi hi vanhu. Loko ku fambeni ka ndzavisiso lowu mitwa ingaku ami khomeki kahle, mapfumeleliwa ku tshika. Tani hileswi ku teka xiphemu eka ndzavisiso lowu munhu ati nghenelaku hi wexe anga.io8ik+ tshikeleliwi.

Wa n'wina

Nkoka C. Maluleke (Mulavisisi)

Mina, _____ (vito ra mutswari), mu tswari wa, _____ (vito ra nwana) ndza pfumelelea naku seketela leswaku tatana(Mr) Nkoka C. Maluleke (Mulavisisi) eka ndzavisiso ya wena lowu ra: The effects of EFAL on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Mahlohlwani Primary School in Malamulele North- East Circuit (Limpopo) kurhi uya mahlweni.

Sayino ya mutswari:.....

Siku:

APPENDIX 10: LEARNER'S FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS (ENGLISH)

1. What do you think of English language? Why is that so?
2. Do you love English language? Reason?
3. Do you think your classmates like reading English text? Reason?
4. Do you read English texts at home?
5. Do you speak try to speak English language at home? Do your parents encourage it?
6. What do you do when you fail to comprehend English text?
7. At school, what do you do when you fail to comprehend English text?
8. How does your educator teach you English reading comprehension?
9. Do you love like reading English texts? Why?
10. What do you think your educator can do to help other learners read better?

APPENDIX 11: LEARNER'S FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS (XITSONGA)

1. Xana u ehleketa yini loko hi vulavula hi ririmi ra xinghezi? Na kona hikokwalao ka yini u vula tano?
2. Wa switsakela ku hlaya ririmi ra xinghezi? Na kona hikona kwala ka yini?
3. Hi kuvona ka wena, u ehleketa leswaku vadyondzi kuloni va wena vaswitsakela ku hlaya hi ririmi leri ra xinghezi? Hikokwalaho u vula tano?
4. Xana loko uri kaya, wa tinyiketela nkarhi waku hlaya matsalwa ya xinghezi?
5. Xana wa vulavula kume ku hlaya xinghezi kaya? Na swona vatsari va wena vaku hlohlotelaki?
6. Loko uri kaya u tsandzeka ku hlaya kumbe ku twisisa matsalwa ya xinghezi u endla yini?
7. Loko ule xikolweni, loko u tsandzeka ku twisisa matsalwa ya xinghezi u endla yini?
8. Mudyondzisi wa wena uku dyondzisa njhani ku twisisa matsalwa ya xinghezi?
9. Waswitsakela ku hlaya matsalwa ya xinghezi? Iyini lexi endlaku kurhi u hlamula xileswi?
10. U vona onge hiswihi leswi mudyondzisa wa wena angata swiendla ku atswisa na ku pfuna van'wani hiku hlaya?

APPENDIX 12: EDUCATOR'S INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Do you think you learners are ready to read the grade level reading materials?
2. Do you involve your learners in teaching and learning? If so, how do you involve them?
3. Do the learners parents get involved in their children's EFAL teaching and learning?
4. Do you think you have adequate time to teach EFAL reading comprehension?
5. Is there enough time to teach EFAL reading to grade 6 learners?
6. How do you motivate your learners to read EFAL texts?
7. How are learners' attitudes in learning EFAL reading comprehension?
8. Do you have adequate teaching and learning materials?
9. What are your perceptions on the learners' reading difficulties?
10. Do you get help from the school's stakeholders?

APPENDIX 13: IMAGES OF THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM



APPENDIX 14: EDITOR'S LETTER

DIITHWADI HOLDINGS, PTY., LTD. Reg.
No: 2018/461229/07
Magabaneng Community Centre, Office 2,
Driekop 1129
1150 Burgersfort, Limpopo, Rep. of South Africa
Director: Pfumelani Mayimele & Nelson Ratau
(B.A.; Hons; M.A) & (B.A.; Hons; M.A.).

DATE: 27 OCTOBER 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves as proof that the research report entitled "Evaluating challenges of teaching and learning of English First Additional Language reading comprehension in Primary schools: A case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North-East Circuit (Limpopo)" by Mr Maluleke NC has been edited.

Regards
Mayimele P

APPENDIX 15: SCHOOL'S LETTER

MAHLOHLWANI PRIMARY SCHOOL



P.O. BOX 162

SASELAMANI

0928

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that Nkoka Champion Maluleke student number 201418749 has been granted permission to conduct research with title "evaluating challenges of teaching and learning in primary school: a case study of Mahlohlwani Primary School, Malamulele North – East Circuit (Limpopo)".

The school principal and the grade 6 English First Language (EFAL) educator in Mahlohlwani Primary School agreed in helping him in collecting data for his research. He collected data in a two months time in 2021.

Yours faithfully

Mathonsi M.D.

Mathonsi M.D. (Principal)

School stamp:

