The use of Running Records as reading assessment strategy in Foundation Phase classrooms

by

Lynette van Tonder

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in the Faculty of Education

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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor: Dr J West
Co-supervisor: Dr M Moen

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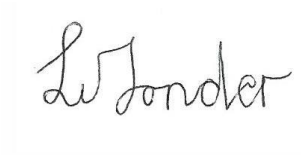
DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Educationis at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



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Lynette van Tonder

5 August 2021

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- Compliance with approved research protocol,
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ETHICS STATEMENT

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this dissertation, has obtained, for the research described in this work, the applicable research ethics approval. The author declares that she has observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's *Code of ethics for researchers* and the *Policy guidelines for responsible research.*

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my loving family who always supports me in achieving my goals. Furthermore, I dedicate this research to every South African Foundation Phase teacher who wants to make a positive contribution to Foundation Phase learners' reading skills.

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To have achieved this milestone in my life, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people:

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ABSTRACT

From various national and international studies, it is evident that by the end of the Foundation Phase, South African learners are still struggling to master basic reading skills. Contributing to this problem is the use of reading assessment strategies that are ineffective in identifying learners' reading needs. Identifying learners' reading needs accurately can enable teachers to adapt their reading instructional planning accordingly and improve learners' reading skills. As a result, this qualitative study investigated the possibility of implementing Running Records, a reading assessment strategy, within South African Foundation Phase classrooms through an interpretivist paradigm. The study was underpinned by the literacy processing theory and the teacher agency theory. The literacy processing theory explains how learners develop and acquire literacy skills, while the teacher agency theory describes how teachers have the authority to make decisions regarding reading assessment. Seven South African Foundation Phase teachers completed an online questionnaire, attended an online workshop on Running Records and implemented a Running Record. During individual interviews, they provided feedback on their experiences with implementing Running Records in their classrooms. The findings suggest that a Running Record outcome may be valid, reliable and consistent in informing reading instructional planning when teachers have received high-quality professional training in implementing Running Records. Therefore, I recommend that the Department of Basic Education and teacher education higher education institutions should provide clear guidelines and training on the implementation of Running Records. Furthermore, teachers should be willing to attend the training to improve their knowledge and skills in performing a Running Record to accurately inform their reading instructional planning.

Key words: assessment strategy; Foundation Phase; reading; reading assessment; Running Records; South Africa

OPSOMMING

Vanuit nasionale en internasionale studies is dit duidelik dat leerders aan die einde van die Grondslagfase steeds sukkel om basiese leesvaardighede te bemeester. Die gebruik van oneffektiewe leesassesseringstrategieë in die identifisering van leerders se leesbehoeftes dra by tot hierdie probleem. Akkurate identifisering van leerders se leesbehoeftes sal onderwysers in staat stel om hul instruksionele beplanning met betrekking tot lees aan te pas en leerders se leesvaardighede te verbeter. Met hierdie kwalitatiewe studie word die moontlikheid ondersoek om Running Records as ’n assesseringstrategie in Suid-Afrikaanse Grondslagfaseklaskamers te implementeer deur ’n interpretivistiese paradigma te gebruik. Hierdie studie word onderlê deur die teorie van geletterdheidsprosessering en die onderwyseragentskapteorie. Die teorie van geletterdheidsprosessering verduidelik hoe leerders geletterdheidsvaardighede ontwikkel en verkry, terwyl die onderwyseragentskapteorie verduidelik hoe onderwysers hul mag gebruik om besluite oor leesassessering te neem. Sewe Suid-Afrikaanse Grondslagfaseonderwysers het ’n aanlyn vraelys voltooi, ’n aanlyn werkswinkel oor Running Records bygewoon en ’n Running Record geïmplementeer. Laastens het hulle gedurende onderhoude terugvoer gegee oor hul ervarings met die implementering van Running Records in hul klaskamers. Die uitkoms van ’n Running Record het die moontlikheid om geldig, betroubaar en bestendig te wees om toekomstige instruksionele beplanning met betrekking tot lees in te lig wanneer onderwysers hoë kwaliteit- professionele opleiding ontvang in die implementering van Running Records. Daarom beveel ek aan dat die Departement van Basiese Onderwys asook hoër onderwysinstellings waar onderwys aangebied word duidelike riglyne en opleiding met betrekking tot die implementering van Running Records verskaf. Onderwysers moet ook bereid wees om opleiding by te woon sodat hulle hul kennis en vaardighede van die implementering en gebruik van Running Records kan verbeter om toekomstige instruksionele beplanning met betrekking tot lees in te lig.

Sleutelwoorde: assesseringstrategie; Grondslagfase; lees; leesassessering; Running Records; Suid-Afrika

PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING

PROOF OF EDITING

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DECLARATION

To whom it may concern

I hereby confirm that I have proofread and edited the following dissertation, including the references.

Title of dissertation

The use of running records as reading assessment strategy in Foundation Phase classrooms

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8 September 2021

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Term
ANA	Annual National Assessment
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
LoLT	Language of learning and teaching
LPT	Literacy processing theory
MS	Microsoft
PIRLS	Progress in International Literacy Study
RR	Running Records
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SVR	Simple view of reading
TAT	Teacher agency theory

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South African learners are experiencing a crisis in terms of reading skills, with their lack of reading skills being identified through reading assessment. The reading crisis is evident from studies and assessments such as the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the Annual National Assessment (ANA) and the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA). SACMEQ III revealed that 27% of Grade 6 learners were not able to comprehend texts (Spaull, 2013). Every five years, the PIRLS assesses learners' reading comprehension skills on a global scale (Mullis & Prendergast, 2017). In 2016, the PIRLS revealed that 78% of South African learners could not read with comprehension (Howie, Combrinck, Roux, Tshele, Mokoena & McLeod Palane, 2017). In 2014, the ANA[1] revealed that Grade 3 learners scored, on average, 56% in the English Home Language test (Marais & Wessels, 2020). The EGRA revealed that 65% of Grade 1 learners were not able to identify single-letter sounds (Piper, 2009).

From the abovementioned national and international reports, it is evident, that South African learners lack the necessary reading skills to form meaning when they are reading and to progress academically (Trudell, 2019). Prinsloo and Harvey (2016) and Wagner (2017), contend that reading problems among high school learners can be traced back to their first five years in school (i.e. the Foundation Phase) during which their literacy instruction has been inadequate. South African Foundation Phase teachers would, therefore, benefit from reading assessment that can inform their reading instructional planning to create and apply meaningful reading instruction (McMurry-Harrington, 2019). Meaningful reading instruction is only possible when reading assessment is correctly administrated, which may improve learners' reading skills, such as comprehension (Wagner, 2017).

[1] The ANA is a national census-based survey in South Africa that assesses the language skills of Grade 1 to 6 and Grade 9 learners on the minimum outcomes as outlined in the CAPS document. The purpose of the ANA was to improve the teaching of language; however, this was not the case, and the ANA was stopped in 2014 (Kanjee & Moloi, 2014).

Reading assessment monitors and evaluates learners' reading progress and assists Foundation Phase teachers in determining the starting point for their reading instruction (Afflerbach, 2016; Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2011b). Hence, reading assessment can be regarded as essential in accurately identifying learners' reading needs and reading behaviour. When learners' reading needs and reading behaviour are identified, teachers will be able to address these by adapting their reading instructional planning accordingly. To enable teachers to accurately identify learners' reading behaviour, they have to use reading assessment strategies that are valid, reliable and efficient (DBE, 2011b). In my study, the benefits and limitations of implementing Running Records (RR), a reading assessment strategy, is determined by how it will inform teachers' reading instructional planning.

The RR strategy assesses learners' reading behaviour (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017), such as recognising sight and high-frequency words, sentence patterns and pronunciation errors (D'Agostino, Kelly, & Rodgers, 2019; Salem & Omar, 2018). RR can enable teachers to identify learners' reading needs based on their reading behaviour and to address those needs in their reading instructional planning (Briceńo & Klein, 2018; Reed, Cummings, Schaper, Lynn, & Biancarosa, 2019). Consequently, RR can be implemented as a reading assessment strategy that could help inform teachers' reading instructional planning more effectively.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Various national and international studies (e.g. SACMEQ, PIRLS, ANA and EGRA) have reported on South African learners' poor reading skills (DBE, 2017; Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016; Van den Berg, 2015). As a Grade 3 Foundation Phase teacher, I have also noted that an increasing number of learners are experiencing a reading barrier and cannot comprehend text. Conducting reading assessments and implementing a reading assessment strategy is important, as they can guide teachers in their reading instructional planning to improve learners' reading skills, such as comprehension (Truckenmiller, Yohannan, & Cho, 2020). Developing learners' reading skills is imperative, as it enables learners to comprehend written text (Trudell, 2019). Furthermore, if poor reading skills are not identified and addressed in the Foundation Phase, it may lead to increased dropout rates in high school because learners may struggle to understand and interpret the work in textbooks (Joshi & Wijekumar, 2019).

As such, a valid and reliable reading assessment strategy is necessary to assist teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour. Various research studies (i.e. Barone et al., 2020; Briceńo & Klein, 2018; Reed et al., 2019) have delved into the subject of reading and reading assessment by investigating how RR could improve reading instructional planning, research on RR within the South African context is limited (Nathanson, 2018). In South African only two studies was performed by Nathonson, in 2009 and 2018. In both studies she found that learners reading might improve if teachers reading instructional planning are informed by a RR.

In South African Foundation Phase classrooms, various reading assessment strategies exist, including rubrics, checklists and memorandums (DBE, 2011b). However, Kanjee (2020) points out that Foundation Phase teachers have to effectively implement other assessment strategies that can assist them in identifying learners' reading needs and not only use checklists, observational notes and rating scales. RR could, therefore, be considered as a possible reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

1.3 AIMS AND BENEFIT OF THE RESEARCH

My study aims to explore the benefits and limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy that can assist Foundation Phase teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour and making informed decisions with regard to reading instruction. RR may contribute to teachers' current reading assessment practices and help them improve their reading instructional planning to support learners more effectively in their reading needs. When learners' reading needs are met, the outcomes of their reading skills in national and international studies may improve.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

My study explores RR as a reading assessment strategy and how it can be used in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. RR can equip Foundation Phase teachers with an alternative reading assessment strategy that allows them to identify learners' reading behaviour. In doing so, they will be able to make more informed decisions about their reading instruction. To recommend or adopt a reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms that is valid,

reliable, efficient and can inform planning with regard to reading instruction, I first explored the benefits and limitations of RR.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS UNDER INVESTIGATION

The following primary and secondary research questions have been formulated to guide me in exploring the use of RR as a reading assessment strategy in Foundation Phase classrooms.

1.5.1 Primary research question

The primary research question of my study was as follows:

How can RR, a reading assessment strategy, help inform Foundation Phase teachers' reading instruction?

1.5.2 Secondary research questions

To answer the primary research question, I was guided by the following secondary research questions:

- What are the benefits of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?
- What are the limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?
- How can RR be adapted for Foundation Phase classrooms to inform teachers' reading instruction?

1.6 KEY THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

1.6.1 Assessment strategy

Teachers select an assessment strategy, for formal or informal purposes in accordance with their assessment method, that enables them to collect evidence of a learner's work. Assessment strategies may include rubrics, checklists, RR, tests and assignments (Gareis & Grant, 2015e; Naude & Davin, 2017; Prinsloo & Harvey, 2016). In my study, an assessment strategy refers to a rubric, checklist, rating scale or RR that is used by teachers to collect evidence of learners' reading behaviour, accuracy rate and error rate and the difficulty of the text.

1.6.2 Foundation Phase teachers

In South Africa, learners between the ages of six and ten are in Grade R to 3, which is referred to as the Foundation Phase. A teacher in the Foundation Phase is a resource that facilitates the learning process (Davin, 2017a). According to the teacher agency theory (TAT), a teacher has the authority, knowledge and skills to decide when, where and how the curriculum is implemented within the classroom (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016). Therefore, in my study, the term “Foundation Phase teacher” refers to a facilitator of learners, aged between six and ten years, who has the authority to implement, construct and reconstruct the process of learning.

1.6.3 Reading assessment

Reading assessment is the process of gaining information about a learner’s reading behaviour and evaluating the developmental reading progress of the learner (Afflerbach, 2016). Reading assessment includes reading behaviour such as phonemic awareness, word recognition, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency (DBE, 2011b). As such, in my study, reading assessment is defined as evaluating a learner’s reading progress and gaining information about a reader’s current reading behaviour to plan for future reading instructional decisions.

1.6.4 Reading barrier

Reading barriers are problems readers experience with the components of reading to decode and recognise words and comprehend what they have read. The components of reading include phonological awareness, pronunciation, vocabulary, semantics and syntax (Lan, Xiao-Hua, & Xiao-Fei, 2017). According to Dednam (2019a), a reading barrier is when a reader experiences problems with oral reading or any of the components of reading. Furthermore, readers will need support from the teacher in overcoming their reading barriers (Dednam, 2019a). In my study, a reading barrier is defined as any reading problem, such as the components of reading or prerequisites to reading, readers experience while they are reading that causes them to not comprehend the text correctly.

1.6.5 Reading behaviour

Reading is a complex process whereby symbols are decoded to construct and derive meaning from words and written text (Parmawati & Yugafiati, 2017). As such, reading behaviour refers to what a reader is doing while reading and includes re-reading and self-correction (Barone, Khairallah, & Gabriel, 2020). In my study, reading behaviour refers to the cognitive process and strategies readers use when they read accurately and make errors and self-correcting by implementing re-reading strategies, cues (e.g. meaning, visual and structural), and decoding skills.

1.6.6 Reading skills

Reading skills include the decoding of phonics, letter knowledge, word recognition, reading familiar and non-familiar words, fluency and comprehension (Dowd & Bartlett, 2019; Govender & Hugo, 2020; Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016; Wagner, 2017). Reading skills are what readers use to enable them to understand, interpret and comprehend written text (Afflerbach, 2019; DBE, 2011b). Reading may also be described as the process of gaining information through an analytic-synthetic process of interpreting signs (Salem & Omar, 2018). For my study, reading skills are defined as the process of interpreting and synthesising signs, letters and words to understand, interpret and comprehend one's meaning of a given text.

1.6.7 Running records

Running Records (RR) is an oral reading assessment strategy designed by Marie Clay based on her literacy processing theory and has been used by teachers since 2000 (D'Agostino et al., 2019). When using RR, the teacher systematically observes and monitors learners' literacy processing skills and identifies a reader's reading behaviour in a consistent pattern over time (Briceńo & Klein, 2018). Readers' reading behaviour, such as their reading errors and self-corrections, is continuously observed and recorded to inform instructional decisions (D'Agostino, Rodgers, Winkler, Johnson, & Berenbon, 2021). Consequently, RR enables teachers to identify a reader's accuracy rate, error rate and self-correction rate (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). In my study, RR refers to a reading assessment strategy that assesses, monitors and records readers' reading behaviour and identifies their accuracy rate, error rate and self-correction rate over time to inform instructional decisions.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

Foundation Phase teachers continuously perform reading assessments using various reading assessment strategies (De Lange, Winberg, & Dippenaar, 2020). By means of effective reading assessment strategies, such as RR, teachers are able to make informed decisions about their reading instruction and, as a result, improve learners' reading behaviour (Briceño & Klein, 2016). In the following sub-sections (1.7.1 and 1.7.2), I elaborate on reading assessment and provide an overview of RR.

1.7.1 Reading assessment

In South African schools, language assessment tasks are often and sometimes exclusively used for summative assessment. Thus, school practices ignore the value of formative assessment in language assessment tasks (Dube-Xaba & Xulu, 2020). Language assessment tasks are divided according to the different language skills outlined in the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (CAPS) of 2011, these being listening, speaking, reading, writing and handwriting. At the end of the term, one (of four) language assessment tasks is administrated to assess all the different language skills by implementing different assessment strategies, methods and tools (DBE, 2011b). Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6 for a detailed discussion of reading assessment, and Section 2.5 for the CAPS requirements.

Reading assessment contributes to learning by identifying learners' strengths and weaknesses, as this helps guide teachers' reading instructional planning (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). Therefore, the purpose of reading assessment can be viewed as both assessments of learning and assessment for learning. "Assessment of learning" refers to the process where reading assessment takes place after learning has occurred (Prinsloo & Harvey, 2016). "Assessment for learning" refers to assessing learners' reading while they are learning in order to identify at-risk learners, monitor learners' progress, collect information for reading instructional planning, assess whether the reading instructional planning has been sufficient and provide regular feedback to learners (Govender, 2020). Once teachers have identified the purpose of reading assessment, they must choose the most appropriate reading assessment tools, methods and types to implement in their classrooms. Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6 for a detailed discussion of the purpose of reading assessment.

The purpose of assessment will determine the type of reading assessment being implemented (Carl, 2017). The different types of reading assessment are baseline, formative, summative, diagnostic, criterion-based, peer and norm-referenced assessment (Carl, 2017; Davin, 2017a; Ferguson, 2017). Baseline assessment, using pre-tests and class discussions, occurs before instruction starts to establish where instruction should start and to trigger previous learning (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). After baseline assessment has been conducted, instruction takes place and the teacher continuously assesses (implementing formative assessment) while instructing the class.

Formative assessment refers to continuous assessment, which includes providing ongoing feedback that forms part of teaching and supporting learners' literacy development (DBE, 2011b). Formative assessment may consist of the following assessment tools: paper-pencil tests, checklists, observation and standardised tests (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). In contrast to formative and continuous assessment, summative assessment occurs after instructional planning with regard to reading and assesses the degree of learning that has taken place by means of a project or examination (Davin, 2017a). Summative assessment informs decisions about the curriculum, instruction and assessment for the future (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). The type of assessment will, therefore, assist the teacher in selecting the most appropriate assessment method.

When Foundation Phase teachers select an inappropriate assessment method, strategy and tool to assess reading, it will not guide them in identifying learners' reading behaviour. Assessment methods refer to the way in which a teacher has selected and used the most appropriate assessment tools and strategies to assess learners' reading response to a reading activity (Carl, 2017; Govender, 2020). Teachers need to implement different assessment tools to assess a learner's reading, as different assessment strategies focus on different aspects of reading. Such assessment tools include observation, checklists, holistic rubrics and informal reading inventories (Estes, 2018; Mensah & Ruffin, 2019; Musefa, 2017). When different assessment methods and tools are used, Foundation Phase teachers will be able to identify learners' reading behaviour correctly. Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6 for a detailed discussion of different types and methods of reading assessment.

In the following sub-sections, I elaborate on the potential use of RR as a reading assessment strategy to help identify learners' reading behaviour and inform teachers' reading instructional planning.

1.7.2 Overview of Running Records

The RR strategy has been developed by Marie Clay, a former literacy teacher and researcher from New Zealand (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017), and has made it possible for teachers and researchers to identify and assess learners' reading behaviour by using an observational strategy during summative and formative assessment (D'Agostino et al., 2019). Through RR, reading behaviour is assessed by recording learners' reading errors and self-corrections, determining their reading accuracy rate and implementing miscue analysis.

With RR, the teacher will be able to identify whether a reading error or self-correction made by a learner during reading was made using a reading cue, such as meaning, structure or visual information (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). Reading cues are clues a learner uses to identify a specific word while reading a story or text (Nathanson, 2018). A meaning cue refers to the way that learners interpret and evaluate the text they have read and identify unknown words in the text. By being able to identify which word sounds correct within the context of a sentence, learners can use structure cues. Visual cues refer to the process by which learners observe the letters in a specific word and read a word that may be familiar to them (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). Self-corrections may include cues used in monitoring their own reading, then rereading and checking their reading. As such, self-corrections will enable a reader to problem-solve words (Barone et al., 2020). Furthermore, teachers use codes to score learners' reading behaviour, which informs their reading instructional decisions (D'Agostino et al., 2019). Findings such as the reading cues and reading behaviour a learner uses while reading will assist teachers in making informed reading instructional decisions about learners' strengths, reading instructional needs, error rate, accuracy rate and self-correction rate (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). Refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2 for a detailed discussion of RR as a reading assessment strategy.

Learners' reading skills may improve when teachers implement and base their reading instructional planning on the outcome of their RR assessment. RR may be regarded

as both a summative and formative assessment strategy, although the benefits and limitations thereof as a reading assessment strategy for the South African Foundation Phase classroom should first be established. Without identifying these, the value of this strategy in the South African context will remain unknown.

1.7.3 Theoretical framework

My study was framed by two theories, namely the literacy processing theory (LPT) and the TAT. The LPT focuses on the reading behaviour of a reader and is based on the assumption that a reader uses different decision-making strategies during the reading process to form an understanding of the text (Parlindungan, 2019; West-Higgins, 2017). The reading process consists of reading behavioural changes that are documented to monitor changes in the reader's reading behaviour over time (Worsfold, 2015). It is associated with perceptual and cognitive processes that are necessary during the reading and writing process (Fasciana, 2019). As such, careful consideration must be taken in selecting a text that may help readers increase their vocabulary, enabling them to read more difficult texts later. Therefore, detailed observation of literacy behaviour (Doyle, 2013) and reading instructional planning should be based on a learner's reading development level (Fasciana, 2019). RR is based on the LPT, and as such, this theory guided my investigation into the possible implementation of RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. Refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1 for a detailed discussion of the LPT.

The TAT focuses on teacher autonomy in making decisions with regard to reading assessment and reading instruction in the classroom (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016; Wilcox & Lawson, 2018). This theory has to do with the process whereby teachers apply their agency to have a positive impact on learning through the teaching strategies, lesson context, lesson activities and teaching and learning resources they implement in their classrooms (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016). The TAT also implies that teachers base their actions and decisions on past, personal, social and cultural experiences within the education sector (Campbell, 2019). As such, the TAT guided me in which elements of RR as a reading assessment strategy have to be adapted. Refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2 for a detailed discussion of the TAT.

1.8 POTENTIAL VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

This research on RR can contribute to the field of reading assessment in the education sector by contributing towards reading assessment strategies in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. RR, as a reading assessment strategy, have the potential to assist Foundation Phase teachers in effectively identifying learners' reading behaviour. In addition, teachers may use the results from RR to address learners' reading needs more effectively during their reading instructional planning. Therefore, the results from my study could serve as a starting point for future research on reading assessment in South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

Furthermore, the study can also provide explicit guidance within policies such as the CAPS to guide teachers in assessing and identifying learners' reading behaviour more accurately. Thus, my study may contribute to professional teacher training, as the use of RR can be included in the curriculum to help prepare student teachers to implement RR.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research methodology is a specific style, method and technique of collecting data (Nieuwenhuis, 2019b). Mouton (2019b) explains that a research methodology focuses on the process, tools, objectives, procedures and individual steps used during research. In my study, research methodology refers to the specific method, process and tools I have selected for data collection. In the sections that follow, I briefly discuss the research paradigm, research approach and research design. For a detailed discussion of the research methodology, refer to Chapter 4.

1.9.1 Research paradigm

A research paradigm comprises the specific ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology that form a comprehensive framework or belief system guiding the researcher in the research process (Sefotho & Du Plessis, 2018). My study followed an interpretivist paradigm within a qualitative exploratory case study approach, as most qualitative studies include interpretivism as an epistemology (see Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). As my study explored the implementation of RR as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms, I had to determine the

limitations and benefits thereof from the perspective of Foundation Phase teachers. Based on their own experiences and circumstances, the teachers' perceptions of the benefits and limitations of RR might differ and were understood from their unique perspectives (see Sapkota, 2019). Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.2.1 for a detailed discussion of the research paradigm.

1.9.2 Research approach and design

The research approach is defined as a specific direction of scientific reasoning used to acquire knowledge. Based on assessing a particular phenomenon, the aim is to find out what is believed and known about that phenomenon (Sefotho & Du Plessis, 2018). Research design can be defined as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct research (Mouton, 2019b). A research design consists of a research approach and a research paradigm (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). My study followed a qualitative exploratory case study research design. Qualitative exploratory research refers to a new reality that arises in a community and needs to be systematically explored to gain a better understanding of the problem (Ivankova, Creswell, & Plano Clark, 2019). A case study can be defined as a research method or type that focuses on a particular evolved organisation and will enable the researcher to describe, explain and explore a specific phenomenon under study (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). Because of the limited research available on RR as a reading assessment strategy as pertaining to the South African context (Nathanson, 2018), my study followed a qualitative exploratory case study research design to explore the benefits, limitations and possibilities of implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. Furthermore, qualitative exploratory case study research would allow me to make recommendations on how RR might be adapted for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. Therefore, the strategy of RR was the "case" that was explored in my study. For a detailed discussion of the research approach and design, refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2.

1.10 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING

1.10.1 Sampling

Sampling refers to the process whereby a portion of the population is selected for a research study (Maree & Pietersen, 2019a). In my study, participants were selected through non-probability purposive sampling. Non-probability purposive sampling

refers to participants being selected based on defining characteristics and involves specific settings, incidents, events and activities in the research process (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). In this study, non-probability purposive sampling was used, as participants were purposefully chosen based on specific criteria.

Using the criteria listed below ensured that I collected rich and in-depth data about the benefits and limitations of RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. The participants in my study had to meet the following sampling criteria:

- They should be qualified Foundation Phase teachers.
- They should have two or more years of teaching experience with Foundation Phase learners.
- They should teach Foundation Phase learners in either English or Afrikaans.

Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.2.4 for a detailed discussion of the selection of participants.

1.10.2 Research site

The research site refers to a suitable and feasible location where research is conducted (Maree, 2019). In my study, the research site was selected using convenient sampling. Due to the restrictions imposed because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the research site was online, using Blackboard Collaborate, Zoom, Microsoft (MS) Teams and Google Forms. Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.2.5 for a detailed discussion of the research site.

1.10.3 Role of the researcher

The role of a researcher is to establish a collaborative and empowering partnership with participants to gain greater insight into their perspectives (Maree, 2019). This allowed me to collect rich data that could be accurately analysed. In my study, I formed a collaborative partnership with the participants to gain in-depth data of what they believed were the benefits and limitations of RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. During the in-service training and individual online interviews, I ensured that all my participants were comfortable, respected and treated as human beings with feelings. Furthermore, I did not force participants to answer any question that they were not comfortable to answer (see Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014).

I was responsible for raising additional questions, compiling and administering online questionnaires, preparing, structuring, conducting and facilitating two online workshops and individual online interviews, and analysing and triangulating the data (see Maree, 2019). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2015), as the researcher, I was responsible for making decisions and judgements in terms of the strategies, selecting useful data and coding the data.

My predispositions, expectations, biases and values as a researcher might have influenced my decisions and judgements, consciously or subconsciously, in selecting and coding the data (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Thus, I had to identify my predisposition about RR. I believed that RR had the potential to successfully assist Foundation Phase teachers in identifying and monitoring learners' reading needs. The participating Foundation Phase teachers were not forced to provide answers that I wanted, and I did not indicate to them what my predisposition about RR was. To minimise my predispositions, I triangulated the data I had gathered (see Maree, 2019). Refer to Chapter 4, Sections 4.3 and 4.4.1 for a detailed discussion of triangulation.

1.11 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection and documentation refer to how data are gathered in the field and documented to enable the researcher to analyse the data and answer the research question (Ivankova et al., 2019; Mouton, 2019a). In my study, I used multiple sources of data collection (i.e. online questionnaires, anecdotal evidence and individual, semi-structured online interviews) to gather rich, in-depth and descriptive data about the benefits and limitations of RR that Foundation Phase teachers had identified (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

As mentioned, I used online questionnaires, anecdotal notes and individual, semi-structured online interviews with set questions for my data collection. Using three data collection methods allowed me to triangulate my data. The purpose of triangulation was to increase the validity, reliability and trustworthiness of the data while reducing the risk of researcher bias (Maree, 2019). Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3 for a detailed discussion of data collection methods and documentation.

1.12 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis can be defined as the process of breaking data up into different themes, allowing the researcher to identify specific patterns, categories or relationships in the data (Mouton, 2019a). My study employed content analysis, a systematic process or method of interpreting and analysing qualitative data, to draw realistic conclusions (see Bengtsson, 2016; Hsieh & Shannon, 2018). Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3.1 for a detailed discussion of the content analysis that was used in this study.

1.13 METHODS USED TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

In qualitative research, the data and findings must be trustworthy. Trustworthiness can be defined as the determination of the researcher to ensure that the participants' voices are heard in the research report (Graneheim, Lindgren, & Lundman, 2017). Therefore, in this study, I used multiple data sources to ensure that my data were trustworthy and triangulated (see Moon, 2019). I considered criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (see Hsieh & Shannon, 2018). Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.4 for a detailed discussion of the criteria of trustworthiness for this study.

1.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When an academic study is being undertaken, a researcher is expected to conduct the entire process according to generally accepted norms and values (Mouton, 2019c). To conduct qualitative exploratory research, I requested permission from the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (Faculty of Education) (ethics number: EDU091/20, refer to Ethical Clearance Certificate). After I had received my ethical clearance, I requested and received consent from the DBE, as well as the respective teachers, parents and learners. I ensured that all aspects of my study met the guidelines provided by the University of Pretoria Ethics Committee (Faculty of Education) and the DBE (refer to Annexures G-J).

To ensure transparency, I met online with the selected research participants and explained the purpose of the research and what it entailed. During the data collection phase, the participants were required to complete an online questionnaire, attend an online workshop, implement RR and make anecdotal notes on what they perceived to

be the benefits and limitations of RR. Thereafter, they participated in an individual online interview. The online questionnaire was answered anonymously to ensure confidentiality, meaning that the responses cannot be traced back to the individual schools or teachers. I emphasised that participation was voluntary and that the participants had the right to withdraw from the research without any consequences. They had the opportunity to ask questions to clear up any uncertainties or concerns.

In addition, measures were put in place to protect the participants from any foreseeable harm arising from the study. In respecting their right to privacy, no participant is identified in the published research findings (see Mouton, 2019c). Before publication, the participants had the right to access the findings of my study and cross-check whether these correlated with what they had said in their interviews and the questionnaires. This allowed me to focus on the truth and knowledge of the research data (see Mouton, 2019c).

1.15 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

In order to assure a well-structured research report, the chapters were structured as follows:

Chapter 1: General introduction and orientation

In the first chapter, I have provided an overview of this qualitative exploratory case study research. This study was conducted to contribute to the current reading assessment strategies that South African Foundation Phase teachers are using.

Chapter 2: Reading in the Foundation Phase

In Chapter 2, the focus is on a literature review of reading. The purpose of Chapter 2 is to provide an in-depth overview of the prerequisites for reading, the components of reading, teaching approaches to reading and the CAPS requirements for teaching and assessing the reading of Foundation Phase learners.

Chapter 3: Reading assessment in the Foundation Phase

The focus of the third chapter is on RR as a reading assessment strategy. In this chapter, I provide an overview of RR and then discuss the process of RR, the benefits

and criticism of RR and the validity, reliability and rater variance of RR. Furthermore, I draw a comparison between RR and the EGRA tool. Currently, in South African classrooms, teachers are more knowledgeable of and skilled in EGRA than RR. As such, a comparison may guide teachers in understanding RR. This chapter is concluded with a discussion of my theoretical framework, namely the LPT and the TAT.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

Chapter 4 focuses on the research methodology used in the study. The research design, data collection methods and documentation, trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the study are discussed. The discussion of my research methodology guides the reader in understanding how I carried out the research.

Chapter 5: Findings and recommendations

In Chapter 5, I present my empirical research findings on the use of RR as a reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. The research findings are guided by the LPT and the TAT. Furthermore, I present how the aims, codes, sub-codes, categories and themes are related to my research questions. In this study, I identified two themes and two categories, with three codes in each category.

Chapter 6: Report on findings

In the final chapter, I reflect on my research findings and the existing literature. Thereafter, I use the findings to answer my main and secondary research questions. I conclude the chapter by making recommendations for future studies and the way forward for the use of RR as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. This is followed by a conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2: READING IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on reading in the Foundation Phase. For a visual presentation of the literature review, refer to Figure 2.1.

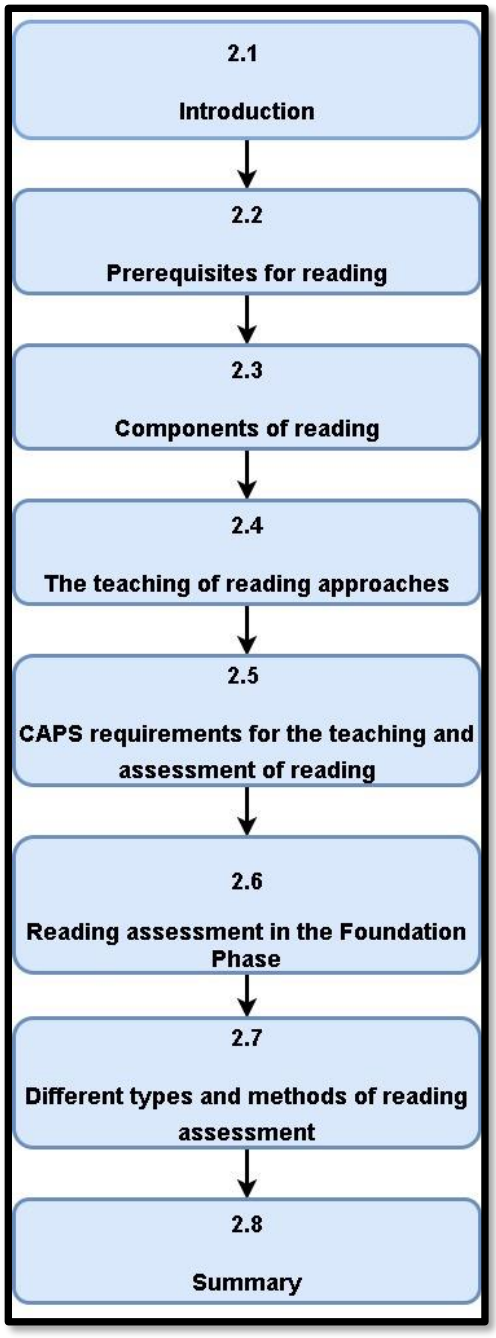


Figure 2.1: Overview of Chapter 2

Reading assessment is continuously performed by South African Foundation Phase teachers using various reading assessment strategies (De Lange et al., 2020). However, reading comprehension in South African schools is problematic. The PIRLS, SACMEQ, ANA and EGRA have shown that many South African learners are struggling with reading comprehension (Govender & Hugo, 2020; Nel, 2018; Van den Berg, 2015).

Learners may struggle with poor reading comprehension due to a lack of decoding skills and language comprehension (Hjetland, Lervag, Lyster, Hagtvet, Hulme & Melby-Lervag, 2019). Fifty countries, including South Africa, participated in the 2016 PIRLS, with South Africa scoring last of all the countries, as 78% of Grade 4 learners were unable to read with comprehension. The learners who participated in the PIRLS in 2016 scored 372 points and did not reach the international benchmark of 500 points (Howie et al., 2017).

The purpose of the SACMEQ is to monitor and track Grade 6 learners' reading progress in sub-Saharan Africa to identify areas in the education sector that need improvement and to report on the progress that is made within those areas. In the SACMEQ III study, South African Grade 6 came 10th out of 14 countries (Govender & Hugo, 2020). SACMEQ II and III revealed that Grade 6 learners' reading comprehension skills are unacceptably low (Govender & Hugo, 2020). According to SACMEQ III, 27% of Grade 6 learners were unable to comprehend text (Spaull, 2013). The SACMEQ is performed every seventh year, and SACMEQ II, III and IV refer to each of those times the SACMEQ was performed. The mean reading score for South African Grade 6 learners who participated in SACMEQ IV in 2013 was 538,3 points, which were higher than the benchmark of 500 points but still indicate that South African learners' reading skills are problematic (DBE, 2017).

The ANA was a national census-based survey in South Africa that assessed the language and mathematical skills of Grades 1 to 6 and Grade 9 learners in two separate tests during the last quarter of the year from 2011 until 2014. The ANA tests assessed learners' performance in language and mathematics in a specific grade based on the minimum outcomes outlined in the CAPS document (Kanjee & Moloi, 2014). After 2014, the ANA was discontinued, as it did not improve the teaching of language and mathematics. In 2012, the ANA tests indicated that for the overall

language skills, which included phonics, reading comprehension, writing and language structure, the average percentage score in Home Language for Grade 1 learners was 58%, while for Grade 6 learners, it decreased to 43% (DBE, 2012). Thus, as learners progress to higher grades, their reading skills do not improve. As such, the current teaching and assessment strategies used are insufficient. According to Wildschut, Moodley and Aronstam (2016), the academic performance of many learners is below the required level, as only 28% of Grade 6 learners perform at an acceptable literacy and numeracy level. Besides the ANA, the EGRA reports on learners' reading skills.

The EGRA is a national standardised tool in South Africa that assesses Foundation Phase learners' knowledge of letters, phonics, word recognition, reading fluency and reading comprehension (Spaull & Pretorius, 2019). In 2009, the EGRA revealed that 65% of Grade 1 learners were unable to identify single-letter sounds. Moreover, only 0,6% of Grade 1 learners reached the international benchmark of identifying 26 letters per minute for letter or sound recognition. During word identification, 90% of Grade 1 learners were unable to identify one word in the test. Only two out of 650 Grade 1 learners tried to read a short passage, and only one learner was able to answer the reading comprehension questions successfully (Piper, 2009).

From the results of the abovementioned international and national assessments (i.e. PIRLS, SACMEQ, ANA and EGRA), it is clear that South African learners do not have well-developed reading skills (Schaefer & Kotze, 2019). Taking the findings of international and national assessments into account, it is evident that South African Foundation Phase teachers need well-researched reading assessment strategies to screen, diagnose and monitor learners' reading progress and should adapt their reading instructional planning accordingly (Adam & Nel, 2014). Furthermore, according to Nel (2018), there currently are various inadequate screening, diagnostic and monitoring strategies in Foundation Phase classrooms, which might contribute to poor reading comprehension. The reading assessment strategies that are currently used in South African schools are insufficient in identifying and addressing learners' reading needs through reading instructional planning (Nel, 2018). In contrast to insufficient reading strategies, learners' poor reading skills may also indicate that they have not mastered the prerequisites for reading.

In the following sections, I provide an overview of the prerequisites for reading, the components of reading and approaches to the teaching of reading. Thereafter, an overview of the CAPS in teaching reading is provided. Lastly, I discuss the different types and methods of reading assessment, as well as the reading assessment requirements of the CAPS curriculum.

2.2 PREREQUISITES FOR READING

During early childhood, learners first have to master certain prerequisites for reading. The prerequisites for reading will assist learners to successfully use the components of reading and master reading comprehension (Wildschut et al., 2016). The components of reading are discussed in Section 2.3. De Witt and Lessing (2018a) have identified four prerequisites for reading, namely visual, auditory and kinaesthetic perceptual skills and body image, which form the basis of cognitive functioning, pre-writing skills and language skills. Learners will only function and read successfully in Foundation Phase classrooms when they have mastered all three of these prerequisites for reading (Krog, 2020).

The first prerequisite for reading is perceptual skills. Perceptual skills include visual-figure ground differentiation, visual discrimination, visual space and sequencing, visual analysis and synthesis, assimilation, auditory perception, auditory figure-ground differentiation, auditory discrimination, auditory sequencing, auditory analysis, synthesis and memory. Perceptual skills are essential for learners, enabling them to read and comprehend a text more easily (Thuketana, 2020). During visual figure-ground differentiation, learners will learn to focus on the activity with which they are busy and ignore all the background activities (DBE, 2011a). It is important that learners master visual figure-ground differentiation, as it will enable them to focus on a specific word, sentence or paragraph in a text without losing their place or skipping lines (Dednam, 2019b; De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). Thus, the reader will be able to focus on the text and ignore illustrations on the page that are not relevant to the text. Learners have to accurately sort objects that are similar and different, as it develops their visual discrimination (DBE, 2011a). When learners can sort objects according to similarity and difference, it will be easier for them to visually differentiate and recognise specific forms, letters or words that almost look the same in a text, such as “ball” and “doll” (Dednam, 2019b; Wildschut et al., 2016). If readers cannot accurately discriminate

between letters and words, they may insert an incorrect letter or word that may affect the meaning of the text and their understanding of the text (De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). During spatial awareness, learners are aware of the visual space around them and will start to organise the space around them. This skill is essential, as it contributes to learners' reading and writing skills (Krog, 2020). Visual space enables a learner to put letters and words in a specific sequence to read them from left to right to understand the text (De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). Visual analysis and synthesis enable readers to decode unknown words and put words and sentences together to understand the text (Dednam, 2019b; De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). Learners have mastered visual memory skills to remember what they have seen and recall these in the correct sequence (DBE, 2011a). Therefore, visual memory and recall are important in reading, as these enable readers to follow what they are reading and remember the sequence in which letters appear in a specific word (Davin, Van Staden, & Janse van Rensburg, 2013). Accordingly, visual memory enables readers to read more fluently by recalling particular letters and words from their memory. Assimilation is another skill that allows readers to relate new knowledge of the text to existing knowledge in their memory, thereby enabling them to develop new concepts and vocabulary (De Witt & Lessing, 2018a).

Secondly, auditory perception enables learners to give meaning to what they have heard by using their ears to acquire and interpret information (DBE, 2011a). When learners have mastered auditory perception, they will be able to carry out reading instruction because they have learnt to use their auditory skills successfully when reading (Wildschut et al., 2016). Auditory figure-ground differentiation enables readers to differentiate between different sounds in a word and distinguish between important sounds and sounds in their environment (De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). Well-developed auditory discrimination skills enable readers to recognise and differentiate between different sounds in words or sentences, such as the pitch and volume of words and letters (Wildschut et al., 2016). Thus, the reader should differentiate between similar sounds such as /oo/ and /oa/ (Sjerps, Fox, Johnson, & Chang, 2019). Auditory sequencing enables readers to put sounds in a specific sequence to understand the word (De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). Auditory analysis and synthesis enable readers to decode sounds in an unfamiliar word to make sense of it and enable them to synthesise sounds into a word (Dednam, 2019b; De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). When

readers can break a word up into its sound segments, they have mastered auditory analysis. Auditory synthesis is mastered when readers can put the sound segments together to form a word. Thus, they will interpret and organise the information received on a higher level (Weber, 2019). Auditory memory enables readers to remember the sounded words and sentences in a specific order and to repeat the sounded words and sentences in that particular order (Wildschut et al., 2016).

Thirdly, learners will be successful in reading when they have mastered kinaesthetic perception skills and movement in space. Kinaesthetic perception skills and movement in space enable a reader to read from left to right, top to bottom and cross the midline in reading a passage. Movement in space enables a reader to focus on eye movement, rhythm and intonation when reading. Kinaesthetic perception skills ensure fluent and accurate reading and ensure that readers do not lose their place when reading (De Witt & Lessing, 2018a).

Lastly, learners should have a good body image that ensures reading readiness, as good body image is the foundation for reading success (De Witt & Lessing, 2018a). Reading readiness can only be accomplished if prerequisites, such as perceptual skills, kinaesthetic perception and good body image, are mastered. These prerequisites are developed through physical education (Krog, 2020), which is necessary for developing prerequisite skills that will contribute tremendously to learners' ability to read and comprehend a text. Therefore, if a reader is struggling with reading, it may be necessary for the teacher to evaluate and address the reader's prerequisite skills during physical education periods before teaching the different components of reading.

2.3 COMPONENTS OF READING

The components associated with reading are essential skills that Foundation Phase learners should master (Novianti, 2016). Reading is a complex and multifaceted process using lower- and higher-order thinking, such as decoding and problem-solving skills, to understand the text (Bester, 2015; Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). When reading, there is expression, interpretation, interaction and communication between the reader and the author (Yang, Tsai, & Hikaru, 2019). As such, a reader uses visual and auditory perceptual skills, language skills, cognitive processing skills and socialising

and interactive processing skills to form an understanding of the text. The process of reading also includes linguistic components such as decoding, vocabulary, fluency, prior knowledge of the topic and working memory (Nel, 2018; Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016; Waltz, 2016).

Before readers can comprehend a text, they must have mastered components of reading that include phonological awareness, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary knowledge, fluency and comprehension (Bester, 2015). Firstly, phonological awareness enables readers to hear and identify syllables, onset rimes and phonemes in spoken words by recognising the different sound segments of the words (Wildschut et al., 2016). Readers will be able to successfully use phonological awareness when they are frequently taught how to manipulate letter sounds and decode words, read and write text and participate in a discussion of the story (Forbes & Dorn, 2015).

Secondly, word recognition will be developed, which is the ability to recognise and know words and their meanings within a specific context to comprehend a text. Linguistic (i.e. phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics), psycholinguistic (i.e. psychological aspects of a language) and sociolinguistic (i.e. interaction among people) components are involved in word recognition (Oliver & Young, 2016).

Thirdly, decoding skills enable readers to recognise words by connecting phonemes or signs to letter sounds or symbols and translate them into meaningful words and sentences (Hugo, 2010). The decoding of words and word recognition expand readers' vocabulary knowledge.

Fourthly, before readers can master reading comprehension, they should have mastered vocabulary knowledge, which enables readers to recognise and understand the meaning of words in different contexts and to communicate effectively (Hempenstall & Buckingham, 2016). Vocabulary knowledge can be divided into meaning vocabulary and utility vocabulary. Whereas meaning vocabulary refers to the words a reader understands, utility vocabulary refers to the words a person actually uses (Dednam, 2019a). Therefore, many factors affect vocabulary, such as frequency, pronunciation, introducing new vocabulary, the depth of processing and storing new vocabulary (Lee & Yoon, 2019). When readers have comprehensive vocabulary

knowledge, they will retrieve words from their memory fast and effortlessly, and it will assist them in comprehending a text accurately (Hamford, 2019). Reading fluency refers to the ability to read a text with speed, accuracy, intonation, expression and emphasis (Hempenstall & Buckingham, 2016).

Readers are regarded as being successful in reading comprehension when they have mastered reading fluency and possess a wide oral vocabulary span (Piper, Schroeder, & Trudell, 2016). Reading comprehension is the ability to react meaningfully towards a text after reading the text (Bester, 2015). When reading for comprehension, readers actively extract, construct, integrate and critique the text, using their linguistic knowledge, cognitive ability and metacognitive strategic ability to form an understanding of the text (Frankel, Ward, & Fields, 2019; Piper et al., 2016). Linguistic knowledge can be referred to as a reader's vocabulary, while cognitive ability refers to a reader's prior knowledge and use of strategy. Readers' observation and use of reading strategies can be referred to as their metacognitive strategic ability (Yang et al., 2019).

Readers use different levels of cognitive processing skills and different sources of information, such as detection and transcription of information and the integration of previous knowledge and information in the text, to enable them to read and interpret the text correctly (Jang, 2017). Therefore, they need to interact with the text and grammatical rules to understand and interpret the author's message. Moreover, by understanding and interpreting the author's message, reading can increase readers' experience and knowledge of a new concept from gaining useful information from the text (Sudirman, 2016). Thus, readers use their cognitive processing skills to identify words and to know what these words mean when they read for a specific purpose or for pleasure (De Witt & Lessing, 2018b).

Whether readers read for a specific purpose or for pleasure, they use reading techniques such as survey, scan, skim, active, detailed or speed reading (Sudirman, 2016). Survey reading is when a reader is looking for specific information, while scanning will be used when the reader is looking for a particular answer to a question. When reading to find the most important ideas in a text, a few lines will be skipped, thus implementing skimming as a reading technique (Sudirman, 2016). Active reading is used as a technique when the reader is actively involved with the text to gain a

deeper understanding thereof. When a text is read to extract information accurately from the text, the reader uses detailed reading as a technique. Speed reading does not focus on understanding the text but is used when readers want to improve their reading speed (Rau, Zheng, Guo, & Li, 2018). The different reading components and reading techniques should be mastered to enable a reader to comprehend a text successfully. Hence, a teacher has to take into account the different components of reading when performing reading assessment.

In the Foundation Phase, teachers teach and assess reading components and techniques using approaches to reading. Furthermore, different assessment methods, tools and strategies are based on different reading approaches. In the following section, I elaborate on the teaching of reading approaches.

2.4 THE TEACHING OF READING APPROACHES

Within the literature, there is considered to be a “reading war” between reading experts, researchers and practitioners (i.e. teachers). The reading war refers to a debate regarding the best approach to teaching reading (i.e. bottom-up, top-down or blended approach), the three-cueing system and the simple view of reading (SVR) (Barshay, 2020). Thus, the teaching of reading can be regarded as controversial, as the debate on the best approach to teaching reading continues.

The teaching of reading involves a top-down or a bottom-up approach. The top-down approach focuses on understanding the text and requires background knowledge of the topic, while the bottom-up approach focuses on understanding each individual letter and word read (Yang et al., 2019). In other words, the top-down approach starts with reading comprehension, while the bottom-up approach starts with phonological and phonemic awareness. For a visual presentation of the two approaches to reading, refer to Figure 2.2.

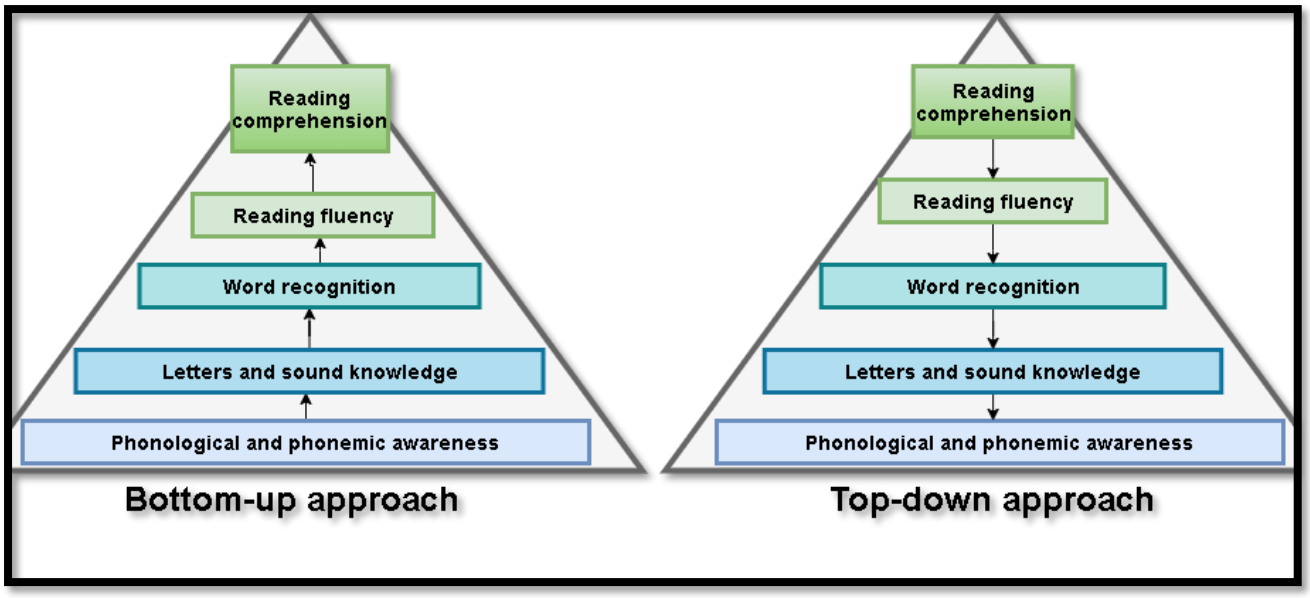


Figure 2.2: Approaches to reading (adapted from West, 2020a)

During the bottom-up approach, learners are taught reading in a specific sequence; hence, it correlates with a behaviourist view of learning to read (Bojovic, 2016; Naafan, 2018). Within the behaviourist view, learners learn to read in a specific sequence. They first have to master phonological and phonemic awareness before letters and sound knowledge can be taught. More recently, the bottom-up approach has been described as the "science of reading" (Barshay, 2020). Thus, the bottom-up approach views reading as a mechanical process where a reader decodes the message or text word by word (Yang et al., 2019). The bottom-up approach or skills requirement theory begins with phonological and phonemic awareness, followed by letters and sound knowledge, word recognition, reading fluency and lastly, reading comprehension (Bester, 2015). This approach primarily focuses on synthetic and analytical approaches to reading, accordingly using an alphabet and sound method when teaching reading (Bester, 2015). With the bottom-up approach, skills are systematically introduced and hierarchically ordered by using word identification series (Rahmi, 2019). This reading approach is successful for readers who strongly rely on visual and auditory clues when reading (Bester, 2015). The approach emphasises decoding skills and is text-driven (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). Therefore, a benefit of the bottom-up approach may be that learners' reading skills would be better developed than with the top-down approach, because each reading skill is taught separately. However, with the bottom-up approach, the whole text is not introduced first, which

may affect learners' understanding of specific words in a text, which may be easier for them with a top-down approach (Yang et al., 2019). The EGRA tool is based on the bottom-up approach to reading and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 Section 3.3.

Some teachers and researchers believe that learners should be taught reading through a phonics approach, which is a bottom-up approach. The phonics approach focuses on teaching each reading component separately, in detail, and sounding out words (Armes, 2020). Hamford (2019) believes that learners who have learnt to read through a bottom-up or phonics-based approach are better readers than those who have learnt to read through the three-cueing system. When teachers only use the three-cueing system, they may teach learners to guess when they do not recognise a word and to memorise sentence patterns. In contrast to the three-cueing system, the bottom-up or phonics-based approach focuses on sounding out words by using knowledge of the letters of the alphabet.

In contrast to the bottom-up or phonics-based approach, the top-down approach or meaning-giving theory is a psycholinguistic view of reading. The psycholinguistic view of reading refers to readers who use their background linguistic knowledge to interpret a text (Mohamed, 2019). The top-down approach to reading thus starts with the whole and breaks it down into separate components. Accordingly, when teaching reading, a teacher will focus first on developing learners' reading comprehension, then reading fluency, word recognition, letters and sound knowledge and, lastly, phonological and phonemic awareness (refer to Figure 2.2). The top-down approach focuses on readers' prior knowledge, language ability and expectations of the text and how they use their prior knowledge to make sense of the text (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). Furthermore, with a top-down approach, the focus is on meaning, and if a reader understands the meaning of the text, the other components will also be achieved; thus, each component does not have to be taught separately (Bester, 2015). Therefore, with the top-down approach, learners' prior knowledge of the topic helps them to form an understanding of the text. As such, learners may interpret the text the same as or different from the author. In contrast to this, with the bottom-up approach, prior knowledge does not affect comprehension, because meaning is formed by understanding and interpreting each word and sentence in the text (Yang et al., 2019).

The language experience approach and the whole language approach both form part of the top-down reading approach (Bester, 2015). In addition, the top-down approach focuses on the three-cueing system – semantic, syntactic and graphemes – rather than errors, and errors are ignored if the meaning of the text is not influenced by them (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). When a teacher uses the three-cueing system in reading, it is believed that readers may learn to guess a word instead of using their memory and knowledge of the language and base their decision on that (Armes, 2020). During the three-cueing system, teachers and researchers believe that reading does not take place in a specific process but rather make predictions about the text (Hamford, 2019). The three-cueing system ignores the SVR (refer to Figure 2.3). The SVR includes cognitive and linguistic operations that are involved in the reading process, which include identifying sounds and words and making predictions about the story. The cueing system is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.

The reading rope, as depicted in Figure 2.3, also known as the SVR, focuses on the interwoven relationship between decoding (word reading) and linguistic (language) comprehension. “Linguistic comprehension [is] the ability to understand spoken language” (Nation, 2019, p. 48). Thus, readers may be able to read whole words before they have mastered grapheme-phoneme knowledge (Ehri, 2020). However, the SVR does not illustrate how the process of reading development takes place during the teaching of reading. Hence, teachers may be uncertain about how the development of reading takes place (Nation, 2019). Furthermore, the SVR focuses on reading words and ignores the teaching of systematic phonics instruction and the background knowledge of the reader (Goodwin & Jimènez, 2020). Lastly, the SVR does not take into account that a reader can read words accurately and fluently but may have poor reading comprehension skills (Nation, 2019).

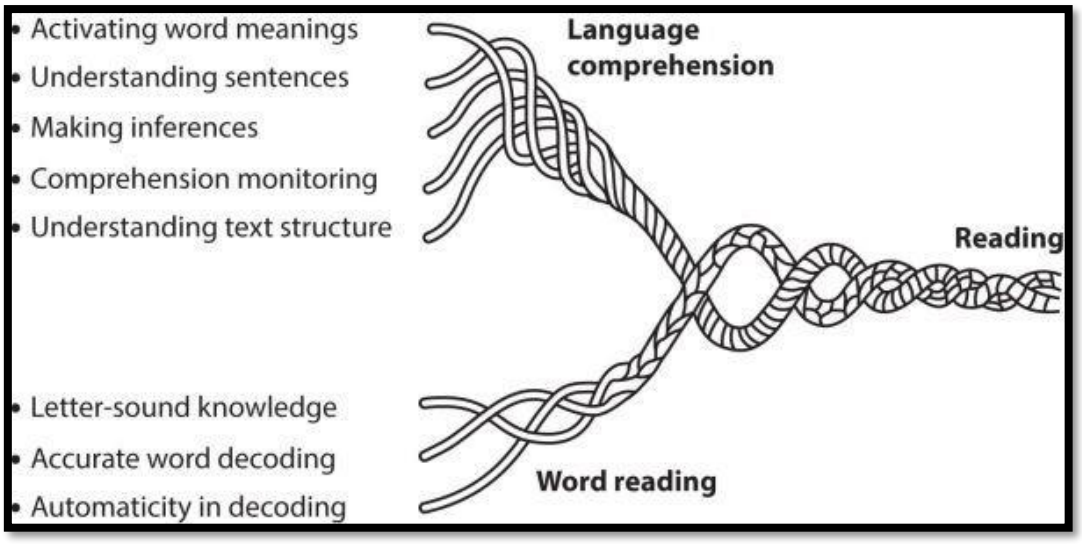


Figure 2.3: Reading rope (Scarborough, 2009, p. 24)

In addition to the top-down and bottom-up approaches to reading, a balanced approach to reading may be used. A balanced approach uses a combination of the top-down and bottom-up approaches (Barshay, 2020). The balanced approach is based on the assumption that learners will start reading independently when they are exposed to a variety of texts and books that they like to read (Armes, 2020). With a balanced approach, teachers and researchers will focus on the text or story ideas rather than on memorising the letters, sounds and words in the story (Barshay, 2020). While the balanced approach to teaching reading incorporates the teaching of phonics, it does not teach phonics explicitly. Armes (2020) supports a balanced approach because, according to her, when phonics is taught explicitly, some phonics could be overemphasised during teaching and learning. In contrast, when phonics is taught simultaneously, it will allow learners to decode the meaning of the text more easily (Ehri, 2020).

There is more to reading than only teaching phonics and sounds in a bottom-up approach; hence, a balanced approach should be used to teach the other components of reading integrated with phonics and sounds (Castles, Rastle, & Nation, 2018). During reading assessment, learners who have been taught phonics explicitly score higher than those who have been taught with a balanced approach (Barshay, 2020; Castles et al., 2018). Furthermore, with a balanced approach, the focus is on the ideas and interpretation of the text, instead of memorising phonics (Barshay, 2020).

It is evident that researchers and teachers believe there are different approaches to teaching and assessing reading, namely top-down, bottom-up and balanced approaches. However, in teaching and assessing reading according to the CAPS curriculum, a combination of these approaches should be used. In the following section, I elaborate on the CAPS requirements for teaching and assessing reading.

2.5 CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT OF READING

The purpose of the CAPS curriculum is to "provide a more structured and sequenced approach to literacy instruction, explicitly articulating pacing, time on task and learning outcomes" (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016, p. 1). In contrast to the purpose of the CAPS, learners' reading comprehension has not improved because the CAPS curriculum overemphasises reading assessment and pays little attention to the teaching of reading (De Lange et al., 2020).

A Home Language assessment task is used each term and includes different assessment tools to assess learners' progress (DBE, 2019e). In South Africa, the school year is divided into four terms, and the duration of each term is 10 or 11 weeks. When the CAPS curriculum was implemented, Grade 1 and 2 learners had to complete two Home Language assessment tasks per term for Terms 2, 3 and 4, while Grade 3 learners had to complete three Home Language assessment tasks in Terms 2 and 3 (DBE, 2011b). However, the DBE found that the number of Home Language assessment tasks per grade per term in Foundation Phase classrooms was impractical and amended the policy to reduce the number of assessment tasks in Grade 1 to 3 to only one assessment task per term (DBE, 2019e). Refer to Table 2.1 for the assessment tasks per term in the CAPS 2011 document.

Table 2.1: Assessment tasks per term (DBE, 2011b, p. 10)

Grade	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Grade 1	1	2	2	2
Grade 2	1	2	2	2
Grade 3	1	3	3	2

Language assessment tasks in the Foundation Phase are divided according to the different language skills outlined in the CAPS document of 2011, these being listening

and speaking, reading and phonics, writing and language structure, and handwriting (DBE, 2011b). Reading assessment in Grades 1 and 2 is conducted orally and practically (DBE, 2011b), that is, through flashcards and play activities, such as solving riddles, word-based snakes and ladders, scrabble, spy with words and word search (Arora, 2018). The CAPS requires that the assessment of reading in Grade 3 should be conducted orally, practically and in written format (DBE, 2011b).

According to the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b), Foundation Phase teachers have to teach and assess the following reading components: phonemic awareness, word recognition (e.g. sight words and phonics), comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. Reading in the Foundation Phase is divided into three types of reading activities, namely shared reading, group guided reading and independent reading (DBE, 2011b). For learners to understand a text read during shared reading, group guided reading or independent reading, they should be able to use the different components of reading according to their developmental age (Goodman, 2020; Novianti, 2016). A text includes meaningful words, phrases or sentences (Goodman, 2020).

During shared reading, the whole class works with the same text, using resources such as big books, posters and pictures (Bester, 2015). The DBE (2011b) suggests that only one reader (text) should be used per week per grade, but the length and complexity of the text should increase for the different terms and grades. During a shared reading activity, the Foundation Phase teacher has to focus on one of the following aspects: “concepts of print, text features, phonics, language patterns, word identification strategies and comprehension at a range of levels” (DBE, 2011b, p. 12). During shared reading, the teacher focuses on learners talking and interpreting the text (Bester, 2015).

In contrast, group guided reading activities focus on learners’ reading abilities, and learners are divided into different reading groups based on their reading needs and instructional level (DBE, 2011b). During group guided reading, the teacher focuses on a specific skill or strategy that the group has to master (Bester, 2015). Group guided reading develops learners’ strategic actions that enable them to process and understand the written text (Hudson & Walker, 2017). Furthermore, the text should be selected based on the group’s needs and instructional reading level. During guided reading, learners are placed in different reading groups based on their reading skills.

Thus, they are given reading books or texts that are on their reading level. However, some researchers believe that this strategy does not challenge readers to read books or texts that are above their reading level. When readers read texts that are above their reading level, they will learn more than when they read texts that are on their reading level (Barshay, 2020). The goal of group guided reading is to develop readers who can read independently (Bester, 2015).

Foundation Phase teachers should also employ independent reading. During independent reading, a learner sits silently on his or her own, at any time, and reads a book that is read during shared and group guided reading (DBE, 2011b). Independent reading should occur daily and give learners the opportunity to silently read a story or book of their choice, which will motivate them to read (Bester, 2015). However, researchers have found that independent reading alone is insufficient, as the teacher is not involved in the reading process and reading comprehension is not promoted. Moreover, readers who struggle to read may find independent reading frustrating, and it may demotivate them to read (Barshay, 2020).

Teachers can monitor learners' reading success by continuously assessing their progress in the different components of reading during shared, guided or independent reading. By continuously assessing learners' reading progress, the teacher will be able to identify their reading needs, which can then be addressed in reading instructional planning. Therefore, teachers have to be knowledgeable about the CAPS and reading assessment in the Foundation Phase.

In South African schools, instead of assessing reading continuously, assessment tasks are often and sometimes exclusively used for summative assessment to assess the reading components (Dube-Xaba & Xulu, 2020), using a one-size-fits-all approach. However, in the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b), it is explained that a teacher should form reading ability groups so that the text can be selected based on the reading instructional ability of the various groups. According to the DBE (2011b), a reader should be competent in reading by reading and decoding 90 to 95% of words accurately at the reading instructional level. Furthermore, Home Language lessons should be structured to support learners with reading barriers, as well as excellent readers with enrichment reading activities (DBE, 2011b). In addition, Foundation Phase teachers should be able to mark, evaluate and monitor learners' reading

performance and use the results to plan future reading instructional lessons (DBE, 2011b). From the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b), it is clear that teachers cannot use a one-size-fits-all approach in teaching and assessing reading, as a one-size-fits-all approach will not address the diverse reading needs of learners (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). Moreover, the purpose of reading assessment should be to assess whether the reading instruction provided is successful and whether learners can read at their expected reading level and make progress in reading (Bester, 2015).

In contrast to the purpose of reading, with CAPS being implemented in 2012, Foundation Phase teachers started to focus more on the assessment of learning instead of assessment for learning to inform reading instructional planning (De Lange et al., 2020). De Lange et al. (2020) believe that the reading requirements in the CAPS document will not improve learners' reading comprehension because the CAPS overemphasises reading assessment. In the CAPS document, little attention is paid to the teaching of reading and reading instructional planning. Moreover, there is no clearly structured reading principled approach in the CAPS document that will guide and assist Foundation Phase teachers in reading assessment and reading instructional planning. Therefore, RR should be explored as a possible reading assessment strategy that focuses on each learner's reading level, reading progress and reading instructional needs. In the following section, I elaborate on reading assessment in the Foundation Phase in South Africa.

2.6 READING ASSESSMENT IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE

In the previous section (2.5), I focused on the CAPS requirements for the teaching and assessment of reading. In this section, I focus on how reading assessment should continuously take place in the classroom to inform reading instructional planning and address learners' needs with regard to reading.

Reading assessment refers to the continuous process a teacher uses during different types of assessment, such as diagnostic, formative or summative assessment, to gain information about learners' reading ability, including their reading fluency, phonology awareness, phonics knowledge, decoding skills, vocabulary span, comprehension and self-correction pace (Afflerbach, 2016). Davin (2017a) defines reading assessment as

a continuous process associated with teaching and learning in which a learner is holistically assessed.

Reading assessment assesses a reader's current performance in all the components of reading and indicates in which areas of reading the reader needs more support (Salem & Omar, 2018). It is a process in which an individual's reading progress is monitored and not compared to other learners' progress or the class average that may harm the learner (Afflerbach, 2016). Davin (2017a) mentions that a teacher uses different forms of assessment to provide positive feedback to the learners and identify the areas that still have to be addressed during reading instructional planning and teaching. The valuable information gained from the reading assessment should assist teachers in their reading instructional planning (Mahmoud, 2019). The definition of reading assessment can be summed up as a continuous process that holistically assesses and monitors a learner's reading progress and reading ability by using diagnostic, formative or summative assessment. Before teachers can determine the form of assessment to be used, they must first establish the purpose of the reading assessment.

The purpose of reading assessment is to contribute to learning by identifying learners' strengths and weaknesses, as these guide teachers in reading instructional planning (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). Therefore, the purpose of reading assessment can be viewed as either assessment of learning or assessment for learning. Assessment of learning refers to the process in which the reading assessment takes place after learning has occurred (Prinsloo & Harvey, 2016). Assessment for learning refers to assessing learners' reading while they are learning to identify at-risk learners, to monitor learners' progress, to collect information for reading instructional planning, to assess whether the reading instructional planning has been sufficient and to provide regular feedback to learners (Govender, 2020).

Archer (2017) adds that the purpose of assessment works in the shape of a triangle that ensures an integrated and balanced reading assessment. Figure 2.4 is a representation of Archer's (2017) triangle of the purpose of assessment.

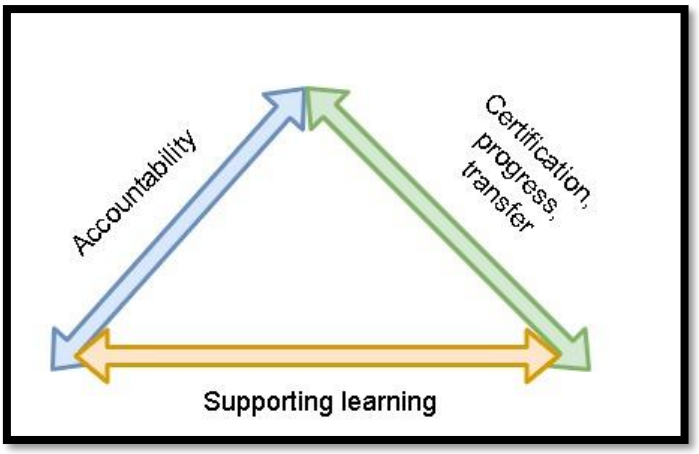


Figure 2.4: Assessment purpose triangle (adapted from Archer, 2017, p. 4)

As depicted in Figure 2.4, Archer's (2017) assessment purpose triangle includes supporting learners in their reading and having an accountable assessment. Furthermore, assessment may be used for the certification, progression and transferral of learners to a higher reading level (Archer, 2017). Assessment to support learners' learning or reading is regarded as formative assessment, with assessment to support learners' reading focusing on the interaction between learning and assessment in reading. Accountability in reading assessment focuses on how the learning that has taken place can be compared by participating in national comparative and benchmark studies. Assessment for certification, progression and transferral refers to the set criteria in reading a learner has to master. Only when a learner has mastered the set reading criteria, he or she will be ready to move to a higher reading level. Whether teachers implement an assessment for learning or an assessment of learning, they should consider using Archer's (2017) assessment purpose triangle when conducting the reading assessment.

During reading assessment, learners' reading behaviour should be observed. The following should be observed: the substitution of letters and words; omissions of letters; insertions and additions; reversals of letters and words; decoding problems; sounding words out; confusion about where to read; long pauses; repetition of letters, words or sentences; mistakes in pronunciation, phrasing and intonation; ignoring punctuation; and self-corrections (Scholastic Canada, 2002; West, 2020a). Refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 for an explanation and examples of these errors. Self-corrections made by learners during a reading assessment may include re-reading

and the problem solving of their own mistakes (Barone et al., 2020). Such self-corrections have the potential to provide valuable information about a reader's word identification and reading skills (Johnson, Mikita, Rodgers, & D'Agostino, 2020).

Once teachers have identified the purpose of their reading assessment, they should choose the most appropriate reading assessment tools, methods and types to implement in their classrooms. In the following section, I elaborate on the different types and methods of assessment followed by the CAPS curriculum.

2.7 DIFFERENT TYPES AND METHODS OF READING ASSESSMENT

The purpose of an assessment will determine the type and method of reading assessment implemented (Carl, 2017). The different types of reading assessment are baseline, formative, summative, diagnostic, criterion-based, peer and norm-referenced assessment (Carl, 2017; Davin, 2017a; Ferguson, 2017). Baseline assessment consists of using pre-tests and class discussions and occurs before instruction starts to establish where instruction has to start and to trigger previous learning (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). Therefore, baseline assessment is used to establish what a learner knows, can do and what values the learner holds about the new content (Davin, 2017a). According to Govender and Hugo (2020), the EGRA is a tool used in some South African Foundation Phase classrooms during baseline assessment. The EGRA is briefly discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.3. After baseline assessment, instruction will start and the teacher will implement formative assessment to continuously assess learning during reading instruction and teaching.

Formative assessment, as mentioned before, refers to continuous assessment and can be regarded as developmental, which includes providing ongoing feedback that forms part of teaching and supporting learners' literacy development by enhancing everyday teaching and learning (Davin, 2017a; DBE, 2011b). Formative assessment may include the following assessment tools: paper-pencil tests, checklists, observation and standardised tests (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). In contrast to formative and continuous assessment, summative assessment occurs after instructional planning and assesses the degree of learning that has taken place by means of a project or examination (Davin, 2017a). Summative assessment informs decisions about the curriculum, instruction and assessment for the future (Gareis & Grant,

2015c). In contrast to summative assessment, diagnostic assessment identifies the specific reading strengths and weaknesses of a reader that should be addressed during effectively planned reading instruction (Nel, 2018).

In Foundation Phase classrooms, teachers mainly use baseline, diagnostic, formative and summative assessment (DBE, 2011b). However, they may also use norm-referenced or criterion-referenced assessment during reading. According to Carl (2017), teachers use norm-referenced assessment when they assess a learner against a predetermined standard and compare the learner's reading mark to the class average for that specific activity. Therefore, a norm-referenced assessment is suitable when the teacher wants to identify where learners should be placed in terms of the class average for reading (Miyahara, 2020). On the other hand, criterion-referenced assessment measures learners' reading progress against a specific criterion that the reader should meet (Carl, 2017). The type of assessment will, therefore, assist the teacher in selecting the most appropriate assessment method.

Assessment methods refer to how a teacher selects and uses the most appropriate assessment tools to assess a learner's reading response to a reading activity (Carl, 2017; Govender, 2020). Assessment tools include observation sheets, checklists, holistic rubrics, informal reading inventories and oral or written tests (Gareis & Grant, 2015a; Martinez, 2017). When observation sheets are used as an assessment tool, teachers will observe and make notes of readers' reading behaviour in a meaningful, planned and purposeful way (Davin, 2017b). Observation sheets can enable teachers to identify which areas of reading have to be addressed (Johnson et al., 2020). A checklist can be used when a quick assessment of reading behaviour is conducted or a specific component of reading is checked. However, checklists do not indicate to what extent a learner has mastered the different reading components but only identify what reading behaviour or reading components are present when a learner is reading (Gareis & Grant, 2015d).

Teachers may also use a holistic rubric, which indicates a learner's overall reading performance but does not indicate how the learner has progressed in a specific reading component (Gareis & Grant, 2015d). Furthermore, Foundation Phase teachers can use an informal reading inventory during reading assessment. An informal reading inventory is a reading assessment instrument that is administered by

teachers to assess the reading skills of learners and to identify reading barriers that need to be addressed (Martinez, 2017). When an informal reading inventory is conducted, a reader reads a range of text that will gradually increase in difficulty. The informal reading inventory provides information on an independent, instructional and frustration level (Bester, 2015). Each of these levels is discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.

In contrast to observation-based assessment tools, teachers may conduct an oral or written test (also known as an assessment task or examination) to keep the school and teachers accountable for learners' reading progress (Shute & Kim, 2013). A test or examination is a set of oral or written questions to which learners have to respond. The learners' responses to these questions enable the teacher to measure the degree to which specific knowledge, skills and values have been mastered (Gareis & Grant, 2015b). The purpose of a test may be formative or summative. A test may be formative to identify current performance and areas of improvement or summative to make a final decision on the outcome of individuals' learning (Fulscher & Owen, 2016). Teachers need to implement different reading approaches, assessment tools and strategies, as suggested in the CAPS document, depending on the purpose of assessing learners' reading levels and skills. As such, different reading approaches, assessment tools and strategies focus on different components of reading.

2.8 SUMMARY

From this chapter, it is evident that the reading skills of South African learners are poor. Possible reasons for this may be that they do not acquire the prerequisites in reading and do not master the components of reading. Another reason may be that the CAPS document does not provide clear guidelines on the best reading approach to follow in teaching and assessing reading. Hence, South African Foundation Phase teachers have to identify the most appropriate reading approaches, assessment methods, tools, types and strategies to teach and assess learners' reading components. Although teachers have a variety of options available when it comes to reading approaches and assessment, there may be room for a different reading assessment strategy (RR), to identify and inform teachers' reading instructional planning to address learners' reading needs. In this chapter, I discussed the prerequisites of reading and the different components of reading. Also, I elaborated

on the ongoing debates regarding the teaching and assessment of reading in the Foundation Phase in terms of the bottom-up, top-down and balanced approaches. In addition, I discussed the CAPS requirements for teaching and assessing reading.

In Chapter 3, I elaborate on the potential use of RR, a reading assessment strategy to help identify learners' reading behaviour and inform teachers' reading instructional planning. Thereafter, a comparison is drawn between the EGRA and RR, followed by a discussion of the theoretical framework for my study.

CHAPTER 3: RUNNING RECORDS AS A READING ASSESSMENT STRATEGY AND THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

From Chapter 2, it is evident that South African Foundation Phase teachers have specific assessment methods, tools, types and strategies; however, they may benefit from an alternative reading assessment strategy. In this chapter, I elaborate on RR as a possible reading assessment strategy. When teachers are able to identify and address learners' visual, meaning and structural errors through RR, the learners' reading skills might improve (Briceño & Klein, 2016). However, the benefits and limitations of any assessment strategy should be determined before implementation to ensure that the strategy is valid, reliable and efficient.

In the following sections, I provide an overview of RR as a reading assessment strategy and discuss the history of RR, the process of conducting an RR, the reliability, rater variance and passage difficulty of RR and the benefits of and critique against RR. Also, I elaborate on studies where RR as a strategy was used in South Africa. This is followed by a comparison between RR and the EGRA tool. Lastly, I discuss the LPT and the TAT as the theoretical framework for my study. Refer to Figure 3.1 for an outline of this chapter.

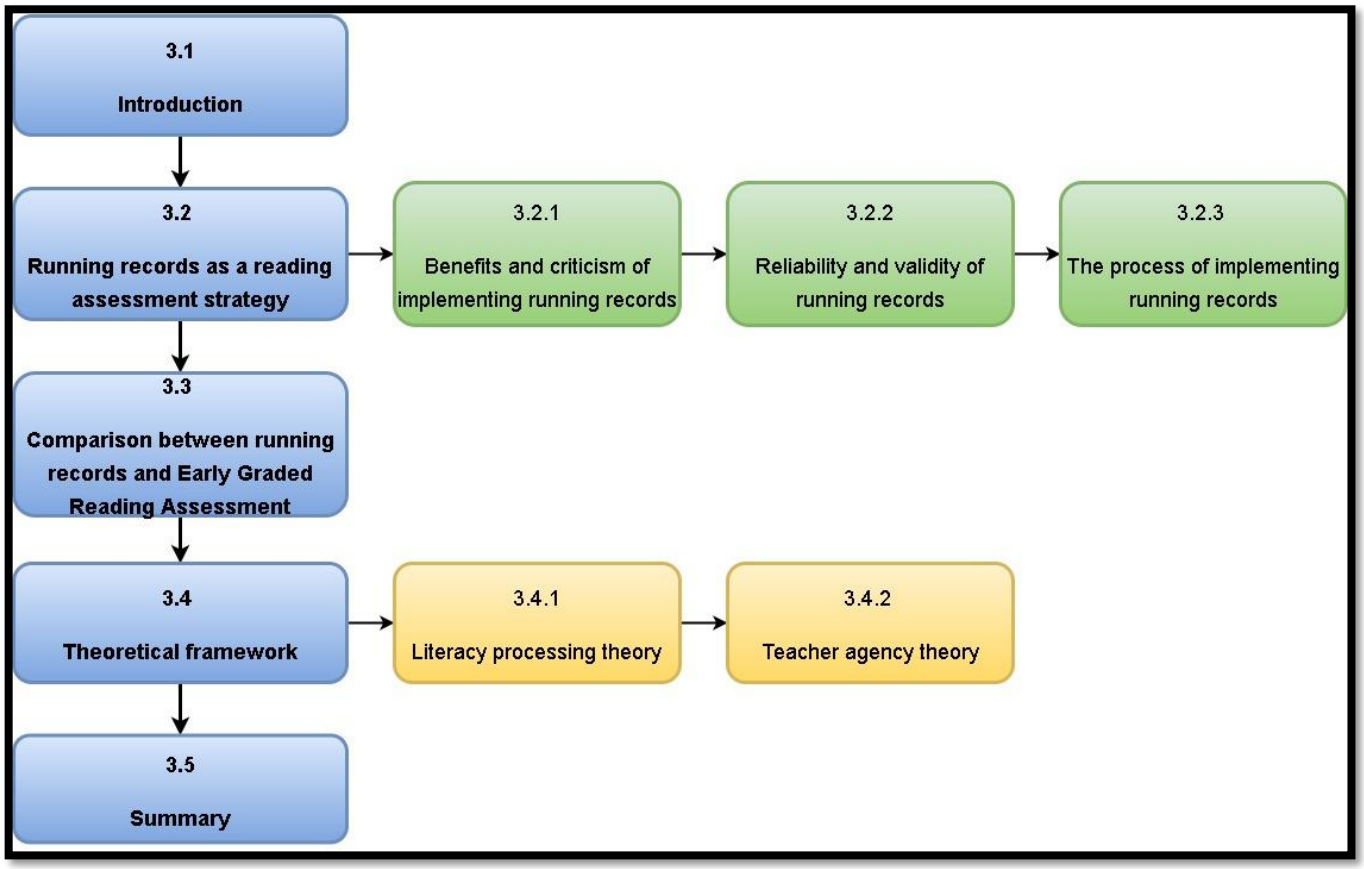


Figure 3.1: Overview of Chapter 3

3.2 RUNNING RECORDS AS A READING ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

RR have been developed by Marie Clay, a former literacy teacher and researcher from New Zealand (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). The RR strategy has made it possible for teachers and researchers to identify and assess learners' reading behaviour (D'Agostino et al., 2019). Clay made it possible to identify and assess learners' reading behaviour by using an observational strategy as part of summative or formative assessment. The observation strategy allows teachers to observe and record learners' reading behaviour, such as their reading errors and self-corrections. It has also been posited that RR can be successfully implemented in classrooms when they are used as a formative assessment strategy and where learners' reading behaviour is continuously observed and teachers make reading instructional decisions based on the findings of the RR assessment strategy (D'Agostino et al., 2021).

The RR strategy uses a top-down approach during reading instruction (Soler, 2016) (refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.4 for a discussion of the top-down approach). The top-down approach in reading enables the learner to look at the whole text first, and from there, it is broken down into smaller parts (Lee & Yoon, 2019). Accordingly, the top-down approach to reading can be regarded as context-driven (Oliver & Young, 2016). Mondesir and Griffin (2020) compare the top-down approach to a musical piece where the musicians first listen to the whole composition, with each musician focusing on his or her specific part in the composition. In the same way, with the top-down approach, the learner will first gain an understanding of the entire text, and this understanding of the entire text will then enable the learner to master the vocabulary and focus on the words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs more easily (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). According to Lee and Yoon (2019), the process of a top-down approach is as follows: text in context leads to sentences, collocations and phrases, which lead to family words, the definition of words and word formation. Moreover, readers use their past and background knowledge to make sense of the text they read; therefore, the reader is regarded as an active participant in the reading process (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020; Yang et al., 2019).

RR can enable teachers to determine how learners' reading proficiency skills improve in the classroom (Briceńo & Klein, 2018) by determining their reading accuracy rate, error rate and self-correction rate and by implementing miscue analysis. Reading accuracy refers to how accurately a reader reads a text aloud (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). Learners' reading accuracy is divided into three levels. The first level is frustration, which refers to learners who read with less than 89% accuracy (D'Agostino et al., 2019; Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). Learners who read at the frustration level may find reading boring and be frustrated. If learners read at the frustration level, it might result in their reading less, having weaker reading skills and having a limited vocabulary span (Oliver & Young, 2016). The second level is instructional, which refers to a learner who reads with between 90 and 94% accuracy (D'Agostino et al., 2019; Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). Learners who read at the instructional level may read more, and as they read more, their vocabulary span, reading and reading comprehension skills improve (Oliver & Young, 2016). The last level is the independent level, which refers to a learner who reads with above 95% accuracy (D'Agostino et al., 2018, Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). Teachers use these levels to identify the most appropriate

text for learners to read. The instructional level is the ideal level on which children should read, as this level is neither too difficult nor too easy for learners to read. The formula to calculate the accuracy rate is the total number of words read by the learner, subtracting the total errors made by the learner, divided by the total number of accurately read words of the learner and multiplying it by 100 (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). For example, if a learner has read 120 words and made 25 errors, he or she reads 95 words accurately, which calculates to a 79% accurate rate ([120 – 25] / 120 x 100 = 79%]). An accuracy rate of 79% shows that the learner reads at a frustration level. Therefore, the teacher has to identify easier grade level books for the learner to read at an instructional level.

To enable a reader to read at an instructional level, Forbes and Dorn (2015) and Johnson et al. (2020) suggest that the reader's self-correction ratio should be between 1:1 and 1:5. A self-correction ratio of between 1:1 and 1:5 indicates that learners are self-monitoring their reading. However, Rodgers, D'Agostino, Kelly and Mikita (2018) believe that learners who start reading have to read easy texts, which will result in high accuracy rates and low self-correction rates. The formula to calculate the self-correction ratio is adding the total number of errors to the total number of self-corrections made by the learner and then dividing it by the total number of self-corrections (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). For example, if a learner has made 25 errors and five self-corrections, he or she has self-corrected every sixth word read ([25 + 5] / 5 = 1:6). Thus, the self-correction ratio of the learner suggests that the grade level the learner is reading at is a frustration level. Therefore, in this example, the teacher should identify easier grade level books for the learner to read at an instructional level.

According to Barone et al. (2020), RR as a reading assessment strategy could support the reading, writing and language development of learners by identifying their reading behaviour. Reading behaviour can be identified through the miscue analysis, focusing on language structure, vocabulary and pragmatics. The implementation of miscue analysis refers to identifying and analysing the different reading cues a reader is using while reading, which can be meaning, structural or visual cues (Bester, 2015; West, 2020a). A reading cue refers to a clue a reader uses in identifying a specific word while reading (Nathanson, 2018). When teachers use an RR, it enables them to identify these reading cues, such as pictures, contextual or meaning clues, writing style,

semantic clues, syntactical clues or structure and visual-phonetic image or information, that the reader has used during reading (Bester, 2015; Gillet & Ellingson, 2017; West, 2020a).

Pictures in a storybook assist readers in receiving a clue to the meaning of a word in the text (Bester, 2015). A meaning cue refers to how a reader interprets and evaluates the text and identifies unknown words in the text. Thus, the reader will read the text and consider the text before guessing a word for the unknown word in the text. For example, the reader may use the word “wood” instead of “forest” in a sentence (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). The meaning in the context of the text may provide a contextual cue to the reader. The way the author wrote the text can also provide a writing cue (Bester, 2015).

The text may provide semantic cues by the use of specific words, phrases or sentences, and readers may integrate the particular words, phrases or sentences with their background knowledge. Syntactical cues refer to how the words in a sentence are ordered and may provide a clue about the word in the sentence the reader is uncertain about (Coltman & Place, 2013). The reader will use a structural cue to identify which word sounds correct within the context of a sentence; thus, the substitution will make grammatical sense in the text (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018).

A reader may study the visual presentation of a word and make a decision based on the visual information, in other words, using a visual-phonetic image (Bester, 2015). Visual cues refer to the process where readers observe the letters in a specific word and read a word that may be familiar to them (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). For example, the reader may read “in” instead of “into”. These words look alike owing to their initial sounds but have different meanings. Visual cues include directionality, spaces, letters, beginnings or endings of words and punctuation (Waltz, 2016). Meaning cues include what readers think about when they read the text and whether the word they have used still makes sense in the sentence. For example, the text may be “The animals lived in the forest” and they may read “The animals lived in the wood”; thus, it still makes sense, although they read “wood” instead of “forest”. Structural cues include the grammar and structure of the specific language (Burdujan, 2020). When miscue analysis is conducted, the type of cue used by the reader will be indicated using the letter “V” for visual, “M” for meaning and “S” for structural (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). If

a reader makes a reading error and self-corrects the error, the teacher indicates that the reader has used a self-correction with the letters “SC” and what miscue was involved during the self-correction, such as meaning, visual or structural. Lastly, readers’ reading comprehension is tested by asking them to retell the story (Sudirman, 2016) or to verbally answer a few questions about the story.

Self-corrections may include cues used in monitoring readers’ reading and then rereading and checking their reading. As such, self-correction enables a reader to problem-solve words (Barone et al., 2020). Furthermore, teachers use codes to score the reading behaviour and cues used by readers to inform their reading instructional decisions (D’Agostino et al., 2019). Findings (e.g. readers’ reading level, accuracy rate, error rate, self-correction rate and reading cues used) obtained from readers’ RR assist the teacher in making informed reading instructional decisions about their reading strengths and reading instructional needs (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). Using a cue while reading allows readers to apply specific skills such as prediction, self-correction and confirmation to form an understanding of the text (Bester, 2015). Refer to Table 3.1 for a visual illustration of these cues.

Table 3.1: Running Records cueing system (adapted from West, 2020b)

Cues	Meaning cues	Structural cues	Visual cues
Symbol	M	S	V
Information about the cue	• The reader can gather the message of the story by making meaning of the story and word level. • The reader decides on reading through thinking and evaluating what he/she is reading by checking if it makes sense. • Meaning errors do not interrupt the general comprehension of the sentences or paragraphs.	• The reader makes a decision based on his/her knowledge of the structure, language and syntax of the specific language. • The reader will check whether the word or sentence sounds right.	• The reader makes a decision based on how the word and letters look. • The reader will look at the beginning sound, word length, familiar word chunks, etc., when the reader reads another word instead of the given word and there is visual information that is the same in both words.
Example	• Story: “The tiger lives in the forest.”	• Story: “It rolls out the door.”	• Story: “The wheels roll into the school.”

Cues	Meaning cues	Structural cues	Visual cues
	• Reader reads: "The tiger lives in the wood." • "Forest" and "wood" may be regarded as synonyms, and therefore, the reader has made a decision using a meaning cue.	• The reader reads: "It rolls of the door." • The reader used "of" instead of "out", but grammatically it still makes sense; thus, the reader has made a decision using a structural cue.	• The reader reads: "The wheels roll in the school." • The reader used "in" instead of "into". Both words start with "in"; thus, the reader has made a decision using a visual cue.
Question to be answered for each error made	• Considering the background information of the story from pictures and meaning in the sentence, **does the reader's attempt make sense?**	• Considering the structure and syntax of the specific language, **does the reader's attempt sound right?**	• **Does the reader's attempt visually resemble in any way the word in the text (e.g. begins and/or ends with the same letter)?**

Various studies (i.e. Barone et al., 2020; Briceño & Klein, 2018; Reed et al., 2019) have delved into the subject of reading and reading assessment. However, research on RR within the South African context is limited (Nathanson, 2018). Reading assessment studies where RR were used as an assessment strategy have been conducted in various countries, including the United States of America, Columbia, Australia and England. Many of these studies (i.e. Fried, 2013; Jones, 2011; Surdiman, 2016) have investigated how and to what extent the use of RR could improve reading instructional planning. Studies have also been conducted on teachers' perceptions of RR (Barone et al., 2020; Briceño & Klein, 2018; Reed et al., 2019). Barone et al. (2020) found that in many classrooms, RR were only used during summative assessment. A study by Briceño and Klein (2018) found that teachers could not identify how different reading errors influenced a reader's reading comprehension, which the researchers believed could lead to poor reading instructional planning. Moreover, Reed et al. (2019) found that teachers were mismarking readers' reading behaviour without training in implementing RR, which led to unreliable and invalid reading assessment.

A study by Nathanson (2009) in the Western Cape province of South Africa found that learners' reading behaviour might improve if teachers' reading instructional planning was informed by the information RR provide. Nathanson (2009) used RR to continually (i.e. formatively) assess the literacy levels of Grade 1 learners over one year.

Nathanson's (2009) study also found that the learners made progress in reading and that RR could help improve their literacy performance by identifying learners' reading behaviour and addressing their reading behaviour during reading instructional planning. Although Nathanson (2009) found that RR could be implemented successfully as a reading assessment strategy in South Africa, her results could not be generalised as only one school in one province was used in the study.

In another study by Nathanson (2018), she designed a reading recovery programme for one Grade 1 learner over a period of one year to improve the learner's reading and writing skills. During the reading recovery programme, she used RR as a baseline, formative and summative assessment strategy to monitor and evaluate the learner's progress. She used RR to identify the learner's reading behaviour and address the learner's reading behaviour throughout the reading recovery programme (Nathanson, 2018). The study found that a learner's reading might improve if teachers used RR correctly in identifying learners' reading behaviour and base their reading instructional planning on the outcome of the RR. Nathanson (2018) used RR only to monitor the learner's progress during the reading recovery programme and did not pay attention to the benefits, limitations, reliability, rater variance and passage difficulty of RR.

By taking the findings of previous studies into account, I focus next on the benefits and limitations from the Foundation Phase teachers' perspectives and the reliability, rater variance and passage difficulty of RR. I find it important to explore the benefits and criticism of RR as a reading assessment strategy as these have guided me in how RR might be adapted for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. In the following section (3.2.1), I elaborate on these aspects.

3.2.1 Benefits and criticism of implementing Running Records

Before a reading assessment strategy such as RR can be implemented in South African schools, the benefits and criticism of the reading assessment strategy have to be determined. Foundation Phase teachers' perspectives on RR enabled me to determine the benefits and limitations of RR and even adapt RR for the South African Foundation Phase context.

Many benefits and criticism have been reported within research, but little thereof specifically relates to the South African context. Sudirman (2016) believes that one of

the benefits of RR is that the teacher can organise reading material according to learners' reading needs, and by doing this, their reading ability may improve. When the appropriately graded reading material has been selected, RR can enable teachers to monitor the sources of information, such as meaning, visual or structural cues, a reader uses, and it can guide their reading instructional planning (Waltz, 2016). Another benefit of RR is that the teacher can prompt learners to problem-solve and self-correct a specific word (Forbes & Dorn, 2015). In addition, the RR strategy is beneficial, as a teacher can use the RR of learners to determine what to include or exclude during group guided reading to assist them in their reading needs (Briceño & Klein, 2018). Lastly, many researchers believe that RR may hold value for teachers in monitoring learners' reading progress; however, some researchers, such as Harmey and Kabuto (2018), believe otherwise.

Harmey and Kabuto (2018) suggest that teachers should not use RR exclusively because as a strategy, it does not focus on all the components of reading, as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3. For example, one RR test may focus more on comprehension than on fluency and vice versa (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). Critics perceive that RR should rather be based on a bottom-up approach than a top-down approach, as each reading skill would be assessed individually and more in-depth. Hempenstall (2017) explains that RR are insufficient and that teachers should instead use a bottom-up approach where each component is individually taught and assessed. One can, therefore, argue that RR should be used with other strategies such as the Gray Oral Reading Test, the Qualitative Reading Inventory-3 and the Woodcock-Johnson Passage Comprehension Test. The Gray Oral Reading Test focuses on assessing oral reading and identifying struggling readers. The Qualitative Reading Inventory-3 focuses on the assessment of learners' reading ability in solving reading problems. The Woodcock-Johnson Passage Comprehension subtest focuses on the assessment of reading, written language, mathematics and academic knowledge (Alsawar, 2017; Edwards, 2017; Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). Using different strategies that assess different components of reading could be more valuable to teachers, as it would allow a teacher to gather more comprehensive findings of learners' reading abilities.

Another criticism of RR is that the strategy may lead to readers guessing words instead of applying decoding, synthesis and analytical skills to solve the word problem. It has been argued that emphasis should rather be placed on syntactic, semantic and phonemic awareness when reading instead of the three cueing systems (meaning, structure and visual) which form part of RR (Hempenstall, 2017). The possibility of learners guessing words may lead to an inaccurate assessment of their oral reading, which can result in incorrect reading instructional planning to address their specific reading needs. Finally, the reliability of RR has also been criticised by various researchers, such as Briceńo and Klein (2018), Gillet and Ellingson (2018) and Reed et al. (2018). Their reasons are discussed in Section 3.2.2.

Taking the findings of previous studies into account, as well as the reported benefits and criticism of RR as a reading assessment strategy, it is important to further explore the reliability, validity, rater variance and passage difficulty of RR that might be added to the existing literature. The reliability, validity, rater variance and passage difficulty of RR can also provide more information regarding the benefits and limitations of using RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African context.

3.2.2 Reliability and validity of Running Records

Reliability and validity are essential for RR as a reading assessment strategy, as the results from an RR should be dependable, consistent, stable and error-free. Reliability can be defined as the degree to which an assessment is dependable, consistent, stable and error-free and not influenced by bias or error (Gareis & Grant, 2015a). Thus, if the same reading assessment strategy is used with the same learner, but a different teacher carries out the assessment, the results should be the same (Pietersen & Maree, 2019). Validity is defined as “the appropriateness or meaningfulness of an assessment’s target” (Gareis & Grant, 2015a, p. 27). Hence, validity is the extent to which an assessment strategy assesses what it intends to assess and the extent to which the results may be regarded as truthful, suitable, legitimate, applicable, convincing and compelling (Gareis & Grant, 2015a). It can be concluded that the validity of RR for this study is the extent to which the RR strategy measures what it is supposed to measure (Pietersen & Maree, 2019).

In determining the reliability of an assessment, a teacher has to consider the degree to which it may contain systematic or random errors. Systematic errors can be detected and prevented in an assessment. Systematic errors that could affect the reliability of the assessment include language used, reading level, mechanical or grammatical mistakes, insufficient or unclear directions, poor layout of the assessment, an insufficient number of assessment items, subjective scoring and cheating. In contrast to systematic errors, random errors cannot be detected or prevented. Random errors include illness, carelessness, luck, the emotional wellbeing of the learner, distractions, giddiness, a poor night's rest and the environment when the RR is taken (Gareis & Grant, 2015a). Not one assessment strategy is free of systematic or random errors; however, the degree of these errors may differ.

To determine the validity of a reading assessment, aspects that should be considered are construct validity, content validity, concurrent validity and consequential validity (Pietersen & Maree, 2019). Construct validity refers to the degree to which the strategy is aligned with the planned outcomes of the reading assessment strategy. In other words, "Does the reading assessment strategy measure what it purports to measure?" (Gareis & Grant, 2015a, p. 29). Content validity has to do with how accurately a reading assessment measures a sample of completed reading outcomes. Concurrent validity refers to the extent to which two different reading assessment strategies provide the same results; in other words, if the outcomes of two different reading assessment strategies are used, to what degree will the outcome of those reading assessment strategies be the same? Consequential validity refers to the intended and unintended outcomes of the reading assessment strategy in deciding whether a learner is ready to progress to a higher reading level (Gareis & Grant, 2015a).

McMurry-Harrington (2019) has found that RR is a reliable and valid assessment strategy in identifying a reader's reading behaviour to inform reading instructional planning. Other studies have found that the reliability of RR is affected when teachers do not interpret the reading errors of learners in the same way, which may result in a specific pattern of errors (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). These errors may lead to inaccurate results of learners' reading progress (Reed et al., 2018). When teachers consistently report and administrate an RR, the personal bias of the teacher is reduced and the validity of the results of an RR is increased (Briceńo & Klein, 2018). McGee,

Kim, Nelson and Fried (2015) believe that the RR strategy provides information about reading behaviour that is accurate, reliable and complete. Fountas and Pinnell (2012) believe that the reliability of RR is increased when teachers receive accurate, adequate and high-quality training on how to perform and interpret RR. Besides the validity and reliability of an RR, the rater variance of an RR should also be considered.

Rater variance refers to the average extent that different scorers or instruments provide different results. Klingbeil, Nelson, Van Norman and Birr (2017) evaluated and compared the reliability, validity and rater variance of three different reading assessment tools to establish the rater variance of the tools. The three tools they evaluated were measures of academic progress, curriculum-based measures and RR. They found that learners' RR results strongly correlated with their results in measures of academic progress ($r = .77$), which indicates that RR has criterion-related validity. Criterion-related validity compares and evaluates the degree to which the results of different tests would be the same or different (Mohajan, 2017). Furthermore, Klingbeil et al. (2017) found that the correlation between measures of academic progress, curriculum-based measures and RR was strong ($r > .70$) (Klingbeil et al., 2017). Therefore, the results of RR can be regarded as valid and reliable.

Harmey and Kabuto (2018) studied the relationships and metatheoretical differences between RR and miscue analysis, focusing on the relationship between readers' responses to a text and the analysis of their oral reading behaviour. In Harmey and Kabuto's (2018) study, there was an inter-rater agreement. Inter-rater agreement refers to the degree to which different scorers agree on the outcome of results (Gareis & Grant, 2015b). Harmey and Kabuto (2018, p. 21) found inter-rater agreements in the following aspects of RR: "(1) the total number of errors, (2) the text difficulty level, (3) the number of self-corrections, (4) the accuracy percentage, (5) meaning information, (6) syntactic information, and (7) visual information". They also found that when two different scorers scored the same RR, there was an agreement in the kappa scores of the two scorers (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). Kappa scores are used to measure the degree to which two or more scorers agree with the results. The kappa score will be between zero and one. Zero indicates that there is no agreement, whereas one indicates that they completely agree with the results (Glen, 2014). A moderate kappa score is considered to be between 0.41 and 0.60. A substantial kappa score will be

between 0.61 and 0.80, while a good agreement is a score of 0.80 or above (Morris et al., 2020). When the kappa scores of Harmey and Kabuto's (2018) study are studied, it is clear that there is a moderate agreement between scores about self-corrections (k = .68), number of errors (k = .42), text difficulty (k = .59), accuracy percentage (k = .56) and visual information (k = .47). There is a weak agreement between scores about meaning information (k = .38) and syntactic information (k = .36) (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018). The moderate agreement in the kappa scores shows that RR may be regarded as a valid and reliable reading assessment. However, the weak kappa scores indicate that RR as a reading assessment is invalid and unreliable.

To conclude, RR can produce reliable and valid information when teachers are experienced in using RR as an assessment strategy and have been effectively trained in the use thereof (McGee et al., 2015), as it may ensure better consistency in grading. However, it is also important to consider the criticism and limitations of RR that have been reported to caution teachers about using RR as their only assessment strategy. In the following section (3.2.3), I elaborate on the process of implementing RR.

3.2.3 The process of implementing Running Records

In order to conduct a RR successfully in Foundation Phase classrooms, a specific process should be followed. This ensures results that are valid and reliable to monitor a reader's reading behaviour over a period. The process of conducting an RR takes approximately 15 to 30 minutes (Klingbeil et al., 2017). Refer to Figure 3.2 for a depiction of the process that has to be followed when conducting an RR.

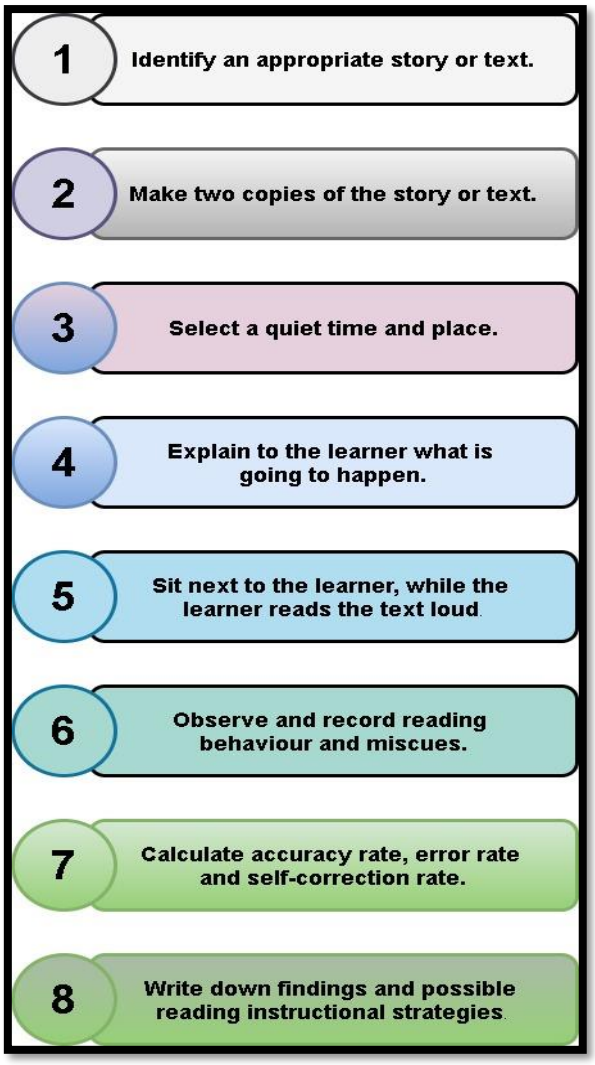


Figure 3.2: Process of a Running Record (adapted from Burdujan, 2020)

First, the teacher identifies an appropriate text for a specific learner to read (Burdujan, 2020). In the case of this study, the teacher should preferably choose a text from the DBE workbooks, since they are freely available. The teacher will receive a template with the text and the extract from a DBE workbook (refer to Annexure A). Second, the teacher copies the text – one for the reader and one to annotate on. While the learner is reading the text aloud, the teacher records the learner's reading behaviour (i.e. reading errors) on his or her copy (Sudirman, 2016). Each word that the learner reads correctly is marked with a tick (√). When a learner misreads a word, the teacher records the error and indicates what type of error the learner has made using a set code of notations. Refer to Table 3.2 for a list of reading errors and their notations.

Table 3.2: List of reading errors and notations (adapted from Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Reading behaviour	Description	Code	Examples	Error
Accurate reading	Each word is read accurately.	√	√ √ √ √ The fish swim in √ √ the dam.	No error
Substitution / word guessing	The learner replaces some words or sounds with other words or sounds. Sometimes a learner does this because he/she does not understand the word in the story. Word guessing may also lead to substitutions. Ask the following: • Does the substitution make sense in the passage? • Is it a logical substitution?	Write the word that the learner read and underline the word: **river**	√ √ √ √ The fish swim in √ **river** the dam.	1 error per word
Omission	The learner leaves out a word during oral reading. It may suggest weaker visual tracking. Ask the following: • Is the meaning of the story affected? It may also indicate that the learner read too fast, is not focusing or has a weak vocabulary sight.	_____	√ ___ √ √ The fish swim in √ √ the dam.	1 error per word omitted
Insertion	The learner inserts a word that is not in the sentence or story. The learner may also insert a suffix, and if this is the case, it should be addressed. For example, “finished” instead of “finish”.	^	√ √ had √ √ The fish swim in ^ √ √ the dam.	1 error per word

Reading behaviour	Description	Code	Examples	Error
	Answer the following: • Does the inserted word change the meaning? It may indicate that the learner is reading too fast.			
Reversal	The learner reverses the order of the print or the word. Pay careful attention to altered meaning.	R	√ √ √ √ The fish swim in √ R- bam the dam.	1 error per word
Sounding/ spelling out word	The learner sounds or spells out a word instead of reading it. This may indicate that the learner does not know the word or there are too many syllables in the word. Indicates that the learner knows the sound/letter. The teacher has to do more whole-word and word recognition exercises. The teacher can also expose the learner to more vocabulary.	e.g. f-i-sh	√ f-i-sh √ √ The fish swim in √ √ the dam.	1 error per word
Total confusion	The learner is confused and cannot get back where he/she went off track. Suggest that the learner tries again, and it is counted as one error. On the second attempt, each error counts as a separate miscue.	TC	Write TC at the word the learner stops reading. √ √ √ TC The fish swim in the dam.	1 error per attempt
Told by teacher	The learner cannot read further on his/her own. The teacher has to prompt the learner	T	√ √ T √ The fish swim in √ √ the dam.	1 error per word

Reading behaviour	Description	Code	Examples	Error
	by asking a question such as "What good reading strategy could you try here?" If this does not work, the teacher may also read the word for the learner.			
Whole-word errors	The learner misread a word based on prior knowledge with a word that visually looks almost the same. This indicates that the learner is not processing the printed words phonetically.		√ √ swam √ The fish **swim** in √ √ the dam.	1 error per word
Tracking errors	The learner struggles to read a word from left to right, mixes up the letters in the word and reads another word instead.		√ √ √ √ The fish swim in √ mad the dam.	1 error per word
Long pause	Sometimes when a learner takes very long to read a story, the teacher may time him/her. When a learner takes too long to read a story, he/she has lost the meaning of the story. Thus, the teacher has to provide exercises where he/she can practise to be a fast and fluent reader.	//	√ √ √ The fish // swim √ √ √ in the dam.	No error
Repetition	The learner repeats a word or part of a sentence or paragraph. This may indicate that the next level is too difficult. Learners are repeating when they are uncertain about what they have read and will	REP ←	REP ← The fish swim in the dam.	No error

Reading behaviour	Description	Code	Examples	Error
	repeat it to make sense of the story.			
Self-correction	The learner realised that he/she has made a mistake and rereads the word/sentence/ paragraph without prompting to correct the mistake. This is good. However, it may also indicate that he/she is reading too fast. If learners are correcting correct words, they are uncertain of themselves.	SC	√ √ swam√ √ The fish **swim** in SC √ √ the dam	No error

While a learner is reading, the teacher indicates the errors on the table. The errors in Table 3.2 will also indicate to the teacher what errors the learner has made and how these can be addressed in the teacher's reading instructional planning. Thereafter, the learner's use of visual, meaning, structural information and self-correction cues is analysed. For a discussion of these miscues, refer to Section 3.2. After the learner has read the text, the teacher calculates the accuracy, error and self-correction rate using formulas as prescribed by RR (Sudirman, 2016). The formulas for accuracy, error and self-correction rate are discussed in Section 3.2. Refer to Annexure B for a summarised version of the process of taking an RR.

In South African Foundation Phase classrooms, teachers are not familiar with RR, although some of them are familiar with EGRA. Therefore, in the following section, I draw a comparison between RR and EGRA to guide Foundation Phase teachers in using their autonomy and deciding to implement RR, EGRA or both in their classrooms during reading assessment.

3.3 COMPARISON BETWEEN RUNNING RECORDS AND EARLY GRADED READING ASSESSMENT

The EGRA tool is a bottom-up approach to the assessment of reading, as it focuses on the assessment of the different components of reading individually. In contrast, RR,

which are a top-down approach, assess reading skills as a whole. In this section, I discuss EGRA in comparison to RR to indicate the differences and relationship between the two.

The EGRA was developed in 2006 by the Research Triangle Institute International to improve reading in the early grades globally. The EGRA enables teachers to track learners' reading competency, identify challenges that beginner readers may have and provide reliable results to inform reading instructional planning and provide support to learners. Since 2013, the EGRA has been implemented in more than 60 countries, among which are African countries (Govender & Hugo, 2020). The EGRA aims to assess early reading skills and identify learners' reading problems in the Foundation Phase. The tool focuses on the following reading skills: knowledge of letter names and sounds, decoding of syllables, reading familiar and non-familiar words, word recognition, oral reading fluency and listening and reading comprehension (Dowd & Bartlett, 2019; Govender & Hugo, 2020; Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016; Wagner, 2017). Identifying Foundation Phase learners' reading problems enables teachers to adapt their reading instructional planning and activities according to individual learners' needs (Govender & Hugo, 2020). According to Govender and Hugo (2020, p. 7), research such as the EGRA "could provide useful information to improve literacy teaching in primary schools, as it involved all the grades in the Foundation Phase, and the Home Languages of some of the learners were taken into consideration".

The EGRA can be used as a baseline assessment in the Foundation Phase to measure early reading skills, reading fluency and comprehension. The EGRA tool consists of letter sounds, word reading, passage reading and comprehension. Whereas the EGRA assesses each reading skill separately, the RR strategy assesses it holistically (Govender & Hugo, 2020). The reading fluency of letter sounds and word recognition of the EGRA require teachers to count the words read correctly within 60 seconds, with learners' reading comprehension being tested by asking them multiple-choice questions afterwards (Piper et al., 2016).

In the EGRA, reading is viewed as a linear progression of reading skills, and the use of decoding strategies, re-reading, checking the meaning of words, recognition and recall is emphasised (Oliver & Young, 2016). The reader starts with a phonics-based approach in reading and recognising letter sounds and the meaning of words, which

lead to an understanding of the text using a bottom-up approach (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). The bottom-up approach is where readers start with lower-order thinking skills, and as their reading skills improve, they progress to higher-order thinking (Lee & Yoon, 2019; Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). According to Lee and Yoon (2019), the process of the bottom-up approach is as follows: word-formation informs word definitions, which leads to phrases, collocations and sentences, which finally leads to the context of the text. Therefore, decoding skills and reading comprehension guide readers to higher-order processing in reading (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020). The bottom-up approach assumes that readers use a little bit of information and processes that information before they can receive more information (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020; Yang et al., 2019). Refer to Table 3.3 for the differences and relationship between the EGRA and RR.

Table 3.3: Comparison between the EGRA and RR

		EGRA	RR
1	Theoretical underpinning	• Based on a bottom-up reading approach (Oliver & Young, 2016).	• Based on a top-down reading approach (Soler, 2016).
2	Aim	• Aims to assess early reading skills and identify learners' reading problems (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016).	• Aim to identify, assess and record learners' reading behaviour and inform reading instructional planning to address and improve learners' reading needs (D'Agostino et al., 2019).
3	Assessment	• Baseline assessment that measures early reading skills, reading fluency and comprehension and assesses phonological awareness, print knowledge and orthographic knowledge (Wagner, 2017). • Assesses knowledge of letter names and letter sounds, decoding syllables, reading familiar and non-familiar words, fluency of oral reading and listening and reading comprehension (Govender & Hugo, 2020).	• Baseline, formative and summative assessment that assesses and monitors a learner's progress regularly (Nel, 2018). • Measure reading behaviour, knowledge and attitudes towards reading (Dubeck & Gove, 2015). • Identify specific reading cues, such as meaning, visual and structural (Prinsloo & Harvey, 2016). • Identify accuracy rate, self-correction rate and error rate (Waltz, 2016).
4	Reading time	• Counts the words a learner reads correctly within 60 seconds (Reed et al., 2019).	• The learner does not have to read a specific number of words within 60 seconds (Reed et al., 2019).

		EGRA	RR
5	Testing reading comprehension	• Test comprehension by asking multiple-choice questions afterwards, even for the parts that the learner did not read (Piper et al., 2016)	• Learners read up to the end of the text, and then open-ended reading comprehension questions are asked (Scholastic Canada, 2002).
6	Administration	• Individually administrated (Govender & Hugo, 2020).	• Individually administrated (Sudirman, 2016).
7	Text/material	• Use prescribed text and sight words that are the same for all the learners (Prinsloo & Harvey, 2016). • Teacher-centred approach.	• Text is selected based on learners' current reading level (Burdujan, 2020). • Learner-centred approach. • Assist the teacher in determining the appropriate text level (Waltz, 2016).

(Sources: Burdujan, 2020; D'Agostino et al., 2019; Dubeck & Gove, 2015; Fountas & Pinnell, 2012; Govender & Hugo, 2020; Nel, 2018; Oliver & Young, 2016; Piper et al., 2016; Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016; Prinsloo & Harvey, 2016, Reed et al., 2019; Soler, 2016; Sudirman, 2016; Wagner, 2017; Waltz, 2016)

From Table 3.3, it is evident that there are fundamental differences between the EGRA and RR. The EGRA is used as a tool for baseline assessment and not continuous assessment, while the RR strategy is used as a baseline, formative or summative assessment strategy (Nel, 2018; Wagner, 2017). Therefore, with RR, a teacher may assess and monitor a reader's reading progress regularly, which may not be possible with the EGRA (Nel, 2018). In contrast to RR, the EGRA does not measure reading behaviour, knowledge or attitudes towards reading (Dubeck & Gove, 2015). During the EGRA, the specific reading cues, such as visual, meaning and structural, are not identified as with RR. The EGRA uses prescribed texts and sight words, which are the same for all the learners (Prinsloo & Harvey, 2016), while the RR strategy does not use a prescribed text, but rather a text appropriate for the specific learner whose reading progress a teacher wants to monitor or assess. The EGRA can be regarded as a teacher-centred approach, whereas RR is considered to be a learner-centred approach. Therefore, RR help teachers determine the appropriate text level for learners, using their accuracy and self-correction ratios, as well as their reading progress over time (Waltz, 2016).

Furthermore, in contrast to RR, the EGRA requires a reader to read a specific number of words within 60 seconds, which can place unnecessary stress on a learner and, as

a result, affect the validity and reliability of the assessment. Timing learners during assessment may also have a negative impact on their reading comprehension as it is better for learners to read slowly but accurately (Dowd & Bartlett, 2019; Zuilkowski, Piper, Kwayumba, & Dubeck, 2019). During RR, the reader reads on a specific reading level and is not timed (Reed et al., 2019). Hence, the RR strategy makes provision for slow but accurate readers. Consequently, RR may give a more accurate version of a reader's behaviour in terms of reading aloud than the EGRA.

In the following section (3.4), I elaborate on the theoretical framework that guided my study. The LPT focuses on the reading behaviour of a reader (West-Higgins, 2017), whereas the TAT focuses on teachers' autonomy in making reading assessment and reading instructional decisions in the classroom (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016; Wilcox & Lawson, 2018).

3.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

My study was guided by two theories, namely the LPT and the TAT. In the following sections (3.4.1 and 3.4.2), I elaborate on both theories.

3.4.1 Literacy processing theory

Marie Clay, a developmental psychologist from New Zealand, developed the LPT based on her interest in reading as a researcher (Worsfold, 2015). Clay's LPT is based on Rumelhart's interactive parallel processing system model that uses a top-down approach in reading and Singer's working systems model to formulate theories on the process of reading (Alvermann, Unrau, & Ruddell, 2013). The LPT guides the teaching and learning of reading by using a reading recovery programme in the United States of America. "Reading recovery" is an American term that refers to the learning support a struggling reader receives from the teacher during literacy processing (Novianti, 2016; Worsfold, 2015). In addition, the LPT follows the socio-constructivist approach of Vygotsky, as a reader is part of a social context (Parlindungan, 2019).

The LPT assumes that a reader uses different decision-making strategies integrated during the reading process to problem-solve and form an understanding of the text (Parlindungan, 2019; West-Higgins, 2017). Furthermore, readers learn to read by being actively involved in using different skills, paths and reading behaviours in their

reading development (Lewis-Fokum & Thomas, 2018; Parlindungan, 2019; West-Higgins, 2017). A reader's decision-making strategies during reading are influenced by the knowledge sources and the working system of the reader. The reader uses different knowledge sources and working systems during the reading process. The different knowledge sources are visible and invisible sources of information that are integrated and linked with one another when reading (Worsfold, 2015).

Different sources of visible knowledge may include visual, auditory and phonological information, movement, speaking, articulation and knowledge of the language, such as meaning and language structure (Parlindungan, 2019; Worsfold, 2015). In contrast to visible sources, invisible sources or working systems may include sources that support the reader's understanding and background knowledge (Worsfold, 2015). The visible and invisible working systems refer to the current knowledge a reader has and brings to the reading activity that will develop over time (Parlindungan, 2019).

The reading process refers to the steps a reader goes through while reading. These steps include prereading or predicting what the text is about, reading, responding to or communicating about the text, exploring and applying the text (Castiblanco Becerra & Rodríguez Campo, 2016). The reading process in the LPT refers to a reader's perceptual knowledge, linguistic knowledge, cognitive knowledge and social context (Fasciana, 2019; Parlindungan, 2019). Refer to Figure 3.3 for the reading process of the LPT.

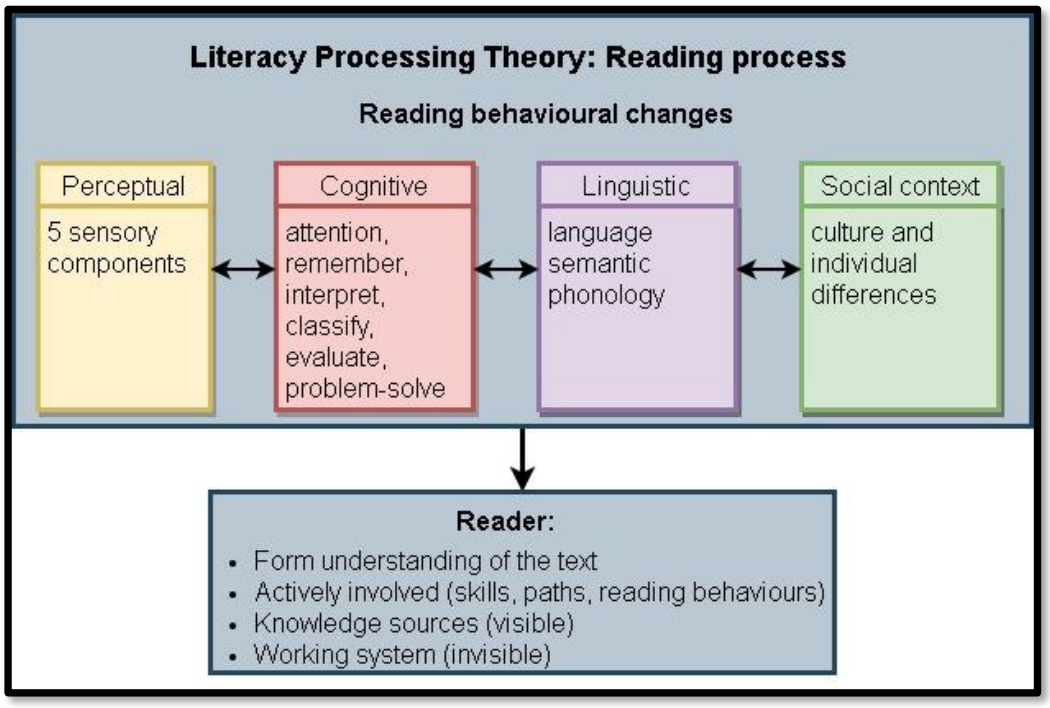


Figure 3.3: The literacy processing theory: Reading process (adapted from Hudson, Pullen, Lane & Torgesen, 2009)

The reading process of the LPT, as depicted in Figure 3.3, consists of reading behavioural changes that are documented to continuously monitor a reader's reading behaviour over time (Worsfold, 2015). Reading behavioural changes may refer to what a reader does while reading, and this behaviour may vary in the same or different stages of reading (Parlindungan, 2019). While readers are reading, they will use different reading behaviours that form part of the reading process.

The different reading behavioural changes readers use while reading enable them to read and write a simple text (Fasciana, 2019). As such, careful consideration must be given in selecting a text that helps them increase their vocabulary, enabling them to read more difficult texts later. Different reading behavioural changes include perceptual processing, cognitive processing, linguistic components and social context systems (Doyle, 2013). These reading behavioural changes are necessary during the reading and writing process to successfully comprehend the text (Fasciana, 2019; Parlindungan, 2019).

The perceptual process includes a reader's five sensory components, namely hearing, taste, smell, sight and touch, and what the brain does with these sensory components

during reading. The various sensory components work together during the reading process to enable the reader to form an understanding of the text (Franceschini et al., 2020). Thus, the perceptual process is aligned with Orton-Gillingham's multisensory approach to reading, which refers to the teaching and assessment of reading by using multisensory strategies (Romero, 2020). Readers form an understanding of a text by using their perceptual process and cognitive process that are integrated when reading. Thus, they will first observe the reading text using their perceptual process and then form an understanding of the text using their cognitive process (Solikhah, 2018). The cognitive process includes a reader's ability to pay attention, remember, interpret, classify, evaluate ideas and solve problems (Dunn, Georgiou, & Das, 2018). Also, readers use their linguistic components, such as language, semantics and phonology, when reading. The linguistic components they use enable them to improve their reading skills and understanding of the text (Collins, Wolter, Meaux, & Alonzo, 2020).

Readers' social context includes their culture and individual differences, thus relating to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Parlindungan, 2019). Vygotsky has developed the sociocultural theory that is formed by the belief that a reader is part of a social context; accordingly, the social context influences the development of a reader's reading skills and comprehension (Panhwar, Ansan, & Ansari, 2016; Vygotsky, 1986). Within readers' social context, they are confronted with particular social, cultural and interpersonal experiences that may directly or indirectly influence their reading skills and understanding of the text. They form an understanding of the text from their social, cultural and interpersonal experiences and background knowledge of the topic of the text (Daneshfar & Moharami, 2018). Teachers have to identify the learners' understanding of the text by using detailed observations.

Detailed observations of reading behaviour and reading instructional planning have to be based on a reader's reading development level (Fasciana, 2019), which can be identified by a reading assessment strategy. A reading assessment strategy, such as RR, may assist teachers in monitoring readers' reading behaviour and inform teachers' reading instructional planning. During reading assessment, teachers should observe what reading processes (i.e. reading behavioural changes) readers use to find information on how they link current information to prior information. The teacher can observe how a reader is making meaning using prior visual, phonological, language

and semantic knowledge (Sangia, 2018) as part of the process of reading. This process will "support essential learning [which is] neglected by most literacy theories" (Doyle, 2013, p. 640).

The reading instruction of the teacher has to be adapted according to the reading development of the learner. Reading instruction can only be adapted when a teacher knows which cognitive processing is taking place while a reader is reading (Parlindungan, 2019). Thus, the teacher has to be able to identify the reading behavioural changes and help learners to problem-solve and use a reading strategy effectively during reading (Worsfold, 2015). The RR strategy, based on the LPT, can enable teachers to observe and keep a detailed record of a reader's reading progress to assist them in when, how and where to begin their reading instructional planning (Fasciana, 2019). Moreover, RR will enable teachers to identify the appropriate grade level books and scaffold their reading instructional planning more effectively. The LPT can support readers' reading progress by enabling teachers to use scaffolding as a teaching technique (West-Higgins, 2017).

Since the RR strategy is based on the LPT, this theory guided my exploration of RR within the South African context. I explored the benefits and limitations of RR from the perspectives of Foundation Phase teachers. In addition, the LPT has connections with the TAT, as Foundation Phase teachers use their agency, autonomy and knowledge of teaching and assessment of reading when using RR in their classrooms. In the following section (3.4.2.), I elaborate on the TAT.

3.4.2 Teacher agency theory

The TAT refers to an individual teacher's ability to be critical about problems and make responsible, adaptive decisions about such problems to reach specific goals, which can be regarded as a specific form of professional agency (Abdullah, 2019; Imants & Van der Wal, 2020; Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016). As such, the TAT may be regarded as the process in which teachers apply their agency to positively influence learning through the teaching strategies, lesson context, lesson activities and teaching and learning resources they implement in their classrooms (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016).

In 1937, the agency theory was developed by Adam Smith in the field of economics (Panda & Leepsa, 2017). It was later adapted into the TAT to be used in the field of

education. The agency theory is used in a wide range of disciplines where one person is given the authority to make decisions in a specific field (Parker, Dressel, Chevers, & Zeppetella, 2018). The work of Biesta, Priestley and Robinson (2015), Pace and Aiello (2016) and Ramrathan and Mzimela (2016) elaborates on the TAT.

Teacher agency is achieved through teachers making decisions, taking the initiative and acting proactively in the implementation of available reading resources in their classrooms to reach a particular goal when teaching (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). According to Imants and Van der Wal (2020), the TAT distinguishes between individual characteristics and action. Individual characteristics include that individuals have the autonomy to decide for themselves about the quality and nature of their lives. Action, on the other hand, refers to what individuals will do in their work to form their professional identity (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). Therefore, teacher agency highlights what teachers can do with what they have (e.g. resources and past personal and professional experiences) in their professional careers (Abdullah, 2019).

The TAT also implies that teachers base their actions and decisions on past, personal and sociocultural experiences and formal, situational and experiential knowledge within the education sector (Campbell, 2019; Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016). Therefore, teachers' past experiences influence their future decisions and play a role in the process of making decisions in the present (Abdullah, 2019). From a sociocultural perspective, individuals must distinguish between the social and professional context of the school environment and their individual personal perspectives on particular aspects (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). Social-cultural constraints form part of teacher agency, as the school curriculum, relationships with colleagues and management, the dominant culture of the school and available resources will influence the autonomy teachers have in their classrooms regarding reading, reading assessment and reading instructional planning (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). Teachers' past professional and personal experiences of reading, reading assessment and reading instructional planning will have an impact on their future decisions with regard to reading. Hence, teachers use their past professional and personal experience to adapt their future reading assessment and reading instructional planning.

From the above discussion, the characteristics of the TAT can be summarised as follows: a teacher can be regarded as an active or passive actor in making decisions;

the relationship between teachers and their autonomy in their professional work is complex and dynamic; the influence of policy, management and the school culture on teachers' autonomy in their classrooms is integrated and complex; teachers' autonomy continuously change as they want to develop professionally in their careers; applying their professional autonomy in their classrooms (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020).

Professional autonomy forms part of the characteristics of the TAT. The characteristics of the TAT consist of three dimensions, namely iterational, practical-evaluative and projective (Abdullah, 2019; Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015). The three dimensions of the TAT are related to one another and influence one another. For example, if something changes at the iterational level, the change influences the practical-evaluative and projective dimensions (Rose, 2019). Refer to Figure 3.4 for an illustration from Biesta et al. (2015, p. 627) of the three dimensions of the TAT.

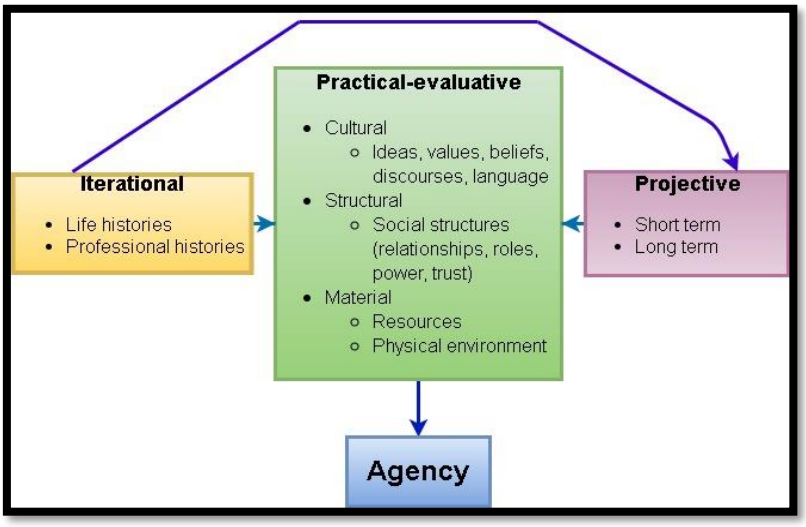


Figure 3.4: The teacher agency model (adapted from Biesta, Priestley & Robinson, 2015, p. 627)

The iterational dimension includes past experiences of life and professional histories (Abdullah, 2019). Therefore, teachers make professional decisions based on their past experiences (Rose, 2019). Projective dimensions include individuals' short- and long-term goals (Abdullah, 2019). As such, teachers make professional decisions based on things that may happen in the future (Rose, 2019). The practical-evaluative dimension is twofold, as it includes what is practically possible and how it can be evaluated (Abdullah, 2019). The practical-evaluative dimension is based on the assumption that

a teacher makes a decision based on a response to what happened in the past (Rose, 2019). The practical-evaluative dimension includes cultural, structural and material aspects (Abdullah, 2019). Cultural aspects include an individual's ideas, values and beliefs, discourses and language (Abdullah, 2019; Rose, 2019). However, although the cultural dimension may be regarded as individual, it can be influenced by external ideas, values, beliefs, discourses and language (Rose, 2019). Structural aspects include an individual's social structures, such as relationships, roles, power differential, respect, understanding and trust (Abdullah, 2019; Rose, 2019). Material aspects include an individual's resources and physical environment, such as the layout of buildings (Abdullah, 2019).

Rose (2019, p. 76) believes that the TAT facilitates "student learning, professional development, collaborative teacher learning and school improvement". However, critique of the TAT includes that individual teachers' autonomy in making classroom decisions about reading is overestimated and that teachers can make decisions with regard to reading without considering the social context of the reader (Farmasari, 2020).

Another critique of the TAT includes that a teacher's decision in reading, reading assessment and reading instructional planning may be neglected or restricted by the teacher's knowledge and past reading experiences (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). The effects of the TAT depend on teachers' interaction with reading, reading assessment and reading instructional planning, as well as their interpretation of reading outcomes and the actions they take with regard to reading in their classrooms (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). However, in this study, the above critique was minimised by integrating the LPT with the TAT. With the TAT, teachers use their autonomy to implement reading assessment strategies in their classrooms, while the LPT forms the foundation of RR as a reading assessment strategy.

Through the lens of the TAT, RR may enable teachers to adapt their reading instructional decisions and planning according to specific goals based on learners' reading behaviour. Effective decision making is crucial in guiding teachers to reach their goals (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016). Teachers are also expected to improve the implementation of reading, reading assessment and reading instructional planning in their classrooms (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). The TAT guides them regarding when,

where, how and for how long a specific reading instruction, strategy or component should be implemented (Wilcox & Lawson, 2018). As teachers have control over how the RR strategy is implemented in their classrooms (Simpson, Sang, Wood, Wang, & Ye, 2018), using RR could strengthen their teacher agency. Hence, teacher agency provides teachers with the autonomy to inform and improve their reading instructional planning, based on the knowledge they have gained about RR as a reading assessment strategy (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020).

In my study, teachers had the autonomy to implement RR in their Foundation Phase classrooms, as well as the voice to express which benefits and limitations they experienced when using RR as a reading assessment strategy. Foundation Phase teachers, therefore, completed a questionnaire, attended a workshop on RR, implemented RR, made anecdotal notes and participated in an interview about RR. Refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.3, where I elaborate on the data collection methods and documentation of my study.

In conclusion, the LPT guided my investigation into the benefits and limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy, whereas the TAT highlighted teachers' authority to raise their voice regarding reading assessment strategies, such as RR, and the benefits and limitations thereof within their social context.

3.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I discussed RR as a reading assessment strategy, including the history of RR, the process of conducting RR, the reliability, rater variance and passage difficulty of RR and the benefits of and critique against RR. It is important to understand the history and process of conducting RR, as these will guide teachers in effectively performing RR. When the RR strategy is effectively performed to guide reading instructional planning, learners' reading skills may improve. In contrast, RR may incorrectly inform reading instructional planning when teachers' knowledge and skills are inadequate. When the RR strategy is incorrectly implemented, the outcome may be invalid, unreliable and inconsistent in informing reading instructional planning. Hence, it is important to establish the reliability and validity of RR as it may influence the outcome of the strategy. Without identifying these, the reliability and validity of this strategy remain unknown for the South African context. RR can be regarded as both

a summative and a formative assessment strategy, although the benefits and limitations thereof as a reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms should first be established from Foundation Phase teachers' perspectives.

The differences between RR and the EGRA were discussed to establish which one would be better to implement in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. The chapter was concluded with a discussion of the theoretical framework of the study. The LPT describes the reading process that the RR strategy is based on and which should be integrated when reading is assessed. In addition, the TAT describes the autonomy of Foundation Phase teachers in using RR as a possible reading assessment strategy and making informed reading instructional decisions based on the outcome of RR.

In the following chapter, I elaborate on the research methodology of my study. I discuss the research design (Section 4.2), data collection methods and documentation (Section 4.3), trustworthiness (Section 4.4) and ethical considerations (Section 4.5).

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapters 2 and 3, I have discussed reading problems in South Africa and reading assessment in South African Foundation Phase classrooms, the possibility of implementing RR, a reading assessment strategy, and the difference between RR and the EGRA. Furthermore, I have discussed the LPT and the TAT that apply to my study. In this chapter, I elaborate on the research methodology of my study, which includes the research design, sampling, data collection and documentation, as well as data analysis.

Research methodology refers to a specific design, method, strategy and technique that are integrated and used to collect and analyse data (Nieuwenhuis, 2019b). Furthermore, the research methodology focuses on the process, tools, objectives, procedures and individual steps a researcher takes to gather data about individuals' social reality (Mouton, 2019b; Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). Therefore, in my study, the research methodology consisted of the specific method, processes and tools for collecting data about teachers' social reality using RR as a reading strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

In the following sections, I discuss the research design of my study by elaborating on my research paradigm, research approach, selection of participants, research site and the research process. Thereafter, I explain my data collection and documentation methods, followed by a discussion of the trustworthiness of my study. Lastly, I discuss the ethical considerations of my study. Refer to Figure 4.1 for an outline of the research methodology that was followed in my study.

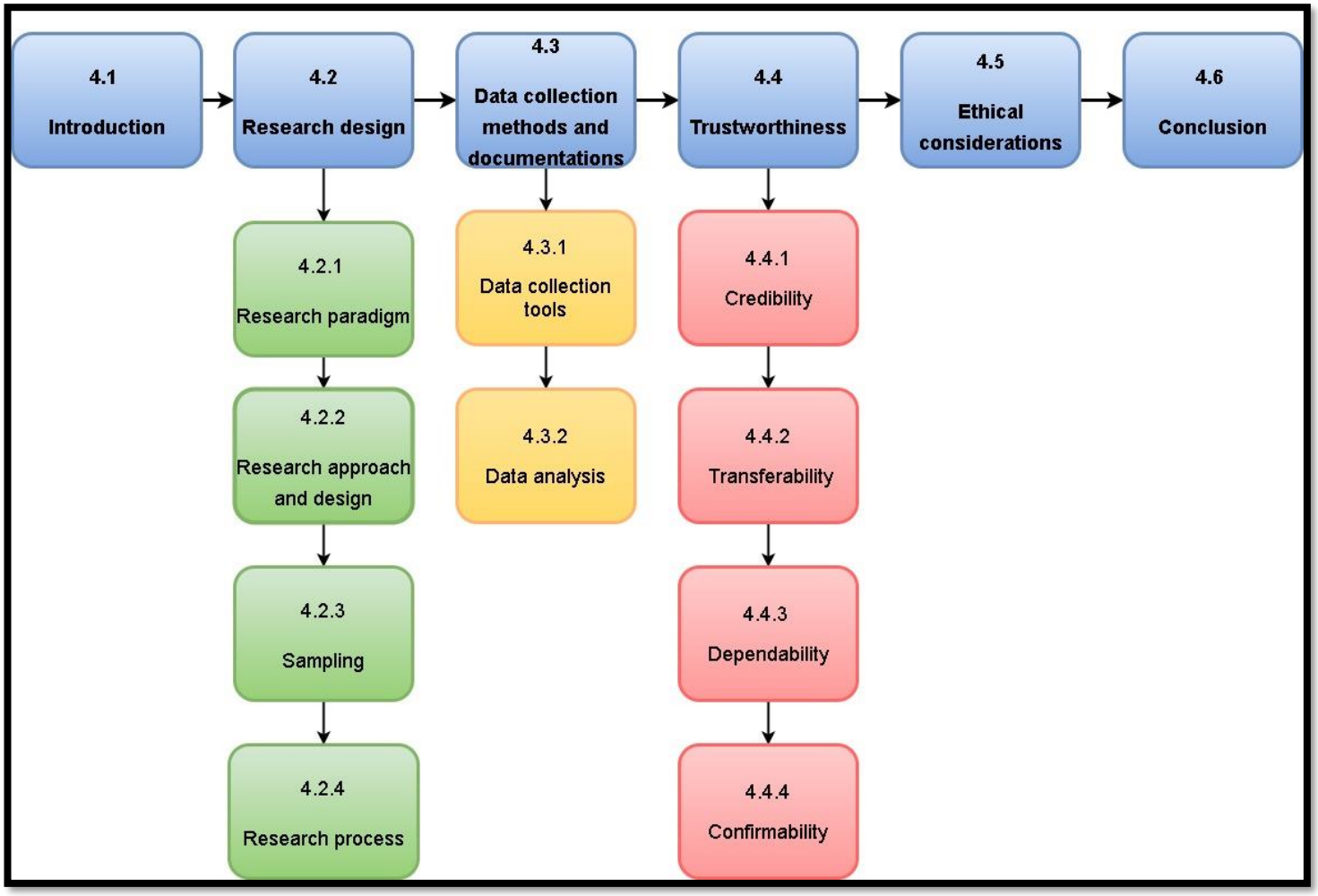


Figure 4.1: Overview of Chapter 4

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to how the researcher intends to conduct the research and can be regarded as a plan or blueprint of the study (Mouton, 2019b). The research design is based on philosophical assumptions, the research approach, research paradigm, data-gathering methods and data analysis (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). Therefore, the research design enabled me to answer the following research question: How can RR, a reading assessment strategy, help inform Foundation Phase teachers' reading instruction? In my study, the research questions were answered through interpretivism as the research paradigm and a qualitative exploratory case study research approach, as described in the following sections.

4.2.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm refers to a specific ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology, which is a comprehensive framework or belief system guiding a researcher in the research process (Sefotho & Du Plessis, 2018). Therefore, a paradigm can be regarded as the lens through which a person views a particular case (Nieuwenhuis, 2019b). As many qualitative studies use interpretivism as their research paradigm, interpretivism suited the qualitative exploratory case study approach of my study best (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019b). When using interpretivism and qualitative methods, the researcher wants to interpret the participants' experiences, understandings and perceptions of how they view their reality and not rely on statistics (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Furthermore, an interpretivist will consider the criteria of trustworthiness used in qualitative research (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Refer to Section 4.4 for a detailed discussion of trustworthiness.

In contrast to interpretivism, positivism can be used in experimental studies and focuses mostly on statistics when objects and humans are studied. However, when humans and their settings are explored in depth, interpretivism is more appropriate to use. This is because humans and their environments change continuously in contrast to objects that do not change (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). With positivism, the case is studied through prediction, control, measurement, causality and objectivity. Therefore, positivism is more suitable for quantitative research (Sefotho & Du Plessis, 2018). Interpretivism is a paradigm that guides action through a basic set of beliefs (Sapkota, 2019) and suggests that meaning is constructed through one's own experiences and understanding from within oneself (Nieuwenhuis, 2019b). Therefore, the ontology of my study was subjective and not neutral, as different individuals held different views regarding RR as a reading assessment strategy. Hence, a rapid relationship was constructed. The truth was regarded as subjective, and knowledge was not absolute (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). Consequently, building rapport with the participants was important to collect data from them regarding the case (see Sapkota, 2019). The participants' understanding and knowledge of the specific case (i.e. RR) were understood by studying their language, such as written or spoken, meanings and rules, which was the epistemology of my study (see Pfeiler-Wunder, Buffington, Rao, & Sutters, 2017).

In investigating the case of RR, I had to explore the benefits and limitations of the reading assessment strategy from the Foundation Phase teachers' perspectives. So, I interviewed and provided in-service training to the participants that allowed me to interact closely with them and gain insight into their perspectives (see Kankam, 2019). Moreover, this study guided me in adapting RR as a reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. The participants' active involvement allowed for flexibility during the data collection by recognising and accepting different perspectives from them.

Other advantages of interpretivism include the flexibility thereof and the acknowledgement that particular ideas should be reconstructed without distorting them (Rapley, 2018). For example, an interpretivist depends on the active involvement of participants to construct their reality of a phenomenon (Magam, 2018) as participants' perspectives may "contain valuable data for the development of a theoretical understanding" (Sebastian, 2019, p. 3). In my study, the participants' opinions played an essential role in understanding RR as a possible reading assessment strategy for use in South African schools.

However, using interpretivism as a paradigm also had some limitations for my study. With interpretivism, the findings on the phenomenon are limited to a specific time, place and situation (Kankam, 2019; Sebastian, 2019). In addition, participants may regard their different views within a specific time, place and situation as facts about the phenomenon (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Furthermore, in my study, no distinction was made between myself and my prior knowledge about RR; consequently, my prior knowledge of RR could have influenced the data analysis. My findings are, therefore, only generalisable to some extent (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019b). In contrast to generalising the results to the whole population, I wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of RR, which is impossible in quantitative research. In the following section (4.2.2.), I elaborate on the research approach associated with interpretivism in this study.

4.2.2 Research approach and design

A research approach is defined as a specific direction of scientific reasoning used by a researcher to acquire knowledge about a specific phenomenon (Mouton,

2019b). There are two different research approaches, namely qualitative and quantitative. In qualitative research, the focus is on studying participants' words, ideas and perspectives in depth. In contrast to qualitative research, quantitative research focuses on statistics and does not explain why the study of a specific phenomenon has occurred (Maree, 2019). There are different types of qualitative research designs, with one of these types being a case study (Ivankova et al., 2019).

A case study is defined as a research method or type that focuses on a systematic and in-depth understanding of a particular strategy (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). In addition, case studies are qualitative in nature and tend to provide a rigorous and in-depth description of a specific case. The trustworthiness of case studies is important and is directly associated with qualitative research (Joubert, 2016). Refer to Section 4.4 for a discussion of the trustworthiness of my study. A case study is focused on the participants' reality and perspectives that focus on qualitative research. Qualitative research focuses on linguistic data rather than numerical data (Nieuwenhuis, 2019b). There are different types of case studies, namely explanatory case studies, exploratory case studies, descriptive case studies, multiple-case studies, intrinsic case studies and instrumental case studies (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). In my study, I used a qualitative exploratory case study approach.

Using the qualitative exploratory case study as a research design enabled me to describe, explain and explore RR by using multiple sources of data collection, such as questionnaires and interviews (see Joubert, 2016; Nieuwenhuis, 2019a; Trochim, Donnelly, & Arora, 2016a). Although there are assessment strategies available for South African Foundation Phase classrooms (DBE, 2011b), RR is a new reading assessment strategy for most South African Foundation Phase teachers. Therefore, RR can be explored as a new idea to avoid narrowness in the field of reading assessment and to add to the existing resources (Ivankova et al., 2019). A qualitative exploratory case study allowed me to explore the benefits and limitations of RR for South African Foundation Phase classrooms from the perspectives of Foundation Phase teachers. As such, the participants presented their versions of reality, because qualitative research gave them the authority to do so (see Holt & Ammaturo, 2019). The reading assessment strategy of RR was, in this "case", explored qualitatively. The qualitative exploratory research approach focuses on a

richer exploration and understanding of a specific issue by asking “what”, “why” and “how” questions (Joubert, 2016).

The qualitative exploratory case study research design had numerous advantages for my study; however, it also had some limitations. Using a qualitative exploratory case study as a research design implies that research findings can be generalised to a limited extent, as a small number of participants were included (Pennella & Rubano, 2019). Furthermore, my role as a researcher might have affected the participants’ opinion of RR, as “ethical and power-related issues might limit [the] research” (Holt & Ammaturo, 2019, p. 2). In this study, the participants might have regarded me as a person with knowledge and power. Thus, they might have assumed that they could learn from me, instead of me gaining information from them. I minimised this limitation by explaining to them that I wanted their perspectives and that there were no correct or incorrect answers.

In this qualitative exploratory case study research, I had to gain the participants’ trust to gather data that were trustworthy. Furthermore, “qualitative research may be time-consuming which may lead to invalid results” (Holt & Ammaturo, 2019, p. 5). Using a qualitative exploratory case study method might narrow the research and prevent me from exploring a broader range of aspects related to RR as a reading assessment strategy. However, the purpose and focus of the study were to establish the benefits and limitations from the participants’ perspectives (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). In my study, however, I wanted to explore the benefits and limitations of RR, which could lead to further research on adapting RR for South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

4.2.3 Sampling

When researchers select a portion of the population for their research study, it is referred to as “sampling” (Maree & Pietersen, 2019a; Trochim, Donnelly, & Arora, 2016b). When deciding on a sample, Nieuwenhuis (2019b) believes that researchers have to consider what they want to get to know from the participants, what the purpose of the research is, whether the information received from the participants will be useful and credible and what the researcher can do within the

available time and resources. In this section, I elaborate on how I selected the participants and the research site in my study.

4.2.3.1 Selection of participants

In my study, participants were selected through non-probability purposive sampling (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). Non-probability purposive sampling is the process whereby participants are selected based on defining characteristics, as they are the owners of the data that are needed. I have asked participants who met the criteria if they wanted to participate in the study. Five of the seven participants were from the same school, while the other two participants were from two different schools. This type of sampling involves specific settings, incidents, events and activities in the research process and does not depend on the probability theory (Maree & Pietersen, 2019a; Nieuwenhuis, 2019a; Trochim et al., 2016b). Non-probability purposive sampling was used as the participants and the research site were purposefully selected based on specific criteria (see Trochim et al., 2016b). The sampling criteria ensured that I received rich and in-depth data about implementing RR as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). The sampling criteria of my study are listed below in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Criteria for participant selection

Criteria	Specific
Phase	A Foundation Phase teacher
Qualification	A degree, diploma or certification that is approved by the South African Council for Educators
Experience	A minimum of two or more years of teaching experience with Foundation Phase learners A teacher who is currently teaching in the Foundation Phase
Language requirement	The language of learning and teaching (LoLT) must be either English or Afrikaans, as English and Afrikaans are the languages with which I am familiar and the RR strategy is the same in all languages

Using the above-listed criteria ensured that I gathered rich, in-depth data about the benefits and limitations of RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. Nieuwenhuis (2019a) and Saunders and Townsend (2016) believe that there are no predefined criteria in qualitative research on the number of participants. In my study, there were seven Foundation Phase participants, as six participants are the smallest acceptable number of participants for qualitative studies (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a).

Furthermore, the seven participants had diverse backgrounds and years of experience with Foundation Phase learners. Their diverse backgrounds and years of experience enabled me to reach data saturation (see Lakens, 2021). Also, the data collected from the participants would be in depth in terms of what they believed to be the benefits and limitations of RR, which would not be possible with a large sample size (see Carrier & Beverly, 2021). Refer to Table 4.2 for the details of the participants.

Table 4.2: Details of the participants

Participant	Highest qualification	Year in which qualification was obtained	Years of experience	Current grade teaching	School quintile	LoLT
Participant 1	BEd	2010	Between 11 and 15 years	3	5	English
Participant 2	Diploma	2000	Between 16 and 20 years	1	5	English
Participant 3	BEd	2019	Between 0 and 3 years	1	5	English
Participant 4	BEd (Hons)	2018	Between 0 and 3 years	2	5	English
Participant 5	BEd	2015	Between 4 and 10 years	2	5	Afrikaans
Participant 6	Diploma in Higher Education	1983	More than 20 years	2	5	Afrikaans
Participant 7	Diploma	1982	More than 20 years	2	5	English

One of the limitations of non-probability purposive sampling is that the results cannot be generalised to the whole population (Maree & Pietersen, 2019a). Moreover, the results of a non-probability purposeful sampling cannot be regarded as reliable because a particular group of people is more present in the study than other groups (Trochim et al., 2016b). However, in my study, the focus was specifically on South African Foundation Phase teachers, as they are the experts in the Foundation Phase on reading and reading assessment.

Non-probability purposeful sampling may increase researcher bias (Naidoo & Singh, 2018). However, the focus of my study was to explore the possibility of using RR in Foundation Phase classrooms and provide an opportunity for researchers to study RR as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

4.2.3.2 Research site

The research site refers to a suitable, feasible, comfortable and relaxed location where research can be conducted (Maree & Pietersen, 2019a). In 2020, the coronavirus disease of 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic became a reality for South Africa and the rest of the world. Since 26 March 2020, South Africa has been in a nationwide lockdown on different alert levels, depending on the capacity of the healthcare system and the number of persons infected with the virus (Hatefi, Smith, Abou-El Hossein, & Alizargar, 2020). Covid-19 is a new contagious respiratory virus that spreads through the air, a person's droplets, mouth and nose (Cao, 2020). As Covid-19 was a new virus, no effective medication or vaccines were available (Lazarus et al., 2021). Consequently, due to the fact that Covid-19 had caused contact among individuals to be limited, I had to revise my research methodology. I, therefore, decided to conduct all of my research online. By doing my research online, I eliminated the risk that my participants might contract the virus.

I designed and distributed my questionnaire using Google Forms. Google Forms is a free online, ready-to-use survey platform to design, distribute and receive responses and analyse questionnaires (Mondal, Mondal, Ghosal, & Mondal, 2018). Google Forms made the distribution of the questionnaires affordable, convenient and accessible for everyone involved. Secondly, I used Blackboard Collaborate to present a workshop on RR. Blackboard Collaborate is an online videoconferencing programme, and participants do not have to install it on their devices. Blackboard Collaborate allows people to use an interactive whiteboard, add files and share applications (Chen, Dobinson, & Kent, 2020). Lastly, I used Zoom or MS Teams for the individual interviews with the participants. I used both, depending on which platform the individual participant felt more comfortable with. Zoom is an innovative, collaborative, cloud-based videoconferencing platform that can be used for online meetings (Archibald, Ambagtsheer, Casey, & Lawless, 2019). MS Teams is part of

the MS Office packet and makes online collaboration and communication among people easier (Hubbard & Bailey, 2018). Therefore, participants from anywhere in South Africa who met the criteria, had access to the internet and were willing to participate could take part in the online research (see Jowett, 2020).

The online sites were selected because they were conveniently available to everyone involved in the research process (see Maree & Pietersen, 2019a). Furthermore, online research reduced the participants' risk of contracting Covid-19 compared to face-to-face research (see Jowett, 2020). As my research took place online, my participants could complete the online questionnaire at their convenience, and my presence did not affect their responses (see Jowett, 2020; Maree & Pietersen, 2019b). Moreover, online research reduced the risk of being influenced by research bias and could lead to more honest and authentic responses from the participants (see Germain, Harris, Mackay, & Maxwell, 2018). Although conducting the research online had numerous advantages for my study, it also had some limitations.

One limitation of using an online site is that some participants may have valuable information but are technologically illiterate and are, therefore, excluded from the study. On the other hand, participants can be technologically literate but may struggle with their technological devices, such as laptops, programmes and internet connection (Jowett, 2020). Also, with online research, it is difficult to ensure that the person who completes the questionnaire really is the participant who has been selected for the study (Germain et al., 2018).

However, the online site made it cost-effective, productive, easy and convenient for everyone involved. The online site formed part of the research process. In the research process, the participants used the online site to complete the questionnaire and attend a workshop and an interview. The participants found the online site easy and accessible.

4.2.4 Research process

The study was conducted in four phases. Refer to Figure 4.2 for the four phases of data collection for my study.

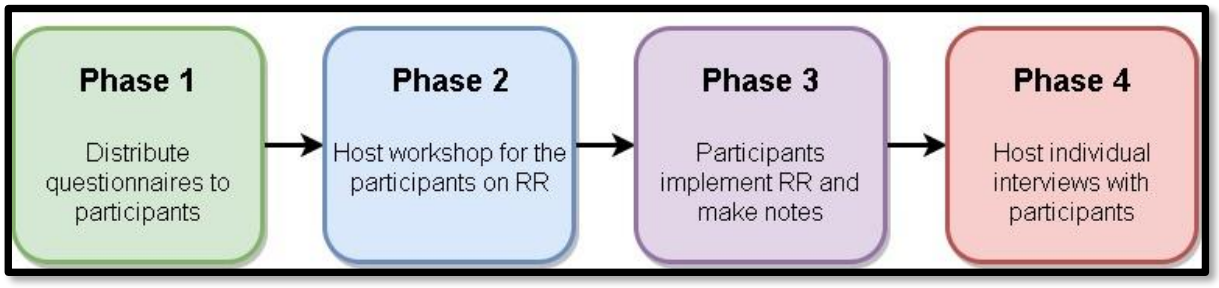


Figure 4.2: Data collection process

During the first phase, I distributed my questionnaire online through Google Forms (refer to Section 4.2.3) to seven participants to complete anonymously and voluntarily. In the second phase, I used the data gathered from the questionnaires to plan an online workshop using Blackboard Collaborate. During the online workshop, I explained to my participants how to use RR (see Holt & Ammaturo, 2019). For a discussion of the questionnaires, refer to Section 4.3. Refer to Annexure C for the questionnaire and Annexure D for the link to the pre-recorded workshop.

In the second phase, I hosted an online workshop for Foundation Phase teachers. Using Blackboard Collaborate (refer to Section 4.2.3.2) for the online workshop means that it did not have financial implications for the participants. Refer to Annexure D for a link to the pre-recorded online workshop. Furthermore, all the tools the Foundation Phase teachers needed were provided to them (refer to Annexures A and E). I developed all the templates and guidelines for RR that the Foundation Phase teachers needed. The children's literature that the teachers were asked to use when they performed RR was freely available to them in open-access DBE textbooks. It was not necessary to obtain permission from the developers of RR for this study. The RR strategy only informs teachers on observing and recording learners' reading behaviour while reading aloud (Kindergarten, 2020). Refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2 and Annexures A, B and E for a full discussion of RR.

In the third phase, the seven participants were asked to conduct at least one RR reading assessment with a learner and make anecdotal notes. Anecdotal notes are private written documents of participants that are used as primary and unpublished sources of data that a researcher directly gathers from the participants (Creswell &

Creswell, 2018; Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). For a detailed discussion of anecdotal notes, refer to Section 4.3.

During the fourth and last phase, the participants took part in an online interview using Zoom or MS Teams (refer to Section 4.2.3). An interview is a two-way conversation between a researcher and a participant to collect data about the participant's beliefs. The aim of the interviews was to allow me to obtain rich, in-depth and detailed data on how the participants experienced RR as a reading assessment strategy (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a).

All the methods mentioned in this section are discussed in depth in the next section (4.3).

4.3 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND DOCUMENTATION

Data collection and documentation refer to how data are collected in the field and documented to enable a researcher to analyse the data and answer the research questions (Maree, 2019; Mouton, 2019a). In this study, I collected data using multiple sources of data collection methods, namely questionnaires, anecdotal evidence and individual interviews (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The various data collection methods allowed for triangulation of the data, which is essential in increasing credibility, trustworthiness and reducing my own bias regarding RR (see Maree, 2019). Table 4.3 below provides an overview of my data collection and the types of information gathered to answer my research questions.

Table 4.3: Data collection tools used in this study

Data collection	How data have been collected	Information the data provided
Questionnaire	• Distributed questionnaire electronically to Foundation Phase teachers to complete (refer to Annexure C) • The questionnaire contained 21 open-ended and closed-ended questions that took approximately 45 minutes to complete (refer to Annexure C for the complete questionnaire)	Information about teachers: • Biographical information • Reading instruction practices • Reading assessment practices (e.g. methods, tools, strategies and implementation)
Document review of	• The Foundation Phase teachers made notes during and after they had	• Benefits of RR as a reading assessment strategy

Data collection	How data have been collected	Information the data provided
anecdotal notes	conducted the reading assessment of one learner using RR as a reading assessment strategy	• Limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy • Possible solutions for RR as a reading assessment strategy • Amendment of items • Areas for clarification during online interviews
Individual interviews with set questions	• Fieldnotes • Video- or audio-recorded interviews and transcribed interviews • Combined oral, transcribed and observation data • Used a funnel structure (refer to individual interviews in this section) • Probing was implemented to gain more information (see Leedy & Ormrod, 2015)	• Benefits of RR as a reading assessment strategy • Limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy • Possible amendments that could lead to an improvement in the teaching practice • Clarification of the participants' anecdotal notes

In the following sub-sections, I elaborate on each of my data collection tools listed in Table 4.3.

4.3.1 Data collection tools

4.3.1.1 Questionnaire

Qualitative questionnaires (refer to Annexure C) are natural and ready-to-use tools that participants complete in research. Using a questionnaire enabled me to collect data relating to current reading instruction and reading assessment practices (see Maree & Pietersen, 2019b; Trochim, Donnelly, & Arora, 2016c). My questionnaire was designed based on existing literature on RR. The questionnaire was electronically distributed using Google Forms (refer to Section 4.2.3). Google Forms is a free online, ready-to-use survey platform to design, distribute and receive responses and analyse questionnaires (Mondal et al., 2018). A link to the questionnaire was sent via e-mail to seven participants to complete (refer to Annexure C). The participants were given a week to complete the questionnaire. Together with the questionnaire, the participants received an informed consent form.

When a questionnaire is designed, it is important to pay careful consideration to the appearance of the questionnaire and the sequence and wording of the questions and response categories (Maree & Pietersen, 2019b). The first section of the

questionnaire in this study included biographical information, such as the participants' qualifications, years of teaching experience and grade currently teaching. Section B included 17 open-ended motivational, explaining and naming questions. Section B also included closed-ended questions such as Likert scale, dichotomous and ranking questions about the participants' reading instruction and reading assessment practices. In the introduction to the questionnaire, the purpose of the study and the ethical aspects of my study were also stated.

The qualitative questionnaire helped me understand Foundation Phase teachers' current knowledge and implementation of reading assessment strategies in their classrooms. The questionnaire allowed me to determine their existing knowledge of RR. In the qualitative questionnaire, the participants gave detailed, honest answers by revealing their thinking processes. Furthermore, the qualitative questionnaire allowed the participants to answer complex questions adequately. In addition, the qualitative questionnaire provided interesting information that might lead to interesting categories and sub-categories when implementing content analysis (see Maree & Pietersen, 2019b).

Although using a qualitative questionnaire had numerous benefits for my study, it also had some limitations. One of the limitations was that the participants could have struggled to complete the online questionnaire and I might not have been immediately available to assist them (see Jowett, 2020). To minimise the limitations of the questionnaires, I also implemented anecdotal notes.

4.3.1.2 Anecdotal notes

In my study, anecdotal notes refer to short descriptions from the participants on how they completed RR and experienced RR. The anecdotal notes were also used to determine the participants' opinions of the benefits, limitations and possible recommendations for improvement of RR (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). A completed RR was part of the anecdotal notes. From the anecdotal notes, I gained insight into a wide range of teachers' perspectives on the benefits and limitations of RR for the South African Foundation Phase context. The benefits and limitations of RR that the Foundation Phase teachers had identified guided me to qualitatively evaluate and adapt RR as a reading assessment strategy for the South African context (see

Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). Although the use of anecdotal notes had several benefits for my study, it also had some limitations.

The participants might have been biased in their anecdotal notes; therefore, I had to identify areas of bias as these might affect the validity and trustworthiness of the data. Also, the participants might not have reported the benefits and limitations they had experienced with RR honestly (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). I reduced these limitations by using various data collection strategies, and I did member checking. To minimise the limitations of anecdotal notes, I also implemented individual interviews and triangulated my data.

4.3.1.3 Individual interviews

An interview is a two-way conversation between a researcher and a participant to collect data about the participant's beliefs (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). The purpose of the individual online interviews in my study was to gain rich and in-depth information on a specific phenomenon (RR) from the participants' point of view by posing detailed questions about the benefits and limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy (see Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2014; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). For my study, I had individual online interviews with all seven participants using Zoom or MS Teams. I used Zoom and MS Teams, depending on which platform the participant was feeling more comfortable with. While the participants had to install MS Teams on their devices if it was their preferred tool, they did not have to install Zoom. Each participant received a separate e-mail that contained the link to their interview.

The individual interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, which allowed me to access the data at any time during the process of data analysis (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I transcribed the audio recordings of the interviews verbatim and included non-verbal cues in the transcription, as these might add value to my study (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). In the transcription process, I wrote down verbatim what the participants had said to systematically analyse the data using content analysis (see Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014). After having transcribed the audio recordings, I checked the transcribed data against the audio recordings to ensure that I had included each word of every participant in the recordings (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c).

The interviews continued until data saturation was achieved, which took about 20 to 30 minutes per interview. Data saturation was reached when the participants did not provide any new information regarding RR (see Braun & Clarke, 2021). I employed prompting as a technique during the interviews, which allowed me to gain more in-depth insight into the statements a participant made (see Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014).

For the interviews, I used a semi-structured interview schedule with a funnel structure and ten open-ended questions. Refer to Annexure F for the interview schedule. For the semi-structured interviews, I developed questions from the literature and my knowledge about RR. These questions could be adapted during the interviews for clarification purposes. During a semi-structured interview, questions are posed that allow for probing and clarification, and new questions may also arise from participants' responses (Nieuwenhuis, 2019a).

During the semi-structured interviews, I used a funnel structure, which refers to asking broad, open-ended questions and then more specific questions (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a; Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The open-ended questions allowed me to gain deeper insight into how the Foundation Phase teachers experienced RR, which would have been impossible with closed-ended questions (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). In my opinion, the participants answered the questions openly and honestly because they felt comfortable sharing their ideas in individual interviews (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a; Trochim et al., 2016a). The participants provided in-depth answers to complex questions during the individual interviews, and interesting themes and categories arose from analysing their responses.

The individual interviews were also used to elicit ideas from the participants (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a; Trochim et al., 2016a). The in-depth insight regarding the benefits and limitations of the programme I had gathered from the interviews was used as a guide to understand Foundation Phase teachers' experiences in performing RR (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In addition, it allowed me to make suggestions on how RR might be adapted for South African Foundation Phase classrooms (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a). Moreover, with the individual interviews, the participants felt more comfortable in sharing more personal, open, honest and true perspectives on RR than they would have shared in a group setting (see Kruger,

Rodgers, Long, & Lowy, 2019). Using a set of questions in the interviews made it easy to organise the participants' responses into categories, codes and themes. Furthermore, the questions and answers could be explained and followed up during the interviews to avoid misinterpretation (see Queiros, Faria, & Almeida, 2017). Although conducting individual interviews had benefits for my study, it also had some limitations for the study.

It was time-consuming to interview the participants and transcribe each interview. However, there were only seven participants in my study; hence, it was possible to interview and transcribe each interview. Another limitation was that individual interviews are generalisable only to a limited extent (see Queiros, Faria, & Almeida, 2017). However, in my study, I explored the benefits and limitations of RR from the participants' perspectives.

In conclusion, I collected my data through questionnaires, anecdotal notes and individual interviews. The various data collection methods allowed for triangulation and reduced researcher bias (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). After I had collected my data, I analysed the data. In the next section, (4.3.1) I elaborate on the data analysis that I performed in the study.

4.3.2 Data analysis

Data analysis can be defined as a systematic and organised process of dividing data into different themes in order to identify patterns, categories or relationships in the data (Mouton, 2019a; Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). The process of data analysis allowed me to have in-depth and detailed descriptions of the meaning and understanding of the data (see Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014). I used Atlas.ti, which is a qualitative data analysis software open-source program (see Friese, Soratto, & Pires, 2018). Atlas.ti, as a technology instrument, supported my cognitive, thinking and mental processes (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c).

The use of Atlas.ti allowed for flexibility and adaptability of the data by removing, editing, moving and linking data in the data analysis process. Atlas.ti furthermore allowed for thoroughness and rigorous data. By implementing Atlas.ti in the data analysis process, the process was more transparent and the validity and credibility of the data that had been analysed were increased (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). In

the software program Atlas.ti, I used content analysis to interpret the data and form categories.

I employed content analysis, which is a systematic process or method of collecting, interpreting and analysing qualitative data to draw realistic conclusions (see Bengtsson, 2016; Hsieh & Shannon, 2018). In my study, content analysis refers to the process implemented to reduce the participants' written text into manageable categories by identifying specific patterns and drawing conclusions from the data (see Bengtsson, 2016).

Content analysis is one of the most frequently used analysis methods in qualitative research because it is a fast and easy method for identifying themes, patterns and trends in data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2018). With content analysis, data are organised into different groups, and then the groups that contain related meanings are categorised together, which may lead to more categories and sub-categories (Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014).

I implemented the steps shown below in Table 4.4, as described by Braun, Clarke and Weate (2016) for all the data I had collected. In my study, a category referred to things such as the participants' opinions, attitudes, perceptions and experiences. I formed different categories from my codes. I also implemented inductive coding, where I worked from the concrete and specific ideas received from the participants to more abstract and general ones. Hence, the themes and categories of this study were developed from the participants' data (see Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014). Using content analysis in my study allowed me to check, audit and report on all the steps within the process. The process of checking, auditing and reporting on all the steps allowed me to refer back to the steps and check the data in each step again (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c).

Table 4.4: Content analysis (adapted from Braun et al., 2016)

Phase	Description
1. Familiarise myself with the data	• Read and re-read all the data analytically • Take notes of the data • Critically engage with the data • Get an overview of the data

Phase	Description
2. Create codes and categories	• Systematic and rigorous process • Build foundations for themes • Identify, assign and label the different codes and categories • Assign codes to specific areas of the data or image • Review codes to eliminate the overlapping of codes
3. Search for themes	• Organise data into themes • Cluster codes into themes that represent the same idea • Theme layers
4. Review themes	• Work from coded data to the dataset • Ensure that coded data relate to the dataset
5. Define and name themes	• Write definitions for themes • Decide on names for each theme
6. Report findings	• Compile, develop and edit existing writing • Formulate writing within a final report

Content analysis is a reciprocal process based on the data received. As depicted in Table 4.4, I read and familiarised myself with the data collected over the three phases. When I read the data, I took notes of important information that helped me to identify codes; thus, I critically engaged with the data and improved my understanding of the data (see Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014; Braun et al., 2016). I worked systematically and rigorously to identify and label the codes and to organise the different codes into manageable categories. From the codes and categories, my themes emerged (see Bezuidenhout & Cronje, 2014; Braun et al., 2016).

During my content analysis, firstly, I read through the participants' completed questionnaires. Secondly, I exported the data from Google Forms and imported these into an MS Word document. Thereafter, I imported the MS Word document into Atlas.ti. Then I analysed the questionnaires, using Atlas.ti, by searching for and identifying codes and themes. I also revised the codes and themes. Lastly, I used my findings from the questionnaire to develop the workshop on RR for Foundation Phase teachers.

After attending the workshop, the participants completed their anecdotal notes and participated in individual interviews. I also used Atlas.ti and content analysis to simultaneously analyse the anecdotal notes and individual interviews. The anecdotal notes allowed the participants to reflect on what they had written during the individual interviews. I was able to refer back to the participants' notes and analyse these.

During the content analysis, firstly, I transcribed the individual interviews and familiarised myself with the data. Secondly, I imported the transcribed data and anecdotal notes into Atlas.ti to create codes and categories. Then I analysed the interviews, using Atlas.ti, by searching for and identifying codes and themes. Again, I revised the codes and themes. Lastly, I reported on my findings per theme used.

One advantage of content analysis is that it was implemented during different levels of abstraction and interpretation in my study (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). An advantage of content analysis was that the data had been gathered in an unstructured manner and were not regarded as invalid (see Du Plooy-Cilliers & Cronje, 2014). Although there were advantages to implementing content analysis in my study, it also had some limitations.

Careful and systematic consideration during the analysis and categorisation of the data was necessary to ensure that the findings were rigorous, valid and reliable. The content analysis was time-consuming and labour-intensive, as it was difficult to illustrate the logic and links between different categories (see Hsieh & Shannon, 2018; Graneheim et al., 2017). After I had collected the data, I reported on my findings, which is presented in Chapters 5 and 6. In the following section (4.4), the trustworthiness of the data is discussed.

4.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS

In qualitative research, the data and findings must be trustworthy. Trustworthiness can be defined as the determination of the researcher to ensure that the participants' voices are heard in the research report. Therefore, in my study, I used various data sources to ensure that my data were trustworthy (see Graneheim et al., 2017). I also considered criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (see Hsieh & Shannon, 2018) to improve the trustworthiness of my study.

4.4.1 Credibility

Credibility means ensuring that the data analysis process is correct and believable by obtaining the relevant data for a study from participants who have experience in the specific field under study (Bengtsson, 2016; Trochim et al., 2016a), thus

ensuring that the data are accurately interpreted by the researcher (Koonin, 2014). The participants in my study were purposefully selected based on a specific set of criteria, as this increased the credibility of my data (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). For example, the participants should have had at least two years' teaching experience in the Foundation Phase and have a valid teaching qualification, such as a diploma, a degree or a certificate approved by the South African Council for Educators, in teaching Foundation Phase learners. In addition, I established rapport with my participants, as this relationship allowed them to be more honest in sharing what they believed were the benefits and limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). To further improve the credibility of my results, I referred anonymously to some of my participants' exact responses during the process of analysing and interpreting the data (see Graneheim et al., 2017). As such, I spent enough time with the participants to ensure that I correctly interpreted their opinions of the benefits and limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy (see Koonin, 2014).

Furthermore, I collected data using three different methods, which allowed me to triangulate my data. The triangulation of the data also increased the credibility of the data (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). I employed member checking, where the participants received their scripts to correct errors and check the facts. During the individual interviews, any uncertainties in the participants' anecdotal notes were cleared to avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations of their anecdotal notes and to contribute to the data (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). Additionally, I implemented content analysis, where I followed six steps in analysing the data (see Braun et al., 2016) to increase the credibility of the results of my study (refer to Section 4.5.1). Content analysis also minimised my own bias towards the research.

For my study, it was also important to consider the transferability of the results. Therefore, in the following section (4.4.2), I elaborate on the transferability of my study.

4.4.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to "the degree to which the results may apply to other settings or groups and the number of informants or study subjects" (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 13).

Thus, transferability is the process of selecting the participants and the setting to ensure rigorous and in-depth data of the specific phenomenon under study so that the data may be transferred to other settings (Graneheim et al., 2017; Trochim et al., 2016a). Transferability increased the possibility of generalising the results of my study to South African Foundation Phase classrooms (see Koonin, 2014). The detailed reports of the online settings increased the transferability of my study. Furthermore, the detailed reports allowed future researchers to understand the context of my study. These detailed reports made it possible to replicate my study using the same online setting to establish whether the results would be the same (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c; Trochim et al., 2016a).

I purposefully selected Foundation Phase teachers who implemented RR and provided feedback on the strategy. Thus, the participants included in my study increased the transferability of the study (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). In the following section (4.4.3), I elaborate on the importance of the results being dependable in this study.

4.4.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency of the research findings and the degree to which the results will be the same if the study is performed in another similar environment (Bengtsson, 2016). Thus, dependability focuses on the research design, implementation and data-gathering techniques (Nieuwenhuis, 2019c). The research design includes deciding which codes and text to include during data analysis and which to leave out. Furthermore, the research design enabled me to recode and relabel the data during the analysis process. I kept a record of all changes made during my analysis procedure and used member checking to review my data analysis process to enhance the dependability and trustworthiness of my data (see Graneheim et al., 2017). By documenting everything in my data analysis process, I made it possible for other researchers to see my decisions, the reasons for making those decisions and how I had analysed and interpreted my data (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c).

In this study, I had to consider the confirmability of my results. Therefore, in the following section (4.4.4), I elaborate on the confirmability of my study.

4.4.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the way data are presented and the objectivity of the data (Bengtsson, 2016). Thus, confirmability refers to how participants shape the findings and avoid the researcher's bias, motivation or interest in interpreting and shaping the findings. Therefore, I provided a detailed description of the research process (refer to Section 4.2.4) for other researchers to draw the same conclusion as I did (see Trochim et al., 2016a). Confirmability is also increased when a researcher applies triangulation, as it reduces researcher bias; therefore, I triangulated my research methods in this study (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019c; Trochim et al., 2016a). During member checking, the participants and I discussed the data analysis and interpretation to increase the confirmability of the research findings (see Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016).

4.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When undertaking an academic study, a researcher is expected to conduct the entire process in line with generally accepted norms and values that may be regarded as the professional code of conduct and the integrity of the researcher (Mouton, 2019c). The norms and values in place in my study included informed assent and consent, anonymity, confidentiality, respect and consideration to protect the participants from any foreseeable harm arising from the study (see Maree, 2019). It was not expected from the participants to recall emotionally painful memories; so, harming the participants was avoided. I ensured that the research methods of my study were not harmful or unsuited to the participants (see Louw, 2014).

To protect the participants' identities, the audio and video recordings used in the individual interviews were protected by passwords. These recordings will be stored at the University of Pretoria for 15 years. The participants' personal information was and will be kept confidential and will not be revealed in the research report or to any third party. Furthermore, the participants' time was valuable, and I respected this by being prepared and not using a questionnaire and conducting interviews that were unnecessarily long. If participants receive incentives from a study, it may influence

the trustworthiness of the results (Louw, 2014). Therefore, the participants did not receive any incentives for participating in my study.

To conduct qualitative exploratory research, I received permission and ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria Ethics Committee (Faculty of Education). I also received consent from the Gauteng DBE and obtained the respective teachers', parents' and learners' assent (refer to Annexures G-J). Furthermore, I received consent from the Gauteng DBE to conduct all my research online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I ensured that all aspects of my study met the guidelines provided by the University of Pretoria Ethics Committee (Faculty of Education) and the Gauteng DBE. The data that I received from the participants were not and will not be used in a manner other than what is stipulated in the letters of consent and assent.

To ensure transparency, I met individually, online, with the selected research participants and explained the purpose of the research and what it entailed. I emphasised that participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the research without any consequences. They also had the opportunity to ask me questions to clear up any uncertainties or concerns.

During the data collection phase, the participants were required to complete an online questionnaire, attend an online workshop, implement RR and make anecdotal notes on what they perceived to be the benefits and limitations of RR. They participated in an individual online interview. The questionnaires were answered anonymously and voluntarily. This ensured confidentiality, as the responses could not be traced back to the individual teachers (see Louw, 2014).

During the online workshop, I discussed RR as a reading assessment strategy and how to implement it in a Foundation Phase classroom. It was not necessary to obtain permission from the developers of RR for my study, as RR were used as a strategy that informed teachers on how to observe and record learners' reading behaviour while reading aloud (Kindergarten, 2020). RR did not cost money, and neither the school nor the teachers had to buy the strategy to implement it in the classrooms. My supervisors and I designed all the material they needed (refer to Annexures A and E), and it was provided to the participants during the workshop. The children's literature that the teachers were asked to use was freely available to them in open-

access DBE textbooks. After the workshop, I provided templates (refer to Annexure A) to the teachers, which they used to implement RR.

The data received from the participants were analysed using Atlas.ti. Therefore, to ensure the anonymity of participants, their responses were encrypted directly after each interview (see Nieuwenhuis, 2019a).

Before publication, the participants had the right to access the findings of my study and cross-check whether these correlated with what they had said in their interviews or on their questionnaires. Cross-checking allowed me to focus on the research data (see Mouton, 2019c). I did not distort my data but ensured that I regarded all the information I had received and interpreted as equally important and avoided quoting participants' perspectives out of context (see Louw, 2014). I avoided bias in my research by using the predefined criteria for selecting participants and the research site, as discussed in Section 4.2.3, and implementing content analysis to analyse the data.

4.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I discussed my research design, paradigm, approach and process to qualitatively explore the possibility of implementing RR as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. To explore the possibility of implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms, I used a qualitative exploratory case study and three different data collection tools. The data were analysed using Atlas.ti (qualitative data analysis software) and content analysis. Lastly, I elaborated on the trustworthiness of my data and the ethical considerations for my study.

In Chapter 5, I present and report on the findings from my data. Specific focus is placed on the participants' perspectives regarding the possible benefits and limitations of implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF QUALITATIVE DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I discussed my research methodology for the study and how I planned to conduct my qualitative exploratory case study research using questionnaires, interviews and anecdotal notes. Furthermore, I discussed how I used content analysis to analyse my data. In this chapter, I present the analysed data that I have collected from the participants. Refer to Figure 5.1 for an outline of this chapter.

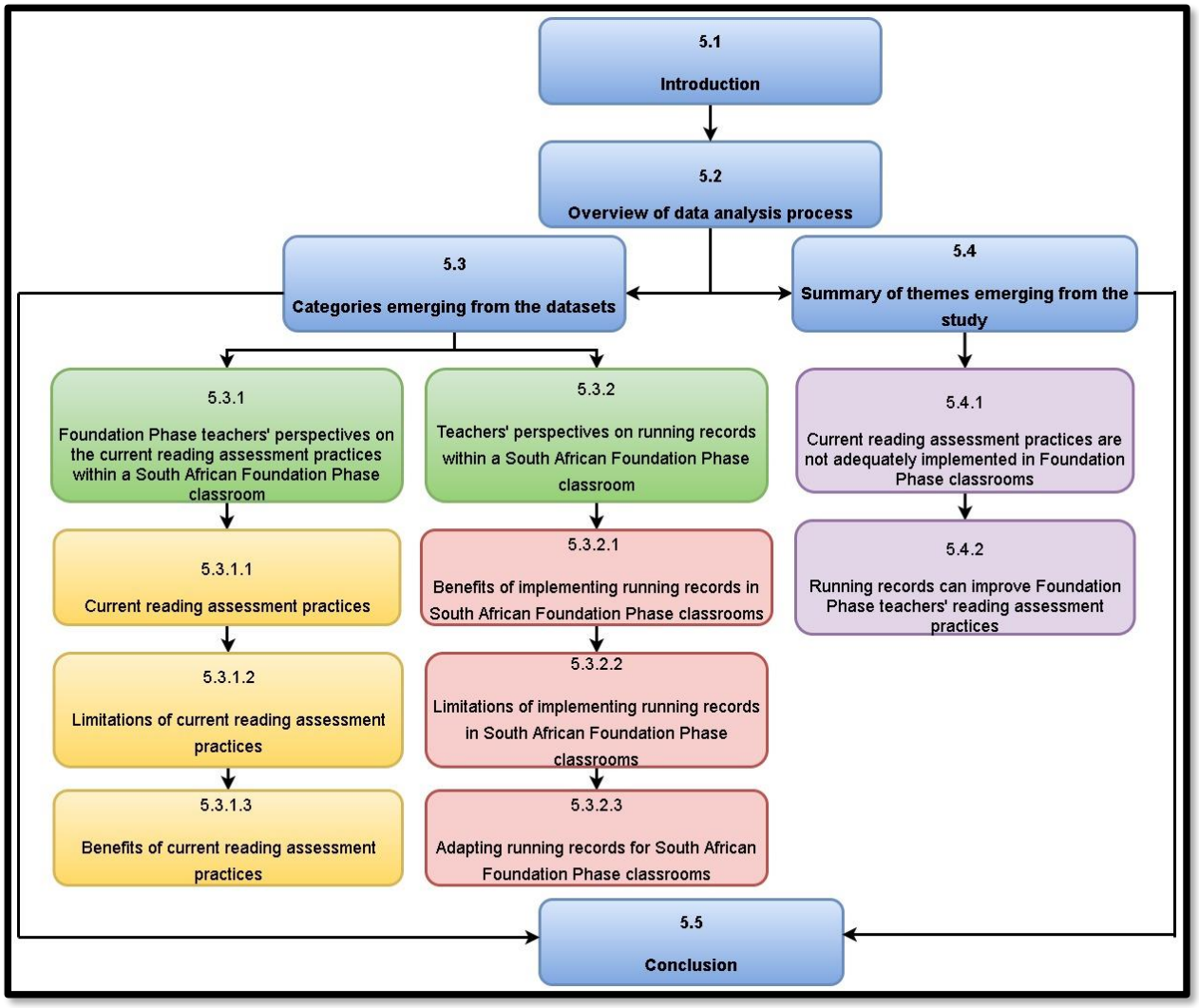


Figure 5.1: Overview of Chapter 5

5.2 OVERVIEW OF DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

In this section, I discuss the data analysis process that consisted of two phases, which formed my categories. In the first category, I analyse and discuss the participants' perspectives on their current reading assessment practices within a South African Foundation Phase classroom setting using the questionnaire (Section 5.3.1). In the second category, I discuss the participants' perspectives on RR within a South African Foundation Phase classroom setting using individual interviews and anecdotal notes (Section 5.3.2). Thereafter, I discuss the themes that have emerged from the categories (Section 5.4). I conclude the chapter by contrasting the participants' current reading assessment practices with a reading assessment practice where the RR strategy is implemented (Section 5.5).

Table 5.1 provides an overview of how my research questions were aligned with the questions in the online questionnaire and individual interview schedule. In the table, I only refer to the question number in the online questionnaire or individual interview schedule. Refer to Annexure C for the complete set of questions used in the questionnaire and Annexure F for the individual interview schedule. Refer to Annexures K to O for examples of the completed RR.

Table 5.1: Overview of how the questions in the questionnaire, interviews and document analysis relate to the research questions

Research question	Questions used from the online questionnaire	Questions used from the individual interviews
Primary research question		
How can RR, a reading assessment strategy, help inform Foundation Phase teachers' reading instruction?	Question 5 Question 6 Question 7 Question 10 Question 11	Question 5 Question 9 Document analysis
Secondary research questions		
What are the benefits of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?	Question 8 Question 9	Question 1 Question 2 Question 3 Question 4 Question 5 Question 6 Document analysis
What are the limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South	Question 8 Question 9 Question 12 Question 18	Question 1 Question 2 Question 7 Question 10

Research question	Questions used from the online questionnaire	Questions used from the individual interviews
African Foundation Phase context?	Question 19 Question 20 Question 21	Document analysis
How can RR be adapted for Foundation Phase classrooms to inform teachers' reading instruction?	Question 5 Question 6 Question 7 Question 10 Question 13 Question 15 Question 16 Question 17 Question 21	Question 8 Question 9

The main purpose of using the above-listed questions in my qualitative exploratory case study research was to explore the possibility of implementing an alternative reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

The complete dataset was qualitatively analysed using Atlas.ti (a qualitative software program) and content analysis (refer to Chapter 4 for a discussion of qualitative research, Atlas.ti and content analysis). The qualitative data in my study were derived from the open-ended questions in my online questionnaire (Annexure C), the individual interviews (Annexure F) and document analysis (Annexures K-O). All the data from the online questionnaires were copied from Google Forms into an MS Word document. The MS Word document was exported to Atlas.ti for analysis. The individual interviews were transcribed using MS Word and then imported into Atlas.ti as separate documents for analysis.

I transcribed the findings of my study verbatim with the question and quotation number in brackets, for example (1:299). This was done to enable the reader to understand from which question the participants' answers have been derived (refer to Annexure P for the Atlas.ti codes and themes report). Most of the participants answered the online questionnaire and individual interviews in their mother tongue, Afrikaans. So, I provide the original answers in Annexure P and only the English translations in this chapter.

Table 5.2: Overview of themes, codes and sub-codes that emerged from the data

Research questions	Themes	Categories	Codes	Sub-codes
Questionnaire focused on current reading assessment practices				
How can RR be adapted for Foundation Phase classrooms to inform teachers' reading instruction?	Current reading assessment practices are inadequately implemented in Foundation Phase classrooms	1. Foundation Phase teachers' perspectives on the current reading assessment practices	Current reading assessment practices	• Importance of teaching and assessing reading skills • Assessment types, methods and tools • Environment for the process of assessment • Intervention and reading programme for assisting learners in reading
What are the limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?			Limitations of current reading assessment practices	• Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment types, methods and tools • Inadequate teacher knowledge and skills • Time management within an overwhelming curriculum • Inadequate reading resources • Learners' language and reading barriers • Home environment and illiterate parents • Suggestions for overcoming the limitations
What are the benefits of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?			Benefits of current reading assessment practices	• Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment types, methods, tools and instruments
Individual interviews and document analysis focused on a reading assessment practice with RR				
What are the benefits of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?	RR can improve Foundation Phase teachers' reading assessment practices	2. Teachers' perspectives on RR within a South African Foundation Phase classroom	Benefits of implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms	• Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment • RR are a standardised strategy • Logical layout of RR • RR assist teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour and errors • RR guide future instructional planning • RR provide evidence of a learner's reading • RR are a learner-centred approach • RR do not benefit only some learners and exclude others
What are the limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?			Limitations of implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms	• Limited time to implement RR • Insufficient funds to implement RR • Reliability, validity and consistency of RR • RR may benefit some learners and exclude others • Inadequate teacher knowledge and skills and choosing appropriate reading text • RR may not test all the aspects of reading
How can RR be adapted for Foundation Phase classrooms to inform teachers' reading instruction?			Adapting RR for South African Foundation Phase classrooms	• Implementing RR in Foundation Phase classrooms • Suggestions for overcoming time and classroom size as a limitation • Suggestions that RR should take place as a continuous process • Suggestions for overcoming inadequate teacher knowledge and skills • Suggestions for overcoming funds as a limitation

5.3 CATEGORIES EMERGING FROM THE DATASETS

From the data collected through the online questionnaires, individual interviews and document analysis, two categories were formulated from my codes and sub-codes. Refer to Table 5.2 for an overview of how the categories were formulated.

In the following sub-section (5.3.1), I discuss the categories that were formed from the data obtained through the questionnaire.

5.3.1 Category 1: Foundation Phase teachers' perspectives on the current reading assessment practices within a South African Foundation Phase classroom

The first category, codes and sub-codes were formed from the questionnaires (refer to Table 5.3 for a visual presentation).

Table 5.3: Category 1: Current reading assessment practices

Category	Codes	Sub-codes
5.3.1 Foundation Phase teachers' perspectives on the current reading assessment practices	5.3.1.1 Current reading assessment practices	• Importance of teaching and assessing reading skills • Assessment types, methods and tools • Environment for the process of assessment • Intervention and reading programme for assisting learners in reading
	5.3.1.2 Limitations of current reading assessment practices	• Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment types, methods and tools • Inadequate teacher knowledge and skills • Time management within an overwhelming curriculum • Inadequate reading resources • Learners' language and reading barriers • Home environment and illiterate parents • Suggestions for overcoming the limitations
	5.3.1.3 Benefits of current reading assessment practices	• Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment types, methods, tools and instruments

The first category is valuable for this study because it provides insight into the benefits and limitations of the participants' current reading assessment practices. According to the TAT, teachers' past and professional experiences of reading and reading assessment, as well as their reading instructional planning, will influence their future

reading practices (Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). Therefore, it was valuable for this study to first study the participants' current reading practices (refer to Section 5.3.1.1), the benefits of their current reading assessment practices (refer to Section 5.3.1.2) and the limitations of their current reading assessment practices (refer to Section 5.31.3), as it enabled me to better understand their current reading assessment practices.

5.3.1.1 Code 1: Current reading assessment practices

In this category, I have identified the following codes that will be discussed: importance of teaching and assessing reading skills; assessment methods, types and tools; environment for the process of assessment; and intervention and reading programme for assisting learners in reading.

- **Importance of teaching and assessing reading skills**

In this study, the data indicate that the majority of the participants believed that reading was important. One of the participants stated that ***reading is important!*** *If a learner struggles to read, it influences all the other skills of the learner* (1:182).

The participant's statement is supported by Joshi and Wijekumar (2019), who have found that poor reading may lead to increased dropout rates in high school because learners struggle to comprehend text. Therefore, mastering reading skills in the Foundation Phase is important. According to the LPT, learners will master different reading skills by being actively involved in the reading process to problem-solve and form an understanding of the text (Lewis-Fokum & Thomas, 2018; Parlindungan, 2019; West-Higgins, 2017). All the participants indicated at Question 13 that they believed particular reading skills were important. At Question 13, the participants were given nine reading skills that they had to rank from one to nine. However, on Google Forms, some participants ranked more than one reading skill the same and emphasised that all of these reading skills were important to them (refer to Figure 5.2).

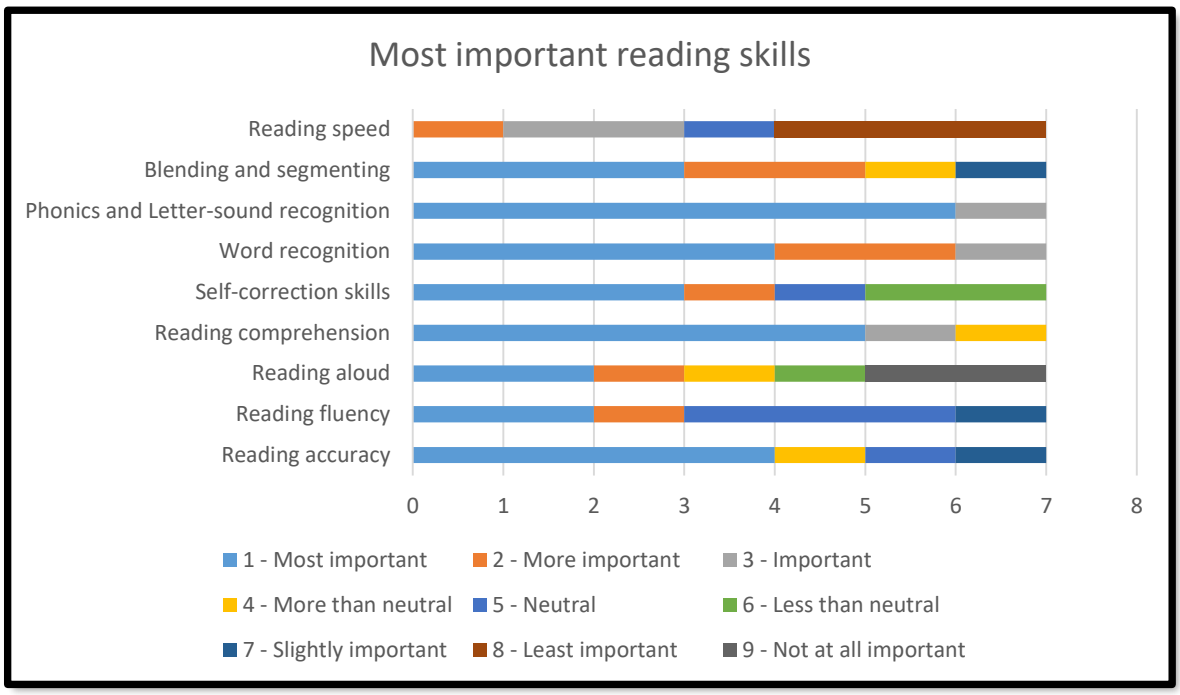


Figure 5.2: Most important reading skills

As depicted in Figure 5.2, the participants regarded the following reading skills as the most important reading skills to teach: phonics and letter-sound recognition (6 out of 7 participants); and reading comprehension (5 out of 7 participants). Even though the participants regarded phonics and letter-sound recognition and reading comprehension as important, the 2016 PIRLS study revealed that 78% of South African learners could not read with comprehension (Howie et al., 2017). From the EGRA, it is evident that 65% of Grade 1 learners are not able to identify letter sounds (Piper, 2009). Thus, it is evident that learners lack the necessary reading skills to form meaning (Trudell, 2019).

- **Reading skills, assessment types, methods and tools**

In my study, it was important to identify the assessment types, methods, tools and strategies the participants used to assess reading skills. In Question 15 in the questionnaire, the participants identified the most important reading skills to be assessed. From Figure 5.3 below, it is evident that the majority of the participants thought that phonics and letter-sound recognition, as well as reading comprehension (7 out of 7 participants), were the most important skills to assess. However, before reading comprehension can be taught and assessed, a teacher first has to teach and assess phonological awareness, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary knowledge

and fluency by using a bottom-up approach (Bester, 2015). According to the LPT, when the different reading skills are taught and assessed, learners will use their perceptual, cognitive, linguistic and social processes in a top-down approach to form an understanding of the text (Fasciana, 2019; Parlindungan, 2019). When learners struggle to use their perceptual, cognitive, linguistic and social context to decode words, recognise words and read fluently, it will be difficult for them to interpret the text correctly and form an understanding of the text.

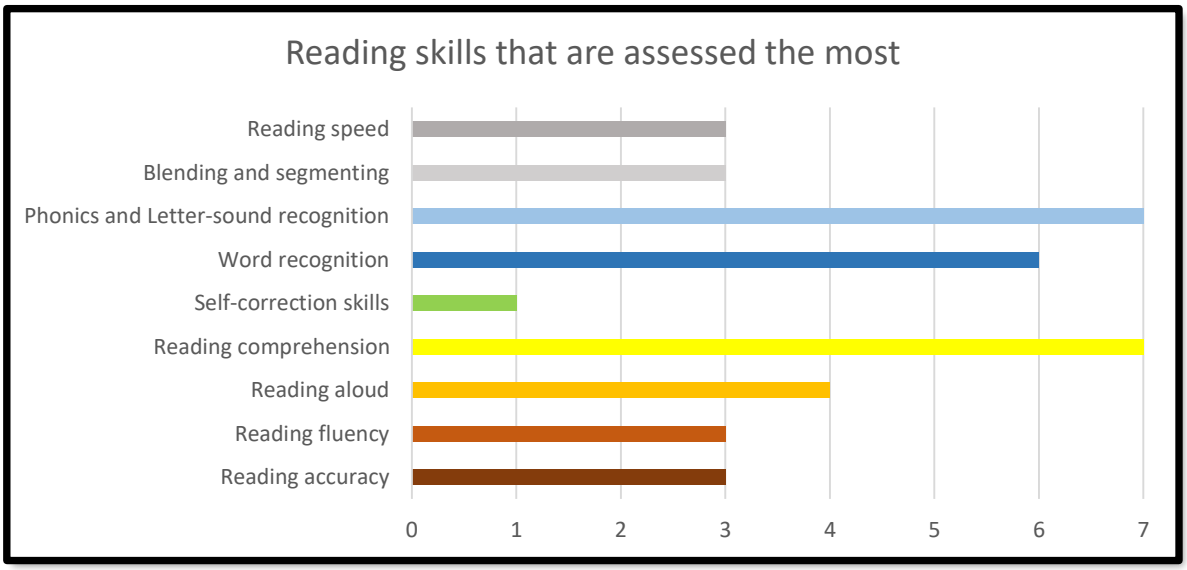


Figure 5.3: Reading skills that are assessed the most

The different reading assessment types, methods and tools used in a classroom will enable the teacher to assess learners' reading skills. The different types of assessment are pre-assessment and formative, summative, continuous and diagnostic assessment (Carl, 2017; Davin, 2017a; Ferguson, 2017). The participants applied their teacher agency to positively influence the assessment of reading (see Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016) by indicating in Question 5 of the questionnaire that they used particular assessment types in their classrooms (refer to Figure 5.4).

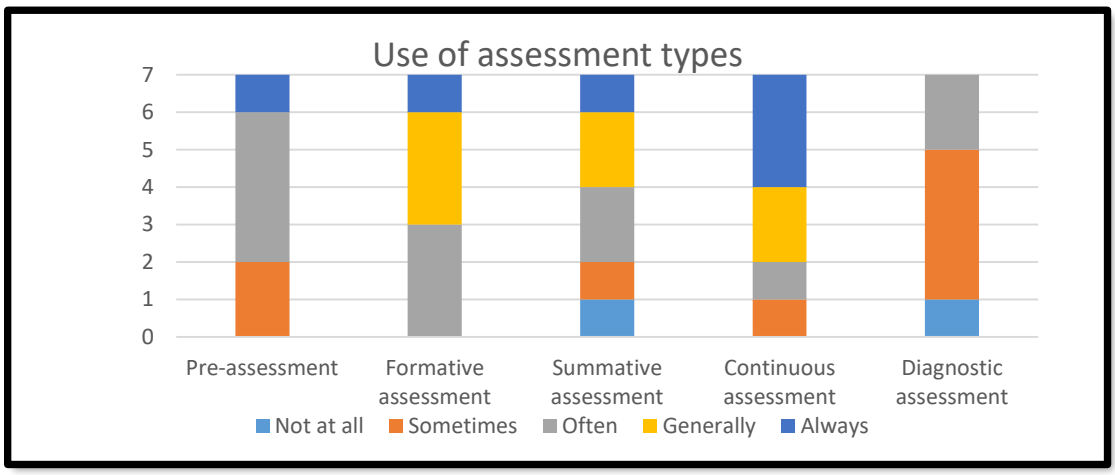


Figure 5.4: Foundation Phase teachers' use of assessment types

As depicted in Figure 5.4, most of the participants always and generally used continuous assessment (5 out of 7 participants) and, in the second place, formative assessment (4 out of 7 participants). Summative assessment (3 out of 7 participants), pre-assessment (1 out of 7 participants) and diagnostic assessment (often used by 2 out of 7 participants) were less popular to be used by the participants. Dube-Xaba and Zulu (2020) state that most schools focus only on summative and formative assessment. Continuous and formative assessment may be regarded as developmental, as it provides ongoing feedback to teachers and learners about their progress in reading (Davin, 2017a; DBE, 2011b). As depicted in Figure 5.4, pre-assessment and baseline assessment are the least popular. Pre-assessment and baseline assessment are used to identify learners' reading needs and errors (Gareis & Grant, 2015c). Consequently, if the participants do not use pre-assessment and baseline assessment, they will not be able to adapt their reading instructional planning to address learners' reading errors.

In Question 6 of the questionnaire, the participants used their past personal and professional experience in education (see Abdullah, 2019) and indicated the assessment methods they used in their current reading assessment practices during summative, formative and continuous assessment (refer to Figure 5.5).

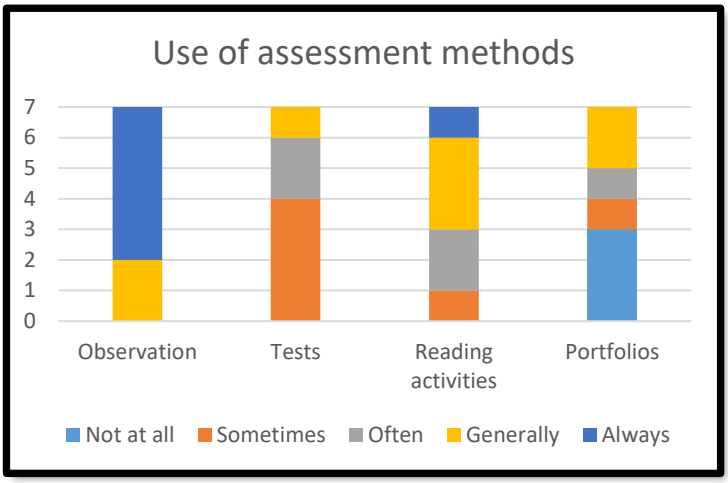


Figure 5.5: Foundation Phase teachers' use of assessment methods

As depicted in Figure 5.5, it is evident that the participants mostly used observation (5 out of 7 participants always and 2 out of 7 participants generally). Some participants indicated that they used observation when learners were ***reading aloud*** (1:287) and that they ***read every day*** (1:290). Most of the participants (6 out of 7 participants) used reading activities. Reading activities may include worksheets, practical activities and reading games, such as word searching. At Question 17, four participants indicated that they used the following reading activities: ***worksheets, comprehension test, word searching and phonics*** (1:185); ***phonics and word recognition should be captured*** (1:290); *start with* ***sounds, then blending, word recognition, comprehension.*** *I read,* ***we read,*** *you read* (1:289); and ***practice, practice, practice*** *… revise previous sight and spelling words regularly and make it fun.* ***Reading games*** *can excite the children and make them want to read* (1:286). Tests are sometimes (4 out of 7 participants) and often (2 out of 7 participants) used as an assessment method in reading. The literature supports the participants' views that observations, informal reading inventories and oral or written tests are good assessment methods (see Gareis & Grant, 2015e; Martinez, 2017).

Reading should also be taught and assessed through observation, reading activities and tests. One participant stated that reading should be taught in ***groups*** (1:288). Another participant believed there should be a ***reading period*** (1:283). Thus, the participants based their decisions to teach reading in groups during reading periods on their past, personal, sociocultural, formal, situational and experiential knowledge within the education sector (see Campbell, 2019; Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016).

However, according to the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b), there should be three 15-minute periods for shared reading and 30 minutes per day for group guided reading. Learners are sorted into different groups during group guided reading based on their reading needs and reading instructional levels (DBE, 2011b). During group guided reading, a teacher addresses the specific reading needs of each group (Bester, 2015). Therefore, according to the LPT, an individual reading programme may be implemented during group guided reading to guide and support the teaching and learning of reading (Febrialismanto, 2015; Worsfold, 2015). Accordingly, there are reading periods where reading can be taught in different groups during group guided reading to teach and assess learners' reading needs.

When studying the assessment types and methods used, it is also necessary to study the assessment tools used. The different assessment tools enable teachers to identify, monitor and assess learners' reading progress (Davin, 2017a; Gareis & Grant, 2015c). At Question 7, the participants indicated which assessment tools they were using in their current reading assessment practices by using their professional autonomy as teachers (refer to Figure 5.6).

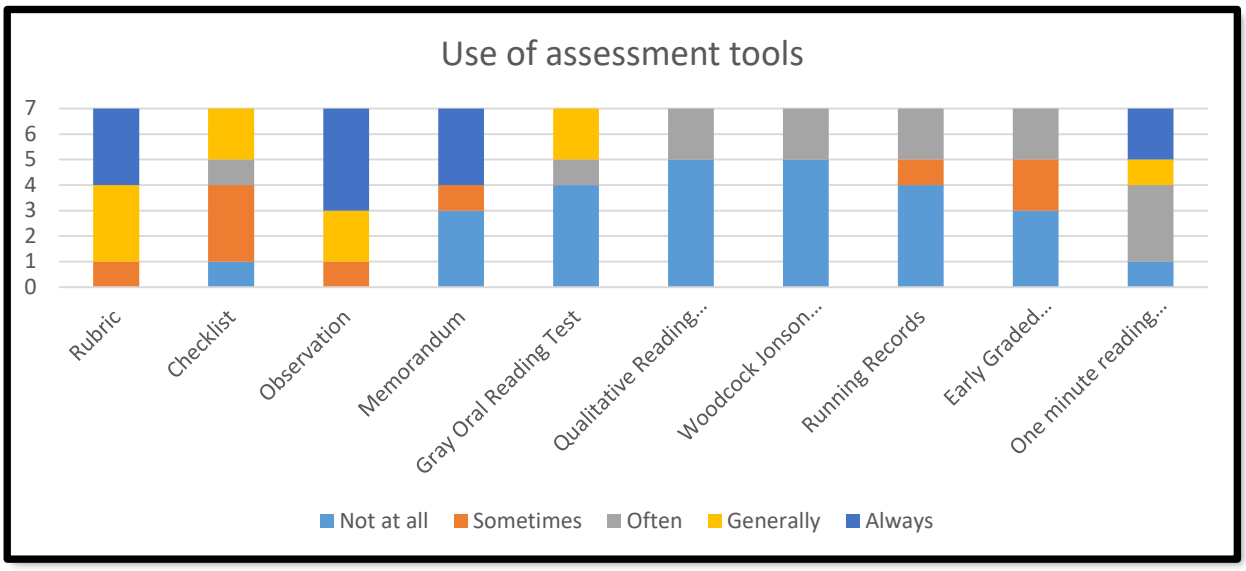


Figure 5.6: Foundation Phase teachers' use of assessment tools

As depicted in Figure 5.6, almost all of the participants used rubrics – always (3 out of 7 participants), generally (3 out of 7 participants) and sometimes (1 out of 7 participants). Almost all the participants used observations (3 out of 7 participants

always, 2 out of 7 participants generally and 1 out of 7 participants sometimes), while half of the participants (4 out of 7 participants) used memorandums. As depicted in Figure 5.5, the participants indicated that they did not really use tests (4 out of 7 participants sometimes); however, as shown in Figure 5.6, the use of a memorandum is popular. In my opinion, a memorandum and a test work together during assessment; thus, it should be the same. Almost all of the participants (6 out of 7 participants) used one-minute reading tests. Almost all of the participants (5 out of 7 participants) used checklists to a limited extent. Furthermore, the participants seldom used the Qualitative Reading Inventory, the Woodcock-Johnson Passage Comprehension Test, RR and the EGRA. Foundation Phase teachers should use rubrics, checklists, observations, informal reading inventories and oral or written tests as reading assessment tools to adequately identify learners' reading needs (DBE, 2011b; Gareis & Grant, 2015a; Martinez, 2017). In my study, the participants used their past and professional autonomy in implementing reading assessment in their classrooms (see Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). As such, they relied predominantly on rubrics, while most of them did not use checklists. By using rubrics, according to the LPT, teachers document and monitor readers' reading behavioural changes over time (Worsfold, 2015). Therefore, the participants did not use all the assessment tools available to them as suggested in the literature.

- **Environment for the process of assessment**

It is evident from Figure 5.4, which relates to Questions 16 and 17 in the questionnaire, that the participants perceived reading assessment as a continuous process that must happen in a relaxed classroom environment. One of the participants believed *reading assessment should take place* ***regularly*** *and in a* ***relaxed environment*** (1:277). Another participant perceived reading assessment as a ***continuous process that takes place in groups*** (1:279). Another participant agreed that reading was ***continuous*** *in all subjects;* ***incidental and formal*** (1:280). Continuous assessment supports teachers in identifying learners' reading needs and adapting their reading instructional planning based on the needs of the learners (Davin, 2017a). Therefore, the process of reading assessment monitors readers' reading progress (Afflerbach, 2016). Another participant agreed by stating that ***reading aloud****, however, should happen* ***continuously*** *throughout the term* (1:278).

Learners should be assessed continuously in a quiet environment (Burdujan, 2020). The following statements of participants agree with Burdujan:

> *I think a **relaxed environment** should be developed, and the learners should feel **comfortable** and read alone to the teacher.* (1:281)

> *Learners should be **tested in private**. In the classroom, learners are very **nervous and shy**.* (1:282)

- **Intervention and reading programme for assisting learners in reading**

From Question 21, it was evident that the participants felt they needed an intervention and reading programme for assisting learners with reading. One participant stated: *after I identify the problem, a **workable intervention programme is needed*** (1:297). Another participant agreed by stating that *we should **standardise the teaching of reading** and **develop a workable reading programme** where all the reading errors are identified and can be used during intervention* (1:318). Some participants indicated that they needed a workable intervention programme after they had identified learners' reading errors. However, all the participants indicated at Question 10.1 in the questionnaire that they based their reading instructional planning on the outcome of their reading assessment. In contrast to this, the participants indicated, as depicted in Figure 5.4, that they did not use pre-assessment and diagnostic assessment. Furthermore (refer to Figure 5.7), the participants indicated at Question 10.2 in the questionnaire that most of them often (57%) based their reading instructional planning on the outcome of their reading assessment. However, Truckenmiller et al. (2020) point out that a reading assessment strategy guides teachers in their reading instructional planning, which may include a workable reading intervention programme. As such, a reading assessment strategy identifies learners' reading behaviour and errors. The reading behaviour and errors of learners can be addressed during reading instructional planning to improve their reading (D'Agostino et al., 2021).

The following figure (5.7) depicts the participants' indications of how often they based their reading instructional planning on the outcome of their reading assessment.

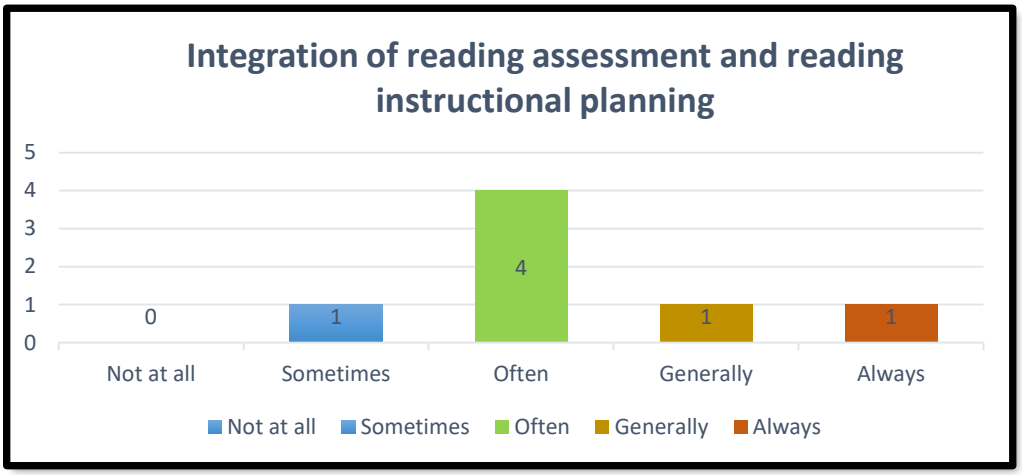


Figure 5.7: Base reading instructional planning on the outcome of reading assessment

As depicted in Figure 5.7, it is evident that only some participants generally or always (2 out of 7 participants) and half of the participants (4 out of 7 participants) sometimes based their reading instructional planning on the outcomes of their reading assessment. According to the literature and the LPT, teachers should always use the outcome of a reading assessment to guide them in developing and planning reading instructional planning (D'Agostino et al., 2021; Febrialismanto, 2015; Worsfold, 2015). The instructional planning of those participants who do not base their reading instructional planning on the outcome of a reading assessment may be incorrectly informed to address learners' reading needs.

In the following section (5.3.1.2), I discuss the limitations of the participants' current reading assessment practices as identified by the participants.

5.3.1.2 Code 2: Limitations of current reading assessment practices

In this category, I have identified the following codes that will be discussed: reliability, validity and consistency of assessment types, methods and tools; inadequate teacher knowledge and skills; time management within an overwhelming curriculum; inadequate reading resources; learners' language and reading barriers; home environment; illiterate parents; and suggestions for overcoming the limitations.

- **Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment types, methods and tools**

It is important that an assessment type, method or tool is reliable, valid and consistent to accurately identify learners' reading errors and monitor their reading progress (DBE, 2011b). Therefore, I asked the participants whether they perceived their current assessment types, methods and tools as reliable, valid and consistent. Half of the participants had strong opinions that the current assessment types, methods, tools and strategies they were using were not reliable, valid and consistent, as indicated in Questions 8, 9 and 12 of the questionnaire. A participant gave the following statement:

> *I do not think a **rubric is valid.** When a rubric is designed and learners are assessed according to it, I feel that the **rubric does not suit all the needs of my learners in the class.** I am always **uncertain to give a mark** because a rubric cannot be rigidly followed.* (1:188)

Gareis and Grant (2015d) agree that a rubric indicates a learner's overall reading performance but does not indicate how a learner has performed in a specific component of reading (i.e. reading skill). Therefore, only implementing a rubric for assessment will not provide a valid, reliable and consistent outcome of a learner's reading performance. One participant said:

> *I feel learners are **being tested once at the end of each term through formal assessment** and **get one opportunity** to show they can do it. Learners should be provided with more than one opportunity to test a concept because they do not feel the same each day*. (1:176)

This participant indicated that formative assessment was only performed once and was, therefore, insufficient. The participant's statement is in agreement with Figure 5.4, which depicts that the participants indicated that they mostly used continuous and formative assessment. However, formative assessment is used continuously during the term and provides ongoing feedback on a learner's reading progress (Davin, 2017a; DBE 2011b).

Another participant mentioned that she was ***uncertain*** whether the current assessment types, methods, tools and strategies were valid, reliable and consistent ***because that is what we know and [we] will be open if there is a better method*** (1:192). In contrast with the participants' opinions, the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b) states that teachers will be able to identify learners' reading behaviour accurately using

the prescribed manner of assessment, and the results will thus be valid, reliable and efficient.

- **Inadequate teacher knowledge and skills**

The participants also indicated inadequate knowledge of and skills in teaching reading and reading assessment in their answers to Questions 18, 19 and 20. They indicated the challenges they experienced in teaching and assessing reading, as well as reasons for the poor reading performance of South African learners. One participant stated: *I think there are* ***more creative ways to assess*** *learners* (1:180). Other participants agreed by asserting that ***more reading workshops*** would be a bonus (1:316) and ***more training and support to teach reading*** (1:317) were needed as sometimes teachers implemented the ***incorrect strategies to teach reading*** (1:312). Another participant stated: *I would love to* ***learn more*** *about how to* ***assist learners*** *to improve their reading.* ***More knowledge building*** (1:178). One participant stated: ***show me better ways of intervention*** (1:180).

From the above perspectives, it is evident that the participants should focus on assessment for learning to identify at-risk learners, monitor their progress and develop reading programmes to address their reading needs (see Govender, 2020). Without the necessary training in assessing learners' reading and planning a workable intervention programme by using assessment for learning, learners' reading will not improve (Reed et al., 2019). The participants played an active role and used their professional autonomy in identifying limitations with their current reading assessment practices (see Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). Besides the validity, reliability and consistency of the current reading assessment used and teachers' knowledge of the teaching of reading and reading assessment, the participants indicated time management and an overwhelming curriculum as a limitation.

- **Time management within an overwhelming curriculum**

Questions 18, 19 and 20 revealed that some participants regarded time management and an overwhelming curriculum as barriers in their reading assessment practices. One participant stated that ***time to read is insufficient*** (1:181) due to an ***overwhelming workload*** (1:319). A second participant agreed as follows: ***time*** *is the biggest challenge. Our* ***crammed curriculum*** *does not leave much space for reading and practical activities* (1:302). Another participant indicated that they had *limited time*

to do it, as they did *not always have* ***enough time*** *during the day to let the kids* ***read independently*** (1:295). Furthermore, a participant asserted that *there is not* ***enough time to reteach*** (1:301). Other participants agreed as follows:

> *The* ***time to read should*** *be a lot more and the focus should be on* ***sight words*** *and* ***reading of phrases.*** *We neglect reading due to a* ***crammed curriculum****.* (1:284)
>
> *A* ***crammed curriculum*** *that does not allow teachers to spend the* ***needed time*** *on reading. There is no time to* ***revise sight and spelling*** *words*. (1:309)
>
> *The* ***time to assess each learner's potential is difficult because*** *we are pressured for time*. (1:294)
>
> *With the Covid-19 pandemic, it was a* ***struggle to finish the curriculum,*** *so the* ***reading assessment was not always a top priority****. I follow my planning and only when I see children that are struggling I would adapt my reading period/lesson.* (1:183)

The participants indicated time and an overwhelming curriculum as limitations within their current reading assessment practices. However, the CAPS curriculum provides a structure, sequence and time frame to teach and assess reading (Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). In addition to this, the DBE has realised that the number of Home Language assessment tasks was time-consuming and has reduced the assessment tasks to one assessment task per grade per time. Consequently, teachers should have more time to teach reading and monitor learners' reading progress (DBE, 2019e). According to the LPT, teachers should document and monitor learners' reading behaviour regularly (Worsfold, 2015). Teachers' professional experience and knowledge in teaching and assessing reading will enable them to continuously document and monitor learners' reading behaviour (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016).

- **Inadequate reading resources**

Some participants indicated that inadequate reading resources to enhance reading and the identification of the appropriate reading level of a learner might be problems in their reading assessment practices. One participant stated that ***resources should be functional*** *so that reading can improve* (1:304). Another participant agreed and

stated that ***[c]apturing of new skills and knowledge*** *does not happen and there are* ***no good implementable reading programmes*** *in schools* (1:311).

Another participant agreed that they needed an ***appropriate[ly] graded reading text,*** *especially for learners with* ***limited vocabulary span*** *and a* ***small living world*** *experience* (1:300). The participants' need for a workable reading programme that supports the reading level of the learners and develops their reading skills and knowledge is supported by De Lange et al. (2020), who have concluded that the CAPS document gives limited direction for teachers in reading, reading instructional planning and structured reading approaches. However, directly after the assessment requirements for a specific grade and term, the CAPS document (DBE, 2011) provides suggestions on which aspects of reading need to be taught and how to assess these. So, teachers should use these suggestions in the CAPS document to implement good reading resources in their classrooms to help develop learners' reading skills (Howie & McLeod Palane, 2017). However, the participants indicated that there were no good reading programmes and resources available to them. Hence, the participants in this study indicated that they had a need for more diverse reading programmes and resources to suit the diverse needs of South African classrooms.

- **Learners' language and reading barriers**

Some participants indicated at Questions 18, 19 and 20 that learners' inadequate language and reading abilities might be a barrier in their reading. One participant asserted that *the* ***learner who struggles*** *is the problem* (1:301), because ***they struggle to follow*** (1:299) *due to* ***poor concentration*** (1:303). A few other participants agreed as follows: *learners have* ***limited vocabulary span*** (1:300), ***poor language skills*** (1:305); the ***learner cannot read, poor word recognition, reading to soft*** (1:292); ***learners do not know their phonics, sounds out everything, so there are no fluency or comprehension*** (1:296); the ***LoLT of the learner is not their mother tongue*** (1:193); ***learners do not read enough*** (1:187); and there are ***excessive differences in the ability of learners to read*** (1:305).

From the above opinions, it is evident that the participants struggled with time and resources to accommodate the diverse reading needs of the learners in their classrooms. However, if they followed the time schedule and implemented the resources suggested in the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b), time and resources might

not be a problem. The home environment of the learners may also contribute towards learners' language and reading barriers.

- **Home environment and illiterate parents**

Some participants indicated at Questions 18, 19 and 20 that the learners' home environment and illiterate parents might contribute towards reading being a problem in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. One participant stated that ***parents' poor assistance*** (1:312) might contribute to learners struggling to read. Another participant indicated that learners ***do not read at home*** (1:305). According to the participants, learners do not read enough at home because they ***spend too much time in front of the television*** (1:308) and do ***little reading with parents*** (1:310). Another participant declared:

> ***Parents do not ensure that learners practice reading at home,*** *again language barrier,* ***some parents are not able to help learners*** *because they do not understand the language.* (1:307)

From the participants' opinions, it is evident that learners' home environment plays an important role in their mastering adequate reading skills. The participants' perceptions are supported by Roux and Howie (2017), who found that parents who engaged their children in early literacy activities achieved higher scores in the 2016 PIRLS than learners whose parents did not engage them in early literacy activities. According to the LPT, a reader uses different visible and invisible knowledge sources during early literacy activities. Parents can assist their children in developing their visible (e.g. visual and auditory skills) and invisible (e.g. understanding and background knowledge) knowledge sources, as these will enable them to improve their reading skills over time (Parlindungan, 2019; Worsfold, 2015). Thus, to improve learners' reading skills, parents must engage with their children in early reading activities, which will enable them to master reading skills in the Foundation Phase.

- **Suggestions for overcoming the limitations**

The participants identified the following limitations: time management; an overwhelming curriculum; limited or inadequate reading resources; inadequate teacher knowledge and skills; and learners and their parents within their current reading assessment practices. Thus, the participants used their autonomy, authority and professional skills and knowledge (see Imants & Van der Wal, 2020) in making

the following suggestions towards the above limitations provided in Question 21. One participant suggested that teachers should ***return … to the basics*** *and creating a love for reading* (1:319). Another participant agreed by stating that *we should* ***go back to the most important*** *and leave out the unnecessary things in the curriculum so that we do have* ***enough time*** (1:314). Other participants made the following suggestions: *make* ***more time for reading*** (1:319); ***more reading activities, reading periods*** (1:313); and ***spending more time on reading. Somehow parents should be more involved*** (1:315).

The above opinions support the bottom-up approach (refer to Section 2.4.1), according to which a teacher teaches reading by starting with phonological and phonemic awareness, letters and sound knowledge, word recognition, reading fluency and reading comprehension (Bester, 2015). From these statements, it is evident that the participants required an alternative reading assessment strategy that would be functional to base their reading instruction on and improve learners' reading skills. According to the LPT, teachers should identify, document and monitor learners' reading behavioural changes over time and address learners' reading needs during reading instructional planning (Febrialismanto, 2015; Worsfold, 2015).

In this section, I have discussed the limitations the participants experienced within their current reading assessment practices. In the following section (5.3.1.3), I discuss the benefits the participants experienced within their current reading assessment practices.

5.3.1.3 Code 3: Benefits of current reading assessment practices

In this category, I have identified the following code that will be discussed: assessment types, methods, tools and instruments are reliable, valid and consistent. The code was identified from Questions 8, 9 and 12. At these questions, participants had to indicate whether the current assessment types, tools and methods were valid, reliable and consistent.

- **Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment types, methods, tools and instruments**

Although the participants mentioned that their current reading assessment practices were unreliable, invalid and inconsistent (refer to Section 5.3.1.2), three participants

disagreed and indicated at Questions 8, 9 and 12 the following: ***I think it is valid, yes*** (1:189); ***yes, I used CAPS and that which I am trained with*** (1:191); and ***the different instruments used make diagnosing of weak learners [reading skills] easy*** (1:179).

Thus, the above participants believed that when they taught and assessed according to the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b), focused on phonemic awareness, word recognition, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency and formed reading ability groups, their reading assessment practices were reliable, valid and consistent.

Two participants believed their current reading assessment practices were reliable, valid and consistent because they indicated at Questions 8, 9 and 12 that they used informal assessment and observation. They stated:

> ***I try to assess (informally) as much as possible*** *… To give one big assessment at the end of the year or term cannot truly show the true abilities of a learner.* ***One must always observe and make notes.*** (1:190)
>
> *Learners have ups and downs. To* ***constantly assess through observation*** *will give you a* ***general idea of the child's abilities*** *whilst not putting any unnecessary pressure on the child.* (1:177)

The perspectives of the above participants are aligned with those of Bester (2015), who believes reading assessment is a continuous process and should be regarded as assessment for learning. To adequately monitor and report on learners' reading progress, it is vital to assess their reading progress continuously through formative assessment (Afflerbach, 2016). Thus, the participants continuously assess learners' reading progress through observation.

When all the responses from the participants about their current reading assessment practices are taken into consideration, it is clear that it is vital to start exploring alternative reading assessment strategies for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. Therefore, in the second phase of my research process, I provided a workshop on RR. After the workshop, the participants implemented one RR and made notes of RR, which were followed by individual interviews. In the following section (5.3.2), I elaborate on the participants' perspectives on RR within a South African Foundation Phase classroom.

5.3.2 Category 2: Teachers' perspectives on Running Records within a South African Foundation Phase classroom

The second category, codes and sub-codes were formed from the individual interviews and anecdotal notes (refer to Table 5.4 for a visual representation).

Table 5.4: Category 2: Reading assessment practices with Running Records

Category	Codes	Sub-codes
5.3.2 Teachers' perspectives on RR within a South African Foundation Phase classroom	5.3.2.1 Benefits of implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms	• Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment • RR are a standardised strategy • Logical layout of RR • RR assist teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour and errors • RR guide future instructional planning • RR provide evidence of a learner's reading • RR are a learner-centred approach • RR do not benefit only some learners and exclude others
	5.3.2.2 Limitations of implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms	• Limited time to implement RR • Insufficient funds to implement RR • Reliability, validity and consistency of RR • May benefit some learners and exclude others • Inadequate teacher knowledge and skills and choosing appropriate reading text • RR may not test all the aspects of reading
	5.3.2.3 Adapting RR for South African Foundation Phase classrooms	• Implementing RR in Foundation Phase classrooms • Suggestions for overcoming time and classroom size as a limitation • Suggestions that RR should take place as a continuous process • Suggestions for overcoming inadequate teacher knowledge and skills • Suggestions for overcoming funds as a limitation

The second category is valuable for this study because it enabled me to identify the benefits and limitations of RR from the participants' perspectives. Furthermore, the second category allowed me to make possible recommendations on how RR might be adapted for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. The participants were critical about RR and responded in a specific manner about the benefits and limitations they experienced when using their professional agency (see Abdullah, 2019; Imants & Van der Wal, 2020; Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016). Therefore, it was important for this study

to determine the benefits and limitations of RR that the participants had identified (refer to Sections 5.3.2.1 and 5.3.2) and address the participants' suggestions with regard to adapting RR for South African Foundation Phase classrooms (refer to Section 5.3.2.3).

5.3.2.1 Code 1: Benefits of implementing Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms

In this category, I have identified the following codes that will be discussed: reliability, validity and consistency of assessment; RR are a standardised strategy; RR assist teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour and errors; RR guide future instructional planning; RR provide evidence of a learner's reading; RR are a learner-centred approach; and RR do not benefit some learners and exclude others.

- **Reliability, validity and consistency of assessment**

It is important that a reading assessment strategy is reliable, valid and consistent in order to accurately measure and identify learners' reading errors (Gareis & Grant, 2015e). Therefore, at Questions 1 and 3 of the interview schedule, the participants were asked whether they thought RR provided valid, reliable and consistent information and whether RR measured what the strategy purported to measure. Five of the seven participants indicated that they believed RR were reliable, valid and consistent. One participant stated:

> *When a **different teacher** uses the **same format** then he or she will get the **same results with the same learner.*** (1:1)

> *I did not only use the **one reading text,** but I also used **classroom storybooks** and even if I took her [the learner] **reading assessment task** into consideration then her **results are very similar.*** (1:7)

The perspective of the abovementioned participants is supported by Harmey and Kabuto's (2018) finding that there is an inter-rater agreement and the kappa scores are high when different scores are used to assess the same RR. Other participants agreed by stating: *yes, I think so because it is a **true reflection of the child's reading*** (2:10); and *every learner is being **assessed on the same level** so the **teacher does not decide what mark** a learner should receive* (4:9).

Briceńo and Klein (2018) agree with the above participants by indicating that RR provide a true reflection of a reader's accuracy rate, error rate, self-correcting rate and implementation of miscue analysis in identifying the reading level of the learner. The following comments were given by the participants:

> ***Valid and reliable*** *because* ***when another teacher and I are going to assess the reading, we will identify the same errors*** *and* ***there can only be one word for the errors the learner is making or one description.*** *For example, if a learner does not read a word it is an omission.* (6:2)

> ***… the instrument tells me what errors the learner made.*** *There is a* ***specific word for the error,*** *thus* ***I know where the learner's problem is*** *… It makes it* ***reliable****.* (6:4)

> *I have a* ***reliable instrument*** *that I can work with, it* ***guides me in planning my lessons****.* (6:10)

The above participants' comments concur with McMurry-Harrington's (2019) viewpoint that RR are a reliable and valid reading assessment strategy in identifying learners' reading errors. Another participant also agreed by stating the following:

> *I never had something to measure reading with and now with* ***RR, I have something to measure with*** *that is* ***fair*** *and makes it* ***reliable*** *and it* ***show[s] you exactly*** *and it is* ***scientifically proven;*** *so, it is tested and you know when you follow it, it* ***will provide true results****.* (3:7)

> *I think it is* ***valid and reliable*** *because we can* ***use it to give marks****. After all, one does not always know what to give learners, especially on a rubric …* ***and in this way, their marks will be the same with me or another teacher.*** *So, let's say someone stands in for you or there are two or three Grade 2 classrooms, we know that* ***every group will be assessed in the same fair manner****.* (4:1)

As a reading assessment strategy, the above participants' beliefs about RR are aligned with those of D'Agostino et al. (2019), who indicate that RR accurately identify and assess learners' reading behaviour. As such, it is important that teachers observe what reading processes and reading behaviour a reader is using while reading to accurately inform reading instructional planning (Sangia, 2018).

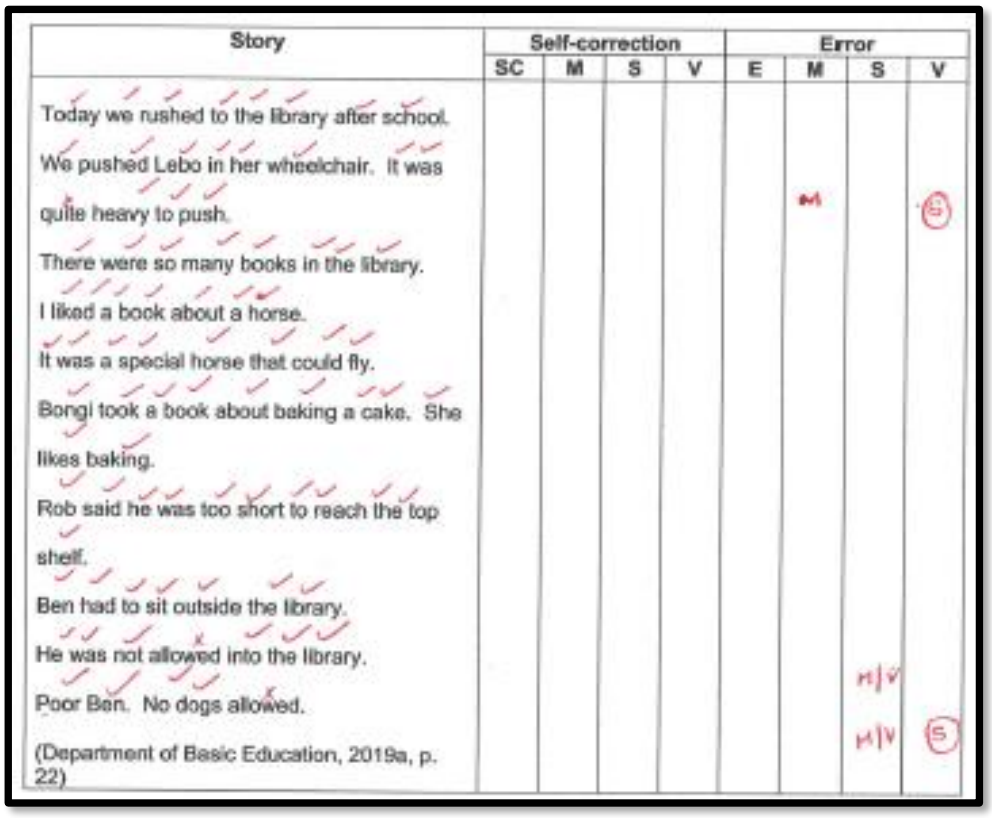
- **Running Records are a standardised strategy**

It is important that a reading assessment strategy is consistent and standardised to ensure that the results are valid and reliable (Gareis & Grant, 2015e). In Question 4, the participants were asked whether they thought RR could give consistent scores. Some participants perceived RR as reliable, valid and consistent because they indicated RR might be regarded as a standardised reading assessment strategy. One participant answered: ***yes, because everyone reads the same text*** (4:6). However, with RR, a teacher needs to identify an appropriate text for each learner (Burdujan, 2020). Thus, learners will read different texts. Another participant agreed as follows:

> *It is a **standardised [reading assessment strategy]**, so every learner is **assessed in the same manner**, the same programme was used, the same problem solving, **the same mistakes that were made gave the same description**; so I think it is **consistent** … **Everyone is going to do it the same way**.* (6:5)

> *It provides a **standard** that can be used **over the country in all the provinces**. Imagine we can send our children from one province to another, from one school to another and we know each school worked according to it … then there is a standard that can be followed … and it makes the **results reliable**.* (6:7)

Learners are being assessed in the same standardised manner due to the process followed in taking an RR, as well as the specific reading behaviour that needs to be indicated (Burdujan, 2020; Sudirman, 2016) (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3 for a discussion on the process of taking an RR). The participants indicated that RR were valid, reliable and consistent. However, as depicted in Figure 5.8 below, when analysing their anecdotal notes (RR), I found that some RR notes were incomplete, mistakes were sometimes incorrectly identified or it was unclear what the mistake was. Some of the participants only indicated a mistake by writing an “X” above the word. For example, in Figure 5.8, the participant only indicated at the words “quite” and “allowed” that the learner read these incorrectly but did not indicate the reading behaviour, such as omission or repetition. Furthermore, the participant wrote, for example, an “S” under “visual” instead of indicating a structural error under the column stating “S” (refer to Annexure K for an example of this).



Story	Self-correction				Error			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Today we rushed to the library after school. We pushed Lebo in her wheelchair. It was quite heavy to push. There were so many books in the library. I liked a book about a horse. It was a special horse that could fly. Bongi took a book about baking a cake. She likes baking. Rob said he was too short to reach the top shelf. Ben had to sit outside the library. He was not allowed into the library. Poor Ben. No dogs allowed. (Department of Basic Education, 2019a, p. 22)						M	M/V M/V	(5)

Figure 5.8: Running record unclear mistakes

- **Logical layout of a Running Record**

Some participants believe that the logical layout of an RR makes it a reliable reading assessment strategy. At Question 6, one participant stated:

> *It is reliable because of the* ***rules and things that are excellently structured*** *… I think the* ***layout of the test is good****.* (3:3)

> *The test is* ***consistent*** *because there are* ***no grey and white areas****.* (3:14)

> *I think it is a* ***straightforward resource****.* (3:31)

Other participants agreed by stating:

> *I think it is* ***100% accurate*** *… The* ***guidelines, miscue analysis and those things are very clear****. Thus I do not think there would be a* ***huge difference when I or someone else test the child****.* (5:1)

> *I think because its* ***instructions and miscue analysis are so clearly structured****, you get a* ***good test outcome****.* (5:7)

The perspectives of the participants are aligned with those of Barone et al. (2020), who regard RR as a reading assessment strategy that guides teachers in a structured manner in identifying learners' reading behaviour using miscue analysis. RR also assist teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour and errors. The RR strategy is based on the LPT; therefore, RR assist teachers in observing learners' reading behaviour and keeping a detailed record of their reading progress to accurately inform and scaffold teachers' reading instructional planning (West-Higgins, 2017).

- **RR assist teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour and errors**

At Question 5, some participants indicated that they thought RR had the potential to inform their reading instructional planning. One participant stated: *I think it should be **valuable in the future** and **you will be able to see with what a learner is struggling*** (1:8). A second participant said that ***you are able to see that all the learners struggle here,** it can help you* (3:11). As such, RR may be successfully implemented when reading instructional planning is based on the findings of a learner's RR (D'Agostino et al., 2021). Other participants agreed by stating as follows:

> *Yes, I think so, for example, if you want to assess fluency, it **provides a good indication where the child is.*** (2:5)
>
> ***To see which phonics the learners are struggling with**, for example, two-letter or three-letter words or reversing of letters, it **assisted in identifying those errors**. If they just read for you, you do not realise these things, but when you mark it, you see, for example, a learner struggles to identify the letter "b".* (1:9)
>
> ***You can choose a reading text that is suitable for the grade** and **then you can identify the problem** … I know when I tested my child, I realised **reading speed** is something one can work on and I haven't really assessed it.* (3:6)
>
> *RR is good to use because it shows you how a child's **reading developed** and to see if **what you are doing is working or if it is still a problem** … I believe that RR is very good because it **tests a wide spectrum of a child**. It is not like the one-minute reading test that only tests how many*

> *words or how fast a child can read. With RR, you can really* ***identify the problem*** *because it is* ***clearly structured****.* (3:9)

Briceño and Klein (2018) agree with the above participants by stating that RR identify learners' reading accuracy rate, error rate, self-correction rate and reading behaviour. Harmey and Kabuto (2018) also agree that RR enable a teacher to identify the most appropriate text for reading. As such, teachers use their autonomy, agency and professional experience to identify a learner's reading behaviour during an RR and adapt their reading instructional planning based on learners' reading needs (Campbell, 2019; Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016; Sangia, 2018). The participants gave the following responses with regard to this:

> ***I will know what to do individually (remedial)*** *with the child, where he* ***needs assistance and in groups.*** *When I do these little tests, I see what my* ***learners are struggling*** *with, for example blending of sounds.* (6:1)

> *Especially when you have* ***learners that make the same mistakes****, you know it is a large part of the group that makes the same mistake.* (5:6)

> *Any teacher can use the instrument [strategy] to test, for example, reading fluency, because the areas that you need to test are very* ***logically stated*** *…* ***thus you will be able to focus on what the learner is struggling with****.* (3:1)

Participants and Waltz (2016) believe that RR have the potential to assist teachers in identifying learners' reading needs and address those needs during reading instructional planning. Their perspectives are supported by the CAPS document, which states that a reading assessment strategy should enable teachers to monitor, mark and evaluate learners' reading progress and then use those results in adapting their reading instructional planning (DBE, 2011b).

It is evident from some participants' anecdotal notes that RR assisted them in identifying learners' reading errors. As depicted in Figures 5.9 and 5.10, two participants indicated on their RR what type of errors the learners made and how they could address those errors in their reading instructional planning (refer to Annexures

L and M). RR, furthermore, assisted the participants in their reading instructional planning.

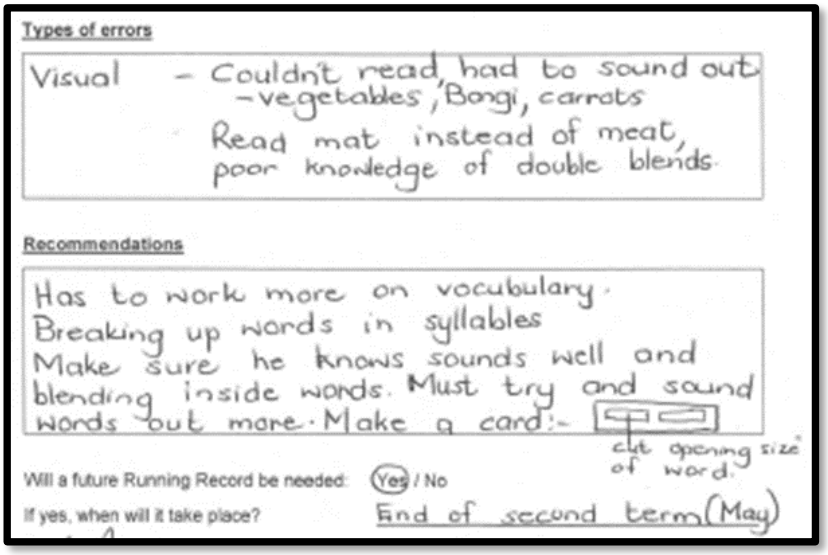


Figure 5.9: Running Records identify and address reading errors

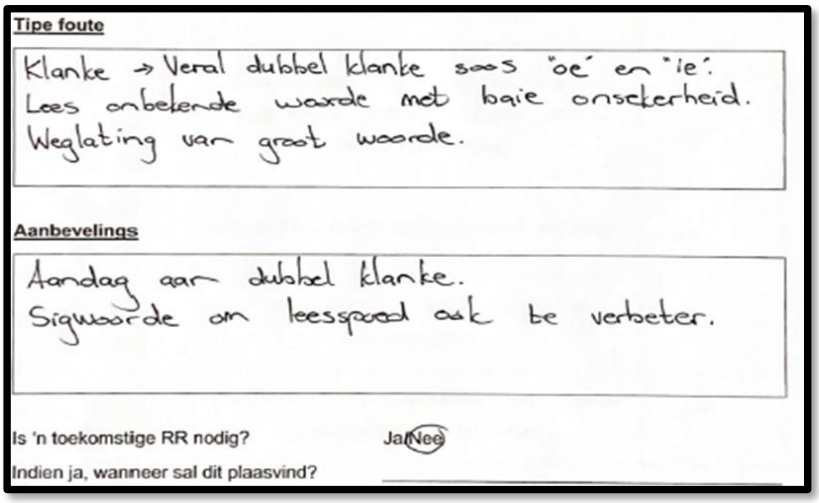


Figure 5.10: Running Records identify and address reading errors

- **RR guide future reading instructional planning**

RR assist teachers not only in identifying reading errors, but also in their reading instructional planning (Question 5). A participant said: *you can* ***see the errors and everything the child does****. Thus, you will* ***know how to adapt your planning*** *according to the errors* (2:10). Thus, teachers will be able to identify the reading

behaviour of a learner through miscue analysis and address it in their reading instructional planning (Bester, 2015). The participant also stated:

> *You will know exactly* ***where the problems are*** *and then you will know* ***what you need to work on****, to what you should pay more or less attention,* ***what the learners are able to do****, on* ***which reading level*** *they are, which learners you can give* ***more challenging work to read*** *and who not.* (2:11)

Some other participants agreed by stating as follows:

> *It* ***helps to do better planning for future lessons,*** *and* ***we urgently need this in our country.*** *For teachers to* ***plan according to reading records' [Running Records] wording and things*** *…* ***It identifies problems and shows us what the learners are struggling with****.* (6:8)

> *The* ***benefit is towards the child and the teacher*** *because the* ***teacher can see, maybe my reading strategy is not working, maybe I should implement a different reading strategy so that learners can improve their reading.*** *Thus, you can use it as an* ***instrument to measure yourself as a teacher*** *to see if what you are doing is working or whether you have to try something different.* (3:16)

The participants' perspectives are aligned to those of Gillet and Ellingson (2017), who believe that the reading cues and the reading behaviour teachers identify in the RR guide will assist them in making informed future reading instructional decisions. According to the LPT, a reading assessment strategy must provide detailed information for reading instructional planning (Fasciana, 2019). Hence, RR provide detailed information about a learner's reading behaviour to be used in reading instructional planning. RR may also provide evidence of a learner's reading performance.

- **RR provide evidence of a learner's reading**

In addition to the above benefits of RR, some participants also noted (Question 6) that RR provided evidence of learners' reading errors. One of the participants stated *that you have* ***more evidence*** *to show parents how a child is reading* (1:10), and another participant agreed that *there is* ***hard-copy evidence*** (4:9). Another participant stated

that the evidence could also serve as an administrative benefit and explained it as follows:

> *If you give a report to each child, you can see all the learners are struggling with something and then … a parent may come to you very angry and wants to know why their child is doing poorly in reading, and then you have this* ***evidence for an administrative benefit****.* (3:15)

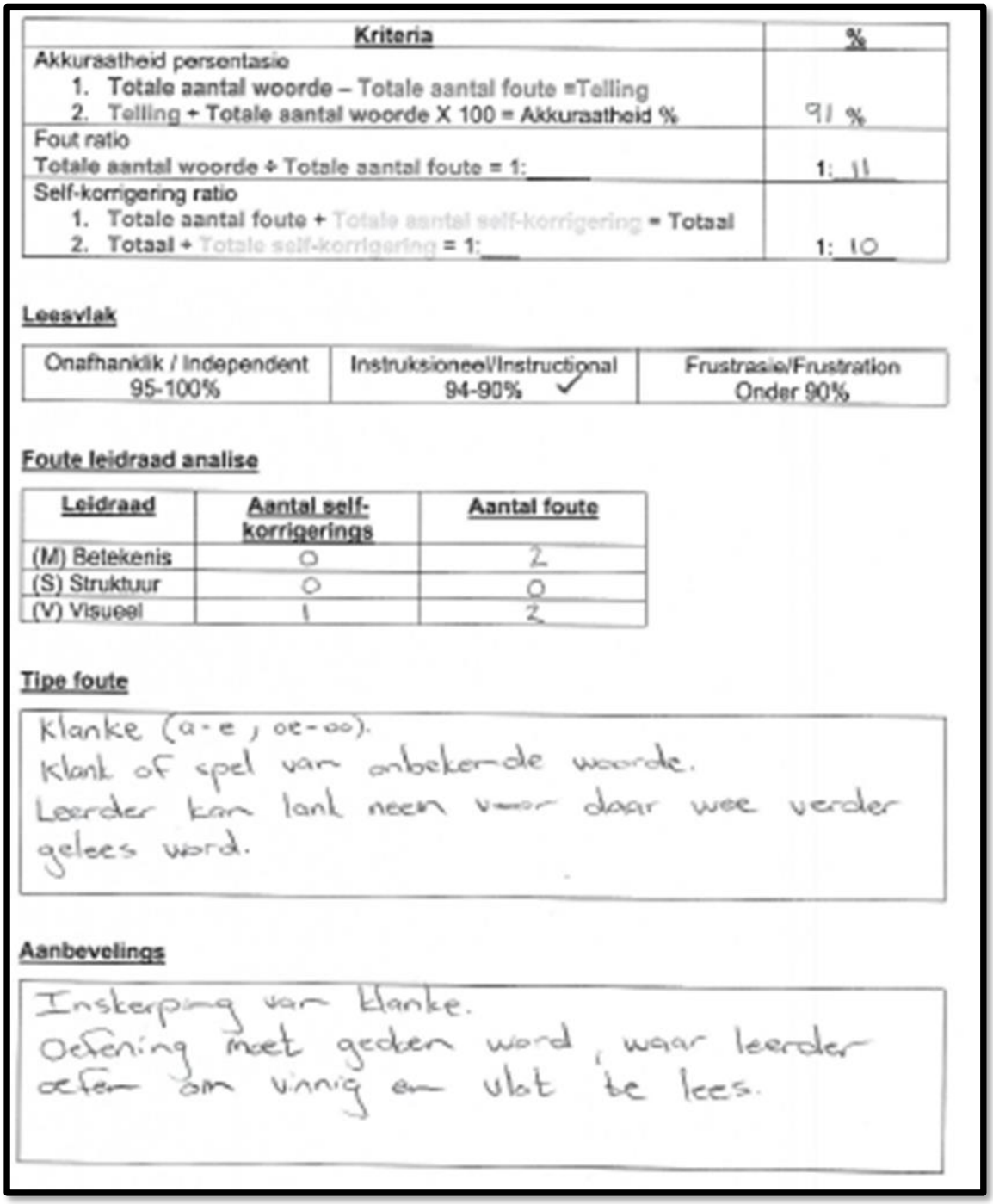
> ***You can provide feedback to the child and parent****. For example, "Your child read so many words per minute; I saw your child struggled with these words; this is the text that your child read, and these were the words he struggled with, so let's focus on those words."* (1:11)

The opinions of the above participants are aligned with those of Harmey and Kabuto (2018), who believe that RR will assist teachers in monitoring learners' reading progress by making notes and having evidence to show parents. Furthermore, when teachers use RR as administrative evidence to monitor and report on learners' reading progress, the validity of the results is increased (Briceńo & Klein, 2018). From the participants' anecdotal notes (RR), it is evident that RR may have an administrative purpose when it is complete and correctly done. Refer to Figures 5.11 and 5.12 and Annexure N for an RR that is completed correctly. The participant identified the reading behaviour and errors of the learner. Lastly, the participant provided a summary of the errors and made suggestions on how the errors might be addressed in reading instructional planning. The participant indicated that the learner sounded out unfamiliar words and would pause while reading and then continue to read. The participant suggested that exercises should be given to improve the learner's recognition of sounds and phonics and improve fluency.

Storie	Self-Korrigering				Foute			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Ons het vandag skoolbiblioteek toe gegaan.					1			
Ek het vir Grieta in haar rolstoel gestoot.								
Dit was swaar om haar oor die gras te stoot.					2			✓
Daar was baie boeke in die biblioteek.								
Ek het van 'n boek oor 'n perd gehou. Dit was 'n besonderse perd wat kon vlieg.								
Bongi het 'n resepteboek uitgeneem. Sy hou daarvan om te bak.					1	✓		
Rob het gesê hy is te kort om by die boonste rak by te kom.					1			
Ben moes buite die biblioteek wag. Hy is nie in die biblioteek toegelaat nie. Arme Ben.					1			
Geen honde word toegelaat nie.	1		✓		1	✓		

(Department of Basic Education, 2019b, p. 22)

Figure 5.11: Example of a complete Running Record



Kriteria	%
Akkuraatheid persentasie 1. Totale aantal woorde – Totale aantal foute =Telling 2. Telling ÷ Totale aantal woorde X 100 = Akkuraatheid %	91 %
Fout ratio Totale aantal woorde ÷ Totale aantal foute = 1:___	1: 11
Self-korrigering ratio 1. Totale aantal foute + Totale aantal self-korrigering = Totaal 2. Totaal ÷ Totale self-korrigering = 1:___	1: 10

Leesvlak

Onafhanklik / Independent 95-100%	Instruksioneel/Instructional 94-90% ✓	Frustrasie/Frustration Onder 90%

Foute leidraad analise

Leidraad	Aantal self-korrigerings	Aantal foute
(M) Betekenis	0	2
(S) Struktuur	0	0
(V) Visueel	1	3

Tipe foute

Klanke (a-e, oe-oo).
Klank of spel van onbekende woorde.
Leerder kan lank neem voor daar wee verder gelees word.

Aanbevelings

Inskerping van klanke.
Oefening moet gedoen word, waar leerder oefen om vinnig en vlot te lees.

Figure 5.12: Example of a complete Running Record

- **RR are a learner-centred approach**

RR not only identify errors and guide teachers in their reading instructional planning, but also are a learner-centred approach, as was stated by a participant (Question 6) as follows:

> *The positive thing for me is that RR are **more intense than a rubric** … A rubric should be a perfectly planned workout thing. Today we said … when*

> *we are done with the assessment, we should get together and discuss the problems we experienced with a rubric,* ***where RR are fantastic to have because if you have practiced it over a period you will be fast and you will know exactly*** *… it will provide* ***a better indication of how the learner is reading*** *…* ***the rubric does not fit the learner 100%, where RR are 100% learner-centred and focus on the individual****.* (2:15)

The perspective of this participant is aligned with Waltz's (2016), who argues that RR are a learner-centred approach because a teacher identifies the appropriately graded reading material for a specific learner and monitor each learner's reading progress. Sudirman (2016) also believes that RR are individually administrated; thus, RR can be regarded as a learner-centred approach. According to the LPT, the reading instruction of a teacher has to be adapted according to the reading development of the learner to effectively address the learner's reading needs (Parlindungan, 2019; Worsfold, 2015).

- **RR do not benefit some learners and exclude others**

It is evident from the participants' answers to Question 2, where they had to indicate whether RR might benefit some learners and exclude others, that they believed RR would not benefit only some learners while excluding others. One participant stated: ***I do not think it harms*** *(*1:4). The following responses from the participants support this statement:

> *I do not think it can have an influence.* ***Reading is reading, whether you read in Tswana or Afrikaans.*** *It definitely cannot have an influence ...* ***And when you choose a reading text, you will keep the culture in mind, but it has nothing to do with the strategy. You apply the strategy to the reading text you gave,*** *so the reading text is separate from when you evaluate whether a child can or cannot read, and if it was so important in some cultures, then* ***you will choose your reading text according to that and not the strategy. The strategy can be used for boys, girls, Afrikaner, Tswana, Venda, whatever language it may be or English which may be the LoLT of the school****.* (6:3)

> ***A reading standard is a reading standard and it does not depend on a child's race, gender or background,*** *because it is what you are testing.*

> ***You are testing the child's reading skill*** *… No, I do not think it will make a difference with any child.* (5:3)
>
> ***I wouldn't say it harms a child because if everyone reads the same text, you can assess everyone fairly****. However, as a teacher,* ***I will find a reading text, for example, that has nothing to do with race or gender****. I would not let learners read, for example, about a sport like rugby because the girls would not be interested in that. So, I would rather use a text about nature or a topic that they should learn, such as the seasons, but* ***something that involves everyone and not only a specific gender and some races****.* (4:2)
>
> ***No, I do not agree****. I think, because you choose your own reading text... I think you as a teacher manage the classroom climate, and yes,* ***I do not agree that anyone will be harmed in the process****.* (3:4)
>
> ***You use a reading text from the DBE workbooks; so, it does not focus on a specific culture or so,*** *and* ***you as a teacher can decide which reading text you want to use.*** *It is not a thing that is given to you and you should use it as it is.* (3:5)

The above quotations of the participants agree with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory that readers form an understanding of a text based on their social, cultural and interpersonal experiences and background knowledge of the topic (see Daneshfar & Moharami, 2018). Furthermore, according to the LPT and the TAT, teachers will use their autonomy, agency and professional background knowledge to scaffold their reading instructional planning based on the learners' reading needs (Campbell, 2019; Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016; West-Higgins, 2017). Thus, all the learners will benefit from RR, and no one will be excluded.

In conclusion, the participants identified the following benefits of implementing RR within a South African Foundation Phase classroom: RR are reliable, valid and consistent due to the logical layout of RR; RR are a standardised strategy; RR assist teachers in identifying and providing evidence of learners' reading errors; RR do not benefit some learners, while excluding others; RR guide reading instructional planning; and RR are a learner-centred approach.

In this section, I discussed the benefits of RR, and in the next (5.3.2.2), I outline the limitations of RR that the participants have identified.

5.3.2.2 Code 2: Limitations of implementing Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms

In this section, I elaborate on the limitations that the participants experienced with RR. The participants identified the following limitations of RR: limited time to implement RR; insufficient funds to implement RR; reliability, validity and consistency of RR; RR may benefit some learners and exclude others; inadequate teacher knowledge and skills; choosing the appropriate reading text; and RR might not test all the aspects of reading.

- **Limited time to implement Running Records**

At Question 7, all the participants indicated that time would be a problem to successfully implement RR within their Foundation Phase classrooms. When they were asked to identify the limitations of RR, one participant stated: *I do not know if there is a problem* ***besides time*** (2:12). Another participant pointed out that ***time will always be against teachers and never for teachers*** (3:25). A third agreed by saying that *the only thing that was negative for me was that it is* ***time-consuming*** (5:18). RR may be time-consuming for teachers because a learner is allowed to read up to the end of the text and is not stopped after one minute (Piper et al*.,* 2016; Scholastic Canada, 2002). Thus, if a reader reads slowly, it may be a long process. The statement below of a participant is aligned with findings of Piper et al. (2016) and Scholastic Canada (2002).

> *Not all children read the same. Today, with my 28 children, most of them* ***read very slow, so it takes a lot of time.*** *Where the children actually need your assistance and you are supposed to help them with a worksheet you first have to listen to the child. So you cannot really help the rest of your class when you listen to one child.* (4:8)

Another participant indicated that RR might work; however, ***time might be a problem*** (1:3). The participant explained: ***It takes a lot of time to do it this way, marking each word, and it takes a lot of time to do it with every learner*** (1:8).

The RR strategy is individually administrated (Sudirman, 2016); therefore, it may be time-consuming to indicate each learner's reading behaviour on an RR. The participants indicated that the time to implement RR within a large classroom might especially be problematic. They commented as follows:

> ***Because we have big classrooms**, it may have an influence because it is not just a rubric that you quickly tick. You should listen intensively and it is **time-consuming**.* (2:13)

> ***The only problem I have** or something that I see in the future **is when you have a class of 40 learners, I do not know how you will implement it**.* (4:7)

> *When all 30 or 33 are in your classroom, it is more **difficult to manage your time to test them one on one**.* (3:10)

Another participant indicated that it might be time-consuming because an identifying process should take place first. She explained:

> ***Besides time, it is difficult because you cannot give the same text to all the learners**; thus, there should be an **identifying process** to identify the learners' reading level and from there you can use RR, and then you further identify if there is a problem. Thus, it was **time-consuming**, because **every learner should come and read and you should tick everything and you should look that they are reading and complete the form and check when you should fill out what and work out the formula**.* (1:12)

Hence, the participants indicated that time to implement RR successfully in their classrooms might be a problem. Reinforcing the participants' opinions, Klingbeil et al. (2017) point out that carrying out one RR will take between 15 and 30 minutes. Thus, RR can be carried out within one or two weeks by assessing a few learners each day during group guided reading (DBE, 2011b). Besides time, some participants indicated insufficient funds to implement RR as a limitation.

- **Insufficient funds to implement RR**

In addition to time, in answering Question 7, two participants indicated that funds to implement RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms might be a limitation. They stated:

> *And with my school, I know they will have a* ***problem, for example, to print a rubric for each child****.* (3:19)

> *I know our school also has the paper and ink and so forth; so, if you have to make a record for each child there will be* ***some funds involved, and it might be expensive****.* (3:21)

In contrast to the participants' opinions, RR might actually be cost-effective for schools because they do not have to buy RR (Kindergarten, 2020). However, schools would have to make copies of the templates to assess the learners, resulting in some costs. On the other hand, if teachers use a rubric to assess learners' reading, they also have to make copies of the rubric, resulting in the same costs as RR.

- **Reliability, validity and consistency of RR**

Some participants indicated that the validity, reliability and consistency of RR (Question 1) might be a problem in providing consistent information to guide instructional planning. They commented as follows:

> ***I think it is valid; however, there will never be something that is 100% valid****, because they say teaching does not happen in a vacuum.* (3:2)

> ***A person does not actually know by only testing one child.*** *If one used a bigger test or battery so that you can test more than one child, you will definitely be able to see the validity of it.* (5:1)

Gillet and Ellingson (2017) and Reed et al. (2019) agree with the above perspectives by stating that the validity and reliability of a learner's RR may be affected when teachers do not interpret the reading errors in the same way, which may lead to inaccurate results of a learner's reading progress. Besides funds, some participants indicated that RR might benefit some learners while excluding others.

- **RR may benefit some learners and exclude others**

One participant indicated (Question 2) that, to some extent, RR might benefit some learners while the strategy excludes other learners. She explained:

> *I did not only test it on one girl. I tested it with other children, and the* ***boys perform weaker than the girls in RR. I have children in my class who***

> ***cannot read; it excludes them*** *where children who can read do good; so, it excludes half.* (1:4)
>
> *I think if one gives an easier text for the weaker learners, the results will be the same, but when* ***the same text is given to the whole group, they struggle***. (1:5)

The above participant's belief that RR may exclude some learners is supported by Hemepenstall (2017), who emphasises that with RR, learners may guess words, and therefore, a teacher may use the wrong reading instructional planning to address the reading needs of the specific learner. As such, RR may benefit some learners and exclude others when they guess words. Furthermore, inadequate teacher knowledge and skills were identified as a limitation in implementing RR.

- **Inadequate teacher knowledge and skills and choosing the appropriate reading text**

At Question 7, some participants indicated that inadequate teachers' knowledge and skills in choosing the appropriate reading text might be a limitation. Teachers' inadequate knowledge and skills in scoring an RR may result in a pattern of scoring errors (Gillet & Ellingson, 2017). One participant explained:

> ***Besides the fact that the teachers should exactly know what notes to make,*** *which letter stands for what so that you do not mark the wrong thing, the M and S and V****, I cannot even remember now what each one stands for, but that you do not mark those things incorrectly****.* (4:11)

From the above statement, it is evident that the validity and reliability of RR might be negatively affected when teachers are inexperienced and not professionally trained in using RR (see McGee et al., 2015). Therefore, one participant indicated that ***you should make yourself comfortable with the recording of it*** (5:12). She furthermore asked: ***how do you correct the mistakes that you have identified?*** (5:5)

Inadequate teacher knowledge and skills in terms of reading and reading assessment are evident in the following statements:

> ***I would like to know how to choose your reading text.*** *How do you know exactly* ***which reading text to use? When and from what do you***

> ***choose your reading text?*** *Because one has to consider words and sounds that they already know.* (4:14)
>
> *Okay, so you want to tell me that the next time all 28 of my children read,* ***they will have different reading texts depending on their reading level*** *or level of difficulty. Because* ***there I do not understand how I will give a mark if every learner does not read the same text****.* (4:15)
>
> *All I can think of is to get your* ***reading text standardised*** *so that you use the* ***correct reading text for the correct group.*** *I think this is the biggest thing; however, with practice, you will later know which reading text suits which learner.* (5:11)

The above perspectives of some participants indicate that they may have inadequate knowledge and skills to implement RR successfully. Moreover, inadequate knowledge and skills of some participants were evident in their anecdotal notes (RR). Some of the anecdotal notes were incomplete, miscues had not been identified correctly, or it was unclear what the learners' mistakes were (refer to Figure 5.13 and Annexure K for an example of an incomplete RR). Figure 5.13 shows that the participant did not indicate how many meaning, structural and visual errors the learner had made. She only indicated with ticks that there were errors. Furthermore, at the type of errors, she only indicated pronunciation and did not make any recommendation on how she was planning to address the learner's reading needs in her reading instructional planning.

Reading level

Independent 95-100%	Instructional 94-90%	Frustration Below 90%

Miscues analysis

Cues	Amount of Self-corrections	Amount of Errors
Meaning		
Structural	✓	
Visual	✓	

Types of errors

Pronounciation

Recommendations

Will a future Running Record be needed: Yes / No

If yes, when will it take place?

Figure 5.13: Example of incomplete Running Record

Inadequate knowledge and skills may influence the validity, reliability and consistency of the outcome of an RR (Reed et al., 2019). Therefore, teachers must receive accurate, adequate and high-quality training before RR can be implemented in Foundation Phase classrooms (Fountas & Pinnell, 2012). It is evident from the following participant that inadequate knowledge of the teacher may be a problem in implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. She stated:

> ***We cannot use RR with a second language or with children whose home language is not English*** *because reading in schools is a huge problem.* (2:1)

> ***I think it is a benefit to be educated in your home language because if you do not have the vocabulary, how do you correct yourself?*** *I think if one only* ***uses it later, from Grade 3 and older, for learners whose home language is different****.* (2:4)

The above participant's opinion is supported by Hempenstall (2017), who asserts that all the different components of reading cannot be assessed simultaneously in a top-down approach. However, these statements contrasted with those of another participant who noted that RR could be used in any language and culture (6:3). The instructions and guidelines stay the same, although the teacher has to adapt the reading text that she will be using to assess the learner (refer to Section 5.2.2.1). Lastly, some participants indicated that RR might not test all the aspects reading of reading.

- **RR might not test all the aspects of reading**

One participant indicated (Question 7) that RR did not test all the aspects of reading. She pointed out that RR ***might not test all the aspects for example intonation, emotion, comprehension, quality, tone, colour and pronunciation*** (6:9). The perspective of this participant is supported by Harmey and Kabuto (2018), who believe that RR do not focus on all the components of reading.

From this section, it can be deduced that the participants identified the following limitations of the implementation of RR within a South African Foundation Phase classroom: limited time; insufficient funds; inadequate teachers' knowledge of RR; and RR do not test all the aspects of reading. In the following section (5.3.2.3), I discuss the possible ways in which RR may be adapted, according to the participants, for South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

5.3.2.3 Code 3: Adapting Running Records for South African Foundation Phase classrooms

Taking into consideration the benefits and limitations that the participants had identified, it was imperative to consider how RR might be adapted for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. Therefore, in the individual interviews, I asked the participants whether they would implement RR in their classrooms (Question 9) and how they would address the limitations of RR (Question 8) by using their agency, autonomy and professional background knowledge as teachers (see Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). In this category, I have identified the following codes that will be discussed: implementing RR in Foundation Phase classrooms; suggestions for overcoming limitations in terms of funds, time and classroom size; suggestions that

RR should take place as a continuous process; and suggestions for overcoming the limitation of inadequate teacher knowledge and skills.

- **Implementing RR in Foundation Phase classrooms**

Question 9 in the questionnaire requested the participants to indicate if they would implement RR in their classrooms. Some participants felt positive about implementing RR in their classrooms. One participant answered: ***yes, if I have enough time, I would want to use it because it is going to provide a good indication of each child*** (2:16). Two other participants agreed by stating the following:

> *I found it* ***very interesting. I wish I can make time to implement it in my classroom****, because I will be* ***able to see exactly with what my learners are struggling*** *… and I need to pay more attention to that.* (3:9)
>
> ***In this case, I am definitely going to do it this way in the second term,*** *because I am going to* ***get a better mark or result*** *and* ***I will know exactly on which level my children are.*** *I will definitely start using it now, but for formal assessment, I will rather assess it this way than in a different way.* (4:16)

The above participants' statements are aligned with those of D'Agostino et al. (2019), who state that RR aim to identify, assess and record learners' reading behaviour to inform and plan future lessons and improve learners' reading. Another participant agreed that RR could be used because the strategy was based on errors:

> ***I think because RR are based on errors, you can definitely use it****; however,* ***it is time-consuming****.* (5:8)
>
> ***So, I think it definitely have a place in the system***. (5:9)
>
> *The EGRA is very basic … however, I like* ***RR because the outcome is more descriptive****.* (5:10)

The above participant's statements are supported by Nel (2018), who argues that the current reading assessment strategies in South African Foundation Phase classrooms are inadequate in screening, diagnosing and monitoring learners' reading progress. Furthermore, the EGRA is used for baseline assessment (Govender & Hugo, 2020), which agrees with the participant's beliefs that the EGRA is very basic. Another

participant indicated that she would use RR for learners who had excellent reading skills. She explained:

> ***Yes, I want to use it with my strong learners, because it motivates them****. I will be able to* ***see where they are making mistakes*** *and I will underline their mistakes for them … and then I show them with which words they have struggled and tell them: "So, go and look in your dictionary what it means, make sentences with it. I am going to give you a week then you come and read again."* ***However, I cannot do it with the rest****.* (1:15)

Although the above participant believed that she could only use RR with strong readers, another participant said that she would instead implement RR in her remedial classes. She commented as follows:

> ***It is so easy now to look at the list of errors learners are making and I have a word for those errors.*** *Now I can use that word and* ***plan a lesson with it,*** *especially the learners who cannot read,* ***to identify the area in which their reading problem lies and to help them*** *…* ***definitely going to use it in my remedial classes****.* (6:10)

The above participant's statement is supported by her anecdotal notes (RR) where she had to indicate her recommendations. She indicated that she would work more on vocabulary, breaking up words in syllables and the blending of sounds, and would ensure that the learners know their sounds and concentrate on sounding out words by using cards as a resource. She even used a small drawing to indicate the resource she would be using in future (refer to Figure 5.14 and Annexure L). This participant applied her autonomy, authority, knowledge and skills as a teacher, according to the TAT, to conduct an RR with one learner (see Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016).

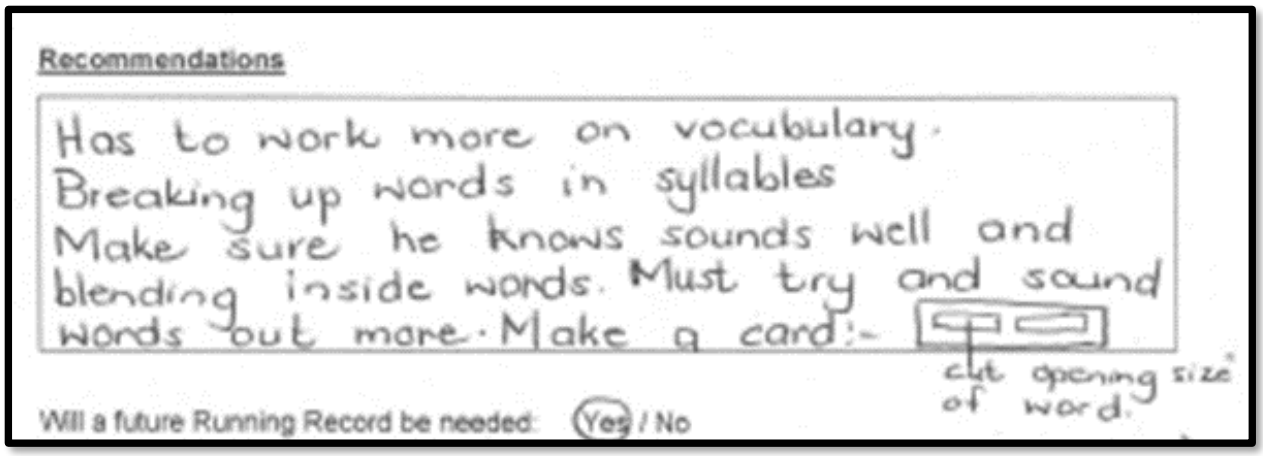


Figure 5.14: Running Records recommendation of resources

Besides suggestions for overcoming limited time as a limitation, some participants indicated how they could overcome limited time and inadequate classroom size as limitations.

- **Suggestions for overcoming limited time and inadequate classroom size as limitations**

At Question 7, the participants indicated that limited time and inadequate classroom size were limitations in implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. However, one participant proposed at Question 8 that group guided reading should be used to overcome these limitations. She explained:

> *You should take **smaller groups at a time,** or there should be a **reading period**. We are lucky; we have assistants. The assistant can take care of the learners while you take ten learners to read. You have already identified the strong, average and weak learners. And then, for example, on a Monday, you take an hour for your strong learners to read with you and to complete the form. However, with the other groups, it will have to be smaller because they take longer to read. **I would suggest reading three times a week for an hour and taking away PE** [Physical Education]; **it will work**.* (1:14)

The above participant's idea of implementing RR in smaller groups is aligned with the CAPS document, as learners should be divided into groups according to their ability during group guided reading. The purpose of group guided reading is to identify and

address learners' reading needs (DBE, 2011b). The above participant believed RR might be successfully implemented and that physical education could be removed from the curriculum. However, during physical education, the prerequisites for reading are developed (Krog, 2020). Thus, by taking away physical education, learners' reading skills may not necessarily improve.

Some other participants added the following about time being a problem:

> *I think one should say "**every Thursday from nine o'clock until ten o'clock is my reading period**, no matter how far I am behind with my work". One should have **fixed reading time no matter how difficult it is**.* (3:25)

> ***Because teachers should be at school at half past six due to all the Covid stuff, it will be nice to do this type of assessment during that time.** Thus, you can **arrange with parents that some learners come earlier to school on some days**. It will work if you do it **over a period, for example, the whole class within a week and not on one day**.* (4:12)

> ***I will use it even if I had to ask parents to bring their children earlier to school to assess them.** For example, I arrange with five or rather three parents per morning to assess them, or the learners who really come late to school come and read to me during ten minutes of PE.* (4:13)

> ***I do not think you have to do the whole test because you have tested your children once** … **over a period you will be very skilled with it,** and without doing the formulas and those things, you will be able to pick up problems with speed and so forth quicker* (5:13). … ***or if you have the need to do it more than once, you do it twice with certain learners,** but in general, I think **because we have larger classrooms, you can use it in this way**.* (5:15)

When only certain aspects of RR is implemented in a classroom due to time, it may increase the personal bias of the teacher and reduce the validity and reliability of RR (Briceño & Klein, 2018). Therefore, the administration of RR should be done correctly, in detail and quickly by experienced and knowledgeable teachers who make informed decisions about learners' reading behaviour based on their past professional

background knowledge to inform the teachers' reading instructional planning (Fasciana, 2019; Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). The participants also suggested that RR should happen continuously.

- **Suggestions that RR should take place as a continuous process**

Some participants indicated at Question 8 that RR should happen as a continuous process. This suggestion is aligned with the CAPS document (DBE, 2011b), which states that reading assessment is a continuous process during group guided reading to identify and monitor learners' reading progress. The participants commented as follows:

> *Do it **continuously by listening every day to different learners' reading when you know you are using these types of assessment**.* (2:14)

> *Children may experience a bad day; so, I think **to receive a true result, you have to do it more than once.** You cannot do it once and see it as the real deal.* (3:8)

> *There are external factors that may play a role. You mentioned when another teacher does it, you know, you get a teacher who is stricter and the learner is more anxious and makes more stupid mistakes … **so for it to be valid, you have to do it a few times to get an overall or average**.* (3:2)

The above participants' beliefs are aligned with those of Afflerbach (2016), who recommends that teachers should implement reading assessment as a continuous process. Furthermore, the LPT regards reading assessment as a continuous process where a reader's reading behaviour is documented over a period (Worsfold, 2015). The participants also made some suggestions on overcoming the limitation of inadequate teacher knowledge and skills with RR.

- **Suggestions on overcoming inadequate teacher knowledge and skills**

Some of the participants indicated at Question 8 that they should familiarise themselves more with RR. When teachers are more comfortable and have the necessary knowledge of and skills in implementing RR, it will increase the reliability and validity of the strategy (Fountas & Pinnell, 2012). When teachers are knowledgeable and skilled with RR, they will have a positive impact on the assessment

of reading in their classrooms (Ramrathan & Mzimela, 2016). One participant remarked:

> ***You should make yourself more comfortable with the recording of it and how you are making notes*** (5:12). ***I do not think you should only use RR once.*** *You should* ***implement it on a regular basis,*** *and so you will* ***feel more comfortable with it****.* (5:16)

Another participant noted that it was difficult to assess reading over a period and not in one day; however, she admitted that maybe she should change this view. She commented:

> *I do not like to test, for example, five learners today and tomorrow the next five; so, maybe I* ***should try and adapt*** *and start doing things like that; then you will be able to do it.* (3:26)

In addition to the participants' suggestions to overcome inadequate knowledge and skills, some of them made suggestions to overcome insufficient funds as a limitation.

- **Suggestions on overcoming funds as a limitation**

At Question 8, the participants had to indicate how they would overcome the limitations they had identified. One participant wanted to implement RR; however, due to funds being a limitation, she would rather make her own RR. Thus, she would use her autonomy, skills and background knowledge as a teacher to adapt and implement RR successfully in her classroom (see Abdullah, 2019). It is evident that this teacher can creatively take the initiative and act proactively to implement RR successfully in her classroom (see Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). She explained:

> ***I will use it****; however,* ***I will make my own,*** *because my school would not be impressed with me if I print all the rubrics and things.* ***But you can use aspects*** *of it, or I can use my tablet.* (3:28)
>
> ***Maybe you can modify a class list****.* (3:23)
>
> *… something I thought of now is many young people have things like* ***smartphones and tablets,*** *so they can* ***download Excel and make spreadsheets****.* (3:24)

Some of the other participants agreed with the above statement. It is evident in their responses that they had implemented their autonomy as teachers (see Abdullah, 2019), as they stated:

> *Yes, I would like to know if you can* ***make your own,*** *press your* ***stamp onto it without deviating*** *by using, for example, your spreadsheet or class list. Can you do it, or will you be deviating from the purpose of RR?* (3:29)

> *I wonder if you cannot, for example,* ***take a reading text from the DBE books,*** *and then you* ***do not have to print the criteria of RR*** *and then you* ***take the rubric for yourself and mark it and paste it into your note book****.* (3:22)

From the categories and sub-codes that emerged from the interviews and anecdotal notes, it is evident that the participants believed that RR might assist in identifying learners' reading errors and adapting their own reading instructional planning. Furthermore, they identified some limitations and suggested how these limitations might be overcome. In the following section (5.4), I discuss the themes that emerged from my sub-codes, codes and categories.

5.4 SUMMARY OF THEMES EMERGING FROM THE STUDY

The research questions and theoretical framework together with the sub-codes, codes and categories guided me in formulating two main themes for my study. The research questions related to the benefits, limitations and adaption of RR for South African Foundation Phase classrooms. However, to answer the research questions, I had to study the participants' current reading assessment practices in terms of the benefits and limitations thereof. The participants used their teacher agency, autonomy and personal and professional background knowledge to identify the benefits and limitations of RR (see Imants & Van der Wal, 2020). Hence, the participants' beliefs and experiences guided me in gaining an understanding of their current reading assessment practices.

In the following two sub-sections, I discuss the two themes that emerged from my sub-codes, codes and categories. First, I discuss current reading assessment practices that are not adequately implemented in Foundation Phase classrooms (Section 5.4.1).

Second, I discuss the second theme, namely that RR can improve Foundation Phase teachers' reading assessment practices (Section 5.4.2).

5.4.1 Theme 1: Current reading assessment practices are not adequately implemented in Foundation Phase classrooms

I identified this theme from my categories, codes and sub-codes that focused on the data obtained from my questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on the participants' perspectives on their current reading assessment practices. Thus, I identified the benefits and limitations of participants' current reading assessment practices.

In this study, some participants stated that they believed that their current reading assessment practices were valid, reliable and consistent because they used CAPS and various assessment instruments in assessing learners. However, some participants indicated that the validity, reliability and consistency of the current reading assessment practices were questionable when using only a rubric and that learners should be assessed summatively and continuously (refer to Sections 5.3.1.2 and 5.3.1.3). Therefore, it was evident from the study that the participants found the implementation of the current teaching and assessment strategies of reading as prescribed in the CAPS document challenging. The challenge to implement the CAPS curriculum in the classroom may have an impact on the validity, reliability and consistency of reading assessment.

Besides the struggle to implement the CAPS curriculum in the classroom, the participants indicated that they needed a workable reading intervention programme within an overwhelming curriculum. Implementing a workable reading intervention programme will assist the participants in addressing learners' reading needs. However, the participants will first have to identify and document learners' reading behaviour (Worsfold, 2015). In contrast, most of the participants indicated that they based their reading instructional planning on the outcome of a learner's reading assessment. Therefore, the participants were able to identify learners' reading behaviour and errors, but might struggle to address the diverse reading needs of learners due to inadequate knowledge and skills, ineffective time management and insufficient reading resources to teach and assess reading.

The participants indicated that they needed more knowledge and skills in teaching and assessing reading, more reading resources and better time management and that the teaching of reading should be standardised (refer to Sections 5.3.1.1 and 5.3.1.2). In this study, it has become clear that teachers may struggle to address learners' reading challenges, as they have inadequate knowledge and skills in designing and planning a workable reading intervention programme for individual learners. One may conclude that if teachers had inadequate skills, knowledge and resources, they might struggle to teach reading as prescribed by the CAPS document.

The participants used their professional agency and indicated that they were able to follow the CAPS curriculum; however, they still believed their knowledge and skills were inadequate for teaching and assessing reading by implementing the CAPS. The participants' beliefs of having inadequate knowledge and skills in teaching and assessing reading were evident in their responses. Most of them indicated that they were not using RR, and this was also evident from their anecdotal notes. Therefore, the participants' inadequate knowledge and skills in teaching and assessing reading should be addressed by implementing workshops in the teaching and assessment of reading that focus on RR (refer to Section 5.4.2). Consequently, training in this regard is imperative in order to improve teachers' reading assessment practices.

A significant finding relating to reading and reading skills was that the participants indicated that reading and reading skills should be taught during group guided reading and reading periods. Furthermore, they would assess the most important reading skills, phonics and letter-sound recognition and reading comprehension continuously in a relaxed classroom environment. They would assess reading skills by using observations, tests, reading activities, rubrics and memorandums (refer to Section 5.3.1.1 and Figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4). The LPT indicates that reading should be assessed continuously through observation in a top-down approach. The CAPS curriculum prescribes that the teaching of reading should happen during reading periods and different types of reading (i.e. shared reading, group guided reading and independent reading) should be addressed.

5.4.2 Theme 2: Running Records can improve Foundation Phase teachers' reading assessment practices

This theme was derived from the participants' responses during individual interviews and from their anecdotal notes (RR). By simultaneously analysing the interviews and the anecdotal notes, I triangulated my data. Moreover, the individual interviews and anecdotal notes allowed me to make suggestions on how RR, a reading assessment strategy, could be adapted for South African Foundation Phase classrooms as a possible solution in identifying reading behaviour to inform reading instructional planning.

From the participants' individual interviews, it was evident that most of them believed that RR, as a reading assessment strategy, were valid, reliable and consistent (refer to Section 5.3.2.1 for a detailed discussion). Thus, RR will correctly indicate learners' reading behaviour and errors to inform reading instructional planning and address learners' reading needs. However, the participants indicated that it was difficult to address learners' reading behaviour and errors in reading instructional planning. As such, the participants will need more training in, knowledge of and experience with RR. For RR to be valid, reliable and consistent in identifying reading behaviour and errors, teachers must have adequate knowledge of and skills in RR.

When teachers are knowledgeable and experienced in the use of RR, they will be able to select the appropriate texts for learners to be used during RR. As such, when the appropriate reading texts are selected, RR will not exclude some learners and benefit other learners based on their interests, culture, race or reading ability (refer to Section 5.3.2.2). Although the same reading assessment strategy is used, the text is used to suit the individual needs of the learners. Hence, RR are a learner-centred reading assessment strategy. The strategy is learner-centred because a teacher will be able to identify individual learners' reading behaviour and make recommendations on how to adapt the reading instructional planning for each specific learner to address and improve their reading.

The participants' limited knowledge of and skills in RR can be regarded as a limitation in adequately implementing RR within South African Foundation Phase classrooms. When teachers' knowledge of and skills in RR are inadequate, they may identify

learners' reading behaviour incorrectly; thus, their reading instructional planning may be incorrectly informed, and learners' reading needs may not be addressed. As such, it is imperative that teachers receive high-quality professional training in administrating and implementing RR.

Furthermore, the participants indicated limited time, insufficient funds and testing all the aspects of reading as limitations in implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms (refer to Section 5.3.2.2). However, they suggested that RR should be continuously used during group guided reading and that they could design their own RR by only using some aspects of RR and using technological devices and software programs. When only some aspects of RR are used, time and money can be saved; however, all the aspects of reading might not be tested sufficiently. If all the aspects of reading are not tested and identified, RR may incorrectly inform reading instructional planning and learners' reading needs may not be addressed. Therefore, when only some aspects of RR are implemented, careful consideration should be paid to ensure that the RR will still test all the aspects of reading to inform reading instructional planning accurately.

Despite these limitations, the participants still believed that RR had the potential to adequately inform their reading assessment practices. They were eager to implement RR in their classrooms. They indicated that RR provided evidence of and feedback on learners' reading behaviour and errors not only to them but also learners and their parents. If the RR strategy is implemented correctly, the evidence and feedback RR provide may assist teachers in informing their reading assessment practices.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, it is evident from the participants' current reading assessment practices that they struggle to teach and assess reading due to an overwhelming curriculum, inadequate time management and insufficient reading resources. It is evident that RR have the potential to be valid, reliable and consistent in identifying reading behaviour and informing reading instructional planning. However, for RR to accurately inform reading instructional planning, teachers should be knowledgeable and skilled in the implementation and administration thereof. Moreover, inadequate time management

and insufficient funds for implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms may be a problem.

In this chapter, I presented my findings on the use of RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms by studying participants' current reading assessment practices and what their reading assessment practice would look like with RR. In Chapter 6, I report on my findings and those in the existing literature. I conclude Chapter 6 by making recommendations for future studies with regard to RR as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I presented and discussed my qualitative research findings and integrated my findings with relevant literature. I discussed my findings by formulating sub-codes, codes, categories and themes. In Chapter 5, I found that RR might be valid, reliable and consistent in informing reading instructional planning if it were implemented correctly.

In this chapter, I conclude the dissertation with a summary of the findings in my literature review and my empirical research (Section 6.2), followed by a presentation of my research conclusions (Section 6.3). Thereafter, I discuss the recommendations and limitations (Section 6.4) of my study and then provide concluding remarks (Section 6.4). Refer to Figure 6.1 for the layout of this chapter.

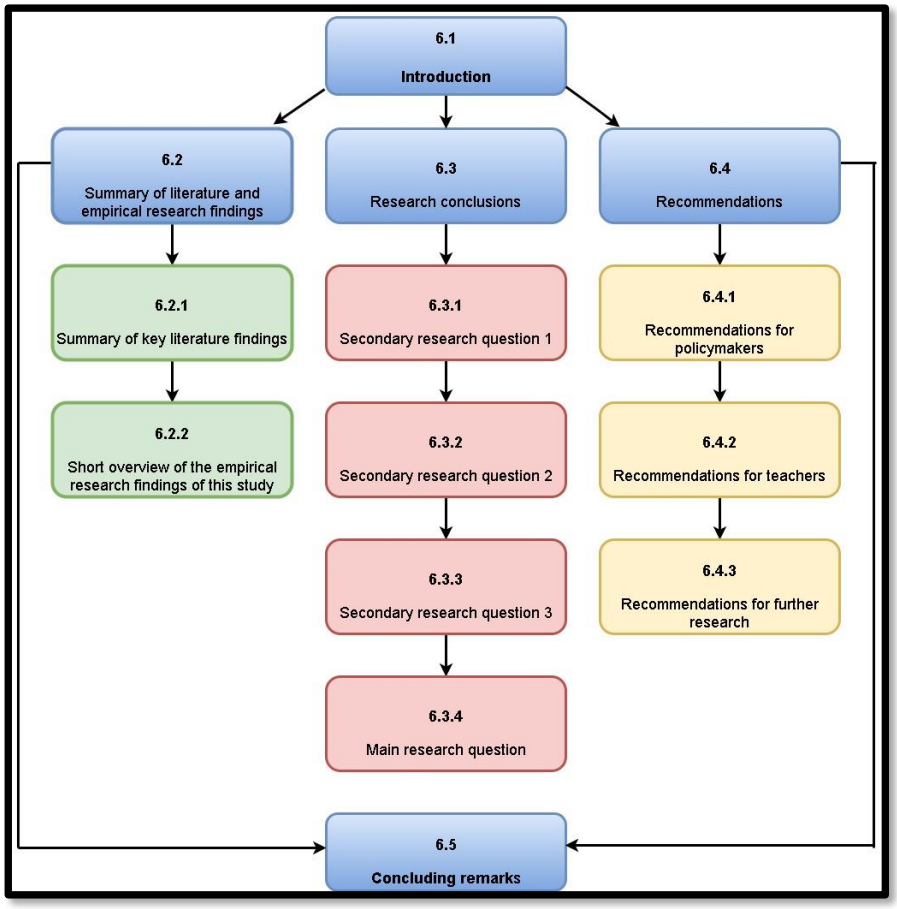


Figure 6.1: Overview of Chapter 6

6.2 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section, I summarise my literature findings (Section 6.2.1) and empirical findings (Section 6.2.2). The summaries provide the key findings and, therefore, enabled me to answer my main research question.

6.2.1 Summary of key literature findings

It is evident from various national and international studies, such as the SACMEQ, PIRLS, ANA and EGRA, that South African reading skills are problematic. Furthermore, the literature indicates that due to the inadequate reading skills of learners, they struggle with comprehension and progressing academically. Poor reading skills may also lead to increased dropout rates in high school. Learners' poor progress in high school can also be traced back to the Foundation Phase, where reading needs were not identified during reading assessment and addressed in reading instructional planning. To address learners' reading needs in the Foundation Phase, teachers have to continuously implement different assessment tools, types, methods and strategies to assess reading and inform reading instructional planning (refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.1). When reading assessment is continuously performed, it may correctly inform reading instructional planning to address learners' reading needs.

Reading assessment should be performed continuously, and the purpose thereof should be "assessment for learning" instead of "assessment of learning" (refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.6). Using an assessment for learning approach during reading assessment will assist teachers in accurately identifying learners' reading needs and reading behaviour to be addressed in reading instructional planning. Therefore, the Foundation Phase would benefit from a reading assessment strategy that is valid, reliable and consistent in monitoring and evaluating learners' reading progress (refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.1). Furthermore, teachers should ensure that learners have mastered the prerequisites for reading. The literature indicates that when learners have not mastered the prerequisites, such as perceptual skills, kinaesthetic perception and body image, they may struggle to master the basic reading components. These reading components include phonological awareness, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary knowledge, fluency and comprehension. When the prerequisites for

reading and reading components are mastered, a reader will be able to comprehend a text (refer to Chapter 2, Sections 2.2 and 2.3). The abovementioned reading components should be continuously taught and assessed during group guided reading. Instructional planning for group guided reading should be based on the reading needs and instructional level of the group. Thus, reading instructional planning should be based on the outcome of the reading assessment of the individual learners in the specific group (refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.5).

In the Foundation Phase, teachers have to use one or a combination of the reading approaches to teach and assess reading components during group guided reading. Reading approaches include the top-down approach, where a teacher works holistically with all the reading skills. In contrast to the top-down approach, with a bottom-up approach, the teacher teaches and assesses each reading skill individually. The top-down approach in reading focuses on readers' prior knowledge, language ability and expectations of the text and how they use their prior knowledge to make sense of the text. In contrast to the top-down approach, the bottom-up approach focuses on synthetic and analytical approaches to reading by decoding the text word for word. Lastly, a teacher may also implement a balanced approach by integrating the top-down and bottom-up approaches in teaching and assessing reading (refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.4). Furthermore, in following any reading approach, teachers have to keep the SVR in mind. The SVR focuses on the interwoven relationship between decoding (i.e. word reading) and linguistic (i.e. language) comprehension, and ignores the process of how reading development takes place.

The EGRA is an example of a bottom-up approach to reading, whereas RR are an example of a top-down approach to reading. The EGRA tool aims to assess early reading skills and identify learners' reading problems. In contrast, RR aim to identify, assess and record learners' reading behaviour and inform reading instructional planning to address and improve learners' reading needs. The EGRA is used as baseline assessment, while the RR strategy is used as baseline, formative and summative assessment to regularly assess and monitor learners' reading progress. Both the EGRA and RR are individually administrated. However, the EGRA is teacher-centred, while the RR strategy is learner-centred.

RR are an observational reading assessment strategy that can be implemented during formative or summative assessment in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. The RR strategy is continuously used to identify learners' reading needs, reading behaviour, reading errors, reading accuracy rate, error rate and self-correction rate. Furthermore, the outcome of an RR can inform reading instructional planning because RR identify learners' reading needs, reading behaviour and reading errors (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2). When teachers carry out RR, they should follow a specific process (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.3). Only when the process is correctly and accurately followed, RR can inform reading instructional planning.

Previous national and international studies conducted on RR have focused on the extent to which RR can improve reading instructional planning and teachers' perceptions of RR. These studies have found that learners' reading may improve when teachers use a learner's RR to inform instructional planning for group guided reading. Furthermore, these studies have found that teachers need high-quality professional training to successfully implement and use RR in their classrooms. If teachers do not receive adequate training, it may lead to mistakes when RR are performed. This may have a negative impact on the validity, reliability and consistency of RR (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2). However, RR are reliable and valid in identifying reading behaviour and informing reading instructional planning when the strategy is used by experienced and effectively trained teachers. Other studies have found that learners may guess a word, which can have an impact on the validity, reliability and consistency of RR. Furthermore, RR may not test all the reading components; consequently, it may not correctly inform reading instructional planning (refer to Chapter 3, Section 3.2.1). It is evident in the literature that there is a debate on the validity, reliability and consistency of RR. Therefore, in this study, I wanted to explore the benefits and limitations of RR in terms of the validity, reliability and consistency thereof in identifying reading errors and informing reading instructional planning.

In this section, I have summarised the findings from my literature in Chapters 2 and 3. In the following section (6.2.2), I will summarise the empirical research findings of the study.

6.2.2 Short overview of the empirical research findings of the study

In the previous section (6.2.1), I provided an overview of the key literature findings of the study. In this section, I provide an overview of the empirical research findings of the study.

In my findings, I have identified two main themes. First, I provide an overview of the first theme, followed by an overview of the second theme.

- **Theme 1: Current reading assessment practices are not adequately implemented in Foundation Phase classrooms**

The online questionnaire focused on the participants' current reading assessment practices. Thus, I used the responses from the questionnaire in this theme. The participants had to describe and identify the benefits and limitations of their current reading assessment practices.

All the participants regarded phonics and letter-sound recognition and reading comprehension as the most important reading skills in teaching and assessing reading. They preferred to assess reading skills, such as phonics and letter-sound recognition and reading comprehension, in a relaxed classroom environment through continuous, formative and summative assessment. Reading is assessed through group guided reading, observations, rubrics and memorandums, as well as different reading activities. The majority of the participants indicated that they used the following reading activities during the assessment of reading: worksheets; reading comprehension; word searching; reading aloud; phonics and word recognition activities; and reading games. Most of the participants did not employ RR during their current reading assessment practices. They indicated that they needed a workable intervention programme to address learners' reading needs. However, they only based their reading instructional planning to a limited extent on the outcomes of reading assessment. Furthermore, they felt it was important that the teaching and assessment of reading should be standardised. Thus, learners should be assessed in the same fair manner to identify and address their individual reading needs (refer to Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.1 and 5.4.1).

The participants indicated particular benefits and limitations in terms of their current reading assessment practices. Some participants regarded their current reading

assessment types, methods and tools as unreliable, invalid and inconsistent. They did so because they believed a rubric was insufficient to determine individual reading needs. Furthermore, some believed that only assessing a learner once did not provide an accurate indication of his or her reading progress. In contrast to the view that the current assessment practices were unreliable, invalid and inconsistent, some participants perceived their current assessment types, methods and tools as valid, reliable and consistent, because they followed the CAPS document, applied what they had been trained in and used different assessment instruments to assess learners (refer to Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.1 and 5.4.1).

Secondly, it was evident that some of the participants felt that their knowledge and skills were inadequate in teaching and assessing reading. Consequently, they struggled to identify and address learners' reading needs. They indicated that they needed more reading workshops and that they might implement the wrong strategy in teaching and assessing reading to correctly identify and address learners' reading needs (refer to Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.1 and 5.4.1).

All the participants mentioned inadequate time management and an overwhelming curriculum as limitations in teaching and assessing reading. An overwhelming curriculum and limited time do not make provision for revision and practising reading skills. Moreover, an overwhelming curriculum makes it difficult to assist learners who experience language or reading barriers. Furthermore, limited time and insufficient resources in the teaching and assessment of reading prevent teachers to continuously perform reading assessment and adapt their reading instructional planning accordingly (refer to Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.1 and 5.4.1). However, the CAPS document indicates the time frames to teach and assess reading and also gives examples of resources. Thus, in this study, it was apparent that there was a difference between what the CAPS prescribed and how the participants experienced the implementation of the CAPS guidelines in their reading assessment practices.

Lastly, the participants used their agency, autonomy and professional identity and made some suggestions to address the limitations they had noted. They suggested that they should go back to the basics and pay more attention to the basics of reading, such as sight words and creating a love for reading. They indicated that there should be more reading time, reading activities and reading periods (refer to Chapter 5,

Sections 5.3.1 and 5.4.1). Using reading time, reading activities and reading periods will enable teachers to identify reading behavioural changes and help learners to problem-solve and use a reading strategy effectively during reading.

From this theme, it is evident that the participants' current reading assessment practices are only to a limited extent valid, reliable and consistent in identifying and addressing learners' reading needs. In the following section, I outline that RR can improve Foundation Phase teachers' reading assessment practices.

- **Theme 2: RR can improve Foundation Phase teachers' reading assessment practices**

The interviews and anecdotal notes focused on the participants' reading assessment practices with RR. The participants described their reading assessment practices where RR might be implemented. They did this by identifying the benefits and limitations thereof and made suggestions on how RR might be adapted.

In general, the participants perceived RR as valid, reliable and consistent because the strategy correctly indicates learners' reading behaviour and errors. Thus, the participants noted that RR would inform their reading instructional planning more accurately. Furthermore, the participants indicated that, with RR, teachers could provide evidence of learners' reading progress to their parents and the learners themselves. However, some participants indicated that it was difficult to establish the validity, reliability and consistency of RR when it is performed only once. Furthermore, some of the participants' anecdotal notes (RR) were incomplete or incorrect. In addition, RR may not test all the reading components and may incorrectly inform reading instructional planning. According to the participants, reading components also include intonation, emotion, comprehension, quality, tone, colour and pronunciation. They suggested that to increase the validity, reliability and consistency of RR, the strategy should be applied continuously (refer to Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.2 and 5.4.2).

In this study, the participants indicated that inadequate knowledge of and skills in implementing RR might have a negative impact on the validity, reliability and consistency of RR. Thus, teachers should be knowledgeable and skilled in identifying reading behaviour and reading errors accurately when scoring an RR. The participants indicated that they should practice the implementation of RR more and make

themselves more comfortable in using RR to be able to correctly identify learners' reading needs and address these reading needs in reading instructional planning (refer to Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.2 and 5.4.2).

In this study, it was established that the text a teacher selects to use during RR may benefit or exclude learners; thus, a teacher needs to pay careful attention to selecting the appropriate text for the learners. Teachers have to consider the learners' interests, cultural and religious backgrounds, race and gender when a text is selected. The participants emphasised the fact that the same text should not be provided to all learners due to diverse reading needs and the fact that the RR strategy is a learner-centred approach (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2 and 5.4.2).

The participants indicated limited time and insufficient funds as limitations in implementing RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. They stated that RR was time-consuming, especially in large classrooms and with learners who are slow readers. Furthermore, they indicated that funds might be a problem, as each learner requires his or her own printed reading material. The participants made a few suggestions on how to save time. They proposed that RR might be implemented during group guided reading periods, that only some aspects of RR might be implemented by identifying only the errors learners were making, that they might design their own RR and that technological devices and software programs, such as their tablets and MS Excel, might be used (refer to Chapter 5, Sections 5.3.2 and 5.4.2).

6.3 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

In the previous section (6.2), I provided an overview of my literature and empirical research findings. In this section, I elaborate on my three secondary questions (Section 6.3.1-6.3.3) and my main research question (Sections 6.3.4).

6.3.1 Secondary research question 1

- What are the benefits of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?

The study has determined that some of the current reading assessment types, methods and tools are valid, reliable and consistent. The current reading assessment practices are valid, reliable and consistent because teachers follow the CAPS curriculum, apply what they have been trained in and use different assessment instruments to identify learners' reading behaviour and needs (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1.3). Thus, the participants apply their teacher agency, autonomy and professional background knowledge in assessing reading.

Furthermore, it has been established that RR, as a reading assessment strategy, is valid, reliable and consistent. RR will provide the same outcome due to the clear, logical layout of the strategy when it is scored by different teachers and thus inform reading instructional planning more accurately. Thus, RR are aligned with the LPT, according to which a teacher uses the outcome of a reading assessment to inform reading instructional planning. When reading instructional planning is accurately performed, learners' reading skills may improve. The RR strategy is learner-centred because it focuses on individual learners' reading behaviour and needs. The outcome of the learners' RR can be used to design an individual reading programme to address their specific reading needs. As such, RR are individually administrated and will not benefit some learners while others are excluded. The RR strategy does not use prescribed text that may benefit or exclude some learners. Thus, a teacher can select a text to suit the individual needs of the learners. With RR, a teacher has to indicate learners' reading behaviour and errors and monitor their reading progress. RR are aligned with the LPT, as the LPT states that learners' reading progress should be monitored regularly. Therefore, RR provides administrative evidence of learners' reading progress to provide feedback to their parents and the learners themselves (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.1).

6.3.2 Secondary research question 2

- What are the limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy within the South African Foundation Phase context?

In the study, I have discovered that the current reading assessment types, methods and tools are unreliable, invalid and inconsistent due to rubrics not being learner-centred and summative assessment not giving a true indication of learners' reading

progress. Thus, a rubric and summative assessment do not provide a reliable, valid and consistent outcome of learners' reading progress that can be addressed in reading instructional planning. Before teachers can use a reading programme, they must identify learners' reading needs by using a reading assessment strategy and identifying the appropriate reading resources. Therefore, the current reading assessment practices differ from the LPT in identifying reading errors and informing reading instructional planning. Teachers' current reading resources in teaching and assessing reading are inadequate to address learners' reading needs. However, in the CAPS document, suggestions are made regarding appropriate reading resources teachers may use during teaching and assessing reading. Furthermore, teachers' knowledge of and skills in teaching and assessing reading are inadequate and may be a reason why they struggle with time management and experience the CAPS curriculum as overwhelming. Thus, they may struggle to use their teacher agency in implementing the CAPS curriculum successfully in classrooms. Teachers' inadequate knowledge and skills can be addressed by providing workshops on the teaching and assessment of reading. Providing workshops will enable teachers to base their reading instructional planning more accurately on the outcome of learners' reading assessment (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1.2).

In cases where teachers lack the knowledge and skills regarding identifying reading behaviour and errors when using RR, the validity, reliability and consistency of the strategy are questionable. Thus, inadequate knowledge and skills of teachers in using RR may contribute to incorrect outcomes of RR. Such outcomes of RR will incorrectly inform reading instructional planning, and learners' reading will not improve. RR may not test all the reading components and, therefore, may inform reading instructional planning incorrectly. When all the reading components are included in RR and the strategy is individually administrated, it can be time-consuming to assess all the learners in a classroom. The process of taking RR is also influenced by slow readers and the identifying process that should occur. When learners read slowly, they take very long to read the whole text and may not be stopped before they have completed the text. Also, teachers first have to use their professional background knowledge in identifying the appropriate text for all the learners before RR can be performed. Moreover, it may be expensive for some schools to regularly print a complete RR for

every learner in the Foundation Phase to assess and monitor the learners' reading progress (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.2).

6.3.3 Secondary research question 3

- How can RR be adapted for the Foundation Phase classrooms to inform teachers' reading instruction?

In this study, I have identified that teachers' current reading assessment practices might improve if they are able to identify and address learners' reading needs during the teaching and assessment of reading. Furthermore, teachers need more reading time, reading activities and reading periods to address learners' reading needs. However, the CAPS curriculum provides guidelines on reading time, reading activities and reading periods. As such, the participants experienced a barrier in applying their teacher agency in implementing the CAPS curriculum in their reading assessment practices (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1.2). The teaching and assessment of phonics and letter-sound recognition and comprehension are important; however, limited time may be a problem when the above reading skills are taught and assessed. Reading skills are taught and assessed through summative, continuous and formative assessment, using observations, reading activities, rubrics, memorandums and one-minute reading tests. However, the RR strategy is used to a limited extent (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1.1).

To increase the validity, reliability and consistency of RR, the strategy should be implemented continuously. By implementing RR continuously, a more accurate version of a learner's reading progress will be provided. The LPT also states that reading assessment should take place continuously to identify and monitor reading behaviour. Teachers need more knowledge and training in identifying learners' reading behaviour and errors using RR. If they identify learners' reading behaviour and errors incorrectly, it will incorrectly inform their reading instructional planning, and learners' reading skills will not improve. Thus, teachers' professional background knowledge in assessing reading should be sufficient so that they can apply it in their reading assessment practices. RR, as a reading assessment strategy, can be used for all the learners in a class; however, teachers should use their autonomy to select different texts for different learners. When the same text is used for all the learners, some

learners may benefit, while others are excluded based on their interests, culture, race, gender or religion. RR can be adapted by using only some aspects of the strategy instead of the whole process. The RR strategy should be implemented during fixed group guided reading periods. When only some aspects of RR are used, the outcome of RR may be invalid, unreliable and inconsistent in informing reading instructional planning. Furthermore, teachers may arrange with selected parents to send their children earlier to school on particular days to enable the teacher to perform RR. To make RR more affordable for schools, teachers can make their own RR or, instead of printing RR sheets, teachers may use technological devices and software programs. However, careful consideration should be given when teachers make their own RR or use technological devices and software programs to ensure that the outcome of the RR is still valid, reliable, and consistent in informing reading instructional planning (refer to Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2.3).

In conclusion, before RR can be continuously implemented during group guided reading, teachers should first receive training on how to implement RR and how different texts should be used. The validity, reliability and consistency of RR may be negatively influenced when teachers design their own RR and use technological devices and software programs.

6.3.4 Main research question

- How can RR, a reading assessment strategy, help inform Foundation Phase teachers' reading instruction?

In this section, I discuss how RR helps inform Foundation Phase teachers' reading instruction by considering the information from Section 6.3.1 to 6.3.3.

In my study, it was established that the layout and guidelines of RR are structured; therefore, RR provides a true reflection of a learner's reading behaviour and reading errors. Due to the structure of RR, different teachers will be able to apply their agency, autonomy and professional background knowledge to identify the same reading behaviour and reading errors of a learner. Therefore, from this study, it can be deduced that RR are valid, reliable and consistent in informing reading instructional planning to address learners' reading needs. Thus, the RR strategy is aligned with the LPT in that reading assessment should inform reading instructional planning. Although the RR

strategy is valid, reliable and consistent, it may be increased when RR are continuously used during group guided reading to assess and monitor learners' reading progress and inform reading instructional planning correctly.

To ensure that the outcome of RR is valid, reliable and consistent every time, teachers must receive high-quality professional training in implementing RR. Only when teachers have the necessary professional background knowledge of and skills in implementing RR, they will be able to score RR correctly and base their reading instructional planning accurately on the outcome of the RR. Furthermore, teachers need assistance in selecting the appropriate reading texts for individual learners. With RR, the text is not provided, and it is the teacher's responsibility to select the appropriate text.

RR is a learner-centred approach and it may be time-consuming to find an appropriate text for each learner and assess each learner; therefore, the participants used their autonomy and suggested using only some aspects of RR, such as identifying reading errors, and excluding the formulas (refer to Section 5.3.2.3). By implementing RR in this manner, important reading components, such as accuracy rate, error rate and self-correction rate, that RR are perceived to test, may not be tested. However, when only some aspects of RR are used, it is uncertain whether the strategy will provide a valid, reliable and consistent outcome to be used in reading instructional planning.

It can be expensive to print RR sheets for each learner. Therefore, the participants suggested that they could use technological devices and software programs to perform RR. However, it is uncertain how exactly RR can be adapted to be used in this manner and ensure that the results are still valid, reliable and consistent to inform reading instructional planning. The scope of the study was not to test the implementation of technological devices and software programs; therefore, more research on this is necessary.

In conclusion, the RR strategy is deemed valid, reliable and consistent in identifying reading errors and reading behaviour in reading instructional planning. The strategy is valid, reliable and consistent due to the layout and guidelines it provides. RR should be continuously performed during group guided reading to increase the validity, reliability and consistency thereof and inform reading instructional planning. The

validity, reliability and consistency of RR may increase when teachers have received high-quality professional training to identify and address learners' reading needs and behaviour accurately. Also, inadequate time management and insufficient funds for schools to print RR sheets may have an impact on the implementation of RR in South African Foundation Phase classrooms. Therefore, the participants proposed only implementing some aspects thereof. Consequently, the validity, reliability and consistency of RR remain questionable. Lastly, the participants indicated that technological devices and software programs might be used to overcome the limitation of insufficient funds. Further research on this aspect is needed too.

In this section, I have discussed my findings for this study. Based on my findings, I will make recommendations for policymakers and teacher education higher education institutions, teachers and future researchers in the following section (6.4).

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following sections (6.4.1-6.4.3), I provide recommendations for policymakers and teacher education higher education institutions, teachers and future researchers based on the findings of my empirical research.

6.4.1 Recommendations for policymakers

The following recommendations are made for policymakers:

- The DBE should consider including RR as a reading assessment strategy in the CAPS curriculum, as RR will guide teachers in identifying learners' reading errors and reading behaviour. Policymakers may provide guidelines to teachers on how they can implement RR, as an assessment strategy, during group guided reading. Furthermore, in these guidelines, they can provide specific direction on how the results of RR may be applied in a workable intervention reading programme to address the reading needs of learners. These guidelines may indicate to teachers how they can select appropriate texts for individual learners to be used during RR.
- The DBE should provide regular, ongoing high-quality professional training and support to teachers in teaching and assessing reading. Such training will improve teachers' knowledge and skills and will enable them to identify and

address learners' reading behaviour and errors more accurately during reading assessment and reading instructional planning.

- Lastly, policymakers may consider revising the CAPS document on reading by providing more reading time and being more specific in how to teach and assess the basics of reading, as the participants felt that the CAPS curriculum was adequate but overwhelming.

6.4.2 Recommendations for teachers

Recommendations for teachers are as follows:

- Teachers should consider integrating RR during group guided reading, as RR has been established as valid, reliable and consistent in identifying learners' reading behaviour and errors. Thus, the outcome of RR can accurately inform reading instructional planning to improve learners' reading needs. RR, should furthermore be performed over a period by assessing two or three learners per day during individual or group guided reading.
- Teachers should attend training on the use of RR as a reading assessment strategy. When teachers have received training, they will be able to accurately identify a learner's reading errors and reading behaviour during RR.
- The third recommendation is that teachers regard RR as administrative evidence. RR provide evidence of a learner's reading progress. This evidence can provide parents with feedback if they have questions about marks their children have received for reading. Teachers can then explain to parents more specifically what their children are struggling with and make suggestions to parents on how they can assist their children at home to improve their reading.

6.4.3 Recommendations for further research

The following recommendations are made for further research:

- This qualitative exploratory case study research used a small sample size of seven participants. Therefore, the findings of the study can only be generalised to some extent. I suggest that future researchers perform the same study but with a bigger group of participants so that the findings can be generalised.
- Currently, the implementation of RR is a barrier for teachers due to the challenges they experience with RR. Therefore, I recommend that future

researchers investigate how RR can be integrated during group guided reading in South African Foundation Phase classrooms through participatory action research. During their investigation, they may investigate how RR can be carried out in assessing learners' reading behaviour and reading errors.

- Future research can investigate how teachers can use the outcome of group RR to plan reading instructional lessons and work out a reading intervention programme for the specific group.
- Another recommendation is that researchers explore the possibility of implementing only some aspects of RR, such as identifying reading errors and reading behaviour, in South African Foundation Phase classrooms to investigate whether the RR will still be valid, reliable and consistent.
- The last recommendation is to study the possibility of implementing RR through technological devices, such as tablets, and software programs, such as MS Excel. Implementing RR through technological devices and software programs will make the strategy more affordable for schools. Furthermore, specific attention has to be paid to the validity, reliability, consistency, benefits and limitations of RR when technological devices and software programs are used.

6.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

My study aimed to explore the benefits and limitations of RR as a reading assessment strategy that could assist Foundation Phase teachers in identifying learners' reading behaviour and making informed reading instructional decisions based on their teacher agency, autonomy and professional background knowledge. With the current reading assessment practices, learners struggle to master reading comprehension due to the implementation of inadequate screening, diagnosing and monitoring strategies for reading assessment during the teaching and assessment of different reading approaches. Furthermore, learners may not have mastered the prerequisites of reading and reading components. Hence, I studied the current reading assessment practices and explored the possibility of implementing RR as an alternative reading assessment strategy.

By conducting an in-depth literature review on reading, reading assessment and RR as a reading assessment strategy, I realised that RR have the potential to identify learners' reading behaviour, and the outcome of an RR may inform reading

instructional planning, which is the purpose of the LPT. Other benefits of RR include that the strategy is valid, reliable and consistent in identifying reading behaviour and errors, it is individually administrated and learner-centred, it will not benefit some learners and exclude others and it can be used as administrative evidence. In contrast, the limitations of RR include that the outcome of RR may be invalid, unreliable and inconsistent if teachers are inadequately trained to implement RR, RR may not test all the reading components, it can be time-consuming and it may be expensive for some schools to print.

From my empirical research, it is evident that RR can provide reliable, valid and consistent results when the guidelines are clear and teachers' knowledge and skills in implementing RR are adequate. However, the validity, reliability and consistency of RR results may be affected if the teacher's knowledge and skills are inadequate and errors are not indicated. Thus, when the limitations of implementing RR are addressed, the validity, reliability and consistency of the outcomes of RR have the potential to accurately inform the reading instructional planning of Foundation Phase teachers in South Africa.

> *"There are no reluctant readers, only children who have not been effectively taught to read" (Lindbergh, 2019)*

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A – TEMPLATE WITH DBE WORKBOOK TEXT

Running Records template

Learner name and surname: _____

Grade: _____

Teacher: _____

Date of assessment: _____

Title of reading story/text: _____

Number of words in the story: _____

Is this a follow-up Running Record: Yes / No

If yes, when was the previous Running Record taken: _____

Story	Self-correction				Error			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V

Criteria	%
Accuracy rate 1. **Running Words** – **Total Errors** = **Score** 2. **Score** ÷ **Running Words** X 100 = Accuracy %	%
Error rate **Total words** ÷ **Total errors** = 1:_____	1:_____
Self-Correction rate 1. **Total errors** + **Total self-corrections** = **Total** 2. **Total** ÷ **Total self-corrections** = 1:___	1:_____

Reading level

Independent 95-100%	Instructional 94-90%	Frustration below 90%

Miscues analysis

Cues	Number of Self-corrections	Number of Errors
Meaning		
Structural		
Visual		

Types of errors

Recommendations

Will a future Running Record be needed: Yes / No

If yes, when will it take place? _____

_____

Teacher signature

Running Record template

Learner name and surname: _____

Grade: 2

Teacher: _____

Date of assessment: _____

Title of reading story/text: We eat at school

Number of words in the story: 52

Is this a follow up Running Record: Yes / No

If yes, when was the previous Running Record taken: _____

Story	Self-correction				Error			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
We are lucky. We get food at school. We like to eat lunch at school. Our mothers cook good food for us. Ben also wants some food. Bongi likes to eat carrots. Dan likes to eat meat. Nomsa is feeling sick. She does not want to eat today. Do you like vegetables? (Department of Basic Education, 2019a, pp. 22-23)								

Criteria	%
Accuracy rate 3. **Running Words** – **Total Errors** = **Score** 4. **Score** ÷ **Running Words** X 100 = Accuracy %	% %
Error rate **Total words** ÷ **Total errors** = 1:_____	1:_____
Self-Correction rate 3. **Total errors** + **Total self-corrections** = **Total** 4. **Total** ÷ **Total self-corrections** = 1:___	1:_____

Reading level

Independent 95-100%	Instructional 94-90%	Frustration Below 90%

Miscues analysis

Cues	Number of Self-corrections	Number of Errors
Meaning		
Structural		
Visual		

Types of errors

Recommendations

Will a future Running Record be needed: Yes / No

If yes, when will it take place? _____

_____

Teacher signature

Running Record templaat

Leerder naam en van: _____

Graad: 2

Onderwyser: _____

Datum van assessering: _____

Titel van leesstorie: Ons eet by die skool

Aantal woorde in storie: 73

Is hierdie 'n opvolg Running Record? Ja / Nee

Indien ja, wanneer was die vorige Running Record gedoen? _____

Storie	Self-Korrigering				Foute			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Die kinders is baie gelukkig. Hulle kry kos by die skool. Die kos maak hulle harte bly en hulle mae vol. My mamma kook vir ons gesonde kos. Dit neem baie tyd in beslag. Ben, my hond, wil ook kos hê. Ben swaai sy stert van blydskap as ek sy kos vir hom gee. Ek hou daarvan om wortels te eet. Danie, my boetie, hou van rys en vleis. Hou jy van groente? (Department of Basic Education, 2019b, pp. 22-23)								

Kriteria	%
Akkuraatheid persentasie 1. **Totale aantal woorde** – **Totale aantal foute** =**Telling** 2. **Telling** ÷ **Totale aantal woorde** X 100 = Akkuraatheid %	%

Fout ratio **Totale aantal woorde ÷ Totale aantal foute** = 1:_____	1:_____
Self-korrigering ratio 1. **Totale aantal foute** + **Totale aantal self-korrigering** = **Totaal** 2. **Totaal** ÷ **Totale self-korrigering** = 1:___	1:_____

Leesvlak

Onafhanklik / Independent 95-100%	Instruksioneel/Instructional 94-90%	Frustrasie/Frustration Onder 90%

Foute leidraad analise

Leidraad	Aantal self-korrigerings	Aantal foute
(M) Betekenis		
(S) Struktuur		
(V) Visueel		

Tipe foute

Aanbevelings

Is ‘n toekomstige RR nodig? Ja/Nee

Indien ja, wanneer sal dit plaasvind? _____

_____

Onderwyser handtekening

Running Record template

Learner name and surname: _____

Grade: 3

Teacher: _____

Date of assessment: _____

Title of reading story/text: Library day

Number of words in the story: 84

Is this a follow up Running Record: Yes / No

If yes, when was the previous Running Record taken: _____

Story	Self-correction				Error			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Today we rushed to the library after school. We pushed Lebo in her wheelchair. It was quite heavy to push. There were so many books in the library. I liked a book about a horse. It was a special horse that could fly. Bongi took a book about baking a cake. She likes baking. Rob said he was too short to reach the top shelf. Ben had to sit outside the library. He was not allowed into the library. Poor Ben. No dogs allowed. (Department of Basic Education, 2019c, p. 22)								

Criteria	%
Accuracy rate 5. **Running Words** – **Total Errors** = **Score** 6. **Score** ÷ **Running Words** X 100 = Accuracy %	%
Error rate **Total words** ÷ **Total errors** = 1:_____	1:_____
Self-Correction rate **5. Total errors** + **Total self-corrections** = **Total** **6. Total** ÷ **Total self-corrections** = 1:___	1:_____

Reading level

Independent 95-100%	Instructional 94-90%	Frustration Below 90%

Miscues analysis

Cues	Number of Self-corrections	Number of Errors
Meaning		
Structural		
Visual		

Types of errors

Recommendations

Will a future Running Record be needed: Yes / No

If yes, when will it take place? _____

_____

Teacher signature

Running Record templaat

Leerder naam en van: _____

Graad: 3

Onderwyser: _____

Datum van assessering: _____

Titel van leesstorie: Biblioteekdag

Aantal woorde in storie: 95

Is hierdie ‘n opvolg Running Record? Ja / Nee

Indien ja, wanneer was die vorige Running Record gedoen? _____

Storie	Self-Korrigering				Foute			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Ons het vandag skoolbiblioteek toe gegaan. Ek het vir Grieta in haar rolstoel gestoot. Dit was swaar om haar oor die gras te stoot. Daar was baie boeke in die biblioteek. Ek het van ‘n boek oor ‘n perd gehou. Dit was ‘n besonderse perd wat kon vlieg. Bongi het ‘n resepteboek uitgeneem. Sy hou daarvan om te bak. Rob het gesê hy is te kort om by die boonste rak by te kom. Ben moes buite die biblioteek wag. Hy is nie in die biblioteek toegelaat nie. Arme Ben. Geen honde word toegelaat nie. (Department of Basic Education, 2019d, p. 22)								

Kriteria	%
Akkuraatheid persentasie 7. **Totale aantal woorde** – **Totale aantal foute** =**Telling** 8. **Telling** ÷ **Totale aantal woorde** X 100 = Akkuraatheid %	%
Fout ratio **Totale aantal woorde ÷ Totale aantal foute** = 1:_____	1:_____
Self-korrigering ratio **7. Totale aantal foute** + **Totale aantal self-korrigering** = **Totaal** **8. Totaal** ÷ **Totale self-korrigering** = 1:___	1:_____

Leesvlak

Onafhanklik / Independent 95-100%	Instruksioneel/Instructional 94-90%	Frustrasie/Frustration Onder 90%

Foute leidraad analise

Leidraad	Aantal self-korrigerings	Aantal foute
(M) Betekenis		
(S) Struktuur		
(V) Visueel		

Tipe foute

Aanbevelings

Is ‘n toekomstige RR nodig? Ja/Nee

Indien ja, wanneer sal dit plaasvind? _____

_____

Onderwyser handtekening

ANNEXURE B – PROCESS OF TAKING A RR

The process of taking a RR can be summarised as follows:

- Step 1: Identify appropriate text or story
- Step 2: Make two copies of the story or text.
- Step 3: The teacher has to select a quiet time to take the RR.
- Step 4: The teacher has to sit next to the learner.
- Step 5: The teacher has to observe and record the reading behaviour of the learner.
- Step 6: The teacher has to work out the accuracy rate, self-correction rate and error rate.
- Step 7: The teacher has to report on the findings and make possible suggestions on how to adapt their reading instructional planning.
- Step 8: The teacher has to keep the RR.

ANNEXURE C – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOUNDATION PHASE TEACHERS

Questionnaire for Foundation Phase teachers/ Vraelys vir Grondslagfase onderwysers

Dear prospective participant / Geagte voornemende deelnemer

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate Foundation Phase teachers' current assessment practices, which will allow the researcher to adapt a reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms in order to improve Foundation Phase teachers' reading instructional planning and Foundation Phase learners' reading skills. Therefore, this study will investigate the benefits and limitations of a reading assessment strategy.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate in this study. You may withdraw at any stage without providing a reason.

You will not receive any payment or financial reward or any other benefit if you participate in this study. The results of this study will, however, be used to recommend possible adaption of the reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

There is no physical or psychological risk involved in participating in this study. You will only be inconvenienced by taking time (45 minutes) to complete the questionnaire, attending a workshop (2 hours), implementing a Running Record (30 minutes) and

participating in a focus group interview (an hour). If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the research you are welcome to discuss it with me.

Information received from participants will be treated confidentially. Furthermore, this questionnaire is anonymously answered. The data will be destroyed when the study is completed.
The data collected will be used to write a research report, which may include journal article(s), conference presentations, dissertations and book sections. Your privacy and the school you are working for will be protected and will not include any identifiable information.

Hard and soft copies of the data will be stored by the University of Pretoria (Faculty of Education) for future research. Soft copies stored on a computer will be password protected.

Die doel van hierdie vraelys is om Grondslagfase onderwysers se huidige assesseringspraktyk te ondersoek en die navorser in staat te stel om 'n leesassessering-strategie aan te pas vir Suid-Afrikaanse Grondslagfase onderwysers. Verder beoog die navorser om deur die leesassessering-strategie Suid-Afrikaanse Grondslagfaseonderwysers se lees instruksionele beplanning te verbeter wat sal bydra to die verbetering van Grondslagfase leerders se leesvaardighede. Met hierdie studie word die voordele, nadele en beperkings van die leesassessering-strategie ondersoek.

Deelname aan hierdie studie is vrywillig en u is onder geen verpligting om aan hierdie studie deel te neem nie. U mag op enige stadium gedurende die studie onttrek, sonder om 'n rede te verskaf.

U sal geen vergoeding, finansiële beloning of voordele ontvang indien u in hierdie studie deelneem nie. Die uitslag van hierdie studie sal gebruik word om voorstelle te maak van hoe die leesassessering-strategie aangepas kan word vir Suid-Afrikaanse Grondslagfaseklaskamers. Hierdie studie hou geen sielkundige of psigologiese risiko's vir die deelnemers in nie. U sal slegs verontrief word om tyd af te staan om 'n vraelys te voltooi (45 minute), bywoon van 'n werkswinkel (2 ure), implementering van

1 Running Record (30 minute) en om aan 'n fokus-groep onderhoud (1 uur) deel te neem. Indien u enige vrae het rakende die vraelys of die navorsing is u welkom om dit met my te bespreek.

Inligting wat vanaf die deelnemers ontvang word sal vertroulik hanteer word. Hierdie vraelys word anoniem beantwoord. Harde en sagte kopieë van die data sal in veilige bewaring gehou word by die Universiteit van Pretoria (Fakulteit Opvoedkunde) vir toekomstige navorsing. Sagte kopieë sal op 'n rekenaar gestoor en met 'n wagwoord beskerm word.

Die data wat ingesamel word sal gebruik word om 'n navorsingsverslag te skryf, insluitend joernaalartikel(s), konferensie voorleggings, tesisse en gedeeltes in handboeke. U en die skool se privaatheid sal beskerm word en sal nie identifiseerbaar wees in die navorsingsverslag nie.

Thank you for your voluntary participation in this study/
Baie dankie vir u vrywillige deelname aan hierdie studie

Miss/Mej Lynette van Tonder

Instructions/ Instruksies

1. Before answering this questionnaire first read and sign the consent form. / Voordat u die vraelys voltooi, lees en teken eers die toestemmingsbrief (consent form).
2. You must answer all the questions as honestly as possible./ U moet alle vrae so eerlik as moontlik antwoord.
3. Provide detailed information where possible./ Verskaf gedetailleerde inligting waar moontlik.

Clarification of terms used in this questionnaire:

1. Reliable refers to how dependable, consistent, stable and error-free are the assessment or test. In other words, the results of the test are not influenced by change, systematic error, bias or cheating. Thus, if the same test is performed by another teacher with the same learner will the results be the same (Gareis & Grant, 2015)/
   Betroubaarheid verwys na die mate van hoe betroubaar, konstant en foutloos 'n assessering of toets is. Met ander woorde, die uitslag van die assessering of toets word nie beïnvloed deur verandering, sisteemfoute, voordele of kullery nie. Dus, indien 'n mede-onderwyser die toets uitvoer met dieselfde leerder sal die resultate dieselfde wees (Gareis & Grant, 2015).

2. Valid refers to how truthful, suitable, legitimate, applicable, convincing or compelling are the learners test result. In other words to what degree does the assignment or test assess what the teacher intended to be assessed to draw appropriate results from it (Gareis & Grant, 2015)./ Geldigheid verwys na die mate van hoe waar, geskik, geldig, van toepassing en oortuigend die leerder se assessering of toets resultate is. Met ander woorde tot watter mate assesseer die assessering of toets wat die onderwyser se veronderstelling was om te assesseer om sodoende toepaslike resultate te verkry (Gareis & Grant, 2015).

3. Baseline assessment is used in the beginning of the year to determine a learner's prior knowledge. / Basislynassessering vind aan die begin van die jaar plaas om 'n leerder se bestaande kennisvlak te bepaal (Gareis & Grant, 2015).

4. Summative assessment is used at the end of the year or term to determine if the learner has mastered the outcomes. / Summatiewe assessering vir aan die einde van 'n kwartaal of jaar plaas om te bepaal of 'n leerder die uitkomstes behaal het.

5. Formative assessment is used during instruction establish the areas a learner still need assistance to master the outcome. / Formatiewe assessering word gedurende instruksie gebruik om te bepaal in watter areas 'n leerder nog ondersteuning benodig om die uitkomstes te bereik (Gareis & Grant, 2015).

6. Continuous assessment is continuously used during teaching and learning to enable the teacher to make adaptions in their instruction to address learners' needs./
   Deurlopende assessering word deurlopend gebruik tydens leer en onderrig en stel die onderwyser instaat om aanpassing in hulle beplanning te maak om leerders se behoeftes aan te spreek (Gareis & Grant, 2015).

7. Diagnostic assessment is used to identify a learner's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge and skills before instruction start. Diagnostic assessment may be regarded as a form of baseline assessment./
   Diagnostiese assessering word gebruik om 'n leerder se sterkpunte, swakpunte, kennis en vaardighede te identifiseer voordat onderrig plaasvind. Diagnostiese assessering word geen sien as 'n tipe basislynassessering (Study.com, 2021)

Question / Vrae 1 – 4

1. Choose the correct option: What is your highest qualification? / Kies die korrekte opsie: Wat is u hoogste kwalifikasie?

   - ☐ Matric / Matriek
   - ☐ Diploma
   - ☐ B.Ed
   - ☐ B.Ed (Hons)
   - ☐ M.ed
   - ☐ PhD
   - ☐ H.OD

2. In which year did you obtain this qualification? / In watter jaar het u hierdie kwalifikasie verwerf?

   _____

3. Thick the correct answer: How many years of experience do you have in teaching Foundation Phase learners?/ Kies die korrekte antwoord: Hoeveel jaar ondervinding het u in die onderrig van Grondslagfase leerders?

   a. Between / Tussen 0 – 3 years / jaar
   b. Between / Tussen 4 – 10 years / jaar
   c. Between / Tussen 11 – 15 years / jaar
   d. Between / Tussen 16 – 20 years / jaar
   e. More than / Meer as 20 years / jaar

4. Thick the correct answer: Which grade are you currently teaching?/ Kies die korrekte opsie: Watter graad onderrig u huidiglik?

   a. Grade / Graad R
   b. Grade / Graad 1
   c. Grade / Graad 2

d. Grade / Graad 3
e. Other / Ander

Question / Vraag 5

5.1. To what extent do you use each of the following assessment types in your classroom during reading assessment?/
Hoe gereeld gebruik u elk van die volgende assesseringstipes in u klaskamer gedurende leesassessering?

	Not at all / Glad nie	**Some-times / Soms**	**Often / Gereeld**	**Generally/ Amper altyd**	**Almost always / Altyd**
Pre-assessment (baseline assessment)/ Voorassessering (basislynassessering)	1	2	3	4	5
Formative assessment/ Formatiewe assessering	1	2	3	4	5
Summative assessment Summatiewe assessering	1	2	3	4	5
Continuous assessment/ Deurlopende assessering	1	2	3	4	5
Diagnostic assessment/ Diagnostiese assessering	1	2	3	4	5

5.2. Except for the assessment types in question 5.1 what other assessment types do you use and how often do you use it?/
Behalwe vir die assesseringstipes in vraag 5.1, watter ander assesseringstipes gebruik u en hoe gereeld gebruik u dit?

_____

Question / Vraag 6

8.1. To what extent do you use each of the following assessment methods in your classroom during reading assessment?/ Tot watter mate gebruik u die volgende assesseringsmetodes in u klaskamer gedurende leesassessering?

	Not at all/ Glad nie	**Some-times/ Soms**	**Often/ Gereeld**	**Generally/ Amper altyd**	**Almost always/ Altyd**
Observation/ Observasie	1	2	3	4	5
Tests/ Toetse	1	2	3	4	5
Reading activities/ Lees aktiwiteite	1	2	3	4	5
Portfolios/ Portefeuljes	1	2	3	4	5

8.2. Except for the assessment methods mentioned in question 6.1, what other assessment methods do you use and how often do you use them?/ Behalwe vir die assesseringsmetodes in vraag 6.1., watter ander assesseringsmetodes gebruik u en hoe gereeld gebruik u die assesseringsmetodes?

_____

Question / Vraag 7

7.1. To what extent do you use each of the following assessment tools in your classroom during reading assessment? / Tot watter mate gebruik u die volgende assesseringstoerusting in u klaskamer gedurende leesassessering?

	Not at all/ Glad nie	Some-times/ Soms	Often/ Gereeld	Generally/ Amper altyd	Almost always/ Altyd
Rubric/ Rubriek	1	2	3	4	5
Checklist/ Afmerklys	1	2	3	4	5
Observation/ Observasie	1	2	3	4	5
Memorandum	1	2	3	4	5
Gray Oral Reading Test	1	2	3	4	5
Qualitative Reading Inventory – 3	1	2	3	4	5
Woodcock-Johnson Passage Comprehension Test	1	2	3	4	5
Running Records	1	2	3	4	5
Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)	1	2	3	4	5
One minute reading test/ Een minuut leestoets	1	2	3	4	5

7.2. Except for the assessment tools mentioned in question 7.1, what other assessment tools do you use and how often do you use it? Behalwe vir die assesseringstoerusting in vraag 7.1, watter ander assesseringstoerusting gebruik u en hoe gereeld gebruik u dit?

_____

Question / Vraag 8 - 12

8. Do you think the assessment tools you are currently using in your classroom are sufficient in measuring learners' reading skills?/ Dink u die assesseringstoerusting wat u huidiglik gebruik is genoegsaam om leerders se leesvaardighede te meet?

☐ Yes / Ja
☐ No / Nee

9. Motivate your answer in question 8./ Motiveer u antwoord in vraag 8.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10.1. Do you base your instructional planning on the outcomes of your reading assessment?/
Baseer u, u lees instruksionele beplanning op die uitkoms van u lees assessering?

☐ Yes / Ja
☐ No / Nee

10.2. How often do you base your reading instructional planning on your reading assessment?/
Hoe gereeld baser u, u lees instruksionele beplanning op die uitkoms van u lees assessering?

Not at all/ Glad nie	**Some-times/ Soms**	**Often/ Gereeld**	**Generally/ Amper altyd**	**Always/ Altyd**
1	2	3	4	5

11. Motivate your answer provided in question 10./ Motiveer u antwoord in vraag 10.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

12. Do you think the current assessment tools and methods you are using in assessing reading is valid, reliable and consistent? Please elaborate on why you think so./
Na u mening dink u die huidige assesseringstoerusting en metodes wat u gebruik in leesassessering is betroubaar, geldig en constant? Verduidelik asb. hoekom u so dink.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Question / Vraag 13

13. Which of the following reading skills do you believe are the most important? Rank these reading skills from 1 to 9, where 1 represents the most import reading skill and 9 the least important reading skill./
Watter van die volgende leesvaardighede glo u, is die belangrikste? Rangskik die leesvaardighede van 1 tot 9, waar 1 die mees belangrikste leesvaardigheid verteenwoordig en 9 die mees onbelangrikste leesvaardigheid.

Reading skill	Ranking
Reading accuracy/ Lees akkuraatheid	
Reading fluency/ Lees vlotheid	
Reading aloud/ Hardop lees	
Reading comprehension/ Leesbegrip	
Self-correction skills/ Self-korrigeringsvaardighede	
Word recognition/ Woordherkenning	
Phonics and Letter-sound recognition/ Foneme en letter-klank herkenning	
Blending and segmenting/ Samevoegings en segmentering	
Reading speed/ Leesspoed	

14. What other reading skills, except the ones mentioned in question 13, are important?/
Watter leesvaardighede, behalwe die genoem in vraag 13, is belangrik?

_____

_____

_____

Question / Vraag 15

15. Which of the following reading skills do you assess the most? (select 5)/
Watter van die volgende leesvaardighede assesseer u die meeste? (Kies 5)

- ☐ Reading accuracy / Lees akkuraatheid
- ☐ Reading fluency / Lees vlotheid
- ☐ Reading aloud Hardop lees
- ☐ Reading comprehension / Leesbegrip
- ☐ Self-correction skills / Self-korrigerings vaardighede
- ☐ Word recognition / Woordherkenning
- ☐ Phonics and Letter-sound recognition / Foneme en letter-klank herkenning
- ☐ Blending and segmenting / Samevoegings en segmentering
- ☐ Reading speed / Leesspoed

15.1. How do you assess each of the reading skills that you have mentioned in question 15?/
Hoe assesseer u elk van die leesvaardighede wat u genoem het in vraag 15?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Question / Vraag 16 – 21

16. How do you think reading assessment should take place in a Foundation Phase classroom?/
Na u mening, hoe dink u moet leesassessering plaasvind in die Grondslagfase klaskamer?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

17. How do you think reading should be taught in a Foundation Phase classroom?/ Na u mening, hoe dink u moet lees onderrig word in die Grondslagfase klaskamer?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

18. Name the challenges you experience while assessing reading./ Noem die uitdagings wat u ervaar, wanneer u lees assesseer.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

19. Name the challenges you experience while teaching reading./ Noem die uitdagings wat u ervaar terwyl u lees onderrig.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

20. What do you think is the reason for South African learners' poor reading performance?/

Na u mening, wat dink u is die rede vir Suid-Afrikaanse leerders se swak lees vordering?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

21. What do you think needs to change with regards to the teaching and assessment of reading in South African Foundation Phase classroom?/ Na u mening, wat dink u moet verander in terme van onderrig en assessering van lees in Suid-Afrikaanse Grondslagfase klaskamers?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ANNEXURE D – LINK TO A PRE-RECORDED WORKSHOP

Follow the links below to the pre-recorded workshops.

Link to English workshop

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bULO1mGBi28X9IdmdbMc5nb9L6N5nch-/view?usp=sharing

Link to Afrikaans workshop

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1afWRW-RNEJ5_6eryGvU5B2WDK6UZ7k4V/view?usp=sharing

ANNEXURE E – RUNNING RECORDS: A READING ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Running Records: A reading assessment strategy

A reading assessment strategy for the assessment of readings skills

Guidelines on how to perform Running Records: Reading Assessment Strategy

Presenter: **Lynette van Tonder – lynette.vantonder@aros.ac.za**

Supervisor(s): **Dr Joyce West – joyce.west@up.ac.za**

Dr Melanie Moen – melanie.moen@up.ac.za

Guidelines on how to perform a Running Record

What is Running Records?

Running Records is a reading assessment strategy that was developed by Mary Clay a former teacher and literacy researcher. Running Records, is widely used to monitor, observe, document and compare learners' reading behaviour over time. Learners' reading behaviour refers to which 'thinking process' the learner is using while reading. Therefore, a language teacher has to record all the reading behaviours of a learner, while reading. By doing this it will enable the teacher to assist the learner in reading and improve the learners' reading skills (Briceńo & Klein, 2018).

The reading behaviours that a language teacher identified will assist the teacher in adapting his/her reading instructional planning accordingly. When adapting the reading instructional planning according to the learners' reading needs, the learners' reading behaviour may improve (D'Agostino, Kelly, & Rodgers, 2019).

How am I going to perform a Running Record?

The process of taking a Running Record takes approximately 15 – 30 minutes (Klingbeil, Nelson, van Norman, & Birr, 2017). See Figure 1 for an overview on how to perform a Running Record

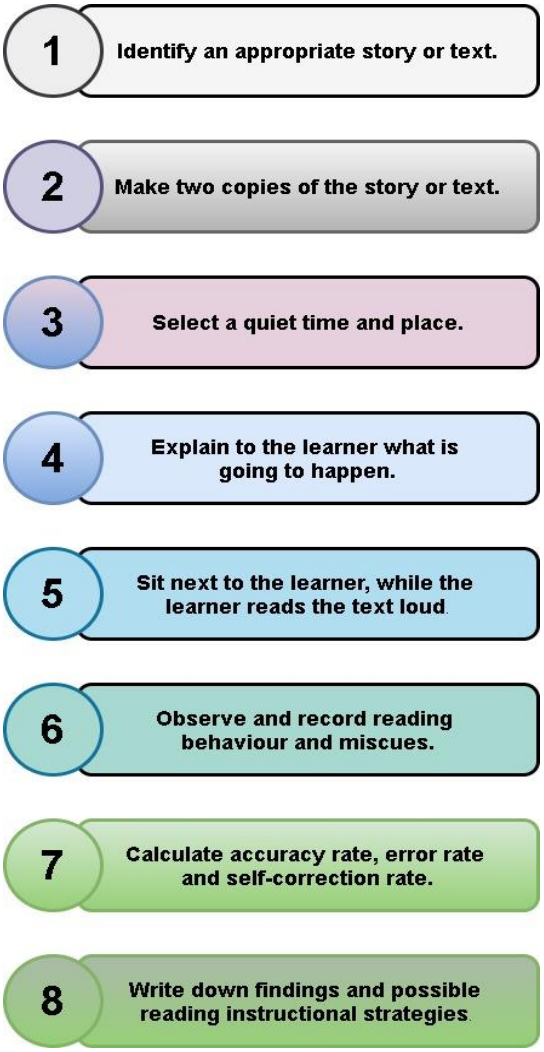


Figure 1: Overview of how to perform a Running Record

Here is a step-by-step guide on how to perform a Running Record:

1.1. Identify an appropriate story or text for the learner to read. The appropriate story or text can be identified using the learner's current reading level, interest or age. You can also select a story or text from the Basic Department of Education workbooks.

1.2. The teacher must ensure that he/she and the learner have a copy of the story.

1.3. Select a time and place that is quiet, without interruptions in a natural and relaxed environment.

1.4. Explain to the learner what is going to happen. This will ensure that the learner is at ease when reading.

1.5. The teacher will sit next to the learner as he/she reads the text aloud.

1.6. Observe and record everything the learner does while reading.

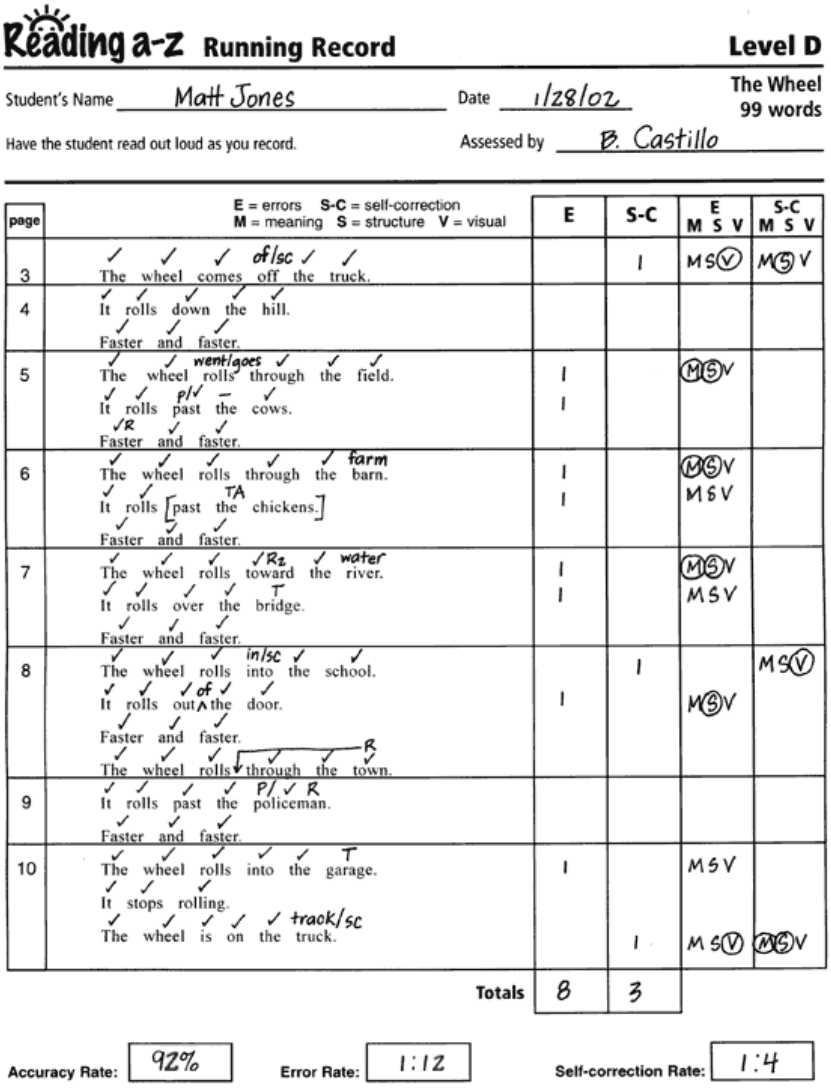
1.7. After the learner has read calculate the learner's accuracy error and self-correction rate. Feel free to use this online calculator: **http://www.wordcalc.com/runningrecord/** (Wordcal, 2020).

1.8. Make notes on your findings and write down a few strategies on how you are planning to assist the learner during your reading instructional planning.

1.9. Store the Running Record as you may want to compare a future Running Record of the learner with the current one (Burdujan, 2020; Scholastic Canada, 2002; Sudirman, 2016).

1.10. For more information on Running Records, follow this link: https://www.education.vic.goc.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/readingviewing/Pages/examplerunning.aspx#link24

You can design your template or use the one provided in Addendum A



Reading a-z Running Record — **Level D**

Student's Name: Matt Jones — Date: 1/28/02 — The Wheel, 99 words

Have the student read out loud as you record. — Assessed by: B. Castillo

E = errors S-C = self-correction
M = meaning S = structure V = visual

page		E	S-C	E M S V	S-C M S V
3	The wheel comes off/sc the truck.		1	MSⓋ	MⓈV
4	It rolls down the hill. Faster and faster.				
5	The wheel went/goes rolls through the field. It rolls past/– the cows. Faster/R and faster.	1 1		ⓂⓈV	
6	The wheel rolls through the farm barn. It rolls [past/TA the chickens.] Faster and faster.	1 1		ⓂⓈV MSV	
7	The wheel rolls toward/Rs the water river. It rolls over the/T bridge. Faster and faster.	1 1		ⓂⓈV MSV	
8	The wheel rolls into/in/sc the school. It rolls out of/the door. Faster and faster. The wheel rolls through/R the town.	1	1	MⓈV	MSⓋ
9	It rolls past the/P/R policeman. Faster and faster.				
10	The wheel rolls into the/T garage. It stops rolling. The wheel is on the truck/track/sc	1	1	MSV MSⓋ	ⓂⓈV
	Totals	8	3		

Accuracy Rate: 92% — Error Rate: 1:12 — Self-correction Rate: 1:4

Figure 2: Example of a Running Record (Lazel, 2020a)

How do I interpret the reading behaviours of the learner? (Miscue analysis)

When a teacher analyses a Running Record it is important to consider all the reading errors the learner make. Furthermore, it is also important to determine if a reader used a meaning, structural or visual cue while reading as it could provide valuable information for future instructional planning. See the following figure (3) as a depiction of the three different reading cues.

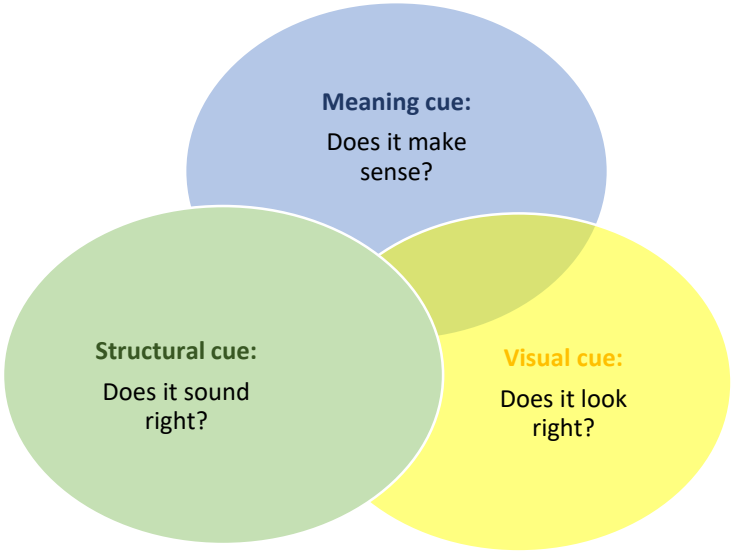


Figure 3: Running Records cueing system (Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Table 1: Running Record cueing system (West, 2020b)

Cues	Meaning cues	Structural cues	Visual cue
Symbol	"M"	"S"	"V"
Information about the cue	• The reader can gather the message of the story by "making meaning" of the story and word level. • The reader decides on reading through thinking and evaluating what they are reading, by checking if it "makes sense". • Meaning errors do not interrupt the general comprehension of	• The reader makes a decision based on their knowledge of the structure, language and syntax of the specific language. • The reader will check if the word or sentence sounds right.	• The reader makes a decision based on how the word and letters look. • The reader will look at the beginning sound, word length, familiar word chunks, etc. If a reader reads another word instead of the given word and there is visual information that is the same in both words.

Cues	Meaning cues	Structural cues	Visual cue
	the sentences or paragraph.		
Example	• Story: The tiger lives in the forest. • Learner read: The tiger lives in the wood. • Forest and wood may be regarded as synonyms and therefore the learner made a decision using a meaning cue.	• Story: "It rolls out the door" • The learner reads: "It rolls of the door." • The learner used of instead of out, but grammatically it still makes sense, thus the learner made a decision using a structural cue.	• Story: "The wheels roll into the school." • The learner reads: "The wheels roll in the school." • The learner used in, instead of into. Both words start with in, thus the learner made a decision using a visual cue.
Question to be answered for each error made	• Considering the story background information from pictures and meaning in the sentence, **does the learner's attempt make sense?**	• Considering the structure and syntax of the specific language, **does the learner's attempt sound right?**	• **Does the learner's attempt visually resemble in any way the word in the text (e.g. begins and/or ends with the same letter)?**

How do I score a Running Record?

To assess a learner's reading using a Running Record you can follow a scoring guide:

1.11. Count the words in the story. Do not count titles, subtitles and captions.

1.12. When a learner skips a line, count each word in that line as an error.

1.13. A learner could have more errors and insertions than there are words on a line. However, a learner cannot have more errors than words on a page.

1.14. When a learner skipped a page, count the page as one error and subtract the number of words on that page from the total word count.

1.15. Proper nouns read incorrectly is only counted once. Other errors are counted each time (Scholastic Canada, 2002).

Table 2: What is an error in reading? (Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Count as one error:	Do not count as an error:
• A substitution • An omission • An incorrect attempt • An unsuccessful appeal • A told word • An insertion • A reversal • A total confusion	• Self-corrections • Repetitions • A correct attempt • A successful appeal • Words pronounced differently in a child's dialect or accent • Pauses • Sounding or spelling out a word

For examples of reading behaviours see Addendum B.

1.16. Calculate the accuracy rate using the formula below

Table 3: Accuracy rate (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018)

1. **Running Words** – **Total Errors** = **Score**
2. **Score** ÷ **Running Words** X 100 = Accuracy %

Example:

A Grade 3 learner read a story of **120 words.** She made 5 errors while reading.

1. 120 – 5 = 115
2. 115 ÷ 120 X 100 = 95,8%

Therefore, the Grade 3 learner accuracy rate is 95,8%.

This indicates that the learner reads on an independent level and the teacher should suggest more difficult graded reading books so that the learner will read on an instructional level.

Table 4: Interpretation of the accuracy rate (Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Easy Text	Appropriate Text	Challenging Instructional Text	Hard Text
96 – 100%	93 – 95%	90 – 92%	Below 90%
The learner should move to a higher graded reading level.	The learner is on a comfortable instructional graded reading level.	The learner may require more direct support from the teacher.	The learner should move to a lower graded reading level.

Table 5: How do I interpret the accuracy rate?

Easy Text (96 – 100%)

- The learner can read for enjoyment and meaning.
- No decoding challenges
- Appropriate for independent reading (Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Appropriate Instructional Text (93 – 95%)

- Selected by the teacher
- Has a lot of support
- Has a few challenges
- Higher-end of what Clay identified as Instructional Text
- Appropriate for guided reading (Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Challenging Instructional Texts (90 – 92%)

- More challenging for a reader

- May require too much work
- Guided reading should only have one or two challenges
- Guided reading should be supported and comfortable to read

(Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Hard Text (Below 90%)

- Too many challenges for the reader

(Scholastic Canada, 2002)

1.17. Determine the Self-Correction rate of a learner's Running Record using the formula below. The Self-Correction rate is an indication of how well a learner monitors him/herself while reading. A Self-Correction rate of up to 1:5 indicates that the learner is self-monitoring and using decoding strategies when reading.

Table 6: Self-correction rate (Harmey & Kabuto, 2018)

1. **Total errors** + **Total self-corrections** = **Total**
2. **Total** ÷ **Total self-corrections** = 1:___

Example:

A Grade 3 learner read a story of **120 words.** She made **5 errors** and **3 self-corrections** while reading.

1. **5** + **3** = **8**
2. **8** ÷ **3** = 1: 2,6

Therefore, the Grade 3 learner self-correction rate is 1: 2,6
This indicates that the learner self-corrected one time for every second or third word read. This indicates that the learner has used self-monitoring and decoding skills when reading.

1.18. Determine the Error Rate of a learner's Running Record using the formula below. The Error Rate is an indication of how many words the learner read accurately before he/she made an error.

Table 7: Error rate (Lazel, 2020b)

1. Total words ÷ Total errors = 1:_____

Example:

A Grade 3 learner read a story of **120 words.** She made **5 errors** while reading.

1. **120** ÷ **5** = 1: 24

Therefore, the Grade 3 learner error rate is 1: 24
This indicates that the learner made one error for every 24 words read.

How many words should a learner read accurately?

Use the rule of thumb to determine a learner reading level. The following table is an indication of the maximum number of words a reader may read incorrectly on a certain level. If a learner read more words incorrectly, it means an easier reading piece should be provided to the reader. This table may also serve as an indication of a learner reads fewer words incorrectly than it is suggested by the table that the teacher should provide more difficulty reading pieces to the learner.

Table 8: Reading level rule of thumb (West, 2020b)

Reading level	50 Words	100 Words
Independent	1 – 2 errors	Maximum of 5 errors
Instructional	3 – 5 errors	6 – 10 errors
Frustration	More than 6 errors	More than 11 errors

How can I create my own Running Record?

1.19. Select a text that is appropriate for the learners' reading level.

1.20. Introduce the story briefly and in a natural manner to the learner. During the introduction pay attention to the background information of the story. After you have done this allow the learner to look at the storybook. By introducing each learner to the story, it will increase the consistency of the assessment.

1.21. Take a Running Record. If the story is long, indicate where the learner should start and stop reading. Otherwise, the learner should read the whole story. Remind, the learner that you will ask him/her to retell the story when they are done reading. The learner may start reading, while you take the Running Record.

1.22. Ask for a retelling or summary of the story. The retelling of a story is a vital part of evaluating the reading comprehension of a learner. Reading comprehension cannot be done when the learner only reads. During the process of retelling the story, the learner may decide on how to retell the story. The teacher will only introduce to the learner that he/she must retell the story by asking the learner: "Tell me about the story?". The learner will now retell the story and include characters, setting and sometimes the theme. If learners need more encouragement to continue telling the story the teacher may ask the learner "What else do you remember? Tell me a little bit more." When you listen to a learner retelling a story, specifically pay attention to the following:

1.22.1. Learner understanding of the story

1.22.2. The learner can accurately report on the events in the story.

1.22.3. The learner can retell the story in the correct sequence

1.22.4. The learner can use some of the words and text from the story

1.22.5. Learner can relate the story to personal knowledge and experience

1.22.6. The learner can use vocabulary effectively

1.22.7. The learner can portray the elements of the characters and settings accurately

1.22.8. The learner can provide supporting details

1.23. Assess the learners understanding of the text, by specifically focusing on the learner's comprehension and higher-level thinking skills. Thus, you will ask questions that directly links with the story, inference questions and critical-thinking questions.

1.24. Making an instructional decision regarding the learners' reading in terms of providing stories that are on a more difficult graded reading level. If a learner can move to a more difficult graded reading level, it is advised that they are moved to that level. However, if a learner is not ready to move to a more difficult graded reading level and is moved to that level the learner may struggle to read and comprehend on the more difficult level and the learner's fluency rate may also be affected. Reading strategies that are taught during a shared reading should afterwards be practised during guided and independent reading. During shared reading, self-monitoring strategies should be taught (Scholastic Canada, 2002).

Figure 4: Strategies a learner will use while reading (Scholastic Canada, 2002)

Self-Monitoring Strategies
•ignored obvious errors •paused/stopped •repeated word(s) •tried something else •self-corrected •self-corrected and re-read to confirm •integrated cueing systems (M, S, V)

Strategies to look for while childern are reading
•Looking at the pictures •questionning whether it makes sense, sounds right, and looks right •finding little words in big words •reading to the end of the sentence •looking at the punctuation marks

Tips to remember:

- Use the information in this guideline to perform a Running Record.
- Remember you will complete the form while the learner is reading. Therefore, the learner will need their text of the story.
- You can copy and paste the reading text of the learner on the form where it says 'story'.

- You can also make the space where the story should be bigger according to the length of the story.
- When you have completed the Running Record of the learners' reading, do the Mathematical calculations using the formulas at number 3 and write the answers on the form.
- When you are done working out the accuracy, error and self-correction rates, write your findings where it says comments. Your findings should focus on what the learner did correctly and which areas need improvement. You can also write down a few ideas of how you will adapt your reading instructional planning to address the areas in which the learner needs improvement.

Addendum A

Running Record template

Learner name and surname: _____

Grade: _____

Teacher: _____

Date of assessment: _____

Title of reading story/text: _____

Number of words in the story: _____

Is this a follow up Running Record: Yes / No

If yes, when was the previous Running Record taken: _____

Story	Self-correction				Error			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V

Criteria	%
Accuracy rate 9. **Running Words** – **Total Errors** = **Score** 10. **Score** ÷ **Running Words** X 100 = Accuracy %	%
Error rate **Total words** ÷ **Total errors** = 1:_____	1:_____
Self-Correction rate **9. Total errors** + **Total self-corrections** = **Total** **10. Total** ÷ **Total self-corrections** = 1:___	1:_____

Reading level

Independent 95-100%	Instructional 94-90%	Frustration Below 90%

Miscues analysis

Cues	Number of Self-corrections	Number of Errors
Meaning		
Structural		
Visual		

Types of errors

Recommendations

Will a future Running Record be needed: Yes / No

If yes, when will it take place? _____

_____

Teacher signature

Addendum B

Reading behaviour	Description	Code	Examples	Error
Accurate reading	Each word is accurately read.	√	√ √ √ √ √ √ The fish swim in the dam.	No error.
Substitution/word guessing	The learner replaces some words or sounds with other words or sounds. Sometimes a learner does this because they do not understand the word in the story. Word guessing may also lead to substitutions. Ask the following: • Does the substitution make sense in the passage? • Is it a logical substitution?	Write the word that the learner read and underline the word. **river**	√ √ √ √ √ **river** The fish swim in the dam.	1 error per word
Omission	A learner leaves out a word during oral reading. It may suggest weaker visual tracking. Ask the following: • Is the meaning of the story affected? May also indicate that a learner reads to fast or is not focusing or has a weak vocabulary sight.	_____	√ ___ √ √ √ √ The fish swim in the dam.	1 error per word omitted
Insertion	A learner inserts a word that is not in the sentence or story. A learner may also insert a suffix and if this is the case it should be addressed. For example, finished instead of finish Answer the following: • Does the inserted word change the meaning? May indicate that the learner is reading too fast.	^	√ √ had √ √ √ √ The fish swim in the dam. ^	1 error per word
Reversal	The learner reverses the order of the print or the word. Pay careful attention to altered meaning.	R	√ √ √ √ √ R The fish swim in the bam.	1 error per word
Sounding / Spelling out word	Sound or spell out a word instead of reading it. This may indicate that the learner does not know the word, or there are too many syllables in the word. Indicates that the learner knows the sound/letter. The teacher has to do more whole-word and word recognition exercises. The teacher can also expose the learner to more vocabulary.	e.g. f-i-sh	√ f-i-sh √ √ √ √ The fish swim in the dam.	1 error per word
Total confusion	The learner is confused and cannot get back where he/she went off track. Suggest that the learner “try again” and it is	TC	Make TC at the word the learner stops reading. √ √ √ TC	1 error per attempt

Reading behaviour	Description	Code	Examples	Error
	counted as one error. On the second attempt, each error counts as a separate miscue.		The fish swim in the dam.	
Told by teacher	The learner cannot read further on his/her own. The teacher has to prompt the learner by asking a question such as: "What good reading strategy could you try here?" If this does not work, the teacher may also read the word for the learner.	T	√ √ T √ √ √ The fish swim in the dam.	1 error per word
Whole word errors	The learner misread a word based on prior knowledge with a word that almost looks visually the same. This indicates that the learner is not processing the printed words phonetically.		The fish **swam … swim** in the dam.	1 error per word
Tracking errors	The learner struggles to read a word from left to right and will mix up the letters in the word and read another word instead.		mad The fish swim in the dam	1 error per word
Long pause	Sometimes when a learner takes very long to read a story, the teacher may time the learner. When a learner takes too long to read a story, the learner lost the meaning of the story. Thus, the teacher has to provide exercise where the learner can practice to be a fast-fluent reader.	//	√ √ √ √ √ √ The fish // swim in the dam.	No error
Repetition	A learner repeats a word or part of a sentence or paragraph. This may indicate that the next level is too difficult. Learners are repeating when they are uncertain about what they have read and will repeat it to make sense of the story.	REP ←	REP ← The fish swim in the dam.	No error
Self-Correction	The learner realised that he/she made a mistake and reread the word/sentence or paragraph without prompting to correct the mistake. This is good. However, it may also indicate that the learner is reading too fast. If a learner is correcting correct words, the learner is uncertain of him/herself.	SC	The fish **swam … swim** in SC the dam	No error

(Scholastic Canada, 2002)

ANNEXURE F – INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Individual Interview schedule

1. Do you think Running Records provides valid, reliable and consistent information to guide instructional planning?

   **Reliable*: Will the results of a learner's test or assessment be the same if another teacher uses the same test or assessment to assess the same learner.

   **Valid* refers to the degree the test or assessment assesses what the teacher intended it to assess. For example, if a teacher is assessing reading fluency, to what extent does the assessment instrument/tool/strategy assess reading fluency.
2. Does the Running Records assessment strategy benefit some learners while other learners are excluded (for example does it benefit some learners based on their culture or gender while excluding other learners on the bases of their culture or gender)? Motivate your answer.
3. Do you think the Running Records assessment strategy measures what it purports to measure? Reading behaviour and accuracy. Motivate your answer.
4. Do you think Running Records can give consistent scores? Motivate your answer.
5. Do you think Running Records has the potential to inform your future reading instructional planning? Motivate your answer.
6. What do you think are the benefits of implementing Running Records as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classroom?
7. What do you think are the limitations/problems of implementing Running Records as a reading assessment strategy in South African Foundation Phase classroom?
8. How do you think the limitations of Running Records as a reading assessment strategy can be addressed/improved?

9. Will you implement Running Record as a reading assessment strategy in your classroom in the future? Motivate your answer.
10. Do you have any questions/remarks about Running Record as a reading assessment strategy?

ANNEXURE G – REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY GENERAL DIRECTOR

[redacted]

10 October 2020

Dear General Director,

REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

I am Lynette van Tonder a Master's student at the University of Pretoria. I wish to conduct research for my Master's dissertation titled "***Reading assessment: The use of Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms*.**" The study aims to explore the use of Running Records, a reading assessment strategy, in South Africa Foundation Phase classrooms. The study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr J. West (Cell: 076 556 7604) and Dr M. Moen (Work number: 012 420 5632) from the Department of Early Childhood Education at the University of Pretoria.

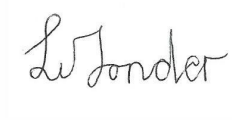
I would like to include two quintile 3 or 4 Foundation Phase teachers from government-funded public schools, in your district to participate in this study. Foundation Phase teachers will be expected to complete a questionnaire, attend a workshop, implement one Running Record, make anecdotal notes of the strategy and participate in a focus group interview. The distribution and answering of questionnaires, as well as the workshop and focus group interviews, will take place after school hours (14:30 – 16:30). The implementation of Running Records will take place during school hours and will only take 30 minutes. I will ask the principals of

the schools to help me identify eight qualified Foundation Phase teachers with three or more years of teaching experience with Foundation Phase learners.

We would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the datasets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

I hereby request permission to conduct research in primary schools under your jurisdiction. To this end, please sign the attached form stating that you give permission and are aware that the selected Foundation Phase teachers may participate in this study. I undertake to provide your office with a bound copy of the full research report on completion of the study. Should you have any questions for clarity, you are welcome to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



……..

Miss. L. van Tonder
Email: u29015414@tuks.co.za or lynette.vantonder@aros.ac.za
Contact number: 084 499 9660

SUPERVISORS' SIGNATURES

Dr. J. West
E-mail address: joyce.west@up.ac.za

Dr. M. Moen
E-mail address: melanie.moen@up.ac.za

PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH

I, ……, hereby give permission to Lynette van Tonder to include teachers and learners of the Foundation Phase in my district to participate in her research study titled *Running Records: The use of Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms.*

Director General Signature: ……

Date: ……

ANNEXURE H – REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY, TEACHER

[redacted]

28 January 2021

Dear Teacher,

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Lynette van Tonder a Master's student at the University of Pretoria. I wish to conduct research for my Master's dissertation titled "***Reading assessment: The use of Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms***."

The aim of the study is to explore the use of Running Records, a reading assessment strategy, in South Africa Foundation Phase classrooms.

I am working under the supervision of Dr. J. West (Cell: 076 556 7604) and Dr. M. Moen (Work number: 012 420 5632) from the Department of Early Childhood Education at the University of Pretoria.

I am kindly inviting you to participate in this study. You will be expected to complete a questionnaire, attend a workshop, implement one Running Record, make anecdotal notes of the strategy while a learner is reading and participate in a focus group interview.

The questionnaire will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. The aim of the questionnaire is to gather information about Foundation Phase teacher current reading- and assessment practices. The workshop will be one hour long. The aim of the workshop is to provide training in how to conduct a Running Record. Thirdly,

you will implement Running Records in your classroom, where one learner has to read to you and make anecdotal notes of Running Records, this will take approximately 30 minutes. Finally, you will participate in a focus group interview (after school hours) of between one to two hours relating to the Running Records strategy. The aim of the focus group interview is to gather rich data from you on the benefits, limitations and possible amendments of Running Records as a reading assessment strategy for South African Foundation Phase classrooms.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and confidential. You have the right to withdraw at any point during the research study without any consequences or explanations. You can be assured that your decision will be respected. Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed always by using pseudonyms to the participants during the transcription phase. **No participant names or personal information will be reported in my findings.**

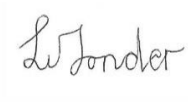
In participating in this research study, you will be asked for permission by the researchers to make audio recordings of the semi-structured interview. The purpose thereof is to make transcription of data valid and authentic. The recording will be safely kept at the University of Pretoria. Only my supervisors and I that will have access to the audio recordings. All data collected will only be used for academic purposes.

You may ask questions before or during the time of participation. If you have any concerns regarding the data collection procedures, please notify me or my supervisor. As a participant, you will have the opportunity to access and verify the recorded views and the transcriptions of interviews made in case there is a need to do so.

We would also like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the datasets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

Please indicate by signing your understanding of information shared above, the purpose being to give your consent to participate.

Kind regards,



Miss. L. van Tonder

Email: u29015414@tuks.co.za or lynette.vantonder@aros.ac.za

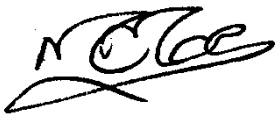
Contact number: 084 499 9660

SUPERVISORS' SIGNATURES

……

Dr. J. West

E-mail address: joyce.west@up.ac.za



……..

Dr. M. Moen

E-mail address: melanie.moen@up.ac.za

CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

I, ……, hereby declare that I have been informed about the nature of the research and the role that I will play in the research. I understand that the information supplied will be kept strictly confidential. I further understand that I will not receive any remuneration for partaking in the research. I hereby give permission to L van Tonder to participate in her study titled: ***Reading assessment: The use of Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms*** as outlined and understand that I may withdraw from the study if I choose to do so.

Teacher's Signature: ……

Date: ……

ANNEXURE I – REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY, PARENT

[redacted]

27 February 2021

Dear parent,

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I am Lynette van Tonder a Master's student at the University of Pretoria. I wish to conduct research for my Master's dissertation titled "***Reading assessment: The use of Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms*.**" The aim of the study is to explore the use of Running Records, a reading assessment strategy, in South Africa Foundation Phase classrooms. The study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. J. West (Cell: 076 556 7604) and Dr. M. Moen (Work number: 012 420 5632) from the Department of Early Childhood Education at the University of Pretoria.

I am kindly requesting for permission to have your child participate in my study. Your child will be required to read to their teacher during school hours, while the teacher will use Running Records, a reading assessment strategy, to make notes of the benefits, limitations and possible amendments of the strategy. Your child will not be harmed in any way. No videos will be taken or recorded of any child in the class.

During the reporting phase of this study, no names of learners or the school will be used in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed by using pseudonyms to the participants during the transcription phase. **No participant or personal information will be reported in my findings.**

We would like to request your permission to use your data, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the datasets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

To this end, please sign the attached form stating that you give consent that your child may participate in this study. Should you have any questions that need clarity, you are welcome to contact me.

Kind regards,

Miss. L. van Tonder

Email: u29015414@tuks.co.za or lynette.vantonder@aros.ac.za

Contact number: 084 499 9660

SUPERVISORS' SIGNATURES

Dr. J. West

E-mail address: joyce.west@up.ac.za

Dr. M. Moen

E-mail address: melanie.moen@up.ac.za

CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS

I, ……, parent of ……., hereby declare that I have been informed about the nature of the research and the role that my child will play in the research. I understand that the information supplied will be kept strictly confidential. I further understand that neither I nor my child will receive any remuneration for partaking in the research. I hereby consent that my child may participate in Lynette van Tonder's study titled: "***Reading assessment: The use of Running Records in South African Foundation Phase classrooms***" as outlined and understand that I may withdraw my child from the study if I choose to do so.

Parent's Signature: …….

Date: ……

ANNEXURE J – REQUEST ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

[redacted]

27 February 2021

Dear Parent and Learner,

REQUEST ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I am Lynette van Tonder a Master's student at the University of Pretoria. I am doing a study to find out if it will be possible for your teacher to use a different method when she listens to your reading. If you decide to take part in this study it will take you 15 minutes. The study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. J. West (Cell: 076 556 7604) and Dr. M. Moen (Work number: 012 420 5632) from the Department of Early Childhood Education at the University of Pretoria.

We are asking you to take part in the research study because your teacher said you will be able to do it. You will only read a story to your teacher, while your teacher will make notes of the good and bad things of the method she is using. You will not be harmed in any way. No videos will be taken or recorded of you. **Nor your name or personal information will be used in this study.**

We would like to request your permission to use your information, confidentially and anonymously, for further research purposes, as the information sets are the intellectual property of the University of Pretoria. Further research may include secondary data analysis and using the data for teaching purposes. The confidentiality and privacy applicable to this study will be binding on future research studies.

Your parents/guardians were asked if it is in order for you to be in this study. Even if they say it's in order, it is still your choice whether or not to take part. If you agree to participate in this study, please fill in the attached form. Should you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me or my supervisors.

Kind regards,

Miss. L. van Tonder
Email: u29015414@tuks.co.za or lynette.vantonder@aros.ac.za
Contact number: 084 499 9660

SUPERVISORS' SIGNATURES

Dr. J. West
E-mail address: joyce.west@up.ac.za

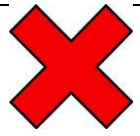
Dr. M. Moen
E-mail address: melanie.moen@up.ac.za

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

ASSENT FORM FOR LEARNERS

Read the statement and mark (√) if you agree and (X) if you do not agree

Icon	Statement	Mark yes (√) or no (X)
	I have listened to and understood the information about the study. I know I may ask questions at any stage.	
	I know my parents said I can participate in a study where I read to my teacher and my teacher make notes.	
	I know I can ask to not take part at any point.	
	I know I will not be audio recorded or photographed.	
	I am happy that the information I give may be shared with the project team.	

Write your full name and surname:……

Date:……

ANNEXURE K – ANECDOTAL NOTES RUNNING RECORD 1

Story	Self-correction				Error			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Today we rushed to the library after school. We pushed Lebo in her wheelchair. It was quite heavy to push. There were so many books in the library. I liked a book about a horse. It was a special horse that could fly. Bongi took a book about baking a cake. She likes baking. Rob said he was too short to reach the top shelf. Ben had to sit outside the library. He was not allowed into the library. Poor Ben. No dogs allowed. (Department of Basic Education, 2019a, p. 22)						M	M/V M/V	(5)

Page 1 of 5

Running Records: ReadSee Assessment Strategy

Criteria	%
Accuracy rate 1. Running Words – Total Errors = Score 2. Score ÷ Running Words X 100 = Accuracy %	% 96,4
Error rate Total words ÷ Total errors = 1:____	1: 2,5
Self-Correction rate 1. Total errors + Total self-corrections = Total 2. Total ÷ Total self-corrections = 1:____	1: 40

Reading level

Independent 95-100%	Instructional 94-90%	Frustration Below 90%

Miscues analysis

Cues	Amount of Self-corrections	Amount of Errors
Meaning		
Structural	✓	
Visual	✓	

Types of errors

Pronounciation

Recommendations

Will a future Running Record be needed: Yes / (No)

If yes, when will it take place? _____

ANNEXURE L – ANECDOTAL NOTES RUNNING RECORD 2

Running Record template

Learner name and surname: _____

Grade: 2

Teacher: _____

Date of assessment: 2021-03-26

Title of reading story/text: We eat at school

Amount of words in the story: 52

Is this a follow up Running Record: Yes / (No)

If yes, when was the previous Running Record taken: _____

Story	Self-correction				Error			
	SC:	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
We are lucky. We get food at school.								
We like to eat lunch at school.								
Our mothers cook good food for us.								
Ben also wants some food.								
Bongi likes to eat carrots.					✓✓			
Dan likes to eat meat. (mgt)								✓
Nomsa is feeling sick.								
She does not want to eat today.								
Do you like vegetables? (scrambled)				✓				
(Department of Basic Education, English Home Language Book 1 Term 1 and 2 Grade 2. 2019a, pp. 22-23)								

1,47 minute

Criteria	%
Accuracy rate 1. Running Words – Total Errors = Score (42-3=49:52) 2. Score ÷ Running Words X 100 = Accuracy %	94 %
Error rate Total words ÷ Total errors = 1: ____	1: 187
Self-Correction rate 1. Total errors ÷ Total self-corrections = Total (4) 2. Total ÷ Total self-corrections = 1: 4 (47)	1: 4

Reading level

Independent 95-100%	Instructional 94-90%	Frustration Below 90%

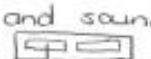
Miscues analysis

Cues	Amount of Self-corrections	Amount of Errors
Meaning		2
Structural		
Visual	/	/

Types of errors

Visual – Couldn't read, had to sound out
-vegetables, Bongi, carrots
Read mat instead of meat,
poor knowledge of double blends

Recommendations

Has to work more on vocabulary.
Breaking up words in syllables
Make sure he knows sounds well and
blending inside words. Must try and sound
words out more. Make a card:- 
cut opening size of word.

Will a future Running Record be needed: (Yes) / No

If yes, when will it take place? End of second term (May)

ANNEXURE M – ANECDOTAL NOTES RUNNING RECORD 3

Storie	Self-Korrigering				Foute			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Die kinders is baie gelukkig. Hulle kry kos by die skool. Die kos maak hulle harte bly en hulle mae vol.	1 1				1			
My mamma kook vir ons gesonde kos.					1			
Dit neem baie tyd in beslag.					1			
Ben, my hond, wil ook kos hê. Ben swaai sy stert van blydskap as ek sy kos vir hom gee.	1				2	✓	✓	
Ek hou daarvan om wortels te eet.					2	✓		✓
Danie, my boetie, hou van rys en vleis.					1			
Hou jy van groente?					1			
(Department of Basic Education, 2019b, pp. 22-23)								

Kriteria	%
Akkuraatheid persentasie 1. **Totale aantal woorde** – **Totale aantal foute** =**Telling** 2. **Telling** ÷ **Totale aantal woorde** X 100 = Akkuraatheid %	86 %

Fout ratio **Totale aantal woorde ÷ Totale aantal foute = 1:** ____	1: 7
Self-korrigering ratio 1. **Totale aantal foute +** Totale aantal self-korrigering **= Totaal** 2. **Totaal** + Totale self-korrigering **= 1:** ____	1: 4

Leesvlak

Onafhanklik / Independent 95-100%	Instruksioneel/Instructional 94-90%	Frustrasie/Frustration Onder 90% ✓

Foute leidraad analise

Leidraad	Aantal self-korrigerings	Aantal foute
(M) Betekenis	0	2
(S) Struktuur	0	1
(V) Visueel	3	1

Tipe foute

Klanke → Veral dubbel klanke soos "oe" en "ie".
Lees onbekende woorde met baie onsekerheid.
Weglating van groot woorde.

Aanbevelings

Aandag aan dubbel klanke.
Sigwoorde om leesspoed ook te verbeter.

Is 'n toekomstige RR nodig? Ja/Nee

Indien ja, wanneer sal dit plaasvind? _____

ANNEXURE N – ANECDOTAL NOTES RUNNING RECORD 4

Storie	Self-Korrigering				Foute			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Ons het vandag skoolbiblioteek toe gegaan.					1			
Ek het vir Grieta in haar rolstoel gestoot.								
Dit was swaar om haar oor die gras te stoot.					2			✓
Daar was baie boeke in die biblioteek.								
Ek het van 'n boek oor 'n perd gehou. Dit was 'n besonderse perd wat kon vlieg.								
Bongi het 'n resepteboek uitgeneem. Sy hou daarvan om te bak.					1	✓		
Rob het gesê hy is te kort om by die boonste rak by te kom.					1			
Ben moes buite die biblioteek wag. Hy is nie in die biblioteek toegelaat nie. Arme Ben.					1			
Geen honde word toegelaat nie.	1		✓		1	✓		
(Department of Basic Education, 2019b, p. 22)								

Kriteria	%
Akkuraatheid persentasie 1. Totale aantal woorde – Totale aantal foute =Telling 2. Telling + Totale aantal woorde X 100 = Akkuraatheid %	91 %
Fout ratio Totale aantal woorde ÷ Totale aantal foute = 1:	1: 11
Self-korrigering ratio 1. Totale aantal foute + Totale aantal self-korrigering = Totaal 2. Totaal ÷ Totale self-korrigering = 1:	1: 10

Leesvlak

Onafhanklik / Independent 95-100%	Instruksioneel/Instructional 94-90% ✓	Frustrasie/Frustration Onder 90%

Foute leidraad analise

Leidraad	Aantal self-korrigerings	Aantal foute
(M) Betekenis	0	2
(S) Struktuur	0	0
(V) Visueel	1	2

Tipe foute

Klanke (a-e, oe-oo).
Klank of spel van onbekende woorde.
Leerder kan lank neem voor daar wee verder gelees word.

Aanbevelings

Inskerping van klanke.
Oefening met geoken word, waar leerder oefen om vinnig en vlot te lees.

Is 'n toekomstige RR nodig? Ja/Nee

Indien ja, wanneer sal dit plaasvind? _____

ANNEXURE O – ANECDOTAL NOTES RUNNING RECORD 5

Storie	Self-Korrigering				Foute			
	SC	M	S	V	E	M	S	V
Die kinders is baie gelukkig. Hulle kry kos by die skool. Die kos maak hulle harte bly en hulle mae vol.	1				1			
My mamma kook vir ons gesonde kos.					1			
Dit neem baie tyd in beslag.	2				1			
Ben, my hond, wil ook kos hê. Ben swaai sy stert van blydskap as ek sy kos vir hom gee.					1	✓		
Ek hou daarvan om wortels te eet.					2	✓		✓
Danie, my boetie, hou van rys en vleis. Hou jy van groente?					2			
(Department of Basic Education, 2019b, pp. 22-23)								

Kriteria	%
Akkuraatheid persentasie 1. **Totale aantal woorde** – Totale aantal foute =Telling 2. Telling ÷ **Totale aantal woorde** X 100 = Akkuraatheid %	88 %

Fout ratio **Totale aantal woorde** ÷ Totale aantal foute = 1:____	1: 8
Self-korrigering ratio 1. **Totale aantal foute** + Totale aantal self-korrigering = **Totaal** 2. **Totaal** ÷ Totale self-korrigering = 1:___	1: 4

Leesvlak

Onafhanklik / Independent 95-100%	Instruksioneel/Instructional 94-90%	Frustrasie/Frustration Onder 90% ✓

Foute leidraad analise

Leidraad	Aantal self-korrigerings	Aantal foute
(M) Betekenis	0	2
(S) Struktuur	0	0
(V) Visueel	3	1

Tipe foute

Klanke
Raai woorde/Herhaaring
Omkerings

Aanbevelings

Aanklag aan tydwoorde.

Is 'n toekomstige RR nodig? Ja/(Nee)

Indien ja, wanneer sal dit plaasvind? _____

ANNEXURE P – ATLAS.TI CODES AND CATEGORIES

The qualitative codes and categories can be accessed by following these Google Drive link:

Questionnaire:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ndrvH4dMT6pvy-CrAiV5nx4XEi_4SPOy/view?usp=sharing

Transcribed interviews:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/16-uWXkijwSqiFV2idcBCVDqfG8WKJNZL/view?usp=sharing