

**A LITERACY INTERVENTION WITH TEACHERS: EXPLORING READING CULTURE IN A
RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOL**

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**A LITERACY INTERVENTION WITH TEACHERS: EXPLORING READING CULTURE IN A
RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOL**

by

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Michelle, Lorraine du Plessis, declare that:

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is my own work and that all references appear in the list of references.

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DECLARATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative, participatory action research study was to explore and describe the nature of a reading culture in a rural secondary school before and after a literacy intervention. Themes of reading culture were investigated within the framework of systems theory and with interpretivism as epistemological paradigm. A secondary rural school was conveniently selected as part of ongoing FLY and STAR¹ studies on resilience and rural schools. Language teachers (n=6, male=1, female=5) were purposively selected to participate in the literacy intervention. The literacy intervention was developed with phonetic acquisition as basis to develop reading skills. The intervention was implemented in two two-day phases, with a three-month gap in between. Pre- and post-intervention data were collected by means of three focus-group interviews with the teacher-participants. These interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for thematic analysis. In addition, the school site (classrooms, notice boards) was observed (documented by means of field notes, visual data, and researcher journals). Textual documents (minutes of staff management team meetings) were analysed to investigate the nature of the reading culture at the school pre- and post-intervention. The following themes emerged from thematic analysis: the reading culture in (i) the learners' system, (ii) classroom system, and (iii) school system in the rural secondary school. Subsequent to a literacy intervention, changes in the reading culture were evident. It was found that the reading culture in a rural secondary school may be affected negatively by the following systemic factors: learners enter this education phase without adequate reading capacity, the language of learning and teaching is an additional language for both learners and teachers, secondary school teachers are not trained to teach (secondary school) learners to read, and the isolated and scarce-resourced nature of a rural school also compounds the difficulties of nurturing a reading culture. Nonetheless, certain systemic factors contributed to enriching the reading culture in the rural secondary school. In the teacher system, the literacy intervention programme addressed teachers' need for training to help secondary school learners to learn to read. At post-intervention in the learner system, learners received the required learning support to read, their participation in classroom activities in the classroom system improved, and they read more and with greater confidence. In the school system, effective management and use of the library contributed to the reading-culture post-intervention. The role of leadership to

¹ FLY: Flourishing Learning Youth; STAR: Supportive Teachers Assets and Resilience.

implement reading initiatives was another contributing factor at the school-system level. Education-system support by the Department of Education in the form of reading resources and the introduction of a policy providing for a reading period also proved valuable to enriching the reading culture. In terms of the community system, the reading-culture initiative led to collaborative networking with neighbouring primary schools in fostering joint capacity development in the literacy intervention.

KEY WORDS

Reading culture

Literacy intervention

Teachers

Learners

Rural secondary school

School structures

Systems theory



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CHAPTER 1: CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction, rationale and background to this study

In South Africa, it is estimated that between 7.4 and 8.5 million adults are illiterate and between 2.9 and 4.2 million people have never formally attended school (UNESCO, 2002). One million South African learners reportedly live in households in which no one has the ability to read (UNESCO, 2002). In 2006, the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (Van Staden & Howie, 2008) conducted a study in South Africa at the University of Pretoria's Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) (Zuze & Reddy, 2011). The results indicated that South Africa's Grades 4 and 5 learners scored the lowest among learners from 45 participating education systems (Venter & Howie, 2008). Although the Grade 5 learners did not reach the international average score, their scores were higher than those of the Grade 4s, suggesting some reading improvement taking place when progressing from Grades 4 to 5 (Venter & Howie, 2008). Wienand (2011) reports in his study that more than 70% of South African learners at a national level have difficulties learning to read, while Blank (2006) states that the figure for learners with learning difficulties in America is 40%. Evidently reading appears to be a problem for learners internationally, but it is a cause for concern that such a significantly higher level of South African learners are experiencing barriers to reading.

"Learning to read is a key milestone for learners living in a literate society" (Whitehurst, 2002, p. 11). I have undertaken a study, in partnership with teachers in a rural secondary school in Mpumalanga, that forms part of two long-term research projects conducted by STAR and FLY.¹ In my study's contribution to these projects, I focused my research on exploring the nature of the reading culture at this rural secondary school.² An impression of the environment in which the participating school is situated can be gained from Figures 1.1 and 1.2.

¹ STAR: Supportive Teachers Assets and Resilience. FLY: Flourishing Learning Youth.

² On the recommendation of teachers from the participating secondary rural school, two neighbouring primary schools were selected in "snowball" fashion (Nieuwenhuis, 2007) to participate in the second stage of the literacy intervention. Although the two neighbouring primary schools participated in the second stage of the intervention, they did not form part of the main focus of this study furthermore, the schools did not contribute to the data.



Figure 1.1: Classrooms and playground for learners of the participating rural secondary school (May 2009)



Figure 1.2: Toilets and playground for learners of the participating rural secondary school (May 2009)

In this study, I collaborated with teachers (from the participating rural secondary school) in order to develop and implement a literacy intervention programme. The need for such a programme was identified during a pre-intervention focus-group discussion held with the participating secondary school teachers. The programme was aimed at equipping these teachers with the literacy skills required for assisting secondary school learners in improving their reading skills. It was hoped that such an

improvement would lead to the implementation of a sustainable reading culture at the secondary school.

As the lack of reading was identified as one of the problems at the participating school, the focus was on implementing and maintaining a reading culture in the school. The majority of the learners in the school spoke SiSwati (first language) and according to the teachers, the learners' English (additional language) language skills were underdeveloped. The learners used English mainly as their language of learning in the classrooms as it is the language of learning and teaching of the school. The learners did not demonstrate much enthusiasm towards reading, which may be considered a plausible reason for delay in the development of a reading culture in the school. The teachers at the participating school spoke a variety of African languages such as Sepedi, Shona, Setswana and Shangaan. A number of the teachers at the school did not speak SiSwati, resulting in a challenge to provide learners with the needed teaching assistance in their mother tongue or home language. Therefore, the teachers voiced their need for guidance to assist the learners in developing their English literacy skills (as their additional language) in order to create and maintain a reading culture at the school.

1.2 Purpose and objectives of this study

The aim of the study was to explore and describe the nature of a reading culture in a selected rural secondary school. Furthermore, the particular objective was to examine the extent to which a literacy intervention with teachers could inform (or not) a reading culture at the school.

As stated previously, for the purpose of this study, I collaborated with teachers who were involved in ongoing research projects (STAR and FLY) in a remote rural secondary school. In Table 1.1 (*Basic exposition of the interactive cycle of action-reflection*) the phases, activities, and timeline of the study are given. (A comprehensive description of the interactive cycle of action-reflection is included in Chapter 3.) The aim was thus to explore and describe the nature of the reading culture in the school (Garn, Matthews, & Jolly, 2010), before (Phase 1) and after (Phase 6) a literacy intervention (Wallace, 2009) (Phase 5). The literacy intervention

was implemented to develop a better understanding of the reading culture (McEwan, 2002) in the school (Phases 1 to 6).

Table 1.1

Basic exposition of the interactive cycle of action-reflection (Adapted from Hay, 2005)

Phase	Activities, data documentation and methods	Timeline
1. Getting started – the intervention knowledge development	- Define problems. - Partner with teachers. - Conduct focus-group interviews and observations. - Establish a mutually agreeable and realistic time frame.	May 2009 to August 2009
2. Reflection	- Reflect on problem formulation and knowledge construction of identified problems. - Hold discussions with supervisors and a fellow student.	August 2009 to April 2010
3. Building partnership – knowledge utilisation	- Negotiate ethics and roles. - Gain access to relevant data and information. - Develop a shared understanding of the problem.	May 2009
4. Reflection	- Reformulate and reassess the problem. - Hold discussions with supervisors and a fellow student. - Use a researcher diary to document reflections.	May 2009 to August 2010
5. Working together – design and development	- Apply the knowledge gained to an applicable innovative intervention: Implement the literacy intervention through means of a phonetics programme. - Establish ways to involve language teachers and learners.	April 2010: First stage of intervention, and May 2010: Second stage of intervention
6. Reflection	- Evaluate, provide feedback and re-plan for future studies. - Hold discussions with supervisors and a fellow student. - Hold post-intervention discussions.	August 2010
7. Looking ahead	Consider options for future cycles of participation, research and action with or without current researcher involvement.	Continued observation of reading culture and literacy in STAR and FLY to investigate educational access, retention and performance of learners in terms of reading.

I relied on exploratory research in order to collect the needed data in the form of informal interviews and focus-group discussions (Phases 1 to 6 in Table 1.1). Explorative studies are intended to give clarity regarding an identified problem. They allow researchers to gain a better understanding of the problems identified in order to select the best research design and methods of collecting the needed data (Stebbins, 2001). Exploratory research is often an informal process conducted through focus-group discussions, interviews, case discussions and pilot studies. It has to be borne in mind, though, that the results obtained from this kind of research are not adequate when used in isolation. Moreover, it usually requires lengthy periods of fieldwork (Stebbins, 2001).

The data for this study needed to be consistently and sufficiently supported to ensure their trustworthiness. I therefore relied on data from various sources in order to give alternative descriptions of the observations made in this study. Descriptive studies are intended to identify information that is reliable in order to give alternative descriptions of what has been observed (Hazelrigg, 2004). Since descriptive studies often suffer from the defect of ambiguity, the information described needs to be presented with sufficient discriminatory supremacy to make it valid (Hazelrigg, 2004).

Other objectives of this study include:

- developing and implementing a literacy intervention;
- determining whether teachers' beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in the classroom enabled a reading culture before and after a literacy intervention;
- determining how a reading culture in a secondary school may influence the community;
- determining how a reading culture in a secondary school may influence classroom practices and learning;
- determining how a reading culture in a secondary school may influence the learners' abilities to read.

1.3 Problem statement

Habitual reading is the foundation of a reading culture. Whitehurst (2002) states that learners who read well, read more, which gives them the opportunity to acquire more knowledge in numerous domains. However, as indicated earlier, learning to read

continues to be a barrier to learning not only in the South African school system, but also in a global context (Shaw & Davidson, 2009). Kachala (2007) states that poor delivery of information services in rural areas contributes strongly not only to lower levels of educational standards but also to lower levels of literacy. These obstacles are exacerbated in schools in rural settings. Kachala (2007) notes further that the separation between the developed and developing nations is placing rural areas at a disadvantage concerning access to relevant and timely information.

A reading culture could ensure that learners are well equipped to excel in their studies, thereby improving the standards of education in rural areas (Kachala, 2007). Teaching reading in schools has been limited to two main methods, namely phonetics and the whole-language approach (Blank, 2006). Phonetics acquisition forms a platform from which development of reading skills can take place. Therefore, in order to surmount the barriers that learners may experience in phonetic acquisition, a phonetic intervention programme can be introduced (Adonis & Hughes, 2007). The central point of reading-phonetics is the adaptation of letters into sounds, whereas the whole-language approach introduces the more conventional methods of teaching reading which focus on word recognition of words when reading. These conventional methods include factors such as reading motivation (Blank, 2006).

The teacher, school, and community play a vital role in assisting a child to learn to read, as well as to use this skill on a habitual basis, thus developing and maintaining a reading culture. Teachers face an extremely challenging task when teaching a child to read and are expected to include a vast number of attributes such as phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, fluency, language knowledge, comprehension, cognitive strategies and reading excessively (Blank, 2006). Learners who do not read well by Grade 3 are more likely to have poor reading abilities throughout their lifetime (Blank, 2006). It is important to note this, as the teacher-participants of the selected school teach older secondary school learners who are already challenged by a lack of general reading skills.

1.4 Research questions

In light of the rationale and purpose of this study as described above, the primary research question is: *To what extent can a literacy intervention with teachers in a rural secondary school inform and enhance the reading culture in the school?*

In addressing the primary research question, the following secondary research questions were considered:

- How do teachers contribute to the reading culture in a rural secondary school before and after the literacy intervention?
- How do learners contribute to the reading culture in a rural secondary school before and after the literacy intervention?
- How do the school structures in a rural secondary school reflect a reading culture before and after the literacy intervention?

1.5 Concept clarification

The following section provides a brief summary of the key concepts employed in this study.

1.5.1 Literacy intervention

Shanahan (2005) defines literacy interventions as programmes that specifically target teachers or learners who are reading significantly below their appropriate age or grade level. A literacy intervention may provide literacy instruction that is intended to accelerate reading attainments, allowing learners to decrease or close the achievement gap between them and their peers. Literacy programmes can be intended as a core or supplemental initiative for an entire class, an individual, or a small group of learners, and may include laboratory or computer-based instruction (Shanahan, 2005). Instruction may take the form of reading or oral guidance in classroom venues. However, it is important that the intention of any programme should be to help learners who are struggling with literacy, and that it should focus on covering at least one aspect of literacy instruction (Shanahan, 2005).

In the context of this study, *literacy intervention* denotes developing and facilitating a literacy intervention to assist participating teachers in using phonics. The activities in

the intervention programme in this study were aimed at educating teachers regarding phonics in order to teach English with the aim to develop and maintain a reading culture at the school.

1.5.2 Reading culture

A reading culture can be defined as “the collective attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours of all the stakeholders in a school regarding any and all of the activities associated, which enables all learners to read at the highest level of attainment for both their academic and personal gain” (McEwan, 2002, p. 16). Another essential aspect of a reading culture is highlighted in the definition of Doiron and Asselin (2011), in which they imply that the optimum situation would be one “where reading is highly valued and appreciated in the society and where reading is regarded not simply as something developed for school purposes but something practiced in all aspects of our lives” (p. 109).

In relation to this study, a *reading culture* signifies attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that enable reading in the following systems: learners, teachers, and school structures. Therefore, a reading culture includes the learners, teachers, school, and community in all the activities associated with reading that enable learners to read on a regular basis, which in turn will deepen such a culture and make it sustainable.

1.5.3 Teacher

The word *teacher* refers to a person who teaches in a school setting. Teaching implies a pedagogical role, such as that of giving guidance (Wallace, 2009). The term *teachers* in this study refers to secondary school language teachers who teach Grades 7 to 12 learners.

1.5.4 Rural secondary school

A *rural secondary school* can be defined as a school population that is characterised by rural living conditions, small population size, poverty, and non-urban acculturation experiences that are related to difficulties in providing for the educational needs of learners (Garn et al., 2010). For the purpose of this study, the terms *rural secondary school* and *secondary school* are used interchangeably. A *rural secondary school*

consists of Grades 7 to 12 learners, aged from approximately 11 to 20 years. In this study, the participating rural school is situated in Mpumalanga, close to the Swaziland border.

1.5.6 Learners

The terms *learner* and *student* are used interchangeably in literature. A learner is defined as a person who is attending school and, furthermore, is learning something (Rundell, 2002). For the purpose of this study, I will refer to learners in a secondary school environment in Grade 8.

1.5.5 School structures

Since reading must form part of all aspects (Mureithi & Kipchumba, 2011) if a reading culture is to be established, it also follows that school structures need to be in place to foster such a reading culture. In this text, *school structures* refer to structures that support and implement a reading culture at the participating rural secondary school.

1.6 Paradigmatic perspective

For the purpose of this study, I relied on participatory action research, interpretivism, and general systems theory in validating the study and its findings. The selected paradigmatic perspectives are discussed in detail in Chapter 3, and the following subsections consequently serve only as an initial outline here.

1.6.1 Metatheoretical paradigm

I regard an interpretivist approach as suitable for this study since it emphasises that human beings are dependent not only on their environment, but also on their individual traits (Avis, 2004). People's experiences of themselves are therefore influenced by their significant relationships; in other words, the way they feel loved, appreciated, and valued (Avis, 2004). In the context of this study, the participants' newly obtained skills and knowledge concerning a reading culture could therefore be shared with other people in the school setting and community.

All human beings have the capacity for growth and creativity. No matter what a person's background, experiences, and personal circumstances, all people possess the ability to achieve their full potential. This study was implemented in a rural area in a secondary school where learners presented with reading barriers. The capacity for the learners and participating teachers to change is important when regarding the nature of this study. It is possible to assume that the implementation of a literacy intervention programme could have equipped the literacy teachers with a better understanding of a reading culture (McEwan, 2002) and the skills to maintain a reading culture in the participating school.

1.6.2 Methodological paradigm

I selected participatory action research (PAR) as methodological paradigm aimed at improving the quality of people's social and/or community orientation (Creswell, 2005). I therefore aimed to establish an interactive form of knowledge development (Nieuwenhuis, 2007) in order to understand the reading culture at the participating school. The research team³ and I relied on PAR (Adonis & Hughes, 2007) in order to develop and implement a literacy intervention programme at this school. My role was that of researcher focusing on both the problem identified (namely the lack of a reading culture) and the teachers who introduced and maintained the reading culture at the participating school. As a mediator, I aimed to introduce participating teachers to skills and knowledge for addressing the identified challenges related to reading and literacy faced at the participating school.

1.6.3 Theoretical framework

I opted for general systems theory (Arthur, 2005; Avis, 2004) as theoretical framework for this study. General systems theory focuses on the interconnection between parts within a system. This psychological perspective identifies each individual as a part of a system in which all individuals interact with one another (Avis, 2004). Learners as well as teachers are part of the school system; they are dependent on each other in order to function. The assumption embedded in this

³ Yolanda Swart (MEd Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling: "Geletterheidsintervensie en onderwysers se taal van onderrigpraktyke: askienavorsing in plattelandse skole") and Loraine du Plessis (MEd Educational Psychology: A literacy intervention with teachers: describing reading culture in a rural school), and supervisors Professor L. Ebersöhn, Professor R. Ferreira and Dr I. Joubert.

theory is that if an intervention or change is implemented in one part of the system, this will have an effect on the entire system (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2009; Avis, 2004).

Since learners and teachers are dependent on each other to function, teachers will influence learners and *vice versa*. As such, the implementation of a literacy intervention programme will affect not only the teachers, but also the learners of the participating school. A literacy intervention with teachers can possibly create a reading culture in the school and flow over into the community as well. The teacher, school, and community may play a vital role in assisting a child in learning to read and to use this skill on a habitual basis, thus developing and maintaining a reading culture. Furthermore, teachers and learners may interact with each other, forming their own subsystem and making it possible for all similar subsystems to rely on each other for emotional support.

1.7 Research methodology

In the following section, I introduce the selected research design, selection of participants, data collection, design and implementation of intervention, as well as data analysis and interpretation. The selected research methodology will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.7.1 Research design

I relied on intervention research to draw on experiences, theory, and data in order to develop a literacy intervention (Fraser, Richman, Calinsky, & Day, 2009). In this study, I used PAR to draw on the personal experiences of the participating teachers in order to consider literacy intervention strategies that could possibly generate a reading culture at the participating school. The literacy intervention strategies were constructed through the use of theory-based intervention as well as systematically selection in order to generate the best possible solution.

1.7.2 Selection of participants

I selected the participants according to the criterion of convenience (Maree & Pietersen, 2007; Hay, 2005; Creswell, 2009) from the FLY and STAR projects already implemented at the participating rural secondary school. Furthermore, the

selection of the participating school was delimited to the surroundings and the availability of appointed language teachers in this study.

1.7.3 Data collection and documentation

I relied on various data sources such as textual documents, observations, field notes, visual data, a researcher journal, and lastly, focus-group interviews during this study. Since the selected data collection strategies are discussed fully in Chapter 3, the subsections below are intended as a brief overview of the data collection and analysing strategies.

1.7.3.1 Textual documents

Primary source data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007) were collected in the form of minutes of meetings and academic results obtained. Academic results included English term marks for Grade 7 learners for the first and fourth terms. I collected the textual documents in order to identify the nature of the reading culture at the selected school before and after a literacy intervention. The documentation was analysed using thematic analysis, and the results obtained are provided in Chapter 4.

1.7.3.2 Observation

I made use of observational data (Hay, 2005) in the form of observations of classroom activities and school environments in order to record the chronological processes of events. These data provided me with a detailed portrait of the participating school's reading culture before and after the implementation of a literacy intervention. I documented the observations textually (field notes) and visually (photographs).

1.7.3.3 Field notes

The observations made during this study were documented by means of field notes (Hay, 2005). The classroom observations made before and after the implementation of a literacy intervention programme were documented in the field notes and analysed afterwards (Braun, 2006).

1.7.3.4 Visual data

Photographs were used as a documentation method (Silverman, 2010) for capturing valuable information such as the research setting, the classrooms, and the immediate environment of the participating school.

1.7.3.5 Researcher journal and researcher role

I made use of a researcher journal to document my ideas, challenges, and outcomes that occurred. The research journal is produced as part of the natural experiences of events and observations at the participating school (Hatch, 2002). The extracts were analysed using thematic analysis, and the findings are reported in Chapter 4.

1.7.3.6 Focus-group interviews

I used focus-group interviews (Hay, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) to gather data on the current reading culture (or lack thereof) at the selected school. The research team conducted two pre-intervention focus-group discussions and one post-intervention focus-group discussion with the six purposively selected teachers from the participating school. The focus-group discussions were held to determine the nature of the participating school's reading culture intervention before and after the implementation of a reading culture in order to address my secondary research questions. The focus-group discussions were transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis.

1.7.3.7 Informal conversational interviews

I engaged in informal conversational interviews (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000) with various participating teachers. This interviewing strategy allowed me to interview the participants in an informal, flexible framework as the questions emerged from the direct situation that presented itself during the study.

1.7.3.8 Design and implementation of intervention

The literacy intervention was implemented in two stages. The first stage focused on basic phonetic acquisition and the second stage on double syllables and blending

phonetics. The six participating teachers from the selected rural secondary school participated in Stages 1 and 2 of the literacy intervention programme.⁴

1.7.4 Data analysis and interpretation

All the collected data (transcriptions of the three focus-group discussions, photographs, field notes, research journal and textual data) served as sources for analysis. I analysed the data by means of thematic analysis and interpretation (Lacey & Luff, 2001) to determine the outcome of the literacy intervention on the participating school's reading culture. For this purpose, I identified meaningful information gathered before and after the implementation of the literacy intervention programme. The findings of this study are reported in Chapter 4.

1.8 Ethical considerations

Ethics generally concerns dealing with beliefs about what is right and wrong, proper or improper, good or bad (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). During the study, I followed guidelines on informed and voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality, no harm to participants, and trust. The above ethical principles are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.9 Quality criteria

I strived to address issues of credibility, transferability, authenticity, dependability, and confirmability (Thomas, Nelson, & Silverman, 2005). Various methods were considered and implemented to ensure that this study would be conducted and reported in a responsible manner (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009). The above quality criterion is discussed in Chapter 3.

1.10 Outline of the chapters

Chapter 1: Contextualising the study

Chapter 1 provides a broad overview of the current study. An introduction and a rationale are followed by a brief account of literature relevant to this study. The purpose and the research questions are stated, and the main concepts are defined

⁵ Two participants from School B and three participants from School C participated in Stage 2 of the literacy intervention programme even though they did not form part of the main focus of this study.

to give the reader a sense of coherence. In conclusion, ethical considerations and quality criteria are briefly addressed.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework for this study in terms of relevant literature used. An in-depth look is taken at various fundamentals concerning reading culture and the role of reading in education (which includes the value of reading, reading in secondary schools, and reading for further educational purposes). Furthermore, reading in schools is also considered, but more specifically in terms of South African schools in which the focus is placed on reading statistics, reading culture, policy structures, schools and classrooms structures. Throughout this chapter, not only research gaps and limitations but also strengths are identified concerning the topics under discussion in order to reveal potential areas for further investigation.

Chapter 3: Research process

Chapter 3 provides a detailed outline of the research design, research methodology and research process. Data collection, data analyses, and interpretation methods are explained. Throughout this chapter, limitations and strengths are identified concerning the research process.

Chapter 4: Results of the study

Chapter 4 provides the results of my study by presenting the themes and sub-themes that emerged during the thematic analysis of the raw data. The discussions of themes are enhanced by including direct quotations from participants and excerpts from a range of selected data for further explanation. Furthermore, the inclusion and exclusion criterion for each theme is presented.

Chapter 5: Final conclusions and recommendations

Chapter 5 forms the concluding chapter, linking the results of the study with the research question posed in Chapter 1. The challenges and limitations are mentioned, followed by recommendations for further research, practice, and training.

1.11 Conclusion

The current chapter serves as an introduction to the chapters that follow. The rationale was given, followed by a literature overview in which important concepts and the theory relevant to this study were discussed. I stated the purpose of this study as well as the research questions. The main concepts used throughout this study were also described. Finally, ethical considerations and quality criteria were briefly discussed.

In Chapter 2, my literature review will encompass an in-depth look at concepts relating to this study. I explore various fundamentals concerning reading culture, including secondary-level language reading skills, older learners learning to read, secondary-level language teachers, the characteristics of a reading culture and reading abilities, as well as motivational aspects.



CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided a broad overview of the current study. I formulated the research questions that guided this study and foregrounded the research process. In this chapter, I discuss literature related to the fundamentals of a reading culture. I examine the role of reading in education, which includes the value of reading, reading in secondary schools, and reading for further educational purposes. Furthermore, I consider reading in schools, more specifically in the South African context with the focus on reading statistics, reading culture, policy structures, schools and classrooms. Finally, I provide the theoretical framework of the study.

2.2 The role of reading in education

In this section, I provide an overview of the role of reading in education by including an introduction, a discussion on reading in South African Schools, the value of reading in education, as well as challenges related to reading. The section is concluded by exploring reading in secondary schools.

2.2.1 Introduction

In today's society, few skills are as important and crucial as reading for achieving success in life (Petursdottir, Mc Master, McComas, Bradfield, Branganza, & Rodriguez, 2009; Bharuthram, 2012). According to Koch (2009), reading has always been an important element of learning, dating back to the beginning of written work and learning. Furthermore, learners do not only have to acquire basic reading skills but also have to engage in reading on a habitual basis if a reading culture is to be implemented and sustained successfully. Since learners are confronted with textbooks and reading material daily, reading with comprehension is an essential skill if they are to cope in our educational system (McNamara, 2009; Quirk, 2008; Bharuthram, 2012). Reading problems can have direct influences on and dire consequences for people in their post-school lives, including adult substance abuse, a higher likelihood of unemployment and a lower probability for higher salary income, and even increased chances for imprisonment (Schumm & Arguelles, 2006; Reutzel

& Cooter, 2004). The most common experience shared by learners who struggle to read is societal exclusion. Learners are being raised in an information age, unable to read in a society that requires reading on a daily basis (Reutzel & Cooter, 2004).

2.2.2 Reading in South African schools

McGuinness (2005) states that the contexts for the acquisition of reading skills varies from one country to another. In developing countries such as South Africa, much of the population still displays a lack of a reading culture, with the impact of this problem remaining critical. In a survey compiled by UNESCO (2002) a decade ago, it was discovered that more than half of South African families did not own books to read for relaxation. The country's education department is often held responsible for this deplorable state of affairs.

According to the former Department of Education (DoE) (2008), reading remains an imperative part of nation building in the South African context. The DoE found that Grade 3 learners achieved an average score of only 39% for reading comprehension and writing in 2003. This is problematic as the DoE (2008) suggests that reading promotes confidence in individuals, which enables them to act creatively and critically in a world that is ever changing and competitive. Reading therefore makes it possible for individuals to access new information that will help them to engage in lifelong learning.

Current research projects focusing on the evaluation of reading levels illustrate that South African learners are performing at a lower level than the expected assessment standards (Venter & Howie, 2008). One such study was administered in the eleven official languages and included 45 international education systems (Venter & Howie, 2008). The sample included 16 073 Grade 4 learners in 432 different schools and 14 657 Grade 5 learners in 398 different schools in South Africa (Wessels, 2010). The performance of the South African Grades 4 and 5 learners was compared to the performance in reading literacy of the other participating countries. The assessment measured the reading achievement of Grades 4 and 5 learners on a variety of literary and informational reading passages, concluding with comprehension questions on the passages read (Venter, Van Staden & Du Toit, 2008).

Furthermore, a survey examining the reading and numeracy skills of 46 560 Grade 6 learners from 2 493 schools between 2000 and 2002 was conducted by the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), supported by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and comprising ministries of education from various African countries, including South Africa. The survey examined school-system success and established criteria for minimum and desirable performance across the countries. Results showed that 19.1% of South African Grade 6 learners had not reached the minimum reading level and 20% would be unable to complete the next level of schooling successfully (UNESCO, 2002).

2.2.3 The value of reading in education

Reading is a valuable skill. If learners can read, they should be able to identify a range of new vocabulary germane to various school subjects; for example, mathematics, social sciences, and historical texts. Information texts are based on text organisation used by the authors to help organise their information depending on the function of the specific text (Reutzel & Cooter, 2004). Furthermore, reading is valuable as learners need to follow and understand these organisationally structured texts, an ability that can ward off the likelihood of academic difficulties and underperformance. Learners who have effective reading skills are inclined to read more than their peers do (Miller, 2010). Effective reading skills consequently increase the likelihood of academic success that could in turn have a positive impact on learners' use of opportunities in life. Learners often question the value of reading skills in accomplishing something that they wish to achieve, but they must also learn to take responsibility for their reading skill development by reading on a regular basis (Blank, 2006). There is validity in the assumption that learners' attitudes towards reading and the amount of time that they will spend on reading activities will influence the outcome of a reading programme (Masgoret, Bernaus, & Gardner, 2002).

Reading motivation can be attained if learners understand the value of reading. Research indicates that the value of reading can be represented by the following three levels: *interest*, *attainment*, and *unity* (Quirk, 2008). *Interest* implies the learners' interest in reading as an activity (Quirk, 2008). The question is raised

whether learners enjoy reading to the extent that they could name a favourite book or if they view reading to be an enjoyable activity or pastime. The *attainment* of reading considers whether learners value their reading performance as imperative (Quirk, 2008). The attainment of reading is often instilled by the example set by teachers and/or parents. The argument can thus be made that if learners see their parents or teachers reading, they could possibly come to value the importance of reading. Lastly, the *unity* of reading entails learners' perception of how useful they might be in their societal roles if they could improve their reading skills (Quirk, 2008).

The value of reading remains an essential part of the educational process; however, some learners, households, and communities may not attach the same importance to reading. These discrepancies in views about the value of reading between schools, households and communities can possibly be a source of confusion when learners spend a significant part of each school day reading without truly understanding why reading is such a vital skill to obtain (Quirk, 2008).

2.2.4 Challenges relating to reading

Miller (2010) notes that "reading improves a learner's comprehension, background knowledge, vocabulary, fluency and writing" (p. 30). Despite the importance of reading, very few learners seemingly reach sufficient levels of reading proficiency in schools. McNamara (2009) and Bharuthram (2012) explain that countless learners fall short of displaying the adequate reading skills that would allow them to understand the text given to them in classrooms.

To be able to read, learners have to master the skill of reading by undergoing the process of reading acquisition. In this process, learners have to obtain the skills of decoding and applying strategies to read fluently and with comprehension. Wessels and Van den Berg (2005) identify two methods of teaching reading: traditional and modern. In the *traditional approach*, teachers make use of the alphabet method that requires learners to identify the letters in the alphabet as well as the sound each letter represents before reading can take place (Wessels & Van den Berg, 2005). Because the alphabet method entails a prolonged process before learners can start

reading a single word, they are often discouraged as they do not experience the satisfaction of immediate success (Joubert, Bester & Meyer , 2008).

According to Reutzel and Cooter (2004), phonics instruction is the most comprehensive reading instruction method and, furthermore, it is more effective than programmes that do not focus on phonics. The phonetic method – the *modern approach* – is similar to the alphabet method with the exception that learners immediately sound the letters when reading them (McEwan, 2002; Wessels & Van den Berg, 2005). Thus, the phonetic method is more advantageous as learners acquire decoding skills while learning the letters of the alphabet (Wessels & Van den Berg, 2005). Moreover, learners come to understand the differences in spelling and pronouncing words that allow them to develop the needed skills to become sufficient readers (Wessels & Van den Berg, 2005, Joubert, Bester & Meyer , 2008).

Another important reading skill identified by Griffith and Rasinski (2004), as well as by Reutzel and Cooter (2006), is reading fluency, which can be defined as learners' ability to read accurately, quickly, effortlessly, and with appropriate expression and meaning (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). Thus, as Klapwijk (2012) notes, reading fluency is a vital skill that can influence not only learners' reading competency, but also their ability to understand what they read. Klapwijk (2012) also emphasises the importance of reading comprehension by acknowledging that it enhances learners' ability to think critically. This need was not met entirely adequately through methods of fluency tuition used in earlier years. In 1970, for example, reading comprehension was taught by asking learners questions about a piece of text that they had just read or by assigning them skills sheets as practise for reading comprehension skills in which they were required to write conclusions, follow directions or identify cause and effect relationships (Reutzel & Cooter, 2004). Valuable as such skills may be, today's society presents learners with different obstacles in terms of comprehension.

Furthermore, research suggests that the most effective way to aid learners in increasing their overall language proficiency is to encourage them to read extensively (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003). Even readers with the strongest cognitive skills may not spend a large amount of time reading if they are not motivated to read (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perenclevich, 2004). Reading is an effortful activity that frequently involves choice; therefore, motivation is fundamental to reading

engagement (Wigfield et al., 2004). The challenge consequently lies in motivating learners with ineffective reading skills to read, since they often lack the experience and confidence to do so (Miller, 2010).

It is, however, important for learners to receive the necessary support from their teachers and caregivers to ensure optimal development of their reading potential (Blank, 2006). Roberts, Torgesen, Boardman, and Scammacca. (2008) conclude: “Many older struggling readers are victims of poor early reading instruction” (p. 63). Fortunately, effective intervention can potentially prevent reading failure or at least to some extent limit its effects (Petursdottir, et al., 2009; Asraf & Ahmad, 2003).

2.2.5 Reading in secondary schools

Reading remains one of the most essential academic skills for ensuring sound performance in various subjects in secondary schools.⁵ Reading is acknowledged as a vital skill not only in schools, but also in school improvement programmes and secondary training opportunities across the world. Although learning to read is taught mainly in the first few years of schooling, it remains alarming how many learners in secondary school still struggle to read (Bharuthram, 2012). Munoz (2007) points out that even though poor reading is frequently identified as a problem for a significant number of secondary school learners, little effort is made to resolve it. The main reason for this is that the focus remains on early interventions and, as a result, most of the efforts to deal with reading problems are usually implemented in the first few years of schooling.

One of the main controversies of today’s reading problem era is how to go about teaching older learners to read. Many learners have passed through their first few years of schooling without learning to read sufficiently. Chall in Jacobs (2002) states that the “difference between primary and secondary school reading is the difference between learning to read and using reading to learn” (p. 58). Learners in secondary school who still struggle with basic reading skills will most likely find most of their classes intimidating.

⁵ The schooling levels of secondary school learners range from Grades 8 to 12.

Difficulties with reading in secondary school do not only become problematic as the learners struggle with content reading, but they also influence learners' confidence and severely limit their academic progress (Reutzel & Cooter, 2004; Bharuthram, 2012). Secondary school learners have to read informational texts such as complex argumentations, descriptions, expositions, and narratives in order to ensure academic progress. Aside from reading the text independently, they must also demonstrate that they understand the contents and are able to analyse, critique, evaluate, and synthesise the information they have read (Bharuthram, 2012). According to Reutzel and Cooter (2004), reading at a much faster pace is also a requirement to cope with the amount of work given to secondary school learners. Horn (2002) in Bharuthram (2012) found that numerous Grade 12 learners in South Africa read only at a Grade 4 level. Furthermore, while they can usually read individual words, they often have difficulty in comprehending what they are reading due to underdeveloped reading strategies (Biancarnosa & Snow, 2006) and a lack of reading fluency (Tanum, 2005). Reading competence, it must be borne in mind, involves what Koda (2005) defines as "linguistic knowledge, processing skills and cognitive ability" (p. 4).

The problem is compounded as learners who enter secondary school with poor reading skills become less likely to complete Grade 12 as their final year, which has a detrimental impact on their tertiary training and study opportunities, and ultimately on their career choices and work possibilities (Slavin, Cheung, Groff, & Lake, 2008). At a tertiary level, learners are often confronted with an extensive amount of text and textbooks that they have to read autonomously (Bharuthram, 2012). Reading at this level requires much more than merely the ability to be able to decode the given information. Readers also need to comprehend what they are reading. Reading comprehension therefore remains a vital reading skill to foster in learners, and the conclusion can be drawn that if learners struggle to comprehend given information their academic performance will be impaired (Bharuthram, 2012). According to Bharuthram (2012), a study done with several Psychology and Sociology students at the University of Pretoria found that most of the students were reading with less than 90% decoding accuracy and less than 60% comprehension. Similar findings were obtained by researchers at other South African universities (Bharuthram, 2012).

Yet, studies done by Denton, Wexler, Vaughn, and Bryan (2008) suggest that many secondary school learners who struggle to read may possibly benefit from interventions that address basic word-level reading. These investigations revealed that reading interventions with secondary school learners implemented over a longer period could be moderately effective in improving reading comprehension outcomes, thus closing the gap between struggling secondary school learners and their peers. The effectiveness of reading interventions with secondary school learners often demonstrates higher outcomes in word recognition, comprehension and fluency (Denton, et al., 2008; Bharuthram, 2012).

2.3 The dilemmas of reading in a rural secondary school

In the following section, second-language acquisition, challenges in rural school settings, and teachers' training and qualifications are explored in striving to disclose the selected barriers to reading in a rural school context.

2.3.1 Introduction

Reading in the South African context comprises a range of underlying barriers. According to Wienand (2011), the former Department of Education identified learning barriers in rural schools to be a lack of appropriate facilities and infrastructure, poor access to textbooks and resources, a lack of qualified teachers, good-quality leadership, and safety in and around schools, as well as overcrowded classrooms and difficulty with discipline. The contributing factors that have been identified in contributing to poor reading skills are that learners watch too much television, teachers are overburdened, books are not regarded as “fun” and thus cannot compete with the popularity of high-tech devices, and current teaching methods for reading skills are inadequate (Blank, 2006; Denton, Wexler, Vaughn, & Bryan, 2008).

2.3.2 Second-language acquisition and reading

In recent decades, a remarkable interest has been shown in second-language acquisition, which includes reading skills, because of the rapid internationalisation of business and industry together with continual immigration influences (Long & Richards, 2005). Language researchers continue to debate the reason for older

learners' having trouble in the acquisition of reading skills in a second language. Kilfoil (2007) explains that the rationale for this phenomenon is often sought behind the mechanisms for the acquisition of second-language reading skills prior to the ages of nine to 14 (puberty). With regard to the role of age in the acquisition of reading skills needed for basic communication, older learners and adults proceed faster through syntactic and morphological development than younger learners (Kilfoil, 2007). However, learners beginning second-language acquisition before puberty often achieve a higher proficiency level than individuals beginning as adolescents (Kilfoil, 2007). Therefore, secondary school learners may be viewed as too old when compared with prepubertal learners as the so-called best acquirers of the basic second-language reading skills needed for interpersonal communication.

Another theory to consider is Krashen's Monitor Theory (2002) of adult second-language acquisition, in which he hypothesises that older learners make use of both subconscious language *acquisition* and conscious language *learning* in acquiring a second language (Krashen, 2002). Krashen (2002) explains that in order to *acquire* a second language, learners must interact meaningfully in the target language while their main focus is on giving and understanding the messages rather than focusing on the structure, rules or errors of the language used (Krashen, 2002). Therefore, some structures tend to be acquired early and others later. Conscious language *learning* implies that more consideration is given to error alteration and the management of explicit rules. Krashen (2002) mentions that error correction can help learners to come to accurate mental demonstration of linguistic generalisation.

When the problems of older learners (high school learners) are considered, the advantages should not be overlooked. Older learners learning to read a new language may have the advantage of being proficient in their first language, thereby already having developed a frame of reference from which to work (Colombo & Furbush, 2009; Long & Richards, 2005). This will help them to make use of cognitive processes and knowledge of the first language in order to facilitate an understanding of the linguistic structure of a second language. Long and Richards (2005) add that second-language learners also have the advantage of being able to draw from their first language experiences, which potentially provides significant facilitation skills. Acquiring reading skills in a second language thus implies that some basic linguistic

foundation has formed. Second-language reading will thereby commence before the needed second-language literacy training has been acquired (Long & Richards, 2005). Colombo and Furbush (2009) state that older learners and adults demonstrate the capacity to develop high levels of proficiency in second languages. They mention that it is, however, very likely that learners will experience first-language influences in developing this proficiency.

Before the various influences at work in learning to read in a second language are considered, the important role of the influence of the first language in second-language acquisition needs to be taken into account. Researchers note that the role of first-language influences is often the only major source of syntactic errors in adult second-language performance (Krashen, 2002). However, since many errors made by second-language speakers cannot be traced back to first-language influences, several other sources of error need to be examined. The first source is the role of the first language as a substitute utterance initiator. Krashen (2002) claims that “first language influence appears to be strongest in complex word order and in word-for-word translation of phrases” (p. 65). He mentions that first-language influences are not strongly identifiable in the “omission of plurals or nouns, lack of subject-verb agreement, [or] adjective-noun agreement”, also known as morphology (Krashen, 2002, p. 66). First-language influences thus seem to play a large role in situations where learners and adults spend less time in activities such as reading, which would promote second-language acquisition, or where affective conditions avert or hinder language acquisition.

Krashen (2002) concludes that learners or adults acquiring a second language may fall back on their first-language influences because of low or minimal acquisition of the target language. When reading is considered, note must be taken of the distinctions between learning to read a first language and learning to read a second language. As learners learn to read their second language, they have the advantage of prior literacy experience, which can prove to be invaluable (Koda, 2005; Long & Richards, 2005). An understanding of what has been read transpires when the reader extracts and integrates a range of information from the text and combines it with previous knowledge. The focus on literacy training also differs. When learning to read a second language, learners focus more on establishing a linguistic foundation

at first, rather than focusing on decoding (Koda, 2005). Therefore, acquiring a basic linguistic foundation is pivotal. Lastly, when learning to read, learners draw on both first and second language in order to read; therefore, both first and second language are interrelated when learning to read a second language. In the context of this study the second language of the learners is English.

2.3.3 Challenges related to rural school settings and reading

Gardiner (2008) states that rural areas typically have shortcomings regardless of the rural areas potential. Furthermore a poverty environment and underdevelopment will also be demonstrated in the quality of education available. Consequently, the assumption that socio-economic conditions can possibly influence learning and education should be considered. In rural school settings, socio-economic conditions generally refer to poverty, employment redundancy, and the lack of access to water, transportation, basic services, and electricity (Gardiner, 2008). In the report *Emerging Voices* conducted by the Nelson Mandela Foundation in 2005 (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005) problems in the relationship between community members and rural schools were identified. These problems include the conflicting demands of the school and the parents concerning learners' domestic and educational obligations, and parents' responses to formal schooling when considering the historical divisions in communities over the need for education. In addition, many school learners do not have food to eat, influencing their ability to concentrate in the classroom environment (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005).

Further challenges in rural school settings have been identified by Mukleen and Chen (2008), who note that learners in rural school settings may be less interested and motivated to attend school. Many rural households depend on children for help with household duties, leading to a clash between the need to adhere to school timetables while maintaining daily routines – including many domestic tasks expected to be carried out during school hours (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mulkeen & Chen, 2008). Schooling can also be considered a financial burden by parents or caregivers as it often requires them to buy textbooks, stationery, and uniforms. Parents or caregivers in rural settings may attach a lower value to schooling as they themselves often have received little formal education. Even when parents or caregivers value schooling, they are likely to be unable to provide the

needed support to help their children with homework or other educational tasks. Furthermore, homes in rural areas are typically ill equipped to meet the educational needs of learners and may often lack essentials such as electricity, not to mention the “luxury” of books to read (Taylor & Mulhall, 2001; Wessels, 2010; Bharuthram, 2012). Challenges in a rural school can therefore affects a positive reading culture.

2.3.4 Challenges related to teacher training and reading

Meganathan (2009) states that rural schools are faced with challenges in terms of teacher proficiency and training which effects a reading culture. Teachers face various challenges as their qualifications are questioned, their accents are often misunderstood, and they are marginalised as professionals. Van Staden and Howie (2008), and the Department of Education (2008) identify factors such as the following that may influence teachers’ effectiveness in South African schools: inadequate subject knowledge, inadequate communication between teachers and learners, and lastly, lack of instructional material.

According to a 2004 national study of language competency in South Africa, over 60% of learners could not read at the accepted level for their grade (Department of Education, 2008). This result was to a certain extent ascribed to the fact that teachers beyond the first two grades of primary school were inadequately trained to teach basic reading (Department of Education, 2008). As a result, teachers do not necessarily have the skills or knowledge at their disposal in order to assist learners who struggle to read (Department of Education, 2008). A survey on teacher qualifications and training – including 197 teachers from Limpopo, 182 teachers from KwaZulu-Natal and 184 teachers from the Eastern Cape (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005) – indicated that about 10% of teachers in all three provinces were unqualified, teaching with only a Grade 12 certificate. Prinsloo (2009) explains that teachers often fall short of obtaining specific language and literacy development instruction. Therefore, many teachers are not familiar with the steps in teaching and developing learners’ literacy and reading skills. Research shows that in order for teachers to make sustainable changes to their instructional methods, new implementations should be guided by specific principles and essentially have to provide substantiation that the methods actually work (Klapwijk, 2012).

According to Moats in Van Staden and Howie (2008), classroom instruction used when teaching reading should be one of the main areas focused on in order to prevent reading problems, and it must also be the central focus for change. Teachers who teach in their mother tongue have the advantage of being able to provide more content concerning their subject area because of their fluency. Stoller and Grabe (2001) in Van Staden and Howie (2008) emphasise that the necessary requirements for developing teachers' classroom instruction skills, more specifically their literacy skills, could be acquired if teachers as well as curriculum developers consulted the available instruction options to ensure the optimal pursuit of instructional goals.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005) also identifies the lack of teaching aids as playing a role in the quality of education given to learners. These aids are often used as means of explaining concepts or information to learners in a comprehensible, easy-to-understand approach. The lack of mentoring and support infrastructures, more specifically those involving curriculum advisers and district officials, may also influence the quality of teaching given to learners (Prinsloo, 2009).

According to the *National Reading Strategy* (Department of Education, 2008) there has been a misunderstanding in the interpretation of Curriculum 2005 as well as in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) with regard to the role of teachers in teaching reading. Teachers often believe that according to Curriculum 2005 and the NCS, they merely have to *facilitate* the reading process rather than directly *teach* reading. Therefore, learners will become responsible themselves for acquiring the necessary reading skills (Department of Education, 2008). Moreover, in contrast to the past situation in which teachers mainly made use of textbooks, teachers are now required to develop their own reading materials and reading programmes, further exacerbating the situation (Department of Education, 2008).

2.4 Reading culture

In the following subsection, I consult literature to accentuate the significance of a reading culture. Furthermore, I focus on policy structures and reading culture in South Africa, school structures and reading, and lastly, classroom structures and reading culture. Acquiring basic reading skills does not ensure the implementation

and sustainability of a reading culture in a school or a classroom setting. Therefore, it is important to understand what a reading culture is and how it can be implemented and maintained.

2.4.1 *Reading culture: an explanation*

I concur with McEwan's (2002) definition describing a reading culture as "the collective attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours of all the stakeholders in a school regarding any and all of the activities associated with enabling all learners to read at the highest level of attainment for both their academic and personal gain" (p. 16). From this collaborative definition, it is apparent that a reading culture will use various sources (such as motivation, teachers, school systems, and knowledge on teaching a person to read) to ensure success in reinforcing a reading culture. Another definition to consider is that of Doiron and Asselin (2011) who view such a culture as one "where reading is highly valued and appreciated in the society and where reading is regarded not simply as something developed for school purposes but something practiced in all aspects of our lives" (p. 109).

According to Commeyras and Mazile (2011), in various African countries – Botswana for instance – it is common to hear the expression that there is no reading culture. Kachala (2007) states that the development of a reading culture should be implemented at a young age right through to adulthood, resulting in the transformation of an illiterate nation. The lack of adequate levels of educational standards and relevant resources in rural areas may thus contribute to high levels of illiteracy. If a reading culture is developed at a young age, it could ensure that learners would be capable of completing their studies. This may be achieved by developing and improving the standards of education among individuals residing in rural areas (Kachala, 2007).

Furthermore, Doiron and Asselin (2010) suggest that in order to create a reading culture among learners in a specified society, it is essential to improve the reading environment in which they find themselves. The environment implies the home, school, and community setting. In order for learners to benefit from an environment in which they can develop a reading culture, they need access to literature. Doiron and Asselin (2010) comment that literature should ideally include books in local

languages, books of local authors, as well as texts of regional authors so as to reflect local interests and needs adequately.

Furthermore, learners need to feel that they have a personal choice in their reading material and should not feel that they must read prescribed school-based texts only. In this way, they are more likely to be motivated to continue reading (Reutzel & Cooter, 2004). This in turn implies that parents, teachers, and librarians have to play a key role in balancing reading choices that match learners' interests and their reading levels.

The characteristics of reading can determine what is needed to generate a reading culture at a school. McEwan (2002) identifies the characteristics of a reading culture and discusses them in relation to different role players, namely teachers, learners, school, and school community. Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the development of a reading culture and must evaluate learners' progress on a continuous basis to ensure that learners achieve success (McEwan, 2002). Learners themselves must take responsibility for their reading-skill development by reading on a regular basis (Blank, 2006). There is validity in the assumption that learners' attitudes towards reading, and the amount of time that they will spend on reading activities, will influence the outcome of a reading programme (Masgoret, Bernaus, & Gardner, 2002). It is, however, important for learners to receive the necessary support from their teachers and caregivers if the optimal development of their reading potential is to be ensured (Blank, 2006).

A reading culture is best implemented by means of a research-based programme and instrumental system that suits the level of reading development of a variety of learners (McEwan, 2002). A strong sense of optimism is needed to ensure the involvement of learners, teachers, and parents, which may lead to the involvement of the entire school (Blank, 2006). McEwan (2002) suggests that both short- and long-term goals be set to ensure that results are achieved, as these will provide learners, teachers, and a school with a sense of how to be involved. Allocated time to practise reading activities is also needed, as this may ensure that learners are able to spend time developing their reading skills (McEwan, 2002).

A reading intervention is an imperative strategy to cultivate a reading culture, and its aim must be to create a school or society that is continuously learning. Norton (2003) adds that a reading culture is created “where learners value books for entertainment and information, and see books as a catalyst for change in their own lives and communities” (p. 158). The important question remains: *How can a book reach the learner?* or rather, *How can a book communicate with the learner?* This need for communication through reading is essential. I agree with the comment of Sadidharan and Madasamy (2003) that “not even the best-furnished village library will serve any purpose in the absence of communication” (p. 130). There is no guarantee that the availability of books will result in stimulating learners’ desire to read. It is clear that reading is not merely a simple mechanical skill used for communication. Reading motivation plays a vital role in creating a reading culture and remains an important focus in the literature (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzone, 1996).

Reading motivation is defined as the “choices of which reading activities to select, persistence at reading activities and the levels of effort extended” (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1999: 199). Denton, et al. (2008) explain that poor reading ability not only leads to low motivation, but also creates discouragement; simply put, “learners will only love to read if they can read” (Blank, 2006: 126).

It therefore seems important for learners to acquire basic reading skills before the focus can be placed solely on reading motivation. Wigfield and Guthrie (1999) state that individuals with a high intrinsic motivation are likely to read more frequently and report higher amounts of reading. However, Roberts, Torgesen, Boardman, and Scammacca (2008) note that the older the learners are the more challenging it becomes to motivate them. It is apparent from the above statement that the acquisition of basic reading skills is a prerequisite for efficient reading, which in turn correlates with a sound reading culture.

2.4.2 Policy structures and reading culture in South Africa

Over the last few years, the South African educational system has changed in an attempt to improve educational infrastructure and resources (Zimmerman & Van Staden, 2008). The democratisation of South Africa in 1994 brought about fundamental changes in education, ultimately leading to the incorporation of the

formerly separated education systems both at national and provincial levels (Bharuthram, 2012). With impartial allocation of resources, it was expected that all learners in South Africa would have access to and receive the same educational opportunities (Bharuthram, 2012). Curriculum 2005 was introduced in 1997, implementing the move from content-based teaching and learning to outcomes-based education (OBE). OBE is seen as a learner-centred approach placing the emphasis on what learners need to be able to know, understand, demonstrate, and become (Zimmerman & Van Staden, 2008). In general, the outcome – when referring to the reading curriculum for the Language Learning Area – clearly states that learners should be “able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional value of texts” (Zimmerman & Van Staden, 2008, p. 6).

The literacy curriculum for the Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase requires that learners obtain different outcome expectations and assessment standards for Reading and Viewing (Zimmerman & Van Staden, 2008). Reading and Viewing fall under one of five learning outcomes set for language, associated with overall language competency (Zimmerman & Van Staden, 2008). The other four language outcomes include listening, speaking, writing, thinking and reasoning, and lastly, language structure and use (Zimmerman & Van Staden, 2008).

The recently revised Curriculum and Policy Assessment Statement (CAPS)⁶ (Department of Basic Education, 2011) promises to attempt to address some of the critical issues identified in the educational system. These issues include educational quality in South Africa, the lack of teachers’ knowledge, and knowledge practices (Lotz-Sisitka, 2012). CAPS (Department of Basic Education, 2011) requires teachers from a wide range of subject areas to teach new environmental content information, values, and skills.

Current research demonstrates that engagement with environmental education and place-based knowledge may improve learners’ academic achievement by providing a contextually situated means to access more complex forms of knowledge (Lotz-Sisitka, 2012). Concerning the teaching of literature, CAPS (Department of Basic

⁶ The new, revised Curriculum and Policy Assessment Statement (CAPS) was not yet implemented to be in time for data collection for this study.

Education, 2011) will focus on teaching comprehension and include various reading process strategies, namely pre-reading, reading, and post-reading. According to the Department of Basic Education (2011), the main reason for reading literature in the classroom is for learners to develop more refined and deeper meaningful language skills, especially reading skills. Learners are encouraged to read a range of different texts not only for entertainment but also to demonstrate their ability to understand and interpret various sources. Interpreting a text is not about what can be viewed as right and wrong, but about searching for what is meaningful to learners (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

According to the Department of Basic Education (2011, p. 10), some of the best ways to approach the teaching of literature in the senior phase would involve the implementation of reading as an activity in class for a period of at least two weeks. During this time, a range of different texts should be introduced and read. Learners should gain a clear understanding of the narrative line and plot. Furthermore, the purpose of teaching literary texts is to show learners how their home language can be used with subtlety, intelligence, imagination, and flair. In conclusion, time should also be devoted to introducing and focusing on creative writing, demonstrating different levels of appreciation on the part of the learner, class discussions involving all the learners, and lastly, whole-text interpretations, as well as creative, personal, and exploratory practices.

2.4.3 School structures and reading culture

Teaching and learning are critical to ensure academic achievement in developing countries such as South Africa (Zuze & Reddy, 2011). One way of reinforcing effective teaching and learning, more specifically the implementation of a reading culture, is to ensure that the school climate is one in which teachers and learners can look forward to attending a school day. As Loukas (2007) points out, school environments vary. Some schools are experienced as friendly, inviting, and supportive; others as exclusionary, unwelcoming, and even unsafe. A school climate implies the elicitation of different feelings and attitudes in the school environment (Loukas, 2007). In order to ensure the implementation of a reading culture at a school, it can be assumed that a more positive, friendly, inviting, and supportive

school climate is needed to ensure that both learners and teachers can encourage each other to read habitually.

The availability of textbooks and library resources is strongly associated with academic achievement (Oakes & Saunders, 2002). Research indicates that many people see libraries that function effectively as the most important component of any programme to encourage reading (Norton, 2003). One way of encouraging reading is to provide a print-rich environment in which learners can flourish. The school library can help generate and prolong a reading environment. The importance of a school library is a well-recorded topic in the literature. According to the Library Association (2000), “libraries empower pupils, not only by supporting the teaching and learning in the school, but by giving them the freedom to make their own choices about reading and learning experiences” (p. 1). Celano and Neuman (2001) also argue that the provision of libraries, both school and public, has to increase and should encourage a lifelong learning process.

This is particularly applicable in rural communities and developing countries where a reading culture has to be established. Homes often have little or no books, families may not have funds to buy books, bookshops are often non-existent, public libraries are not always available, and houses may be undersized and often lacking in electricity (Machet & Wessels 2006). A vast number of libraries are not utilised correctly or even remain unused. A good library means having interesting and exciting books, with a well-trained, motivated librarian serving in the pivotal role of improving the library. Norton (2003) mentions that although there is a demand for appropriate and affordable books in rural areas, the unfortunate reality is that such books are generally not available.

The main reasons for the scarcity of books in rural areas, according to Norton (2003), are that the lack of sufficient distribution of books in rural areas directly influences the *availability* of books, and that people in rural areas frequently lack the financial means to afford books. Such lacks may be remedied by libraries that are both accessible and functional – they may create an environment in which learners can focus on reading. The school library may create a text-rich environment where learners can be exposed to much-needed reading opportunities.

2.4.4 Classroom structures and reading culture

When the question is raised as to how schools should be improved in general, scholars often focus on teaching methodology, stating that teachers should use more teaching aids, make more time to read stories, or teach the learners more about HIV, to name but a few options. When focusing on classroom practices in order to incorporate a reading culture, some fundamentals remain imperative. Asraf and Ahmad (2003), who identify the important role of classroom atmosphere when teaching, introduced the Guided Extensive Reading (GER) programme in rural schools in order to encourage extensive reading. Their studies indicate that if teachers take a less “stiff” and “formal” approach to teaching reading and place less attention on error correction, higher levels of learner participation will result. Moreover, teachers who use a “soothing” voice may create a more relaxed environment, which may in turn increase learner-participation levels. As a result, Asraf and Ahmad (2003) found that learners will then raise their hands and even volunteer to read.

Having adequate facilities in the classroom also plays a role in facilitating a reading culture at a school. According to Zuze and Reddy (2011), schools that can offer adequate facilities will attract good-quality teachers. Furthermore, Zuze and Reddy (2011) comment that adequate resources may even compensate for inadequate teaching or tutoring. The assumption can be made that resources for everyday teaching will lead to an improvement in learners’ school attendance (Zuze & Reddy, 2011). Consequently, school attendance will have a direct impact on learners’ motivation to learn to read.

Lastly, classroom size remains problematic in South Africa and influences the establishment of a reading culture. According to Bhorat and Oosthuizen (2006,) “physical learning infrastructures are directly measured through the non-standard classroom- and specialist classroom-learner ratios” (p. 4). Research indicates that between 15 and 17 learners per classroom are most favourable (Calitz, 2006). Lower numbers are advantageous as they may increase learners’ achievements, narrow the achievement gap between black and white learners, increase learning motivation, and compensate for poor school attendance (Calitz, 2006). Calitz (2006) argues that South Africa does not have sufficient resources to implement smaller

classes. However, if one weighs up the shorter-term financial costs of smaller classes against the longer-term benefits in higher economic value for the country, it seems like a small price to pay.

2.5 Theoretical framework

I adopted general systems theory (Avis, 2004) as a theoretical framework since this theory complements the nature of the study. General systems theory is a potential overarching framework dealing with a range of different problems (Patton & McMahon, 2006). Because this perspective focuses on the concept of interconnection, it identifies individuals as part of a system in which they interact with one another (Arthur, 2005; Avis, 2004). Donald (2009) adds that the performance of the entire system is therefore dependent on the interaction between all parts. According to Arthur (2005), a systems perspective accentuates both the parts in the complete system and the complete system itself as greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore, no individual exists in isolation. The interdependence between the individual and his or her social context needs to be understood.

Donald (2009) identifies various elements and processes leading to a better understanding of general systems theory. Complete systems can network with other systems around them. The interrelationships identified within the parts of the various systems and subsystems imply the occurrences of cycles of cause and effect (Donald, 2009). Communication takes place between subsystems as well as between the complete systems. The clarity, quality, and directness of the communication will influence the functions and interactions of the subsystems, as well as the complete system (Donald, 2009).

In accordance with the tenets of general systems theory, I assume that learners and teachers form part of the school system. In Figure 2.1, the different interrelated systems that form a part of this study are depicted. The learners' and teachers' systems are dependent not only on each other in the successful implementation and maintenance of a reading culture, but also on the classroom system, rural community system, educational sector and policies system, the South African system, and lastly, the world system. These systems are dependent on each other for their successful functioning and, consequently, for the effective implementation of

a reading culture. The basic assumptions embedded in general systems theory are applicable to this study, implying that a literacy intervention implemented in one of the systems will have an effect on the entire system (Avis, 2004). A literacy intervention with teachers may thus possibly create a reading culture in the school and flow over into the community as well.

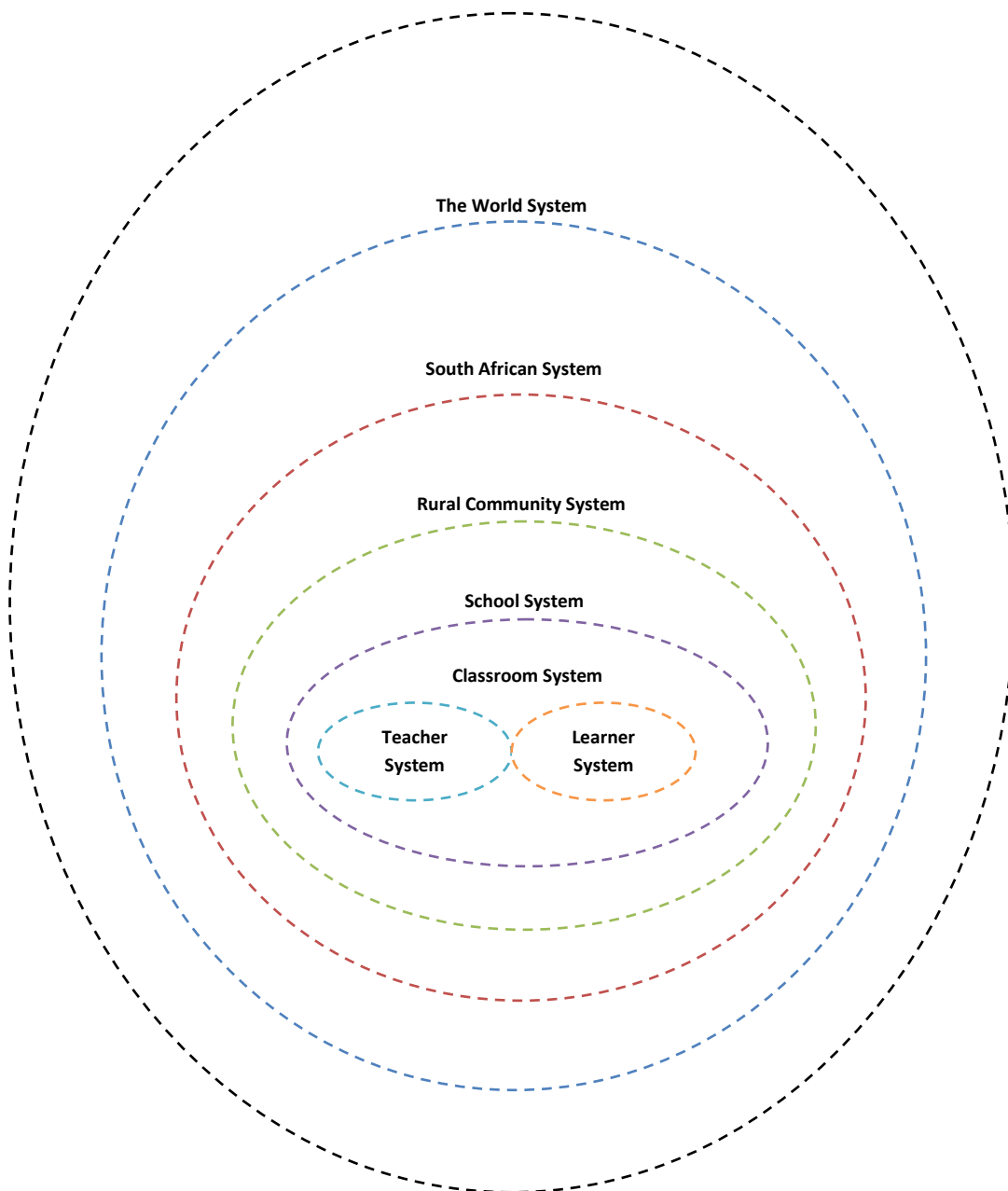


Figure 2.1: Interrelated systems (Adapted from an asset-based perspective on systems (Ferreira & Ebersöhn, 2010))

Furthermore, the teachers, learners, school and community are dependent on the educational sector and policies system to receive the necessary training and resources for the implementation of a reading culture. The teachers and learners interacting with each other form their own subsystem, which also interacts with other subsystems such as family members in the community, the educational sector and policies structure, the South African system, and lastly, the world system.

Finally, the above descriptions provide an understanding of general systems theory. The elements support the assumption of this study that change will occur not only within a teachers' systems, but to a larger degree may also influence the school as a whole, as well as the local community.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I explored literature that supports the nature of this study, embedded in the selected theoretical framework. I commented on different definitions and current arguments surrounding reading. I focused on the role of reading in education and elaborated on current reading conditions in South Africa. I continued by discussing barriers to reading identified in South Africa. I elaborated on resources that enable reading and I continued by defining and explaining what a reading culture implies. Furthermore, I discussed the reading skills needed to enable reading and concluded by focusing on resources that may promote reading.

In the next chapter, I discuss the methodological choices I made in the context of this study. Furthermore, I explain the applicability of the methodological choices for the purpose of this study.



CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 focuses on the research methodology I employed and deals with the manner in which I investigated the research questions. Specifically, I discuss the selected paradigmatic perspective, the research process, ethical considerations, and the quality criteria that I considered. Furthermore, I explain the strengths and limitations of the various choices I made concerning these aspects.

3.2 Paradigmatic assumptions

A research paradigm can be seen as a set of assumptions or viewpoints about essential aspects of authenticity, which in turn reflects a particular ideology (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Hay, 2005; Denzin & Lincon, 2003). In the following sections, I describe interpretivism as my metatheoretical paradigm, participatory action research (methodological paradigm), and general systems theory (theoretical paradigm, discussed in Chapter 2) to underpin my study.

3.2.1 *Metatheoretical paradigm*

I selected interpretivism as metatheoretical paradigm. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), “all research is interpretive; it is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied” (p. 33). Therefore, interpretivism assumes that the symbolic world of meanings and interpretations known as social reality is a distinctively human product (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Denzin & Lincon, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

Social reality, which can be regarded as a social structure that is shaped and reproduced through various interactions in the course of people’s everyday lives, consists of shared understandings, meanings, and cultural symbols (Denzin & Lincon, 2003). People’s interpretations and experiences of themselves are therefore subjective in terms of their significant relationships and the way that they feel loved, accepted, and valued (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). An interpretivist researcher postulates that individuals are allowed to interpret things or events as they please,

acknowledging that they can understand their particular social world better than any other person is able to do (Mac Naughton & Hughes, 2009). Since the individual's understanding of the social world is thus accepted as valuable knowledge or "fact", it follows that such understanding can be altered by the individual through judgement (Mac Naughton & Hughes, 2009).

By choosing interpretivism, I aimed at understanding what the needs of the participants were through the use of participatory action research (PAR) as my research paradigm. Nieuwenhuis (2007) summarises the reasoning behind PAR as follows: "In order to understand the whole it is necessary to understand the parts" (p. 59). Participatory action research, through the use of focus-group interviews and observations, allowed me to create an interpretivist space in which I could acknowledge participants' social worlds as they experience them.

Social structure is shaped and reproduced through various interactions (Scott & Myers, 2010). I aspired to implement a form of change by informing literacy practices as a means to exert a constructive influence on a reading culture. As mentioned earlier in this study, people have a responsibility for the choices they make. Humanistic psychologists recognise that choices are made intentionally; therefore people need to take responsibility for their choices. When a reading-culture intervention is contemplated, a greater opportunity for attaining beneficial results arises if the participants are aware what is expected of them and what the aim of the intervention is. Consequently, they can make the choice to adhere to their responsibilities (Avis, 2004; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). For the purpose of this study, the selected teachers were asked to implement a two-part reading-intervention programme. The first programme was intended to be implemented on a daily basis for a duration of six weeks. Teachers were encouraged to write comments and feedback at the end of each activity. The second programme was intended to be implemented by the participating teachers for seven weeks.

Every metatheoretical paradigm has its strengths and limitations. During this study, I had to distinguish between the participants' and the research team's distinct interpretations of the world or construction of the situation that was researched. Consequently, I not only had to be more willing to acknowledge the attitudes and values of the participants, but also had to concentrate actively on suspending any

personal prior cultural assumptions (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). For this reason, I made use of a researcher journal⁷ to document and monitor my thoughts and assumptions. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) explain that interpretivism makes particular demands on researchers as it calls for interpretations of set questions. They mention furthermore that any research is guided by researchers' beliefs and feelings about the world or how it should be understood, even though some beliefs or interpretations may be taken for granted or seen as highly problematic (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). For the purpose of this study, I collaborated with a fellow student⁸ as well as my supervisors to ensure multiple interpretations of the data in order to enhance the reliability of the findings.

3.2.2 Methodological paradigm

The methodological paradigm applied in this study was that of participatory action research (PAR), which can be defined as the "involvement of participants for the purpose of identifying and addressing a problem or concern to them" (Bruce, 2010, p. 18). Typically, PAR "assumes a strength-based approach in which participants are encouraged to recognise, use, and build on their own strengths and power of their collective communities" (Jason, Keys, Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor, & Davis, 2004, p. 5).

PAR has been developing since the 1970s, revealing a perspective different from those of other social science methods as it does not aim solely at describing and/or analysing (Babbie, 2005; Hall, 2003) social reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). PAR calls for some form of change in the social reality of participants (Hay, 2005). Hall (2003) states that community meetings and a sense of community are an essential part of PAR as they serve to identify issues, to retain a sense of community, to stress the potential for liberation, and to provide a frame for making sense of the knowledge gained.

Change can occur solely through the active contribution or involvement of the participants in a research study itself (Hay, 2005). PAR thus involves a number of steps through which the participants and researcher work in partnership to identify, deal with and re-evaluate concerns they face (Hay, 2005; Jason, Keys, Suarez-

⁷ See Appendix E for extracts from my researcher journal.

⁸ Yolanda Swart (MEd Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling): "Geletterheidsintervensie en onderwysers se taal van onderrigpraktyke: aksienavorsing in plattelandse skole".

Balcazar, Taylor, & Davis, 2004). These concerns commonly relate to the need to access information or resources, the risk of termination of services, or the need to take action in order to lessen future unforeseen events (Hay, 2005). The importance of the interactive cycle of action-reflection is one of the key distinctive qualities of PAR. The cycle allows various perspectives of participants to be taken into account throughout the process, which can possibly lead to a more educated decision (Hay, 2005). A tabulated representation of the PAR interactive cycle of action-reflection follows (Table 3.1), indicating the phases and activities used, as well as the timeline for this study.

Table 3.1:

Comprehensive exposition of the interactive cycle of action-reflection (Adapted from Hay, 2005)

Phase	Activities, data documentation, and methods	Timeline
1. Getting started – the intervention knowledge development	• Define problems identified at the secondary school. • Partner with teachers to seek common understanding of the defined problems in order to gain knowledge about human behaviour. • Implement focus-group interviews and observations in the selected classrooms and document them by means of field notes, visual data, and audio-recordings in order to gain knowledge about human behaviour. • Establish a mutually agreeable and realistic time frame.	May 2009: • Two pre-intervention focus-group discussions with six teachers from the participating rural secondary school. (See transcription in Appendix F.) • Observation in one selected classroom from the participating rural secondary school. (See Appendix G for extracts from field notes and Appendix D for photographs.) April 2009–August 2009: • An in-depth look at available literature on reading culture and intervention methods.
2. Reflection	• Reflect on problem formulation and knowledge construction of identified problems. • Hold discussions with supervisors and fellow student.	August 2009–April 2010
3. Building partnership – knowledge utilisation	• Negotiate ethics and roles. • Gain access to relevant data and information. • Develop a shared understanding of the problem through the knowledge gained during the “Getting started – intervention knowledge	May 2009: • Baseline data collected (pre-intervention data): two focus-group discussions with six selected teachers from the participating rural secondary school (see transcription in Appendix F), one observation (see Appendix G for field notes and

Phase	Activities, data documentation, and methods	Timeline
	development". • Hold discussions with supervisors and fellow student.	Appendix D for photographs), and textual data in the form of minutes of meetings and Grade 7 term marks collected (see Appendices B and C for textual documents) from the participating rural secondary school.
4. Reflection	• Reformulate and reassess the problem. • Hold discussions with supervisors and fellow student. • Use researcher diary to document reflections.	May 2009–August 2010: • Intervention development (See Appendix A for an example of the intervention and Appendix D for photographs)
5. Working together – design and development	• Apply the knowledge learned to an applicable innovative intervention: Implement the literacy intervention through means of a phonetics programme. • Establish ways to involve other teachers and learners.	April 2010: • <i>First stage</i> of intervention implemented with six teachers from the participating rural secondary school. (See Appendix A for an example of the intervention and Appendix D for photographs.) May 2010: • <i>Second stage</i> of intervention implemented with six teachers from the participating rural secondary school, two teachers from School B and three teachers from School C.⁹ (See Appendix A for an example of the intervention and Appendix D for photographs.)
6. Reflection	• Evaluate, provide feedback and re-plan for future studies. • Hold discussions with supervisors and fellow student. • Hold post-intervention discussions.	August 2010: • One post-intervention focus-group discussion held with six selected participants from the participating rural secondary school (see Appendix F for transcription). • Observation in one classroom in the participating rural secondary school. (See Appendix E for field notes and D for photographs of the selected schools).
7. Looking ahead	• Consider options for future cycles of participation, research and action with or without the current researcher involvement.	• Continued observation of reading culture and literacy in STAR and FLY to investigate educational access, retention, and performance of learners in terms of reading.

⁹ The two neighbouring primary schools participated in the second phase of the literacy intervention and did not form part of the main focus of this study.

As part of the broader STAR and FLY projects, the research team¹⁰ interacted with teachers from the selected rural secondary school, using the interactive cycle of action-reflection (PAR) as a guideline. During the development of the study, teachers from two neighbouring primary schools also participated. This resulted in the use of snowball sampling (Gorard, 2003). Snowball or chain sampling identifies cases of interest (Hay, 2005; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; De Vos & Strydom, 2005; Gorard, 2003). Participant referrals are therefore the basis for the selection of the added participants.

During the *Getting Started Phase* we collaborated with the teachers from the rural secondary school (see Figure 3.1 for a photograph of the main building containing the classrooms) in order to generate and analyse (Babbie, 2005) information, thus identifying problems related to reading at the secondary school.



Figure 3.1: The main building of the selected rural secondary school (August 2009)

Teachers in the school identified challenges related to reading, and literacy teaching and learning as a central difficulty that they faced. In the first *Reflection Phase* we¹¹ developed and planned a literacy intervention¹² (DiClimente, Crosby, Sionean, & Holtgrave, 2004) in order to address the challenges. The *Building Partnership Phase* took place over a two-year period during which the research team met and partnered

¹⁰ Yolanda Swart (MEd Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling: “Geletterheidsintervensie en onderwysers se taal van onderrigpraktyke: askienavorsing in plattelandse skole”) and Loraine du Plessis (MEd Educational Psychology: A literacy intervention with teachers: describing reading culture in a rural school), and supervisors Professor L. Ebersöhn, Professor R. Ferreira, and Dr I. Joubert.

¹¹ Yolanda Swart compiled Stage 1 of the literacy intervention programme and Loraine du Plessis compiled Stage 2 of the literacy intervention programme.

¹² See Appendix A for an example of Stage 2 of the literacy intervention programme. See DVD for Stage 1 and 2 of the literacy intervention programme.

with the teachers from the school. During this time of pre-intervention discussions and face-to-face interviews, the team made observations and collected textual data that constituted additional baseline data. Using elements of PAR, we did not work *for* the participants, but rather *in partnership with* them (Hay, 2005). In the *Reflection Phases*, I relied on my own and my supervisors' knowledge and guidance to understand the areas of development needed to reformulate and reassess limitations pertaining to reading at the secondary school. During the *Working Together Phase*, we employed action initiatives by implementing the literacy intervention, which was divided in two stages.¹³

Furthermore, we investigated the extent to which the school was restructured to enable a reading culture (Hay, 2005) (or not). The current STAR and FLY projects are longitudinal and thus ensure future participation at the secondary school (*Looking Ahead Phase*).

Hay (2005) states that an advantage of PAR is that it can be exceptionally rewarding even if it is not viable to engage all the research participants intensively in every step of a research project. Another advantage is that the steps of the interactive cycle of action-reflection can be used as a checklist when engaging in the process of PAR (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003).

Some concerns surrounding PAR emerge firstly from the requirement to balance the needs of participants and, secondly, from the use of correct techniques or solutions for ensuring the feasibility of the plan of action in relation to the demands of the world while retaining the values of social action (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). During the focus-group discussions and face-to-face interviews, teachers were given the opportunity to voice opinions and to furnish input. With regard to the solutions I selected for the implementation of the intervention, I relied on continuous feedback from supervisors, a fellow student and selected teachers to ensure that the intervention would, as far as possible, address the needs of the selected participants. Evaluating a PAR process can also be problematic, as Minkler and Wallerstein (2003) state that uncertainties may exist among practitioners about the extent to which PAR can be evaluated based on the array of variations of PAR

¹³ Note that these *stages* of the literacy intervention programme should not be confused with the *phases* of the interactive cycle of action-reflection.

techniques in practice. For the purpose of this study, I consulted intensively with my supervisors and fellow student in selecting suitable techniques for the evaluation of the results.

3.3 Research methodology

In this section, I explain the selected research design, the development of the intervention, the selection of participants, the process of data collection, and the data analysis and interpretations.

3.3.1 *Research design: Intervention research*

A research design “describes a flexible set of guidelines that connect theoretical paradigms first to strategies of inquiry and second to methods for collecting empirical material” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 36). I employed an intervention research design to draw on experiences, theory, and data in order to develop a literacy intervention (Fraser et al., 2009). Intervention research implies the application of a theory-based and systematic approach in order to generate ideas through the process of documenting possible intervention strategies, assessing effectiveness, and disseminating findings (Fraser et al., 2009, De Vos & Strydom, 2005) in striving to improve people’s lives to some extent (Hohmann & Shear, 2002).

De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, and Delport (2005) identify three main phases of intervention research, namely intervention knowledge development, knowledge utilisation, and design and development. *Intervention knowledge development* implies a process of gaining knowledge about human behaviour. The intervention knowledge development formed part of “Phase 1: Getting started – intervention knowledge development” in the interactive cycle of action-reflection (Table 3.1). During this phase, knowledge was gained in order to define problems identified at the secondary school by partnering with teachers to seek common understanding of the defined problems. *Knowledge utilisation* refers to the practical implication of the knowledge gained during the knowledge development phase, which formed part of “Phase 3: Building partnership - knowledge utilisation” in the interactive cycle of action-reflection (Table 3.1). During this phase, the necessary data and information were collected in order to develop a shared understanding of the problem identified during Phase 1. *Design and development*, which imply the conversion of the

knowledge learned into an applicable innovative intervention, form part of “Phase 5: Working together – design and development” in the interactive cycle of action-reflection (Table 3.1). During this phase, the knowledge learned was applied in order to create and implement a literacy intervention programme at the selected school. The selection of the participating school (see Figure 3.1) was delimited to the setting in which the study took place. It was selected partly for the sake of convenience (Maree & Pietersen, 2007; Hay, 2005; Creswell, 2009), since current STAR and FLY projects were already taking place there. The school is situated in Elukwatini, a rural area in Mpumalanga. An additional criterion for delimited selection was the availability of appointed language teachers to participate in the intervention, as well as the school’s willingness to participate in the study.

3.3.2 Developing the intervention

For the purpose of this study, we implemented a literacy intervention with teachers. As enumerated in Table 3.1, we conducted three focus-group discussions over two days with six teachers from the rural secondary school in April 2009 to inform and develop a literacy intervention programme. The two pre-intervention focus-group discussions were held in a classroom and the library. During this time, I also observed two lessons in literacy classrooms taught by two teachers in the school to gain insight into the requirements for the development of a literacy intervention programme. The learners in the school struggled with reading, writing, and speaking English, and the selected language teachers did not have the basic literacy training to teach them the required skills. Therefore, a literacy intervention programme was implemented to provide the teachers with the necessary literacy training in order to assist the learners.

My research into the relevant literature during the period of April 2009 to August 2009 furnished me with an understanding of possible literacy interventions that could potentially have an ameliorating impact on a deficient reading culture. I found that education is directed by one of two main methods of teaching reading: Phonetics and the whole-language approach (Blank, 2006). *Phonetic acquisition* forms a basis for the development of reading skills. Therefore, an approach to surmounting a reading-skills barrier could be gained through the introduction of a phonetic intervention programme (Adonis & Huges, 2007). The focal point of reading phonetics

is the conversion of letters into sounds, whereas the *whole-language approach* introduces the more traditional methods of teaching reading, which include factors such as motivation (Blank, 2006). In the language approach, little emphasis is placed on implementing reading on a regular basis and thereby creating a reading culture. McEwan (2002) suggests the latter as being the most important missing piece of the puzzle to ensure reading success.

We developed a literacy intervention which incorporated two phases. Both the first¹⁴ and second¹⁵ stages contained an adapted phonetic programme.¹⁶ Stage 1 of the intervention programme was implemented over one day in April 2010 and focused on basic phonetic training through the introduction of single-syllable words and sounds. (See Figures 3.2 and 3.3 for photos of the sound chart and alphabet cards used in Stage 1, and Figure 3.4 for a photo of the manual of the phonetics programme.)

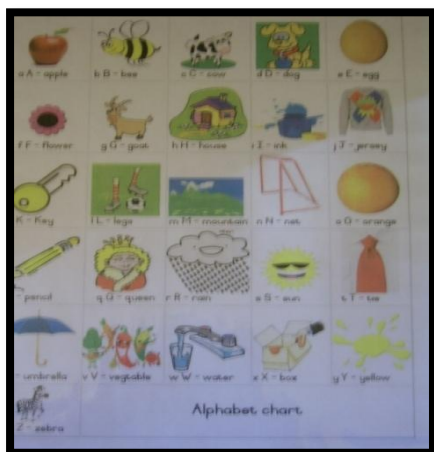


Figure 3.2: Alphabet (sound) chart used in Stage 1 of the literacy intervention (May 2010)



Figure 3.3: Alphabet cards used in Stage 1 of the literacy intervention (May 2010)

¹⁴ Stage 1 of the phonetics programme was created by Yolanda Swart (MEd Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling): “Geletterheidsintervensie en onderwysers se taal van onderrigpraktyke: askienavorsing in plattelandse skole”.

¹⁵ Stage 2 of the phonetics programme was created by Loraine du Plessis (MEd Educational Psychology): A literacy intervention with teachers: describing reading culture in a rural school.

¹⁶ See Appendix A for an example of Stages 2 of the literacy intervention programme and the DVD for Stage 1 and 2 of the literacy intervention programme.

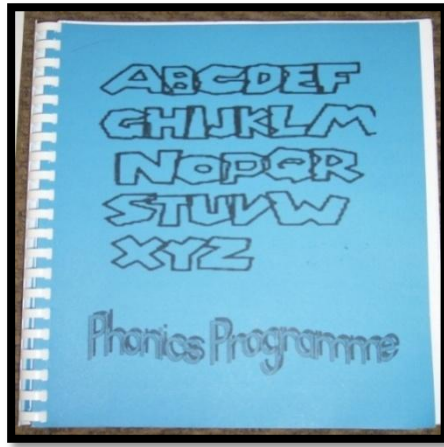


Figure 3.4: Phonetics programme used during Stage 1 of the literacy intervention (May 2010)

Six participants from the rural secondary school (see Table 3.2) took part in Phase 1 of the intervention.

After the implementation of Stage 1, teachers from the secondary school invited teachers from two neighbouring primary schools to participate in Stage 2 of the literacy intervention. The second stage of the intervention programme was introduced in May 2010 over one day and focused on more advanced phonetic training, introducing double-syllable words and sounds. The phonetics programme manual, sound charts, alphabet cards, and phonetic cards used in the second stage of the phonetics programme are depicted in Figure 3.5. During this stage, six teachers from the secondary school participated in the intervention¹⁷ (see Figure 3.6).

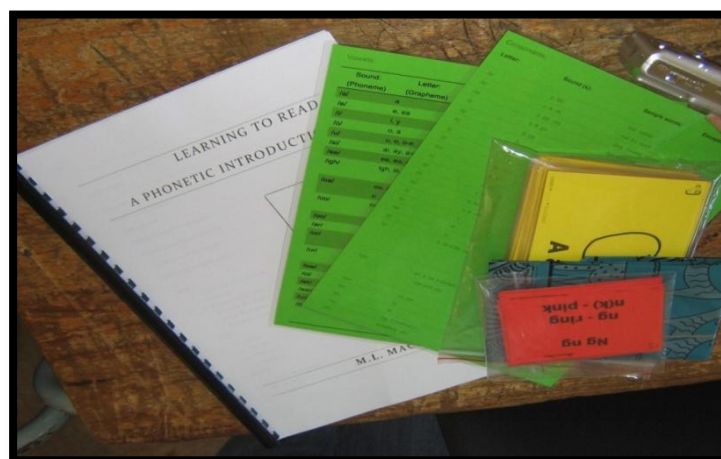


Figure 3.5: Material used for Stage 2 of the literacy intervention (May 2010)

¹⁷ Five teachers from two neighbouring primary schools participated in Stage 2 of the literacy intervention.

In August 2010, I completed 35-minute observation sessions in two literacy classrooms at the rural secondary school in striving to understand the reading culture following a literacy intervention. The research team and I also conducted a focus-group discussion in the library of the school with six teachers from the school to gauge their post-intervention experiences.



Figure 3.6: Implementation of Stage 2 of the literacy intervention (May 2010)

During this study, I did not make use of a pilot study to refine the selected research instruments since I agree with Marshall and Rossman (2011) that “even without a pilot study, the researcher can demonstrate her ability to manage qualitative research by describing initial observations or interviews” (p. 96). Pilot testing can be time consuming and costly as the study needs to be repeated with respondents similar to those in the selected sample (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The absence of a pilot study is therefore admittedly a limitation of my study.

3.3.3 Selection of participants

A sample “comprises elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be viewed as a subset of measurement drawn from a population

in which we are interested” (De Vos & Strydom, 2005, p. 194). For the purpose of this study, I made use of the convenience criterion to select participants.¹⁸

I relied on convenience sampling to select teachers based on their participation in the ongoing FLY and STAR projects. Convenience sampling requires that the participants be selected on a basis of access or availability (Maree & Pietersen, 2007; Hay, 2005; Creswell, 2009). The participants were mandated by the Head of the Language Department of the secondary school to participate in the study. As such, teachers were selected based on their availability, as well as their involvement in literacy or reading at the school. This led to the selection of six literacy teachers for Grades 7 to 12.

A limitation of convenience sampling is that it is not possible for researchers to claim with confidence that the selected participants are representative of a population (Hay, 2005). However, the information obtained from the research can be used to answer an important question and provide in-depth insight into a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). On the other hand, Hay (2005) states that convenience sampling is advantageous as it may save time, money, and effort.

A summary of the participants in this study is provided in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2:
Participants in the study

School	Participant	Gender	Formal training	Language	Teaching	Participated in:
Intervention and data collected on reading culture Stage 1 and 2						
Secondary School	A	M	Teaching Diploma	Sepedi	English, Grades 8, 10 & 11	Stages 1 and 2 of the phonetics programme, pre-focus-group discussion, face-to-face interview
Secondary School	B	F	Higher Education Diploma Secondary	Setswana	English Grades 10 & 11	Stages 1 and 2 of the phonetics programme, pre-and post-focus-group discussions,

¹⁸ As the study evolved, teachers from two neighbouring primary schools also participated even though the primary schools are not the focus of this study. The two neighbouring primary schools were selected in “snowball” fashion (Gorard, 2003).

School	Partici- pant	Gender	Formal training	Language	Teaching	Participated in:
						classroom observations
Secondary School	C	F	Higher Education Diploma	Sepedi	English Grade 7	Stages 1 and 2 of the phonetics programme, pre- and post-focus- group discussions, classroom observations
Secondary School	D	F	BA English Communication	Shona	English Grades 7,10 & 11	Stages 1 and 2 of the phonetics programme, pre- and post-focus- group discussions
Secondary School	E	F	Teaching Diploma & LO Certificate	Shangaan	English Grades 7 & 9	Stages 1 and 2 of the phonetics programme, pre- focus-group discussion
Secondary School	F	F	Teaching Diploma & ACE	Swazi	English Grades 10,11 & 12	Stages 1 and 2 of the phonetics programme, pre- and post-focus- group discussions, face- to-face interview
Literacy intervention, Stage 2 only						
School B	G	M	Not known	Swazi	Grade 2	Stage 2 of the phonetics programme
School B	H	F	Not known	Swazi	Grade 3	Stage 2 of the phonetics programme
School C	I	F	Not known	Swazi	English Grades 4, 5 & 6	Stage 2 of the phonetics programme
School C	J	F	Not known	Swazi	Grade 2	Stage 2 of the phonetics programme
School C	K	M	Not known	Sepedi	English Grades 4, 5 & 6	Stage 2 of the phonetics programme

The participants included one male teacher and five female teachers from the selected secondary school. Six teachers from the selected secondary school and five teachers from two neighbouring primary schools participated in the Stage 2 intervention sessions.

3.3.4 Data collection

Data were collected and documented through the use of textual documents, observations, field notes, visual media, a research journal, as well as focus-group interviews.

3.3.4.1 Textual documents

I collected textual documents to assess the nature of the reading culture at the secondary school before and after a literacy intervention. Textual documents can include newspapers accounts, letters, diaries, journals, and official documents such as minutes of meetings or curriculum guides (Lichtman, 2010). I analysed the following documents: primary public documents in the form of minutes of meetings¹⁹ at which reading problems experienced at the selected school were discussed, as well as Grade 7 English term marks²⁰ for the first and fourth quarter of 2010. These marks were utilised for identifying possible progress with regard to reading achievements.

Textual documents can be defined as a form of communication with the goal of replicating and creating accounts of reality. Such communication reflects written confirmation of activities in an institution (Hatch, 2002; Freeboy, 2003). Creswell (2009) states that primary source data could be in the form of primary public documents as well as primary private source data. Creswell (2009) and Freeboy (2003) explain that the use of primary source data can allow researchers to gain insight into the language and words used by participants. Regarding the selected school, the minutes of meetings reflected discussions on reading problems experienced in the school setting and solutions that could be considered. This gave me some insight into: (a) planning a literacy intervention, (b) developing a baseline idea of the reading culture, and (c) a post-intervention image of the reading culture. I collected Grade 7 English term marks for the first and fourth quarter of 2010 to determine if there was an improvement (or not) in the learners' marks.

Interpreting the implication of textual data is profoundly inferential and it demands of researchers to go about making interpretations cautiously (Hatch, 2002). Using

¹⁹ See Appendix B for an example of minutes of meetings.

²⁰ See Appendix C for an example of English term marks for the first and fourth quarter of 2010.

textual data in isolation may also give researchers a distorted view as it is easy to misinterpret given information without placing it into context. One way of preventing this is to triangulate data with data from other sources. I therefore made use of various types of data in striving to ensure that information obtained from the selected data was not misinterpreted. Concerning this study, written documents reduced my workload as no transcriptions were required for this part of the data (Creswell, 2009).

3.3.4.2 Observations

For the purpose of this study, I observed classroom activities, the school environment, as well as the intervention implementation. These observations were made during three field visits in which my fellow researcher and I observed in two classrooms before the implementation of the literacy intervention. Observation was repeated after the implementation of the literacy intervention (see Table 3.1). The goal of these observations was to understand the culture, setting, and social relationships among the participating teachers at the school in order to understand a reading culture before and after the implementation of a literacy intervention. During these visits, my fellow student and I had the opportunity to observe the participants in their natural classroom settings while they were teaching. Creswell (2009) and Hay (2005) describe observation as the process during which researchers take field notes describing actions and activities of the participants as they occur at the location where the research is taking place.

Hay (2005) identifies two forms of observation, namely controlled and uncontrolled. Controlled observation can be defined as “clear and explicit decisions on what, how, and when to observe” (Hay, 2005, p. 194). Uncontrolled observation is “directed by goals and ethical considerations, but is not controlled in the sense of being restricted to noting prescribed phenomena” (Hay, 2005, p. 194). As mentioned in Table 3.1, observation took place during all phases. I made use of uncontrolled observation for the purpose of this study. This was advantageous as it allowed me to gain insight into the relationships (Freeboy, 2003) among the participating teachers at the school and to form a partnership with them in order to gain valuable information. Another advantage of the observations was that the goals selected for an observation are flexible in nature. This implies that researchers can adapt the primary goal of their observations at any time (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; De Vos & Strydom, 2005). Such

flexibility proved valuable as I had to adapt to the teachers' schedules in order to arrange times and locations for the observations.

The participating teachers were not mother-tongue English speaking, which occasionally hindered their ability to articulate information (Creswell, 2009). Such language differences may have influenced the quality of the data I collected. A disadvantage of using observations is that participants may consciously or unconsciously change their behaviour when being observed (Opie, 2004; De Vos & Strydom, 2005). Another disadvantage is that interpretations of what is being observed are frequently subject to bias, especially unconsciously. In this respect, researchers can possibly be influenced by their own ideas and beliefs concerning the people or elements being observed (Cohen, et al., 2000; De Vos & Strydom, 2005).

During my observations, I experienced that the participants may have consciously or unconsciously changed their behaviour because of my presence. This possibility may have influenced the results of this study. Even though researchers can never entirely be free from the influence of bias, I strived to limit such influence through reflexivity. Through continuous reflection as noted in my researcher diary,²¹ I became more self-aware and could therefore monitor my thoughts (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

3.3.4.3 Documenting my observations: Field notes

Our observations were documented by means of field notes.²² In this study, observers therefore functioned as joint participants in action, examining participants in a specific setting (Denzin & Lincon, 2003). As the relationship between the researchers and the selected participants unfolded, participants validated the cues generated by other people (us as researchers) within the research setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Observation also provided matching confirmation of the research information in question (Hay, 2005). Field notes are important when documenting collected data, as they allow researchers to preserve details of interactions that are needed for later analysis (Silverman, 2010). Researchers therefore make use of field notes to develop a sense of what is going on. As such, researchers need to become

²¹ See Appendix E for extraction from researcher journal.

²² See Appendix G for extractions of field notes.

aware of what they are seeing and hearing. By becoming aware of this, they may be empowered to observe how interactions and events are expressed and formed.

Researchers can make use of a range of variations when recording field notes. Some researchers immediately take field notes, whereas others first leave the field and then write complete records of the events (Berg, 2001). The content of the field notes depends on the context, the objectives of research, as well as the quality and type of the relationship established with participants (Berg, 2001). For this study, the content of my field notes included observations that I made and personal ideas that occurred to me while I was in the field. I tried to write my field notes as soon as I left the field.

An advantage of using field notes is that it can be recorded using voice-recorders, allowing researchers to make additional notes while recordings can be transcribed at a later stage (Berg, 2001). Field notes can also be used to record personal opinions, feelings, and preliminary ideas that can assist researchers in the effort to record as detailed an impression as possible of all the events that occurred (Berg, 2001).

A potential challenge of using field notes is that researchers may document vague, ill-considered details that may be judgemental in nature, making it difficult to understand (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). For the purpose of this study, I collaborated with my supervisors and fellow student in an effort to ensure that my field notes were sufficient and valid.

3.3.4.4 Documenting my observations: Visual data

I also used photographs and audiovisual recording to document my observation activity. Silverman (2010) explains that “visual data comprise a very broad category which can encompass anything from videos to photographs to naturally occurring observational data” (p. 243). This includes aspects of the environment such as street signs and advertisements (Silverman, 2010). I used photographs to document the research setting, the classrooms and school environment, as well as the presented literacy intervention implemented at the selected school. This helped me to document details regarding the settings as well as specific factual data needed for this study.

Photographs are valuable in the sense that they may provide researchers with more detail regarding the setting of the observations than what researchers can recall from memory and field notes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Opie, 2004). Hatch (2002) adds that apart from photographs providing researchers with detail, they “can also provide a sense of what the setting was like as well as factual information about the data study” (p. 120). Bogdan and Biklen (2003) identify photographs as an important instrument for obtaining the required answers and information. A potential disadvantage of using photographs is that researchers may be beguiled by their own interpretation of the captured image and thus detach the photograph from the context in which it was taken (Hatch, 2002). Furthermore, this could influence the value of photographs when analysed by researchers (Opie, 2004).

3.3.4.5 Researcher journal and researcher role

I made use of a research journal to write down my ideas, challenges, and outcomes that occurred during the study.²³ Hatch (2002) states that research journals are usually written without the intent of presenting them to an audience. They are produced as part of researchers’ natural experiences of events and observations (Hatch, 2002). The act of writing down events and observations experienced during the research process may motivate researchers to reflect on experiences differently from merely talking about them (Hatch, 2002). Burns (2010) suggests that journaling should be used in triangulation, in which several data collection techniques ensure that the information obtained is accurate.

I started my research journal the night before my first visit to the selected school. Journaling²⁴ allowed me more flexibility in using my time to report my findings, thoughts, personal reflections and observations, and as I used it in collaboration with other data it proved valuable in supporting my findings. This approach made it easier for me to identify possible themes and patterns. I made use of reflexivity through continuous reflection in order to become more self-aware, which enabled me to monitor my thoughts and feelings (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Furthermore, it gave me a clear understanding of possible influences, as well as my personal views and opinions.

²³ See Appendix E for extracts from the researcher journal.

²⁴ See Appendix E for an example of researcher journal entries.

In spite of being fully aware that journaling calls for discipline to keep up with the journaling process, I experienced this as challenging and burdensome at times. Hatch (2002) mentions that the quality of reflexive thinking varies from researcher to researcher. My role as a researcher in this study required of me to partner with teachers at the selected school in order to identify possible needs in the school and community setting. This led to the implementation of a literacy intervention to address reading culture in the participating school.

Throughout the research process, I made use of a reflective journal to reflect on my observations. It was important for me to consider the nature of my role with regard to the data generation process by means of detailed reflections. This helped me to reflect on my own biases. During the study, I also fulfilled the role of observer while observing settings and people in order to ensure richer data collection. This process was once again noted in my research journal.

3.3.4.6 Focus-group interviews

Focus-group interviews are used for gathering data through exploring the discourses that outline the practices of everyday life. More precisely, focus-group interviews can be defined as “carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment” (De Vos & Strydom, 2005, p. 300). The primary use of focus-group interviews is to gather information, thereby providing insight that may not have been exposed through other methods such as questionnaires or individual interviews (Hay, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

We conducted three focus-group interviews (Hay, 2005; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). As indicated in Table 3.1, the *first* focus-group interviews were held in April 2009 before implementation of the intervention had occurred. The *second* focus-group meeting took place in August 2010 after the intervention. The aim of the first focus group was to discuss the current reading culture (or lack thereof) at the selected secondary school with the participating teachers. The outcome of the focus-group discussion led to the development and implementation of the literacy intervention programme. The aim of the *third* focus-group discussion was to determine whether any changes had occurred after implementation of the literacy intervention and, if so, what these changes were. The focus-group interviews lasted approximately one hour each and

were conducted on site at the secondary school. The focus-group discussions were audio-recorded and later transcribed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Field notes (Hay, 2005; Nieuwenhuis, 2007) and visual data in the form of photographs (Silverman, 2010) were used as secondary methods of capturing the data collected during the focus-group interviews.

One advantage of focus-group discussions relates to the possibility of producing vital data on a topic of interest within a relatively small period of time (Hay, 2005; Berg, 2001; De Vos & Strydom, 2005). As the discussions were focused on a specific topic of interest, ample data could be generated in a relatively short period of time as compared with observations and individual interviews (Hatch, 2002). Another strength of focus-group discussions is the presence of several participants (although perhaps in limited numbers), which may tend to stimulate the dynamics of group interaction. In this case, the focus-group discussions provided me with more comprehensive data than individual interviews would have done (De Vos & Strydom, 2005; Hatch, 2002; Berg, 2001).

In addition, being interviewed in groups appeared to provide the participants with a sense of security and comfort that could possibly have led to more truthful and open responses (Hatch, 2002; De Vos & Strydom, 2005). For the purpose of this study, this group participation thus added to the richness of the information obtained from these discussions as participants occasionally voiced different needs and perceptions.

A concern regarding focus-group interviews is that because of the usually limited number of participants, the findings are not generalisable to a wider population (Hay, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; De Vos & Strydom, 2005; Berg, 2001). Moreover, when a variety of people participate in a focus-group discussion, tension may arise from different and sometimes opposing ideas that can come into play on account of the diversity of the group (Morgan, 1997). A last concern is that the level of participation of the participants can be either very high or very low (Morgan, 1997). The last-mentioned problem seemed evident during the focus-group discussions conducted in this study, which required ample probing during discussions.

3.3.5 Informal conversational interviews

During this study, I engaged in informal conversational interviews with several of the participating teachers. Cohen et al. (2000) explain that such interviews, because of their informal and non-directive nature, constitute an interviewing strategy that allows for a more relaxed, flexible approach as the questions emerge from the direct situation in which participants and interviewers find themselves. Questions are therefore asked in an unaffected manner in the natural course of a conversation. Predetermination of questions, topics or wording consequently has virtually no role to play (Cohen, et al., 2000).

Informal conversational interviews are advantageous as they allow researchers to build on observations made and to match an interview with a specific participant or situation (Cohen, et al., 2000). Furthermore, Kaplan and Maxwell (2005) add that informal conversational interviews are particularly useful for obtaining a sense of participants' views and experiences. Yet, there are limitations to consider when using informal conversational interviews. Because this type of interview is less systematic, the data collected are often unorganised and hard to analyse (Cohen, et al., 2000). I made use of both a researcher journal and field notes to document my informal interviews in order to assure that the data collected would be well organised. Kaplan and Maxwell (2005) also explain that researchers need appropriate communication skills to ensure that the conversation is focused on the relevant topic. I therefore made use of my experience as an interviewer and relied strongly on my interviewing skills to make certain that I communicated effectively with the selected participants.

3.3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

I relied on thematic analysis to analyse textual data, namely focus-group transcriptions,²⁵ field notes²⁶ and a researcher journal²⁷ as indicated in Figure 3.7. Thematic analysis is similar to trend analysis (Cohen, et al., 2000) in that researchers look for broad themes, rather than identifying more specific trends that may emerge through the text (Cohen, et al., 2000).

²⁵ See Appendix F for an example of focus-group transcriptions.

²⁶ See Appendix G for an example of field notes captured.

²⁷ See Appendix E for an example of researcher journal entries.

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

DATA SOURCES:

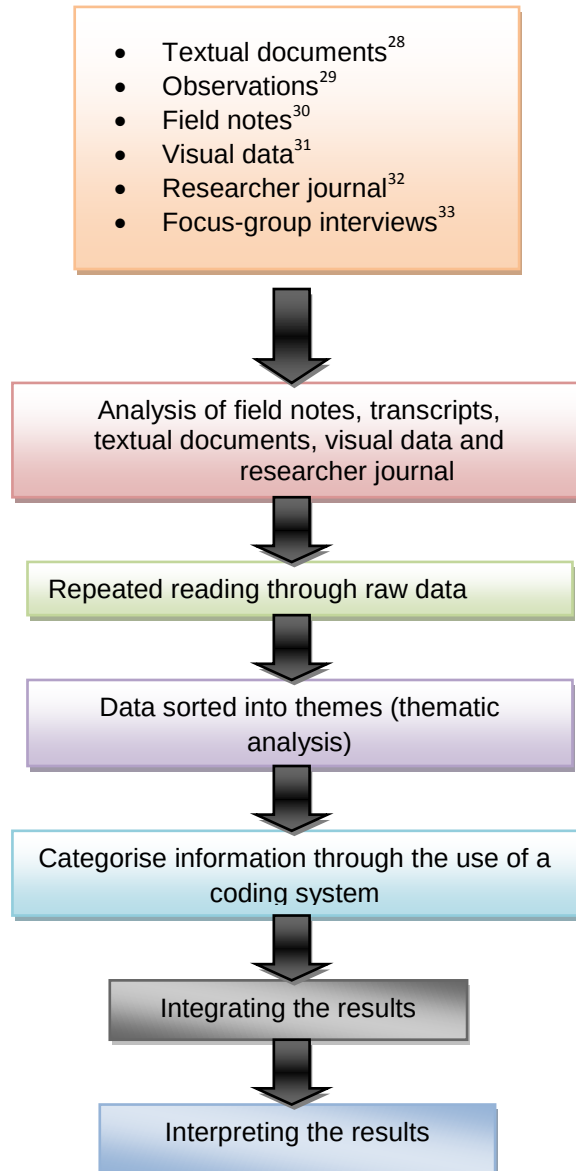


Figure 3.7: A visual representation of data analysis and interpretation (Adapted from McMillan and Schumacher, 2010)

Thematic analysis can be defined as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data” (Braun, 2006, p. 79). I was guided through the process of data analysis by my research questions as well as my working assumptions mentioned in Chapter 1. For the purpose of this study, the audio-

²⁸ See Appendix B for textual documents.

²⁹ See Appendix G for extracts from field notes. Observations were documented in the field notes.

³⁰ See Appendix G for extracts from field notes.

³¹ See Appendix D for photographs from participating Schools A, B and C.

³² See Appendix E for extracts from the researcher journal.

³³ See Appendix F for transcriptions of pre- and post-focus-group discussions.

recordings of the two focus-group discussions were transcribed, together with a fellow student's and my own field notes, visual data and my researcher journal (see Chapter 4).

In my analysis I followed the six phases of thematic analysis suggested by Braun (2006) (see Figure 3.8 for a visual representation). During the first phase, I familiarised myself with the data by transcribing the focus-group discussions, observational data, and field notes. This phase implied reading and re-reading the selected textual data and writing down important ideas. In the second phase I coded the selected data using coding schemes (Mertler, 2006) in order to simplify correlation between these data. In the third phase, I had to search for patterns in order to identify themes across the selected data.

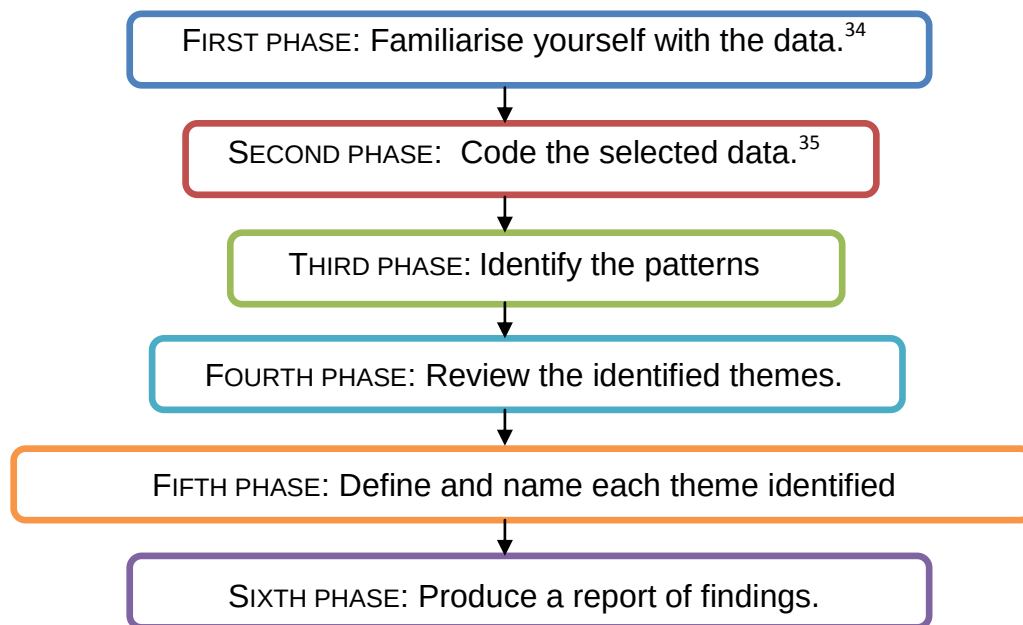


Figure 3.8: The six phases of thematic analysis (suggested by Braun, 2006).

After identifying initial themes, I moved on to the next phase (four) of reviewing these identified themes. This step ensured that I checked whether or not the themes identified during the third phase matched the codes identified in phase two in order to generate a chart of overall themes. As the themes were identified, I completed

³⁴ See Appendices B, C, D, E, F and G, for selected data used for thematic analysis.

³⁵ See Appendix J for examples of the second to fifth phases of the thematic analysis as previous rounds of the thematic analysis are presented.

phase five, which implies defining and naming each theme identified on level four. I concluded the process by producing a report of my findings and reviewing these findings. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

An advantage of thematic analysis is its relative flexibility: most researchers find it easy to use (Braun, 2006). Especially when working with different data collection methods, researchers can employ thematic analysis for easier summarisation of themes from the selected data sources (Braun, 2006). A negative aspect of thematic analysis is that it may be difficult to separate correlating themes from various methods of data collected. During this study, I concentrated on achieving a systematic approach to making it easier to work with a range of data. I also found it easier to document identified themes in table format, which makes it more convenient to add identified themes across the selected data.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Research ethics can be explained as constituting an “aspect of conducting research, especially research involving human beings” (Mertler, 2006, p. 26). During the study, I considered informed and voluntary participation, anonymity, no harm to participants, and trust.

3.4.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

According to Cohen, et al., (2000), informed consent implies measures according to which research participants decide whether to participate in the research study after being informed of the details that would likely predispose them towards participation. Babbie (2005) explains that informed consent and voluntary participation relate to respecting participants – they should not feel intimidated to participate. Informed consent therefore implies four elements, namely competence, voluntarism, full information, and comprehension (Cohen, et al., 2000; Babbie, 2005; Creswell, 2009, Berg; 2001). Competence implies that participants are selected who are able to make decisions and are therefore not limited by mental capacity or impairments. Voluntary participation implies that informed consent has been obtained, thereby ensuring that participants are willing to participate in a study and that they are aware of possible risks of the study (Babbie, 2005). Full information implies that consent is given by the participants (Creswell, 2007). Comprehension implies that participants

are fully aware of the nature of the research project and have therefore been well informed.

The participating teachers of this study were provided with detailed information explaining what would be expected of them during the course of the study. Permission was recorded by means of a consent form signed³⁶ on 14 May 2009. This involved informing the participants of the nature of the study, as well as explaining their right to withdraw from the study at any given time. The participant information obtained from this study will remain confidential.

3.4.2 Anonymity

To protect the participants from harm, I was guided by the principles of anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy for the duration of the study (Cohen, et al., 2000; Berg, 2001). Anonymity implies that the identities of participants will be kept confidential (Babbie, 2005; Creswell, 2009; Berg, 2001). During the first focus-group discussion, anonymity was explained to the participants. Ryen (2004) mentions that not all participants necessarily wish to be treated anonymously. In this study, the participants chose not to remain anonymous.

According to Ryen (2004), the more deviant and secretive the investigative subject of a particular study, the more likely that participants would want to remain anonymous. Because this study was aimed at implementing a literacy intervention to improve a reading culture at a school, the selected participants had no disinclination to reveal any relevant information. The participants also gave written permission to have their photos taken for the purpose of this study. Since this study formed part of a larger study (STAR and FLY), permission for conducting it was obtained from the Department of Basic Education beforehand.³⁷

3.4.3 No harm to participants

Babbie (2005) states that “social research should never injure the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study” (p. 63). He notes furthermore that some of the information that participants are asked to reveal may be

³⁶ See Appendix H for an example of consent forms.

³⁷ See Appendix I for examples of consent forms obtained from the Department of Basic Education.

discomforting, thus leading to possible psychological harm. During the course of this study, I tried to limit placing the participants in discomforting positions. Physical harm to the participants seldom occurs in qualitative research; however, some participants may experience humiliation or loss of trust. Therefore, during this study I tried to incorporate a sense of caring and fairness regarding my actions, thoughts, and personal morality (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The participants were informed of ethical norms and that no harm was intended to them in this research. The participants were also reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any given time.

3.4.4 Trust

According to Ryen (2004), trust can be defined as “the relationship between the researcher and the participants”, in which the researcher has a “responsibility not to ‘spoil’ the field for others in the sense that potential research subjects become reluctant to [participate in further] research” (p. 234). In this study, I tried to ensure that the research participants would not feel that they were being misled or deceived in any way. I was honest with them at all times, which promoted a growing relationship of mutual trust (Thompson & Rudolph, 2000). This sense of trust remained an important element in ensuring data of high credibility, since the participants, in the required research activity of disclosing their personal thoughts and feelings, felt at ease in doing so.

3.5 Quality criteria

During the study, I considered credibility, transferability, confirmability, dependability, and authenticity.

3.5.1 Credibility

Internal validity, which parallels credibility (Bryman, 2004), is described as the correct representation of the context or event by researchers. To ensure credibility, the data collected need to be sufficient to render findings and make the results visible (Mertens, 2010; Seale, 2000). Researchers therefore need to spend ample time in the research field before reaching conclusions regarding the study (Mertens, 2010; Patton, 2002; Seale, 2000). In addition, Silverman (2010) suggests that

credibility can be enhanced by basing a study on well-grounded theory and establishing well-defined accounts of the findings (Patton, 2002).

I visited the selected secondary school on five different occasions over a period of two years. I documented my findings in detail, which allowed me to construct a historical record of the research proceedings that could serve as a form of quality control. During this study, I made use of peer and supervision debriefing discussions (Mertens, 2010; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) to enhance the accuracy of the documentations made. As the study progressed, I continued to consult the germane literature, aiming to ensure that the study was based on well-grounded, current theory. I made use of triangulation (Mertens, 2010) by relying on textual documents, observations, photographs, a researcher journal, as well as focus-group discussions.

3.5.2 *Transferability*

Transferability is “a concept that enables readers of the research to make judgements based on similarities and differences when comparing the research situation to their own” (Mertens, 2010, p. 259). Therefore detailed explanations and documentation of the research setting and contexts are needed. If researchers are to accumulate rich, detailed information, Seale (2000) suggests that they spend ample time doing fieldwork. For this study, I completed my fieldwork over a period of two years, visiting the selected secondary school on five different occasions.

The findings of this study can be regarded as informative since it can be used for future research (Edwards, 2001). This gives researchers an opportunity to identify similarities and differences in the various studies conducted (Mertens, 2010). Readers can judge how relevant the findings of this study would possibly be in other contexts, given the detailed explanations and descriptions.

Since only six language teachers from the selected secondary school participated in this study, they represented a small range of the population. This study was therefore aimed at providing in-depth insight into a specific literacy intervention rather than at generalising the findings (Patton, 2002).

3.5.3 Dependability

Thomas, Nelson, and Silverman (2005) define dependability as “the quality of the data in a qualitative study, including how well the researcher deals with change, based on previous data collections” (p. 359). Dependability implies that the same results will be obtained if the study were to be repeated (Silverman, 2010). During this study, I aimed to achieve dependability by taking comprehensive field notes and using data from various sources (Hittleman & Simon, 2006). I also made use of coding, allowing me to code and recode the data in order to be flexible and adaptable to change. Furthermore, I relied on peer examination (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009) and discussions regarding the data that I collected in striving to enhance the dependability of this study.

LeCompte and Goetz in Seale (2000) recommend for the sake of dependability that researchers should avoid relying only on their recollection of observations made and rather make use of audio-recordings that can be transcribed. I made use of audio-recordings of the two focus-group discussions, which were transcribed verbatim. Seale (2000) further suggests that discussing methodological decisions on a continual basis in partnership with a fellow researcher can possibly be advantageous with regard to dependability. During this study, I consulted with a fellow student as well as my supervisors to enhance the dependability of this study.

3.5.4 Authenticity

Authenticity can be defined as “the faithful reconstruction of participants’ perceptions” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 335). Bryman (2004) identifies fairness, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity as criteria for ensuring authenticity. *Fairness* implies that researchers represent different realities of the social setting fairly (Bryman, 2004). *Catalytic authenticity* implies that researchers should act as sources for utilising action to exert a positive impact on the current circumstances of participants. Lastly, *tactical authenticity* implies that researchers should provide the participants with the means to take the necessary steps to engage in the process of change.

In striving to meet the criterion of authenticity, I worked in partnership with a fellow researcher, my supervisors, and the participants to obtain different viewpoints

regarding reading culture and literacy intervention. By means of implementing a literacy intervention, I aimed to exert a positive impact on the selected participating school's reading culture. The two-phased intervention programme provided the participants with a variety of activities. The participants were therefore given the opportunity to engage in the implementation of a literacy intervention, which was aimed at bringing about a constructive change regarding a reading culture.

3.5.5 Confirmability

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), confirmability can be described as the extent to which the findings of a study are the product of the focus of the topic of the study and are not based on any biases (Patton, 2002) of researchers. I documented the data analysis process and reflected on this process throughout the study. I also attempted to understand and interpret the results (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Furthermore, I attempted to increase the confirmability of the study by seeking advice and guidance from my supervisors and fellow researcher. I aimed to guard against my own subjective perceptions and biases (Patton, 2002) through the process of continuous reflection.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the research design, paradigm, and methodology that I employed during my study. I justified my methodological choices by discussing potential advantages for this study. I identified possible challenges and indicated how I aimed to address these. I also discussed the ethical considerations and quality criteria that applied. In Chapter 4, I present the results and findings of the study.



CHAPTER 4: REPORTING THE RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the research process and methodology underpinning my study. In this chapter, I report on the results of the study by presenting the themes that emerged during the thematic analysis of the raw data. Three main themes and their sub-themes emerged from the colour-coding process that I employed. I have enriched my discussions by including not only direct quotations from the responses of participants, but also excerpts from a range of other data sources. Furthermore, I present the inclusion and exclusion criteria for each theme.

4.2 Results of the study

In Table 4.1, I present the three main themes and related sub-themes. I also indicate the inclusion and exclusion criteria that I applied.

Table 4.1:
Overview of themes and sub-themes that emerged

Theme 1 Reading culture in the rural secondary school learner system			
Sub-theme:	Inclusion criteria:	Exclusion criteria:	Categories:
1.1 Learners' motivated attitudes towards reading	Learners' attitudes of motivation towards reading inside and outside the classroom.	Behaviours displayed by the learners inside and outside the classroom that do not relate to their motivation and attitudes towards reading.	1.1.1 Secondary school learners' reading motivation pre-intervention. 1.1.2 Secondary school learners' reading motivation post-intervention.
1.2 Learners' reading abilities	Learners' abilities to read demonstrated inside and outside the classroom.	Learners' abilities that do not relate to reading displayed by the learners inside and outside the classroom.	In sub-theme 1.2 no categories were identified.

Theme 2 Reading culture in the rural secondary school classroom system			
Sub-theme:	Inclusion criteria:	Exclusion criteria:	Categories:
2.1 Teachers' teaching and learning practices in the classroom	Teachers' teaching and learning practices related to enabling reading as displayed inside the classroom.	Teachers' teaching and learning practices that do not relate to enabling reading displayed inside the classroom.	2.1.1 Secondary school learners' inability to read as a barrier to secondary school teachers. 2.1.2 Barriers to reading because of language diversity.
2.2 Learners' learning behaviour in the classroom	Learning behaviours and attitudes in relation to reading beliefs, attitudes and behaviours as displayed by the learners inside the classroom.	Learning behaviours and attitudes that do not relate to reading beliefs, attitudes and behaviours as displayed by the learners outside the classroom.	In sub-theme 2.2 no categories were identified.
2.3 Classroom resources and reading culture	Teaching aids and resources related to reading used by learners and teachers inside the classroom.	Teaching aids and resources not related to reading used by learners and teachers inside the classroom.	2.3.1 Pre-intervention use of classroom resources for reading. 2.3.2 Post-intervention use of classroom resources for reading.
Theme 3 Reading culture in the rural secondary school system			
Sub-theme:	Inclusion criteria:	Exclusion criteria:	
3.1 Library and reading culture in a rural secondary school.	Reading behaviour, beliefs and attitudes relating to the use of the school's library.	Reading behaviour, beliefs and attitudes that are not related to the use of the school's library.	
3.2 School structures and reading culture	Reading behaviour, beliefs and attitudes identified inside school practices.	Reading behaviour, beliefs and attitudes identified outside school practices.	

4.2.1 Theme 1: Reading culture in the rural secondary school learner system

The sub-themes that support this main theme are learners' motivated attitudes towards reading and learners' reading abilities.

4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Learners' motivated attitudes towards reading

In this sub-theme, I explain differences and similarities with regard to how teachers and I observed learners' motivation to read at the pre-intervention and post-intervention stages.

CATEGORY 1.1.1: SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS' READING MOTIVATION AT PRE-INTERVENTION

Reading motivation plays a vital role in creating a reading culture and remains an important focus in literature in this area (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996). Learners' motivated attitudes to reading became a familiar code identified in various data sources. At pre-intervention, the participating teachers experienced that the learners at the selected rural secondary school did not demonstrate motivation and positive attitudes towards reading and learning. I commented on this in my field notes after having had an informal conversational interview with one of the participating teachers:

"Mrs. Xxx wanted to meet with us to talk about motivational problems she was experiencing regarding the learners' participation in class activities. She mentioned that the learners in her classes were not motivated to participate..." (Field notes journal, lines 243-45, August 2010). The teacher also added, "They showed little emotion when they read" (Field notes, line 456, August 2010).

However, contrary to teachers' pre-intervention views of learners, I observed at this stage that learners did appear to be motivated. I recorded this in my field notes during my first classroom observation:

"The learners are very friendly [and] eager to learn" (Field notes, lines 74-75, May 2009)

My initial impression was thus that the learners in the class I observed seemed quite eager to learn. However, during the pre-intervention focus-group discussion, it became apparent that teachers experienced learners as having negative attitudes towards reading in order to learn. One of the participating teachers commented that "*some of them are not even interested in learning... I think it is a negative attitude*" (Pre-intervention Focus-Group Discussion (FGD) 2, Participant B, lines 52 and 55).

The participant later added, *“And one other problem that I am noticing about their school work is that they don’t want to do anything else [that has] to do with their school work”* (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, lines 71-73). Teachers in this study acknowledged that they should play a role in motivating learners to read, and as one teacher mentioned, *“We also need to motivate the learners to read more”* (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant C, line 94).

A few factors that could have influenced teachers’ views of learners’ low motivation include the lack of reading books and textbooks (resources), learners’ inability to read sufficiently, and teachers’ learning and teaching practices. The participating teachers did indeed identify a lack of resources during the pre-intervention focus group discussion. One of the teachers mentioned that *“we do not have a lot of textbooks and storybooks”* (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant A, line 73). Teachers’ teaching practices also possibly influenced the learners’ motivational levels at pre-intervention. One of the participating teachers commented on her teaching and learning practices, saying, *“I think this problem started from the foundation phase and for us to correct it is very difficult”* (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant E, lines 101-102).

CATEGORY: 1.1.2 SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS’ READING MOTIVATION AT POST-INTERVENTION

At post-intervention, I noted learners’ joy in relation to reading and recorded this in my field notes:

“It seems as if the learners found reading to be more enjoyable and they also showed more confidence when reading” (Field notes, lines 427-28, August 2010).

My observation was corroborated by some of the participating teachers who were of the opinion that the learners showed an overall improvement in their language abilities. This seemed to make teachers revisit their appraisal of learners’ reading motivation. One participant commented during the post-intervention focus-group discussion concerning the learners’ learning progress that *“I used to complain about the learners, now I went to the HOD³⁸ to brag about the marks of the Grade 7s. I was*

³⁸ HOD: Head of Department

so impressed to see their progress” (Post-intervention FGD, Participant C, lines 85-87). Another participant added that *“this programme has helped us to help the learners”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant B, line 152). The participant concluded that *“the learners try their best to use English a lot in the classes. Without the programme, it wouldn’t have been solved”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant B, lines 247-249).

At post-intervention, learners thus seemed to demonstrate more confidence to read, which appeared to influence their attitudes towards learning (*“...and the learners have a lot of confidence”*, Post-intervention FGD, Participant F, lines 52-53). I also recorded the learners’ confidence after an informal conversational interview that I had with one of the participating teachers:

“The learners enjoyed reading more, since she [the teacher] felt that more readers are confident” (Field notes, lines 268-69, August 2010).

4.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Learners’ reading abilities

This sub-theme depicts how learners initially struggled to read but were later able to achieve a measure of academic reform. In addition, in this section I present evidence of how learners’ participation in classes seemed to increase, of the positive changes reported on in terms of their reading skills, and of the reported improvement in their English academic achievement. Learners’ reading abilities are necessarily important to consider when studying a reading culture within a learner system.

Initially, participating teachers communicated negative perceptions of learners’ reading capacity. For example, teachers reported that learners did not display the ability to read in English. At pre-intervention, one of the participating teachers mentioned that *“if the learners cannot speak or write English, how are they suppose to read it”* (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant A, lines 71-72). The learners’ inability to read was further emphasised by another participating teacher who commented that *“we first need to help the learners to read”* (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant B, line 87).

At post-intervention, I noted a change in teachers’ perceptions in this regard. The teachers mentioned that learners were displaying improved reading abilities. One of

the participating teachers commented, *“Ja... they can read better... I think the educator that is using the programme is making the programme work”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant F, lines 64-65). Another participant added, *“What I can say while I was in the class... there was this boy that could not write his name. I know when he was trying to write his name he could not do it. But now there is a change. He has improved his work now. So what we did, we used to give him some of the letters; the more letter writing he did the better he became. So it helped him. The programme is not a waste of time. You can really see there is a difference in the learners”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant B, lines 144-151).

I furthermore reflected at post-intervention that the learners appeared to have improved their reading skills and displayed related confidence. In documenting my classroom observation, I stated:

“Wow! It was amazing! I cannot believe that this is the same class I observed earlier this year.... It seems as if the learners found reading more enjoyable. I loved seeing the confidence they have! Being able to read or for that matter possibly improving the learners’ reading skills seem to have made all the difference!!!” (Researcher Journal, lines 106-113, August 2010).

In terms of the learners’ academic performance, it seemed as if they struggled to perform well academically prior to the literacy intervention. During the secondary school’s General Education Training and Staff Management Team meeting, it was reported that *“out of 113 Grade 10 learners... one managed to get a pass”* (minutes of the meeting, 7 May 2009, line 21). One of the participating teachers made the comment that before the literacy intervention *“I was just allocating marks. Uhm... I was just giving them one, one, one because they don’t deserve it”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant C, lines 79-80).

After the literacy intervention, the learners’ academic performance in English reportedly improved. One of the participating teachers commented that *“there was a change. The marks have improved”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant F, line 74). This indicates that the learners demonstrated some improvement with regard to their academic achievement in English. One of the learners also scored full marks for an English comprehension homework activity at the time, as depicted in Figure 4.1.

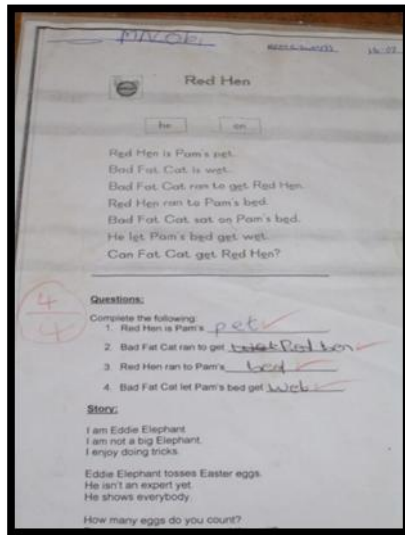


Figure 4.1: A learner achieving full marks for an English comprehension homework activity (August 2010)

I noted that the learners' English marks had improved after an informal conversational interview with one of the participating teachers from the school:

"The learners' marks have also improved" (Field notes, line 430, August 2010).

Learners' improved reading skills seemed to in turn influence their classroom participation. One of the participating teachers commented that *"the learners find it sometimes difficult to concentrate in the formal classroom, but now with the programme they feel that they are learning so they concentrate more. They realise that they are helping themselves; we use the programme as reward at the end of the period so they now ... behave themselves"* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant C, lines 229-34).

After implementation of the literacy intervention, teachers reported that learners' reading abilities improved (*"A lot of improvement. They can now read and spell. They said some of them will try. Then they realise that they can do it."* Post-intervention FGD, Participant C, lines 46-48). I also commented in my field notes on the learners' improved participation during a post-intervention classroom observation:

“They talked about the play; they used more vocabulary... even difficult words. The learners understood the work and interacted with the teacher. The learners were able to read the play; they read it well” (Field notes, lines 445-48, August 2010).

4.2.2 Theme 2: Reading culture in the classroom system

This theme focuses on the way in which reading culture was observed within the classroom system. Teachers indicated strategies and support within the classroom structure that could ensure that learners engage in reading activities, constituting a classroom reading culture. The following sub-themes emerged: teachers’ teaching and learning practices in the classroom, learners’ learning behaviour in the classroom, and classroom resources and reading culture.

4.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Teachers’ teaching and learning practices in the classroom

In this sub-theme, I explain how secondary school teachers’ teaching practices were limited by learners’ inability to read. Furthermore, I explain barriers to reading because of diversity of languages.

CATEGORY: 2.1.1 SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS’ INABILITY TO READ AS A BARRIER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

At pre-intervention, teachers expressed the view that they were limited in their teaching practices as many of the learners in the rural secondary school were unable to read. One of the participants commented, “*We first need to help the learners to read*” (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, line 87.) Thus, learners’ inability to read appeared to serve as a barrier for teachers’ teaching. Consequently, teachers in the selected school were required to teach the learners to read, which should typically not form part of secondary school teachers’ responsibilities.

One of the participating teachers stated that “if the learners cannot read, we need to help them” (Post-intervention FGD, Participant F, lines 129-130). Another teacher added, “I say, somebody has spoken about the foundation phase. It is very important, now even if I motivate the learners and they are willing, I cannot do everything – I cannot start with writing, reading even. There is no time; I have to follow the pace set” (Post-intervention FGD, Participant D, lines 130-33). Another

teacher agreed that learners' improved reading meant changes in the way she could teach them: "... also with distributed books especially for comprehension. I realise there is a bit of an improvement, because if I had to do comprehension exercises they can now go at their own pace" (Post-intervention FGD, Participant F, lines 171-73).

At pre-intervention, the participating teachers at the secondary school felt that they had inadequate training to teach the learners to read: "*It is difficult for a teacher who does not teach English to teach them the basics*" (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, lines 113-14). Teachers felt that primarily, reading had to be addressed in the foundation phase, rather than in secondary schools. One of the teachers remarked that "*I think this problem start from the foundation phase and for us to correct it is very difficult*" (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant E, lines 101-102). At post-intervention, the teachers were pleased with the progress that the learners had made with regard to their reading abilities: "*A lot of improvement ... They can read and spell*" (Post-intervention FGD, Participant C, line 46). Thus, the literacy intervention programme provided the teachers with sufficient training to teach learners to read.

CATEGORY 2.1.2: BARRIERS TO READING BECAUSE OF LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

Language problems seemed to be another influencing factor regarding the participating teachers' teaching and learning practices. During pre-intervention discussions, some of the teachers acknowledged that teaching learners was sometimes difficult because of language barriers. It was established that not all the learners could speak English, and as the school is an English-medium school, this proved to be problematic: "*...but, there are some who cannot understand a single sentence in English. So if you give them anything to do, they don't*" (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, lines 66-67). This implies that the teachers often had to translate the work and instructions to the learners in their mother tongue. However, as some of the teachers at the selected school did not speak SiSwati, this created a language barrier for both teachers and learners. One teacher commented that "*I don't even speak SiSwati*" (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, line 46).

Teachers' inability to communicate with learners because of language differences thus appeared to have a negative effect on teachers' ability to create and preserve a reading culture in the classroom. Several teaching strategies were identified at pre-intervention, which teachers reportedly used to enable a reading culture in classrooms in the selected school after the discussions. In this regard, one teacher stated that *"sometimes I used it [i.e. teaching strategies] for homework or I just adjust the programme and they help themselves among one another"* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant F, lines 34-35). The specific teacher made use of peer teaching as a teaching strategy to use the intervention programme. Therefore, she allowed the learners to work together in teams on the literacy intervention programme's activities, allowing them to help each other find the answers.

Another teacher employed a similar teaching strategy by using extracts from textbooks and allowing learners to share this among themselves in order to read out loud. As she noted, *"What I am doing now is just follow these extracts and I ask one of the students to read it in front of them"* (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant A, lines 160-61). Another teacher used a teaching strategy in which she allowed learners to ask her if they did not understand a word that they were reading (*"If they come up with a difficult word they must come and ask for help"*) (Post-intervention FGD, Participant F, lines 70-71).

4.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Learners' learning behaviour in the classroom

In this sub-theme, I describe how learners' initial inactivity in class changed into becoming more participatory, and how improved reading skills led to better academic achievement. Initially, teachers reported that learners did not actively participate in classroom activities. One of the teachers stated, *"I think it is a negative attitude"* (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, line 55). During the two pre-intervention classroom observations, I also commented in my field notes that the learners did not really participate in reading activities in the classroom: *"Learners do not participate (read) in the class"* (researcher journal, line 30).

However, after the literacy intervention, the learners appeared to be more engaged and participated more actively in classroom activities. I noted this change in their participation in classroom activities in the following manner:

“I immediately noticed that some of the learners had textbooks, and they were lip reading along with one of the students who was reading aloud” (Field notes, lines 206-208, August 2010).

Before the literacy intervention, learners did not seem to be engaging (academically) with learning in the classrooms. One participant commented that “*some of them are not even interested in learning*” (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, line 52). At post-intervention, however, I noted some changes. I made the following comments in my field notes and researcher journal related to some of the identified changes with regard to learners’ skills development and academic performance:

- “... that he has seen improvement in his math classes” (Field notes, line 212, August 2010).
- “The learners were learning faster and they showed some improvement in regard to their spelling abilities. The teachers also felt that the programme was implemented at the correct developmental age” (Field notes, lines 226-28, August 2010).
- “The learners showed an overall improvement in their reading, writing, and spelling abilities” (Field notes, lines 266-67, August 2010).
- “The sounding of the alphabet helped the learners to read difficult words, which they could not read before. The HOD also reported that she saw an improvement in the learners’ scripts” (Field notes, lines 269-71, August 2010).
- “Daar is ‘n verbetering in die leerders se leesvermoëns (hulle lip lees en lees meer vlot³⁹)” (Field notes, line 309, August 2010).
- “The learners were amazing; they gave a demonstration of the programme and everybody participated” (researcher journal, lines 114-15, August 2010).

³⁹ The English translation of this field note entry: “There is an improvement in the learners’ reading abilities (they lip read and read more fluently)”.

- “What stood out for me is that the learners could read more now than they were able to previously” (researcher journal, lines 126-28, August 2010)

The identified changes suggest that the learners’ academic achievement improved (English and Mathematics) after the intervention. Furthermore, learners also progressed in terms of their reading, spelling, and reading skills.

4.2.2.3 *Sub-theme 2.3: Classroom resources and reading culture*

In this sub-theme, I explain how rural secondary school teachers demonstrated their existing use of sparse classroom resources at post-intervention.

CATEGORY 2.3.1 PRE-INTERVENTION USE OF CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR READING

A lack of adequate resources such as reading books and textbooks to enrich a reading culture was apparent at the rural secondary school prior to implementation of the intervention. The participating teachers felt that they needed textbooks and resources in order to motivate the learners to read. In this regard I noted that teachers perceived the lack of textbooks as influencing the learners’ motivation to read:

“... however, she thinks that more books are needed in order to motivate the learners to read” (Field notes, lines 61-62, May 2009).

Although resources such as textbooks and reading books were available in the school, they appeared to be limited. Figure 4.2 shows a typical classroom at the participating school.

The apparent limitations were confirmed by a participant who noted the following: “*We do not have a lot of textbooks and storybooks*” (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant A, line 73). Initially, when the study commenced, the learners had, for example, to share four textbooks per class:

“Limited resources available (textbooks – only four per class)” (Field notes, lines 72-73, May 2009).



Figure 4.2: A typical classroom at the rural secondary school (May 2009)

During my pre-intervention classroom observations, I noted that the selected school had some posters available in the classrooms. Examples of such posters are depicted in Figure 4.3.



Figure 4.3: Few posters available in the school (May 2009)

Other resources used in one of the classrooms at pre-intervention included an overhead projector and transparencies (see Figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4: Use of an overhead projector and transparencies (May 2009)

CATEGORY 2.3.2: POST-INTERVENTION USE OF CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR READING

Upon our return for the post-intervention field visit, the school had received new textbooks (see Figure 4.5). During the post-intervention classroom observations, I also noticed that the learners were participating in classroom activities. It is likely that the availability of textbooks had a positive impact on the learners' classroom participation: *"The learners pay more attention, the learners followed in their books"* (Field notes, lines 450-51, August 2010).

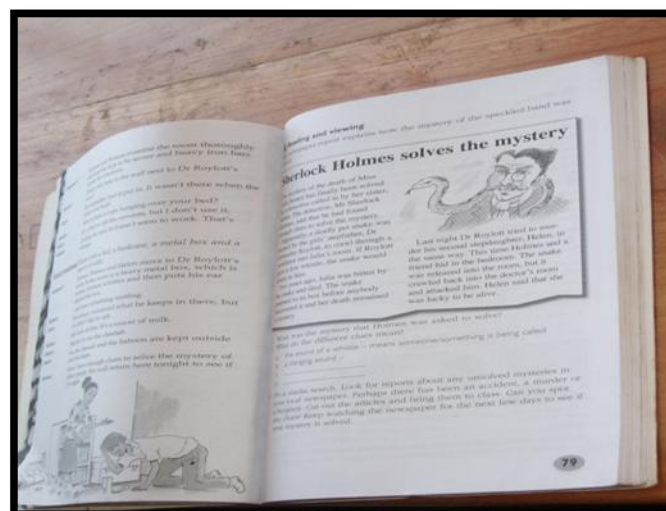


Figure 4.5: Classroom resource: new textbooks (August 2010)

During the implementation of the first phase of the literacy intervention, phonics posters and charts (see Figures 3.2 to 3.4) were distributed in the selected secondary school.

Distribution of alphabet chart posters and alphabet charts appeared to have a constructive influence on the use of classroom resources, with teachers reportedly using these materials in their classrooms at post-intervention. One of the participating teachers explained as follows: *“They look at the picture and then they learn by looking at the picture. They don’t forget the information”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant G, lines 22-23).

Lastly, the participating teachers relied on the use of a chalkboard as a teaching resource to foster a reading culture in the learners (see Figure 4.6). One of the participating teachers stated that *“I explain the meaning of the words, then write on the chalkboard and the learners will copy it into their books”* (Post-intervention FGD, Participant C, line 126).

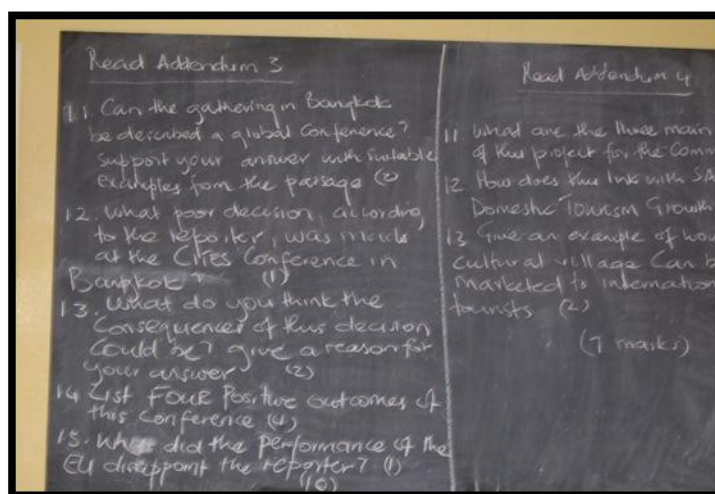


Figure 4.6: Use of the chalkboard (May 2009)

4.2.3 Theme 3: Reading culture in the school system

Within this theme, I identified two sub-themes, namely (1) the library and reading culture in a rural secondary school, and (2) school structures and reading culture.

4.2.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Library and reading culture in a rural secondary school

In this sub-theme, I discuss learners' attitudes towards reading and using the library in a rural secondary school. Furthermore, I highlight some changes identified after the implementation of the literacy intervention programme.

Learners from the participating school initially displayed a negative attitude towards using the library. This was evident in the fact that they were not using the library at the time. I noted in my field notes that:

"Media are currently not being used" (Field notes, lines 57-58, May 2009).

During the school's General Education Training and Staff Management Team meeting of 21 May 2009, the following point was raised (under the heading of "Challenges") for upgrading the library: *"Improvement of the library (it should be equipped)"*. In the same meeting, the need for a reading culture was identified and captured as "Reading Culture" (Minutes of meeting, 21 May 2009). From Figure 4.7 it appears that the library had more books when we returned to the school for the post-intervention field visit. The shortage of available books, therefore, could have influenced the learners' initial lack of accessing books in the library.

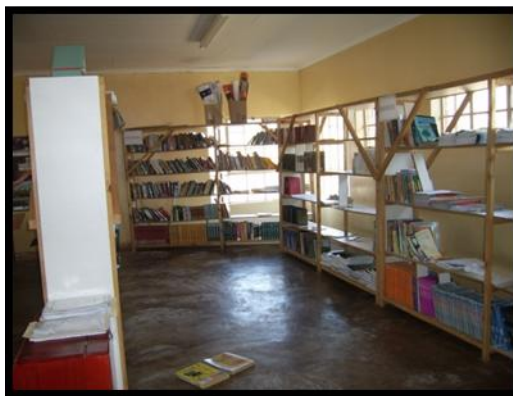


Figure 4.7: Library equipped with books and shelves (August 2010)

Post-intervention, learners reportedly used the library more often, implying change in their reading behaviour. One teacher commented on the library usage during the post-intervention focus-group discussion: *"The learners are using the library"* (Post-

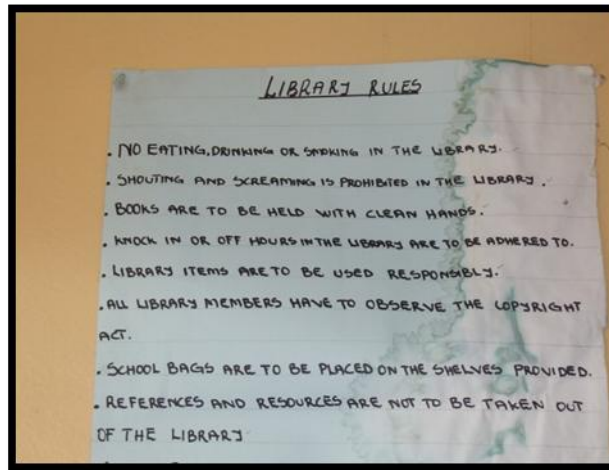


Figure 4.9: Newly implemented library rules (August 2010)

4.2.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: School structures and reading culture

During pre-intervention focus-group discussions, the participating teachers identified the lack of a reading culture at the school as follows: *“Even reading is not enforced in the school, it is not reinforced”* (Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant F, line 77). In addition, as stated, at pre-intervention the participating teachers were concerned about the learners not speaking English.

Teachers often mentioned that the learners displayed little motivation to use English at all. One participant commented that *“if the learners cannot speak or write English, so how are they supposed to read it?”* (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant A, lines 71-72). As this discussion continued, the teachers commented that they thought the learners struggled with reading, writing, and speaking English at the time (*“I think it is English as a whole – reading, writing, and speaking”*, Pre-intervention FGD 2, Participant B, line 71). Another teacher mentioned that reading in particular was a problem at the school: *“We have to start with reading”* (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant A, line 71).

At pre-intervention, the school identified the need for a formal reading period. One of the teachers indicated that *“we can discuss a time where the whole school can read”* (Pre-intervention FGD 1, Participant B, line 93). The participating school was also later mandated by a Department of Basic Education circular to implement a formal

reading period. As a result, the school implemented a formal reading period during the time of this study. In accordance with policy requirements, the formal reading period established a set time and opportunity for the learners to read more, thereby also maintaining and implementing a reading culture at the selected school.

As suggested by the teachers from the rural secondary school, two rural neighbouring primary schools were invited to participate in the later stages of the literacy intervention programme. Thus, the secondary school made use of joint capacity development in order to expand a reading culture in the community. Figures 4.10 and 4.11 show the two neighbouring primary schools that later became involved.



Figure 4.10: Neighbouring Primary School A: Collaboration to extend a reading culture into the community (August 2010)



Figure 4.11: Neighbouring Primary School B (August 2010)

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I reported on the results obtained through thematic analysis in terms of identified themes and sub-themes. The main themes and sub-themes were explained and supported by presenting direct quotations, visual images and extracts from my researcher journal and field notes.

In Chapter 5, I interpret the results of the study in the context of existing literature and my conceptual framework, thereby presenting the findings of the study. Furthermore, I explore and report on possible limitations of this study, and make some recommendations flowing from the study.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I commence with literature control to answer the research questions. Furthermore, I discuss the limitations and contributions of the study. I conclude the chapter with recommendations for further research, practice and training.

5.2 Literature control

In order to substantiate my findings, I consulted the literature as summarised and presented in Table 5.1. After presenting the overview, I discuss ideas surrounding reading culture.

Table 5.1:
Themes and literature review

Theme 1 Reading culture in the rural secondary school learners' system		
Author and year	Existing knowledge	Interpretative discussion
Sub-theme 1.1: Learners' motivated attitudes towards reading		Categories: 1.1.1 Secondary school learners' reading motivation and reading ability pre-intervention. 1.1.2 Secondary school learners' reading motivation and reading ability post-intervention
McKool, 2002	By the time learners reach secondary school, the majority of children rarely read for leisure.	In this study, secondary school learners initially displayed a negative attitude towards reading.
Asraf and Ahmad, 2003	Motivating learners with ineffective reading skills to read can be challenging.	In this study, it was found that poor reading ability not only leads to low motivation, but also to creating reading discouragement.
Denton, Wexler, Vaughn, and Bryan, 2008	Learners will only enjoy reading if they have the ability to read.	In this study, it was important for the learners to acquire basic reading skills before the focus could be shifted solely to reading motivation.
Blank, 2006; Roberts,	The older the learners are the	In this study, learners' reading

Torgesen, Boardman, and Scammacca, 2008	more challenging it becomes to motivate them to read.	abilities influenced their reading attitudes and motivation.
Roberts, Torgesen, Boardman, and Scammacca, 2008	Learners' attitudes towards reading and the amount of time they will spend on reading activities will influence the outcome of a reading programme.	Therefore, in this study, the success of the literacy intervention programme was also dependent on the learners' attitudes towards reading.
Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner, 2002	Even readers with the strongest cognitive skills may not spend a large amount of time reading if they are not motivated to read.	Reading motivation is therefore in this study important to ensure that learners who are able to read, read extensively and create a reading culture.
Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, and Perenclevich, 2004	Reading is an effortful activity that frequently involves choice; therefore, motivation is fundamental to reading engagement.	Reading motivation is fundamental to ensuring a reading culture. The challenge subsequently lies in motivating learners with ineffective reading skills to read, since they often lack the experience and confidence to do so.
Reutzel and Cooter, 2004; Bharuthram, 2012	Reading difficulties in secondary school do not only become problematic as the learners struggle with content reading, they also influence learners' confidence and severely limit their academic progress.	In this study I found that difficulty with reading influences learners' confidence negatively and limits their academic progress.
Wigfield and Guthrie, 1999	Individuals with a high intrinsic motivation are likely to read more frequently and report higher incidences of reading.	Intrinsic motivation was found to be important in ensuring that learners read more and therefore create a reading culture.
Sub-theme 1.2: Learners' reading abilities		
Miller, 2012	Learners are inclined to read three times less if they have reading problems.	In this study it was found that if learners struggle to read, they tend to read less or not at all.
Mullis, Martin, Kennedy, and Foy, 2007	The <i>IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Study in Primary Schools in 40 Countries</i> report indicates that South Africa's Grade 4 learners have the poorest reading self-concept.	In this study, it was evident that if learners struggle to read, their self-concept is influenced negatively.
Roberts, Torgesen, Boardman, and Scammacca, 2008	Learners who struggle to read in secondary school are victims of poor early reading instruction.	Reading instruction is important in secondary school, and therefore this reading intervention programme is

		focused on basic reading instruction in the form of phonetics.
Petursdottir, Mc Master, McComas, Bradfield, Branganza & Rodriquez, 2009; Bharuthram, 2012	Reading is an important skill.	In this study, I also established the importance of reading as a skill used by learners in school in order to be able to create and maintain a reading culture.
McNamare, 2009; Quirk, 2008; Bharuthram, 2012	Learners are confronted with textbook material on a daily basis.	Therefore, learners face reading challenges on a daily basis as they have to use textbooks and reading material in the secondary school.
Schumm and Arguelles, 2006; Reutzel and Cooter, 2004	Reading problems can have direct post-school negative effects, including adult substance abuse, higher likelihood of unemployment and lower probability of a good salary income, and even increased chances for imprisonment.	Reading is important not only in school, but for future opportunities.
UNESCO, 2002	South African families often do not read for relaxation.	Reading is neglected in families, and therefore the family system does not provide the necessary support to encourage a reading culture.
Department of Basic Education, 2008	Reading forms part of nation building.	At a national level, reading forms part of nation building, and consequently it influences the national-level system.
Venter and Howie, 2008	South Africa is performing lower than the expected assessment standards.	Reading remains a problem at both national and international level. It is a universal problem.
Miller, 2010	Learners read more if they are equipped with reading skills.	Learners have to be equipped with basic reading skills in order to ensure that they read more and thus create a reading culture.
McKool, 2002	Learners usually start their schooling career with a positive attitude towards reading.	Why does learners' love for reading decline once they get older? Learners' negative attitudes towards reading influence their ability to maintain and implement a reading culture. The teacher system and parents/caregivers system also influence learners' attitude.
Asraf and Ahmad, 2003	Motivating older learners to read becomes challenging.	Older learners need to be motivated to read. Motivation is

		very important. Teacher system and learner/family system can influence the learners' motivation to read.
Blank, 2006	Learners must take responsibility for their reading skill development.	The learner system is therefore responsible for reading on a regular basis.
Asraf and Ahmad, 2003	Research suggests that the most effective way to aid learners in increasing their overall language proficiency is to encourage them to read extensively.	Reading culture leads to overall language proficiency.
Jacobs, 2002	The difference between primary and secondary school reading is the difference between learning to read and using reading to learn.	Reading skills should have been acquired in primary school to ensure that learners are not only able to read but also able to use their reading skills to learn.
Reutzel and Cooter, 2004	Reading at a much faster rate is also required from a secondary school learner.	Secondary school learners have to read faster to keep up with the amount of work given.
Bharuthram, 2012	Secondary school learners are expected to use reading skills to analyse, critique, evaluate, and synthesise given text.	The learners will not be able to demonstrate advanced reading skills if they cannot demonstrate basic reading skills.
Biancarnosa and Snow, 2006; Tanum, 2005	Secondary school learners often find it difficult to understand what they read because of underdeveloped reading strategies.	Underdeveloped reading strategies will influence learners' reading comprehension.
Slavin, Cheung, Groff, and Lake, 2008; Bharuthram, 2012	Secondary school learners with reading problems become less likely to complete matric.	Reading abilities influence learners' school career and the level (grade) of schooling they will complete. Thus, it influences their tertiary training and study opportunities. Reading at a tertiary level becomes even more challenging as learners have to read autonomously.

Theme 2 Reading culture in the rural secondary school classroom system		
Author and year	Existing knowledge	Interpretative discussion
Sub-theme 2.1: Learners' motivated attitudes towards		Categories: 2.1.1 Secondary school learners' inability to

reading		read as a barrier to secondary school teachers. 2.1.2 Barriers to reading because of language diversity.
Prinsloo, 2009	Learners who struggle to read in secondary school are victims of poor early reading instruction.	Reading skills are taught in Grades 1 to 3. Therefore, secondary school teachers do not receive training in teaching reading skills.
Bharuthram, 2012	Teachers in secondary school do not receive the necessary training in literacy development.	Teachers' learning and teaching practices are influenced by the fact that they lack training in teaching learners to read.
Bharuthram, 2012	Not all secondary school learners are illiterate – high numbers struggle to read.	Teachers need strategies to help learners improve their reading skills
Van Staden, Howie, and Denton 2008	Teachers need to consult available options to assist secondary school readers in learning to read.	To a large extent it becomes the teacher's responsibility to assist the learners in learning to read. Teachers must come up with solutions such as the literacy intervention programme.
Meganathan, 2009	Rural schools are faced with challenges in terms of teacher proficiency and training.	Rural schools are at a disadvantage as they do not get the necessary support from the government (South African system).
Department of Education, 2008	Sixty per cent of learners could not read at the accepted level for their grade. This result was to a certain extent ascribed to the fact that teachers beyond the first two grades of primary school were inadequately trained to teach basic reading.	As a result, teachers do not necessarily have the skills or knowledge at their disposal for assisting learners who struggle to read.
Klapwijk, 2012	Research shows that in order for teachers to make sustainable changes to their instructional methods, new implementations should be guided by specific principles and essentially have to provide substantiation that the methods work.	The literacy intervention programme served the purpose of a guided method given to the teachers to address literacy needs (reading culture).
Van Staden and Howie, 2008	Classroom instruction used when teaching reading should be one of the main focus areas in order to prevent reading problems and must also be the central focus for change.	Teachers might need guidance with regard to classroom instruction when teaching reading.

Department of Education, 2008	Teachers often believe that according to Curriculum 2005 and the National Curriculum Statement they merely have to <i>facilitate</i> the reading process rather than directly <i>teach</i> reading.	Teachers did not teach reading, they rather facilitated reading. Therefore, the teacher system relied on the learner system to ensure a reading culture. The learners became responsible themselves to acquire the necessary reading skills.
Department of Education, 2008	Teachers are now required to develop their own reading materials and reading programmes, which may further exacerbate the situation.	A literacy intervention programme can help the teachers as it addresses this need.
Sub-theme 2.2: Learners' learning behaviour in the classroom		
Horn 2002; Bharuthram, 2012	Many Grade 12 learners in South Africa read at a Grade 4 level.	Secondary school learners do not receive training in reading, therefore they cannot read.
Schumm and Arguelles, 2006; Reutzel and Cooter, 2004	Learners' inability to read influences their opportunities for future training.	Learners who read poorly will have fewer chances to advance in their careers, therefore influencing the community system. The pattern is likely to be repeated when they have children.
Sub-theme 2.3: Classroom resources and reading culture in a rural secondary school		Categories 2.3.1 Pre-intervention use of classroom resources for reading. 2.3.2 Post-intervention use of classroom resources for reading.
Mullis, Martin, Kennedy, & Foy, 2007	The availability of library resources is strongly associated with positive reading habits.	Therefore, if the learners have resources available, they read more.
Mullis, Martin, Kennedy, & Foy, 2007	Textbooks and reading series are the reading materials generally used internationally to teach reading skills.	In order to teach reading skills, textbooks and reading sources are needed. It is essential that the school should provide the necessary resources to enable and maintain a reading culture.
The Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005	The lack of teaching aids is playing a role in the quality of education given to learners. These aids are often used as means of explaining concepts or information to learners in a comprehensible, easy-to-understand approach.	The teachers had limited resources available in the school. This can influence the quality of education given at the school.
Zuze and Reddy, 2011	Schools that can offer adequate facilities will attract good-quality teachers. Furthermore, having	The school system is influenced by the availability of quality and adequate facilities.

	adequate resources can make up for inadequate teaching or tutoring.	
Zuze and Reddy, 2011	The assumption can be made that resources for everyday teaching will lead to an improvement in learners' school attendance.	Subsequently, school attendance (school system) will have a direct positive impact on learners' motivation (learner system) to learn and read.
Bhorat and Oosthuizen, 2006	Physical learning infrastructure is directly measured through the non-standard classroom and specialist classroom learner ratios.	Classroom size influences the classroom system and the implementation of a reading culture.
Calitz, 2006	Research indicates that between 15 and 17 learners per classroom are most favourable. A smaller number of learners may increase their achievements, narrow the achievement gap between African and white learners, increase learning motivation, and compensate for poor school attendance.	South Africa (as a system) does not have sufficient resources to implement smaller classrooms.

Theme 3 Reading culture in the rural secondary school system		
Author and year	Existing knowledge	Interpretative discussion
Sub-theme 3.1: Library and reading culture		
Norton, 2003	The effective functioning of a school library is essential to encourage reading.	The school's library should be fully functioning in order to ensure a reading culture.
Norton, 2003	A reading culture is created where learners value books for entertainment and information, and see books as a catalyst for change in their own lives and communities.	Learners have to value books in order to create a change in the learner system (their lives) and the community system.
Sadidharan and Madasamy, 2003	Not even the best-furnished village library will serve any purpose in the absence of communication.	Again, the teacher system, learner system and school system are dependent on each other to function.
Oakes and Saunders, 2002	The availability of textbooks and library resources is strongly associated with academic	Libraries (school system) are important to ensure academic achievement.

	achievement.	
Norton, 2003	Research indicates that many people consider libraries that function effectively as the most important component of any programme to encourage reading.	Libraries (school system) are important to encouraging a reading culture at the school.
Library Association, 2000	Libraries empower pupils, not only by supporting the teaching and learning in the school, but by giving them the freedom to make their own choices about reading and learning experiences.	Libraries (school system) can empower learners.
Celano and Neuman, 2001	Libraries, both school and public, have to increase and should encourage a lifelong learning process.	Libraries can influence the community system.
Machet and Wessels, 2006	In rural communities and developing countries where a reading culture has to be established, homes often have few or no books, families may not have funds to buy books, bookshops are often non-existent, public libraries are not always available and houses may be undersized and often without electricity.	The implementation and sustainability of a reading culture in the community, school, and learner system are largely dependent on a library or the availability of textbooks.
Norton, 2003	There is a demand for books in rural areas that is both appropriate and affordable. The lack of sufficient distribution of books in rural areas directly influences the availability of books. Lastly, the affordability of books is an issue, since people living in rural areas are often extremely poor. This makes it even more challenging for these communities to buy books.	Books are generally not readily available in rural areas.
Sub-theme 3.2: School structures and reading culture		
McEwan, 2002	The community in collaboration with the school system needs to make resources available.	The community system and parent system play a role in order to ensure that the parents and learners can reinforce their reading activities on a regular basis. The support of parents and the community is necessary to enhance a reading culture that will not only influence the

		school system, but also the community system.
Gardiner, 2008	Rural school settings still experience various challenges regardless of their potential.	Socio-economic conditions such as poverty, job redundancy, the lack of water, transportation, and electricity can influence the quality of education available.
Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005	The quality of education is influenced by the lack of teaching resources available to distribute among learners.	Teachers in rural schools have to use different strategies to adapt to their rural-setting circumstances (address lack of resources).
Wienand, 2011	The lack of appropriate facilities and infrastructures, access to textbooks and resources, lack of qualified teachers, good-quality leadership, and safety within and around schools, as well as overcrowded classrooms and difficulty in discipline, are contributing learning barriers.	Learning barriers will also influence /link to reading barriers.
Blank, 2006 ; Denton, Wexler, Vaughn, and Bryan, 2008	Factors contributing to poor reading skills include learners watching too much television, teachers being overburdened, books not being seen as “fun” and thereby not being able to compete with high-tech devices, and the current teaching methods used to teach reading skills.	Influencing factors were taken into account when determining why learners read poorly.
Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005	Problems between rural schools and community members have been identified. Learners in rural school settings may be less interested in school and less motivated to attend it.	The rural community system does not necessarily support the school/learner system, as the parents expect the learners to focus on domestic tasks rather than on their school work.
Mulkeen and Chen, 2008	Schooling can also be considered a financial burden by parents or caregivers, as it often requires them to buy textbooks, stationery and uniforms. Parents or caregivers in rural settings may attach a lower value to schooling as they themselves often have received little formal education.	The community system is influenced by socio-economic disadvantages such as a lack of finances. This in turn influences the parents’ motivation to support the school system and motivate the learners to read.
Taylor and Mulhall, 2001; Wessels, 2010; Bharuthram, 2012	Even when parents or caregivers value schooling, they are likely to be unable to provide the needed support to	The community system therefore influences the learner system by not providing the needed educational support to

	help their children with homework or other educational tasks. Furthermore, homes in rural areas are typically ill equipped to meet the educational needs of learners and may often lack essentials such as electricity, not to mention the “luxury” of books to read.	the learners, such as assisting with homework.
Prinsloo, 2009	The lack of mentoring and support infrastructures, more specifically those involving curriculum advisers and district officials, may also influence the quality of teaching given to learners.	The school system needs support from the South African system (Government system).

5.2.1 Supporting existing knowledge regarding reading culture

Like other scholars, I have found that reading is a crucial skill that learners employ on a daily basis (Reutzel & Cooter, 2004; McNamare, 2009; Quirk, 2008; Bharuthram, 2012). They have to study textbooks, interpret worksheets, and understand written instructions. It was evident in the data that reading is imperative as it improves learners’ overall language abilities and therefore their ability to read, write, and speak (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003). Similar to the conclusions reached by others (Horn in Bharuthram, 2012), the findings in this study dispute the assumption that secondary school learners have already acquired basic reading skills.

As reading is an effortful activity, the amount of time that secondary school learners spend on reading often declines when compared to that spent by learners in primary schools (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perenclevich, 2004; Masgoret, Bernaus, & Gardner, 2002; Roberts, Torgesen, Boardman, & Scammacca, 2008). In this study, I found that secondary school learners read more as soon as they have received learning support to read and therefore feel confident in their ability to read. Secondary school learners who struggle to read, typically read even less than their peers who do not struggle with reading. Thus, Miller (2012) and Denton, Wexler, Vaughn, and Bryan (2008) conclude that learners will only read if they enjoy reading.

I also found that motivating secondary school learners to read is challenging (Asraf & Ahmad, 2003; McKool, 2007; Roberts et al., 2008). Secondary school learners often

do not want to read for leisure or after school (McKool, 2007). I did, however, find that learners made use of the library more to borrow books – which they may have used for more leisure reading. This deserves further exploration though. Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2002) add that even learners with the ability to perform well academically still need motivation to read.

Findings of this study indicate that secondary school learners who are unable to read well are often victims of poor reading instruction. These learners typically struggle to comprehend what they are reading (Tanum, 2005; Bharuthram, 2012). Furthermore, secondary school learners who struggle to read are less likely to complete their schooling career (Slavin, Cheung, Groff, & Lake, 2008; Bharuthram, 2012). Reading in secondary school becomes more challenging as secondary school learners are expected to read at a faster pace (Reutzel & Cooter, 2004). Bharuthram (2012) adds that secondary school learners often have to demonstrate more advanced reading skills (text analysis, critiquing, evaluation, synthesis).

In concurrence with those of the Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005), my findings indicate that a lack of resources will influence the quality of education provided. In this study, I found that the availability of resources at the selected school influenced the reading culture at the school. Whereas teachers initially only had a handful of textbooks to use for teaching a language, they were able to employ more innovative strategies for supporting learners to read after more textbooks had been distributed. Furthermore, the availability of adequate resources could make up for inadequate teacher training and also improve learners' school attendance (Zuze & Reddy, 2011). Lastly, Oakes and Saunders (2002) remark that the availability of resources will influence academic achievement, a fact that this study could only underscore.

Moreover, the findings of this study further indicated that the availability of adequate library resources is strongly associated with good reading habits (Norton, 2003). Norton (2003) adds that the effective functioning of a library is an essential element in ensuring reading motivation among learners. However, even if a library functions well, it is still reliant on proper communication with learners. Learners therefore have to be informed of what is available at the library for them to read, and how to take out and return books (Sadidharan & Madasamy, 2003).

Like Bharuthram (2012), I found that secondary school teachers often do not receive the necessary literacy training to teach secondary school learners to read. Teachers are then expected to consult available literature, resources, and teaching aids to acquire the necessary literacy training in order to assist learners to read **Invalid source specified..** Subsequently, learners will not read well due to poor teaching instruction (Department of Basic Education, 2011), among other reasons.

5.3 Addressing the research questions

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the nature of a reading culture in a rural secondary school before and after a literacy intervention. The particular objective was to examine the extent to which a literacy intervention with teachers could inform a reading culture at the participating school (or not). In this way, together with a research team, I worked in partnership with the selected teacher-participants to develop a better understanding of the reading culture in the participating school.

In this section, I revisit the secondary research questions before addressing the primary research question namely: To what extent did a literacy intervention with teachers in a rural secondary school inform the reading culture in the school?

5.3.1 Secondary question 1: How do teachers contribute to the reading culture in a rural secondary school before and after a literacy intervention?

Before the literacy intervention, the participating teachers expressed the view that the use of an additional language (English) as language of learning and teaching was a negative factor with regard to the reading culture. They were furthermore of the opinion that communication between them and the learners were stymied, which influenced discussions around reading negatively. The teachers also expressed feelings of incompetence in teaching learners how to read, since training in literacy skills did not form part of their Further Education and Training Phase programmes. These feelings exacerbated a sense of frustration among the teachers because the secondary school learners were not able to read at the grade-appropriate level. Participating teachers viewed this inability to read as a further barrier to promoting a reading culture in classrooms. Learners' lack of engagement also appeared to have

a negative influence on teachers' attitudes towards them. Despite all these obstacles, the teachers were still eager to acquire the knowledge and skills for enabling them to support learners in reading. This was evidenced in the teachers' efforts to make best use of the limited, available resources to motivate reading (for example by sharing four textbooks among learners in one reading period).

After the literacy intervention, teachers not only expressed confidence in their abilities to teach secondary school learners how to read, but were also indeed able to assist learners in honing their reading skills. Some of the reading strategies teachers used at post-intervention were to implement literacy intervention activities such as homework exercises, introducing peer teaching during reading, using extracts from textbooks to create opportunities for learners to read aloud during class time, and allowing learners to ask for guidance if they were not able to understand texts.

When the former Department of Education supplied more textbooks to the school, the teachers used these to great effect during reading classes. As learners became more engaged during reading activities, teachers also responded positively towards the learners by expressing their pride in the learners' progress. Teachers were also central in playing a role to implement reading periods with learners – as stipulated by the principal in response to a Department of Education national initiative. Teachers also contributed to an expanded reading culture by initiating a partnership with fellow teachers in “feeder” primary schools.

5.3.2 Secondary question 2: How do learners contribute to the reading culture in a rural secondary school before and after a literacy intervention?

As did the participating teachers *before* the literacy intervention, the learners also experienced language barriers because of the prominence of English in the school. This seemed to be a significant influencing factor in determining learners' contribution to a reading culture. As most of the learners were not proficient in English, they found it difficult to communicate in this additional language and consequently to perform well academically. The learners' lack of proficiency in English thus had a detrimental effect on their ability to contribute constructively to a reading culture in the school.

A major rationale for the literacy intervention was the fact that participating teachers reported on the inability of the rural secondary school learners to read (inadequate reading abilities). It was apparent that the secondary school learners lacked motivation to read, as was evident in their negative attitudes (distraction, and lack of interest and engagement) towards reading in order to learn. Besides learners' inability to read, their lack of reading motivation was exacerbated by factors such as a lack of reading resources (textbooks, library books) and teachers' lack of training in literacy guidance (as discussed in 5.3.1).

After the literacy intervention, teachers reported an overall improvement in the learners' language abilities. According to the teachers, the improved language abilities were evident not only in more active participation during classes, but also in the learners' confidence to read (during classes, and borrowing from the library). Teachers reported that learners' academic achievement (in both Mathematics and English) was also positively impacted on – plausibly because of more reading confidence and the ability to read with comprehension for learning.

5.3.3 Secondary question 3: How do the school structures in a rural secondary school reflect a reading culture before and after the literacy intervention?

At both *pre-* and *post-intervention*, the selected school had limited resources and was isolated from support functions such as teacher training and service provision by the former Department of Education.

Before the literacy intervention, the school had a minimally resourced library that was little used by learners. A particular teacher was tasked with managing the library, which lacked proper operating procedures (logbook, lending procedures, library rules). The discussions of the school leadership often centred on concern about learners' inability to read, which the leadership attempted to remedy by requesting, advocating and supporting initiatives to promote reading in the school.

The *post-intervention* reading culture scenario was influenced positively by education system actions. In this regard, two initiatives by the former Department of Education enriched the reading culture (irrespective of the presence or absence of the literacy intervention). In the first instance, a reading period was indicated nationally for

schools. Secondly, the schools received many English textbooks for language-class instruction. The school principal was key in implementing these education sector initiatives in partnership with teachers (as discussed in 5.3.1).

After the literacy intervention, the library seemed to be accessed more frequently by learners, as was reported by teachers and indicated in the logbook. In addition, the management of the library changed to include a logbook, visible library rules and procedures for book-lending. The school also extended the scope of the reading culture by networking with neighbouring schools for joint capacity development.

5.3.4 Primary research question: *To what extent did a literacy intervention with teachers in a rural secondary school inform the reading culture in the school?*

I have used a general systems theory to answer the primary research question, as illustrated in Figures 5.1 and 5.2. Figure 5.1 illustrates the reading-culture systems in the selected school *before* the literacy intervention. Figure 5.2 illustrates the reading-culture systems in the school *after* the literacy intervention.

In Figure 5.1, it is apparent that in the particular rural secondary school (school system), the learners (learner system) struggled to read. The teachers and principal (broader governance school system) requested initiatives to promote reading and related learning support to enhance the reading culture. Prior to the intervention, the teachers (teacher system) lacked the necessary skills to teach the learners (learner system) to read. As a result, the teachers (teacher system) could not provide the learners (learner system) with the required literacy support to teach them to read. The reading difficulties that the learners (learner-system) experienced were exacerbated by their problems with communicating in English (the language of learning and teaching) with teachers (teacher system) in classrooms (classroom system) and in school activities (school system). Most of the learners (learner system) could not speak, read, or write English adequately, negatively influencing their ability to learn and perform well academically. Furthermore, the learners (learner system) did not actively participate (low confidence and motivation) in reading as an activity in the classroom system. The lack of engagement in the classroom system between learners and teachers possibly demonstrated learners'

limited confidence in English and their reading abilities. The learners' limited confidence plausibly links with their lack of reading motivation. The lack of reading resources (such as textbooks and reading books) in the classroom and school system (at large) probably also had a detrimental effect on the learner system.

At pre-intervention, learners rarely made use of the library (school system). The library was functioning without systems to regulate lending and library use. The shortage of library resources (reading books) also affected the functionality of the library negatively, as limited reading material was available to invite learners to read. At community-system level, networks to articulate the reading culture between primary schools and the secondary school did not exist.

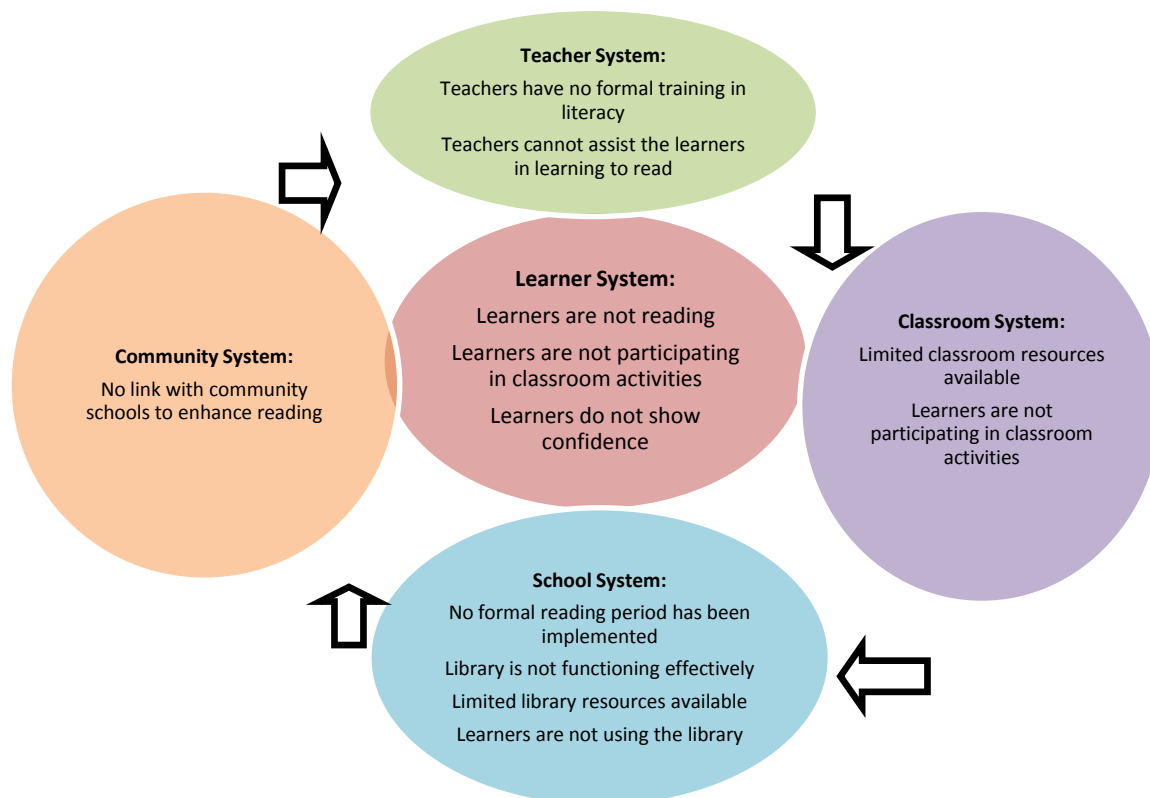


Figure 5.1: Pre-intervention systems

As illustrated in Figure 5.2, teachers (teacher system) participated in a literacy intervention focused on phonics skills to provide learning support to learners (learner system) to read. As a result, the teachers (teacher system) were able to assist learners (learner system) to read in the classroom system. It was evident that

interaction in the classroom system changed with learners being more involved. Teachers also reported improvement in learners' language abilities and their academic achievement (English and Mathematics). Learners (learner system) were not only more willing to communicate but also reportedly read with more confidence and displayed a greater interest in reading (reading motivation). Learners made use of the library more often (as indicated in the logbook in the library). Reciprocally, at post-intervention the library (school system) had procedures for lending books, library rules, as well as a logbook. In the broader education sector system, a formal reading period was mandated. This policy decision was implemented at school level, making it possible for the teachers and learners to have a set time to energise the reading culture. In the community system, the secondary school collaborated with two neighbouring primary schools to participate in the literacy intervention, thereby constituting an inclusive reading culture among the schools.

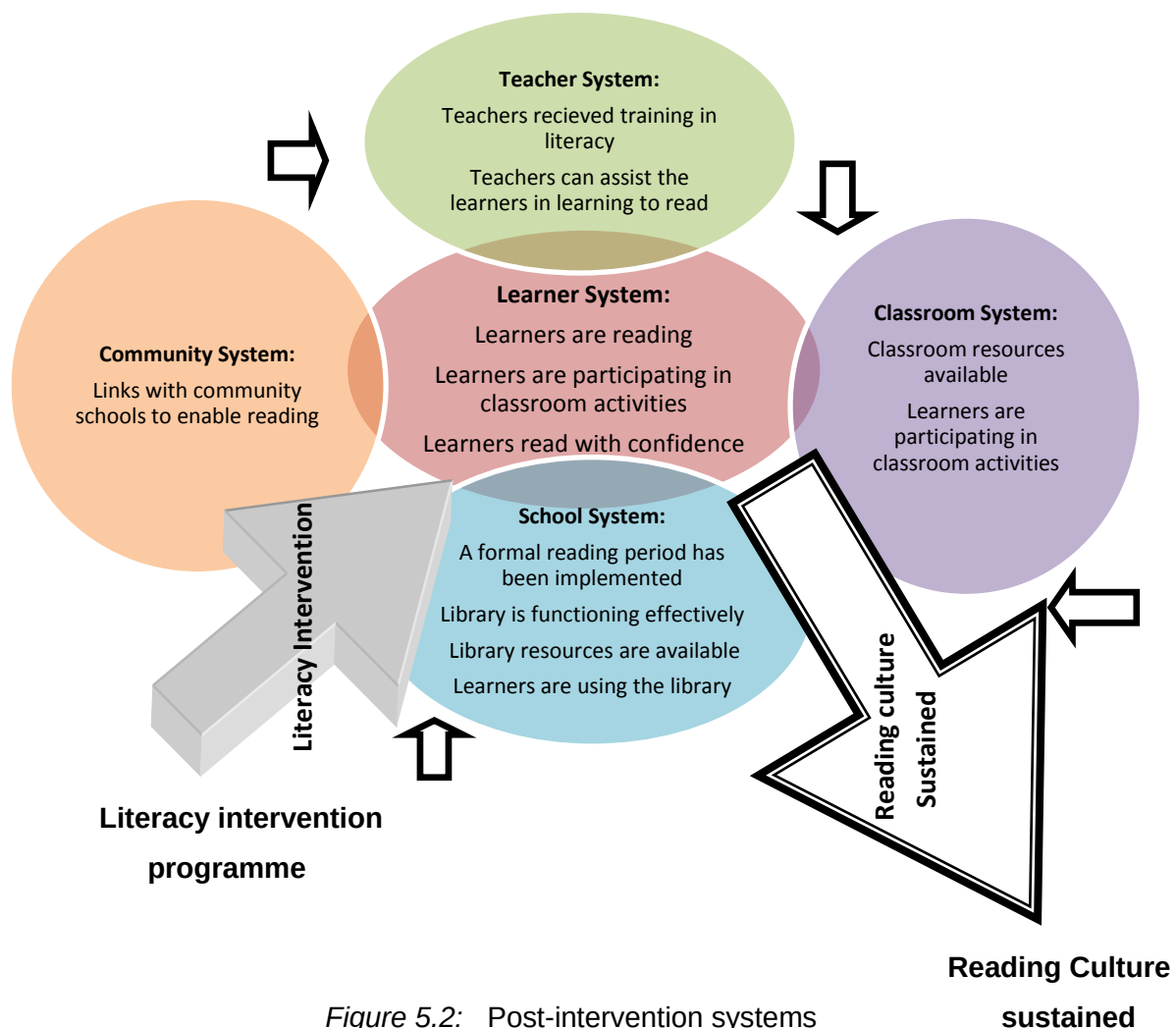


Figure 5.2: Post-intervention systems

In conclusion, it became apparent from this study that when rural secondary school teachers know how to teach reading it appears to inform a reading culture in the school system positively. When teachers participated in a literacy intervention, the teacher system changed as teachers were provided with literacy skills to assist learners to read. Partnering with rural secondary school teachers to gain knowledge on literacy also affected the learner system. Learners became engaged in classroom reading activities, were able to read with more confidence and thus were more motivated to read. Reciprocally, this learner system change also had a beneficial effect on the teacher system since teachers became more positive towards learners. The initial school-system initiative to implement a literacy intervention with teachers thus held multiple benefits for a variety of reading-culture systems. The breadth of systemic influence also extended to the reading cultures of two neighbouring rural primary schools.

5.4 Limitations of the study

One of the limitations of this study relates to the sampling strategy. Since I used a limited sample, this study includes a description of a reading culture in only one rural secondary school. However, my aim was to gain insight into the phenomenon at a specific school in a specific context.

Secondly, I made use of convenience sampling, which suffers from the limitation that the researcher is not able to claim with confidence that the selected participants are representative of a population (Brynamn, 2004; Hay, 2005). However, I used the information that I obtained to provide reflective insight into the specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2007) of a reading culture in a specific school and setting. I thus did not strive to obtain representivity.

This study did not include a pilot phase, and consequently the literacy intervention was not “tested” in other rural secondary schools with similar participating teachers. This can be regarded as a limitation however, the selected teachers have been involved in ongoing research projects (STAR and FLY) at the selected school. A pilot study was therefore not implemented. As such, the specific intervention merely assisted me in understanding a reading culture before and after a literacy intervention in the specific secondary school.

Another limitation is that the participating teachers were not all fluent English speakers. This at times hindered their ability to articulate themselves well (Creswell, 2009). These language differences could possibly have influenced the quality and interpretation of the data collected. I relied on the research team's interpretation and member checking of the given information to address this challenge.

A qualitative study is often subject to the risk of researcher bias. Since I relied on personal interpretations of the selected data in this study, the data could have been laid open to the deficiencies of subjectivity and potentially biased interpretations rooted in personal ideas and beliefs. However, approaching a study of this nature from a subjective viewpoint opens up possibilities for embracing the essence of qualitative research, which I have strived to do in a balanced and thoughtful manner. Even though a researcher can never truly be free from the influence of bias, I endeavoured to counter such influence through reflexivity. In this respect, my researcher journal served as a valuable instrument for recording my thoughts, feelings, and actions, which allowed for critical reflection on them afterwards. I also had discussions on my viewpoints with members of the research team in order to probe and reassess my ideas and perceptions.

5.5 Recommendations

This study revealed the extent to which a literacy intervention with teachers in a rural secondary school could inform a reading culture in the school. Having assessed the themes that emerged, I recommend possible areas for further research, training, and practice.

5.5.1 Recommendations for further studies

In view of the findings discussed in Chapter 4, I recommend the following topics for future studies:

- A follow-up study with the teachers and the school that participated in the intervention to explore the status of the reading culture in the school after a few months.
- Further research on reading culture in rural schools, focusing on learners' perspectives.

- An in-depth study of curriculum practices available for addressing reading barriers identified in rural secondary schools.
- An exploratory study on networking between rural schools to expand and link reading cultures.
- Action research to enable parents/caregivers in rural schools to support their children with reading.
- A study exploring the nature and effect of a reading culture in learners' homes.
- An exploratory study on using the library in a rural school.

5.5.2 Recommendations for training and practice

The findings of this study have implications for the practice of education in this particular field of investigation. Secondary school teachers potentially do not possess the necessary training in literacy intervention, and consequently the teachers in this study struggled to assist secondary school learners' to read. However, I found that teachers may make use of a literacy intervention programme that focuses on phonics to enable them to acquire the appropriate skills for assisting secondary school learners to read. Therefore, teachers as well as learners can implement and maintain a reading culture at a school by addressing literacy needs that the teachers might have.

It was also evident that the majority of learners in the secondary school could not adequately read, write, or speak English, the school's language of learning and teaching. Therefore, a suitable recommendation would be to provide secondary school teachers with a literacy intervention programme that could assist them in helping secondary school learners improve their reading skills. From my findings, I can thus conclude that a literacy intervention programme could have considerable instrumental value in empowering other teachers who face similar problems.

Furthermore, it stands to reason that if learners struggle to communicate in their language of learning and teaching, this will have a detrimental affect on their ability to establish and maintain a reading culture at school. Therefore, the recommendation can be made that a literacy intervention programme focusing on phonetics could have significant value in assisting learners to improve their overall language abilities (reading, writing, and speaking). It follows that teachers or other

professionals may benefit from training in this area, with the aim of implementing interventions in practice.

The school's collaboration with district primary schools seemed to be a promising practice to expand and link reading cultures between rural schools. Therefore, a recommendation can be made that schools collaborate with each other and implement a literacy intervention programme or a similar intervention strategy aimed at addressing a possible lack of reading culture in the community.

Lastly, a functional library was identified in this study as being vitally important to ensuring the implementation and sustainability of a reading culture at a school. Since libraries can motivate learners to read on a habitual basis, the recommendation can be made that a school's library should be capacitated to function optimally for ensuring a reading culture at the school. A library namely needs to provide a print-rich environment for learners in which library structures are in place to facilitate and encourage the taking out of books.

5.6 Concluding remarks

The establishment of a reading culture among learners remains a problem not only in South Africa, but also internationally. In this study, it became evident that the choice of implementing English as language of learning and teaching in secondary schools may contribute to learners' struggling with an additional language (English) as a barrier to their having easy linguistic-conceptual access to learning materials and modes. This difficulty was exacerbated in a rural secondary school in which teachers, because of limited reading instruction (literacy) training, were impeded in their ability to teach the secondary school learners basic reading skills.

The rural secondary school context further compounds this problem since the availability of resources is limited and training opportunities are hard to come by in such settings. However, in this study I found that teachers were determined to acquire skills to assist learners in reading. In their turn, learners seemed eager to learn to read if they were provided with the needed support and guidance. Consequently, after relevant literacy training, teachers made use of paired reading strategies, the library, and activities from the given literacy intervention programme to assist learners to read. Once the learners received the needed support in being

taught to read, they read more regularly (in classes and by using the library more frequently). This seemed to have a positive impact on their overall academic achievement.

Although the participating rural school was isolated and poorly resourced, the systematic enhancement of a reading culture included a well-managed library system and enabling school structures for the implementation of policy initiatives aimed at fostering reading skills. Another constructive element that held promise for future development and practice was the school's collaboration with district primary schools in expanding and linking reading cultures between rural schools. If such initiatives are sustained and reinforced, it is possible that mutual support among the various relevant systems at local level could contribute greatly to surmounting the barriers in the way of nurturing a reading culture in the community and area.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Intervention Programmes stage two⁴⁰

Learning to Read. A Phonetic Introduction.



A Workshop for Teachers

M.L. DU PLESSIS

⁴⁰ The first stage of the literacy intervention programme was created and implemented by Yolanda Swart (MEd Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling): “Geletterheidsintervensie en onderwysers se taal van onderrigpraktyke: askienavorsing in plattelandse skole” and is available on the DVD, Appendix A.

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Introduction:

Being able to read is an important skill children will learn during their schooling years and has far-reaching implications for lifelong confidence and wellbeing (Adonis & Huges, 2007).

This manual intends to give clear descriptive activities and ideas on implementing phonetics in a secondary school. This phonetics program was designed to assist teachers in instructing English to English second language learners.

Both the Primary Framework and the Early Foundation Phase mark significant steps for achieving one's full potential in acquiring a language. It is in this light that this program was designed at a lower level of intensity in order to provide the necessary foundations to build on, for further language acquisition. When focusing on reading it is essential for children to develop secure word recognition skills, as these are important for children to decode (read) and encode (spell) words correctly with ease in order to comprehend the content of the text (Adonis & Huges, 2007).

How to use this program:

The program is designed to introduce one to two new letter combinations per week. It is important for the learners to voice each new sound repeatedly before attempting to start with a new activity. The learners should be familiar with the newly introduced letter combination, and possible sounds it represents in the beginning of each activity.

It is important for every teacher to adapt the activities to best suite the age and ability of his/her learners. Be flexible when teaching this phonetics program, and remember to keep the aim of teaching new skills in mind, rather than focusing on intensity.

The activities is varies in length, however the general idea is to keep the time allocation short, as it can be introduced at the beginning or end of scheduled

curriculum based lesson. The use of resources was limited to insure the versatility and use of the program.

Getting Started:

It is important to make sure that the learners trust in their own potential, even the smallest efforts should be acknowledged. The program focuses on developing speaking, listening- and writing skills. The more words the learners learn and understand the better equipped they will be to succeed. The teachers are therefore responsible to ensure that the learners engage in a lot of conversation, in order to improve not only their speaking abilities, but also their confidence (Adonis & Huges, 2007).

Getting to know Phonetic sounds:

There are 44 sounds generally recognized in the English language, represented by 28 letters. Here are some charts, which indicate both the letter and the sound it represents (from sounds to letters). There are also some sample words to help you to identify the differences. Some words represent sounds not indicated by the given letter and are exceptions to the rule, and something to keep in mind when teach this program (Adonis & Huges, 2007).

Vowels:

Sound:	Letter:	Sample Words:	Exceptions:
(Phoneme)	(Grapheme)		
/a/	a	ant	
/e/	e, ea	egg, head	<u>s</u> aid, <u>s</u> ays <u>f</u> riend, <u>l</u> eopard, <u>a</u> ny
/i/	i, y	in, gym	w <u>o</u> men, <u>b</u> usy, <u>b</u> uild, <u>p</u> retty, engine <u>e</u>
/o/	o, a	on, was	
/u/	u, o, o-e	up, son, come	<u>y</u> oung, <u>d</u> oes, <u>b</u> lood
/ai/	ai, ay, a-e	rain, day, make	<u>t</u> hey, <u>v</u> eil, <u>w</u> eight, <u>s</u> traight
/ee/	ee, ea, e, ie	feet, sea, he, chief	<u>t</u> hese, <u>p</u> eople
/igh/	lgh, ie, y, i-e, i	night, tie, my, like, find	<u>h</u> eight, <u>e</u> ye, <u>I</u> , <u>g</u> oodbye, <u>t</u> ype
/oa/	oa, ow, o, oe, o-e	boat, grow, toe, go, home	<u>o</u> h, <u>th</u> ough, <u>f</u> olk
/oo/	oo, ew, ue, u-e	boot, grew, blue, rule	<u>t</u> o, <u>s</u> oup, <u>th</u> rough, <u>t</u> wo, <u>l</u> ose
/oo/	oo, u	look, put	<u>c</u> ould
/ar/	ar, a	farm, father	<u>c</u> alm, <u>a</u> re, <u>a</u> unt, <u>h</u> ear <u>t</u>
/or/	or, aw, au, ore, al	for, saw, Paul, more, talk	<u>c</u> aught, <u>th</u> ought, <u>f</u> our, <u>d</u> oor, <u>b</u> road
/ur/	ur, er, ir, (or	hurt, her, girl, work	<u>l</u> earn, <u>j</u> ourney, <u>w</u> ere

after "w")

/ow/	ow, ou	cow, out	<u>d</u> rought
/oi/	oi, oy	coin, boy	
/air/	air, are, ear	fair, care, bear	<u>th</u> ere
/ear/	ear, eer, ere	dear, deer, here	<u>pi</u> er
/ure/			<u>s</u> ure, <u>po</u> or, <u>to</u> ur
/ə/	Many different sounds	Cor <u>ne</u> r, pi <u>ll</u> ar, mot <u>o</u> r, fam <u>o</u> us, murmur, <u>a</u> bout, cotton, mountain, possi <u>b</u> le, happ <u>e</u> n, cent <u>re</u> , thoro <u>u</u> gh, pict <u>u</u> re, cupbo <u>a</u> rd.	

Consonants:

Letter:	Sound (s):	Sample words:	Exceptions:
/b/	b, bb	bat, rabbit	
/k/	c, k, ck	cat, kit, duck	<u>sch</u> ool, mosqu <u>i</u> to
/d/	d, dd, -ed	dog, muddy, pulled	
/f/	f, ff, ph	fan, puff, photo	<u>rou</u> gh
/g/	g, gg	go, bigger	
/h/	h	hen	<u>wh</u> o
/j/	j, g, dg	jet, giant, badge	
/l/	l, ll	leg, bell	
/m/	m, mm	map, hammer	lamb, autumn
/n/	n, nn	net, funny	<u>gn</u> at, <u>kn</u> ock
/p/	p, pp	pen, happy	
/r/	r, rr	rat, carrot	<u>w</u> rite, rhyme
/s/	s, ss, c	sun, miss, cell	<u>sc</u> ent, list <u>e</u> n
/t/	t, tt, -ed	tap, butter, jumped	<u>Th</u> omas, doub <u>t</u>

/v/	v	van	of
/w/	w	wig	pengu <u>in</u> , <i>one</i>
/y/	y	yes	on <u>ion</u>
/z/	z, zz s,se, ze	zip, buzz, is, please, breeze	sciss <u>ors</u> , xylophone
/sh/	sh, s, ss, t (before -ion and -ial)	shop, sure, mission, mention, partial	spec <u>ial</u> , <u>ch</u> ef, <u>o</u> cean
/ch/	ch, tch	chip, catch	
/th/	th	thin	
/th/	th	then	breath <u>e</u>
/ng/	ng, n (before k)	ring, pink	tong <u>ue</u>
/zh/	s (before -ion	vision, measure	us <u>u</u> al, beig <u>e</u>

Modelling listening and speaking:

The ways in which teachers model speaking, listening and interact, and talk with children are critical to gain success and to promoting children's speaking and listening skills more widely. The key teacher behaviours can be summarised as follows.

- Listen to encourage talking – time spent listening to children talk to each other, and listening to individuals without too frequent interruption, helps them to use more, and more relevant, language. This provides practitioners with insights into children's learning in order to plan further learning.
- Practitioners should recognise that waiting time is constructive. It allows children to think about what has been said, gather their thoughts and frame their replies.
- Model good listening. This includes making eye contact with speakers, asking the sort of questions attentive listeners ask and commenting on what has been said.

- Provide good models of spoken English to help young children enlarge their vocabulary and learn, for example, how to structure comprehensible sentences, speak confidently and clearly, and sustain dialogue.

(Adonis & Huges, 2007)

The purpose of this program:

The purpose of this program is to teach 25 sounds, most of them consist of two letters (e.g. oa), also known as blending. Children will apply their knowledge of blending, to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words.

Introducing two-letter sound

Week 1:

Introduction for teaching sh

Resources

sh card

sh words (See end of week one for some examples)

Procedure

Hear it and say it

- Say the sound with its mnemonic (e.g. putting your fingers to your lips as though quietening everyone).
- Invite the children to join in.
- If any children in the room have names with the sh sound in them, say their names, accentuating the shshshshsh (e.g. ShshShona, Mishshsha).
- Ask the children to give some more examples.
- Tell the learners that the sh sound can be found in other words that do not have a sh letter combination in it. Words that has a sh sound in them.
- Ask the learners if they can think of some examples.
- Introduce the other sounds:

s: sure, comprehension, illusion etc.

ss: mission, passion, less, kiss etc

t : mention, competition, correction, conversation etc. (Adonis & Huges, 2007)
- Ask the learners to repeat these word and listen if they can hear the sh sound.

See it and say it

- Display sh and explain that this sound needs two letters that the children already know and that to show that two letters stand for one sound we draw a line under them.
- Write some sh words on the board (e.g. shut, fish, shop, dash, wishes, shell, rushed, hiss, stop, such).
- Ask six children to come to the board and one a time to find the word with a sh sound in it, and underline the sound.

Sounding:

Resources:

List of sh words.

Procedure:

- Make sure the learners copy the sh word list or write it on the board for them.
- Say a sh word from your list (e.g. shark) then clap each syllable and ask the children to do the same. (Remember the sh will only represent one clap.
Sh-a-r-k.
- Repeat with all the words.
- Repeat the activity again, but this time ask the learners to sound the letters as they clap.
- The learners must now choose 5 words, and form sentences with them. The learners may work in pairs.

Recognition (for reading)

Sh and A-Z Flashcards

Purpose

To say as quickly as possible the correct sound when a letter is displayed

Resources

Set of A4 size cards with a letter on one side and its sound/picture on the other (e.g. sh on one side and a picture of a finger to the mouth on the other)

Procedure

- Hold up the letter cards the children have learned, one at a time.
- Ask the children, in chorus, to say the sound of the letter.
- If the children do not respond, turn the card over to show the sound.
- Increase the speed of presentation so that the children learn to respond quickly.
- Sometimes you could ask the children to say the sound for the letter in a particular way (e.g. happy, sad, bossy, timid – mood sounds).

Writing a short poem:

Resources:

Sh word list

Procedure:

- The learners must use as many as possible sh words and they have learned throughout the week.

- They are asked to write a creative short poem, using these words. (**See an example of possible sentences, at the end of Week 1 program**)
- Ask the learners to also identify the sh sounds and underline them in their poem.
- The poems are then cut out and stuck on the wall, for the whole class to enjoy.
- Remind the learners to be creative.

Frieze (Repetition)

Resources

Letter Chart

Pointing stick/hand

Procedure

- Point to a letter, one at a time at random, and ask the children to tell you what they are.
- Gradually increase the speed of presentation.
- You could ask a child to 'be teacher' as this gives you the opportunity to watch and assess the children as they respond. (Adonis & Huges, 2007)

Resources Week 1:

Sh word list:

(Unknown, Super Teachers Worksheets: Grammar and Phonetics, 2010)

(sh)

Ship	shake	shop	wish
Fish	mash	shag	shin
Dash	wash	shun	shore
Shock	dish	blush	shot
Shoot	shave	plush	flash
Shush	flush	Shane	clash
Bash	gosh	show	shoe
Cash	shark	posh	shack

Sentence Ideas for poem:

- We wash the wet fish.
- Shane has cash in his shop.
- If you shake the shack you might break a dish.
- They eat mash and fish then wash and sleep.

(Unknown, Super Teachers Worksheets: Grammar and Phonetics, 2010)

Week 2:

Sorting:

Purpose:

Blending for reading

Resources

List of ch/tch sound words. (See resources week 2).

Procedure

- Write the ch letter combination on the board.
- Ask the learners to write down three words that contains the ch letter combination.
- Ask them to share these words with a friend.
- They must say the words aloud, and listen what sound the ch letter combination makes in their words.
- Write the following words on the board: chip and catch.
- Ask the learners to identify the ch letter combination in these words.
- Underline the ch letter combination.
- Ask the learners to repeat the words five times.
- Ask the learners if ch letter combination sounds the same in both words.

- Explain to the learners that in the word chip you can hear the ch sound, however in the word catch you hear a tch sound. These are the two sounds identified in the ch letter combination.
- Give the learners the mixed ch/tch sound (see resources Week 2) or write the words on the board.
- Ask the learners to sort, and write down the words into two groups. Words that has a ch sound, and words that has a tch sound in it. (*See Memo for answers*).

(Adonis & Huges, 2007)

Countdown:

Resources

List of ch words. (See resources week 2).

Sand timer, stop clock or some other way of time-limiting the activity

Procedure

- Ask the learners to compile a list of ch words together as a class. Let each learner write down the list. Make sure that you have the same number of words as learners (or pair of learners) in your class.
- Ask the learners to write the list of words, one underneath the other.
- Explain to the children that the object of this activity is to read and sound as many words as possible before the sand timer or stop clock signals 'Stop'.
- Start the timer.
- Call a child's name out and point to the first word.

- Ask the child to sound-talk the letters and read the word.
- Repeat with another child reading the next word, until the time runs out.
- Record the score.
- The next time the game is played, the objective is to beat this score.
- With less confident children this game could be played with all the children reading the words together.

(Adonis & Huges, 2007)

Translation:

Resources

List of th words.

Procedure

- Divide the learners into pairs or groups.
- As the learners to take the following th words and to translate them into their home languages. They must write the English word next to their translation.

bath	they	third
Earth	thick	father
three	feather	Thursday
thin	thumb	with
than	brother	teeth
that	mother	

- Now ask the learners to go through their words by reading them aloud to each other. Let them make turns.

- Ask the learners to keep these words safe for another activity.
- Ask the learners to complete the crossword puzzle. (See Resources Week 2)

Switching

Purpose

To find the correct letter, in response to a sound being spoken. Revision

Resources

Sound Charts

Procedure:

- Say the sound of a letter and ask the children to find the letter on the chart.

They must write the letter down.

- Ask them to check with a friend if they have the same letter.
- Give them the answer.

Resources Week 2:

List for Learners: ch and tch sounds (Unknown, Super Teachers Worksheets:

Grammar and Phonetics, 2010)

Chat	Church	Batch	Chat
Chest	Bench	Match	Catch
Chop	Ditch	Fetch	Chair
Chicken	Kitchen	Choose	Stretch
Each	March	Notch	Much
Teach	Stitch	Cheese	Chip

Memo for teachers: ch and tch sounds: (Unknown, Super Teachers Worksheets:

Grammar and Phonetics, 2010)

Chat - ch	Church - ch	Batch – tch	Chat – ch
Chest – ch	Bench - ch	Match – tch	Catch – tch
Chop – ch	Ditch - tch	Fetch – tch	Chair - ch
Chicken - ch	Kitchen – tch	Choose – ch	Stretch – tch
Each – ch	March - ch	Notch – tch	Much –ch
Teach - ch	Stitch - ch	Cheese - ch	Chip - ch

(ch) (Unknown, Super Teachers Worksheets: Grammar and Phonetics, 2010)

chip	such	chick	lunch
chair	much	choose	Chad
chap	cheese	chum	chill
chase	chime	teach	teacher
chat	chunky	chubby	chilly
chef	chief	cherry	batch
catch	match	punch	lunch

Clues: (Hext, 2010)

down 1.



down 3.



down 5.



Rhymes with vermouth

down 6.



Rhymes with worth

down 8.



Rhymes with dumb

across 2.



across 4.



across 7.



Rhymes with go

across 9.



TH Words

		1											
		2							3				
						4		5					
				6									
		7										8	
							9						

- Memo

Answer Key													
		¹ M											
		A											
		² T	H	U	N	D	E	R	S	³ T	O	R	M
		H								O			
		E				⁴ A	U	⁵ T	H	O	R		
		M		⁶ E				O		T			
		A		A				O		H			
		⁷ T	H	R	O	W		T		B			⁸ T
		I		T				H		R			H
		C		H						U			U
		S								S			M
							⁹ B	A	T	H	T	U	B

(Hext, 2010) (Unknown, Words and Sounds, 2010)

Week 3:

Word identification

Purpose

To practise reading ng words in sentences.

Resources

Magazines, Text books, Empty boxes, Newspaper, Food Labels.

Procedure:

- Ask the learners to select on form of written text.
- The learner must make a poster displaying all the ng words they could find.
- The poster must also include drawing or picture to demonstrate their understanding of the word (s).
- The learners may work in groups or pairs.

Sounding:

Purpose:

To practise the different sounds the ng letter combinations makes.

Resources:

ng Word List

Procedure:

- Ask the learners to say the word bang aloud. (Repeat five times).
- Ask the learners to say the word bank aloud. (Repeat five times).

- Ask if any of the learners can hear a ng sound in both of the words.

(Remember they have to focus only on the sound not the spelling of the word.)
- Now explain to the learners that the ng sound can be identified in both words, even though you do not spell both words with a ng letter combination.
- Use the following words as an example:

ng (sounds)	n(k) sounds
bang	bank
sang	sank
gang	tank
length	ink
king	link
sing	pink
wing	wink
long	bunk
lung	junk

- Ask the learners to repeat these words aloud together.
- Ask the learners to voice the sounds of each word after saying the words.
- The learners should select 10 words and use them in a sentence.
- Ask the learners to share their sentences with each other.

Short Play:

Purpose:

To practice identifying and saying ng sounds.

Resources:

Any props. (Optional)

Time: Allocate three sessions for this activity.

Procedure:

- Introduce the learners as Kings for the day.
- They have to form groups.
- They have to write and perform a short play.
- Their play has to contain ng words.
- Each time the group members say a word containing a ng sound, the class must clap their hands together.
- (Optional: Scores can be kept).

Week 4:

Dictionary Building: Revision

Purpose:

To build vocabulary.

Resources:

A4 Paper sheets

Time: Allocate two sessions for this activity

Procedure:

- The learners must collect all the new letter sound combinations learned over the past three weeks.
- Ask the learners to compile these words in a dictionary format.
- Learners may work in pairs or groups.
- Here is an example of layout they can use:

Word:	Sound:	Picture:
ship	sh	
sing	ng	

Writing a poem:

Purpose:

Identify ai sounds.

Resources:

Poem

Procedure:

- Ask the learners to read the following poem.

Daisy is a brainy snail

She can drive a train

And bring the mail

She can sail a ship or follow a trail

Yes daisy is a brainy snail.

(Unknown, Words and Sounds, 2010)

- Ask the learners to copy the poem and underline the ai sounds in the poem.
- Ask the learners to write their own ai poem.
- Give the following words as possible words they can use:
aim, afraid, fail, again, paid, maid, rain, stain, tail, mail, snail etc.
- (Optional: Let the learners share their poem with a friend).

Identifying the difference:

Purpose:

Identify the different sound the ai letter combination can represent.

Resources:

Word list

Procedure:

- Tell the learners that: "Today we are going to look at the ai sound like in paint.

Did you know that the letters ay and a-e (*a word usually containing an a in the*

middle of the word, and it ends with an e, it is indicated by adding a dash in between the letters: a-e) also makes the same sound?"

- Ask them to separate the following words into ai, a-e and ay sounds:

Rain, day, date, save, stay, game, train, bake play, clay, plain, play, brake, say, paid, way, afraid, tale, lay, sale.

(Remind the learners to focus on the sound the letter ai/ay/a-e makes rather than on the spelling of the words).

Word search:

Purpose:

Identify the different sound the ai letter combination can represent.

Resources:

Word search activities:

Procedure:

- Ask the learners to name the three sounds the ai letter combination can represent.
- Ask the learners to complete the following word search activities:

AI-Words

OIJGYMFNNXCMAID
GFBQJBWLCETAIMI
SPUQKUHWKJYFFLB
KNAILGPLAITRDIF
FGAPAIMMEHBCIAL
XUEPLAINAYSATK
SPTYTMBOMLGDLPF
HTPRAISEQKLLRRD
BXMFB EUCTR DIBUN
UJDUTYPHHVBAPYW
MDRPNLMMGHRRRNW
ZIFOIAUZIHXTYQK
CAGIAZLKASXWSFE
DRYJPMSBRGBHWDR
BVSFWNASTSAILNY
MWCDEJDSNDKLTY
MGRTFJVRIXRTAWJ
WTZADQVOOYKCPRU
UQQTNHYQNWAILVY
NZQOJDND DYN OGYF

TAIL TRAIL WAIL LAID PLAIT
STRAIGHT AIM MAID NAIL PAID
PAINT PLAIN PRAISE RAID SAIL

(Kisito, 2006)

ai sound:

LG
MSYZ
QSDAIZ
WEDNESDAYLNRNMM
QWFRIDAYCITPAYO
SAYTAHYSETN
SAHAOUD
DTWFMUNLSEA
MTALWAYSRLIYUSY
SYVFSADJD
TUKSQFPHDDAA
ZRNPHYWAYY
DADANAY
OYALMYZWJ
PYWZA

SAY, PLAY, DAY, TRAY, PAY, AWAY
WAY, BAY, STRAY, HAY, DAY, TRAY
MAY, STAY, ALWAYS, SUNDAY, HOLIDAY, MONDAY
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, FRIDAY
(Kisito, 2006)

Week 5:

Time-out

Purpose:

Identify different sound resembled by ee letter combination.

Resources:

Word lists

Procedure:

- Write the letter combination ee on the board.
- Divide the learners into groups of 6-8.
- Give the groups 2-3 min to think of other words that also have ee sounds in them.
- See which groups could come up with the most ee sounds words.
- Introduce the following ee sounds, by giving the learners the examples. Let the learner's voice the sounds aloud, after you say each word.

e_e

eve

Steve

Pete

ea

leaf

heat

beak

easy

bead

lead

bean

meat

mean

cheap

deal

east

clean

neat

teach

beach

steam

weak

dream

gleam

least

plea

real

reach

scream

speak

stream

ee

bee

seen

cheek

sheet

beet

speed

sheep

tree

peel

sleep

keen

steep

queen

wheel

street

cheer

creek

green

free

peer

steel

between

Writing a story

Purpose:

Identify different sound resembled by ee letter combination.

Resources:

Word lists

Time: Allow three session.

Procedure:

- Ask the learners to write their own story.
- Let the class decide on a topic.
- Give the learners the ee list as a guideline to possible words they can select.
- Encourage the learners to draw illustrations to match their story.

Listening to stories

Purpose:

Listen to identify different ee sounds combination.

Resources:

Written stories

Procedure:

- Give the learners an opportunity to read their stories to a friend/class.
- Ask the learners to write down all the ee sounds they hear. The learners should keep the words safe for later dictionary entries.
- Make a collage by sticking all the stories on the wall.

Week 6:

The Tale Of Princess Laughing Dove

Purpose:

Identify different sound resembled by oo letter combination. Creative writing and vocabulary is enhanced.

Resources:

The Tale of Princess Laughing Dove

Time: Allow three sessions.

Procedure:

- Introduce the oo sound to the class by writing it on the board.
- Read the following story to the class. Ask them to try to identify words that contain the oo sound, and to write it down.
- Read the story again, this time give the learners an indication of the oo sounds (it is all the underlined letters).
- Ask the learners to add the new words to their list.
- Ask the learners to write an appropriate ending for the Story of Wainaina.
- Optional: Ask the learners to read some of their endings.

The Tale Of Princess Laughing Dove. (Wainaina, 20)

Once there was a man, neither young nor old, and his name was Wainaina. He lived alone on his farm at the forest edge, in the house he had built himself. The house was small but that did not matter, for whenever Wainaina opened his door, or drew back his curtain he could see the blue peaks of Mount Kenya. Up they rose like church spires and whenever Wainaina saw them, his spirits soared too - high in the blue.

"I'm lucky to be alive," he'd say. But then he would sigh, "If only I had a wife to share this with."

A wife indeed! So why couldn't Wainaina find himself a good woman when the countryside was alive with good women? And why, when a village girl caught his eye, did she walk straight on by, before he'd said hello? This was what he asked himself, day in day out, as he tended his crops.

"Perhaps," said Wainaina. "I haven't the heart for it."

But that wasn't it. The truth was this. Wainaina was not a handsome man, nor even plain. He had grown up downright ugly. And he did not know - because the little mirror that he used when shaving only showed his chin. Nor did his village fellows say, not wanting to hurt the good man's feelings. Poor Wainaina. And though he tried not to make a tragedy out of being wifeless, sometimes his spirits hardly soared at all when he saw the great mountain.

"Life has its ups and downs," he said.

Then one morning as he was dressing for work, he heard a tap tapping at his window. When he pulled back he curtain there was a laughing dove sitting on the sill, cooing and bobbing at its reflection in the glass.

"Ah," said Wainaina gently. "You think you've found a mate. Poor bird."

At the sound of his voice the bird flew off, but for the rest of the day Wainaina thought of it.

"So," he said. "I am not the only one without a love."

Later, when Wainaina was stretching his back from a day's hard digging, an idea crept into his mind:

"You've earned a rest Wainaina. Why not walk down to the stream?"

And why not indeed? It was a place with mossy roots and green arches. Clear mountain by smooth rocks where blue dragonflies danced.

"Mmmmm," said Wainaina when he came to the water. "It is so peaceful here."

But not for long. Suddenly from the overhanging branch of a mugumo tree came the oh-cook cook-oo-oo of a laughing dove. Wainaina looked up: was it the one he'd seen earlier.. Then it flew off down the path and in a flame tree. Oh-cook cook-oo-oo.

Wainaina followed - which was when he heard the laughter that out-sang any dove. He pushed through the reeds to the water's edge: who could be making those sweet, sweet sounds?

Wainaina soon saw....

Speed Test:

Purpose:

To say as quickly as possible the correct sound.

Resources:

Word list for oo sounds

Sand timer, stop clock or some other way of time-limiting the activity

Procedure:

- Give each learner a word to write down from the oo word list below.
- Tell the learners to work as fast as they can.
- They have to say their word aloud and then they should voice each sound twice.
- Take the class's time, and write it down.
- Repeat the activity and see if they can improve their time scored in the first round.

-oo

food	loom	zoom	groom
cool	mood	pool	moor
fool	moon	brood	proof
bloom	noon	broom	room
boom	hoop	drool	scoop
doom	loop	droop	snoop

soon	roost	shoot	noose
zoo	stool	tooth	choose
spoon	stoop	smooth	ooze
boost	too	school	groove
boot	tool	goose	hooves
hoot	troop	loose	soothe
loot	swoop	moose	

-ew

dew	new	screw	shrewd
Jew	brew	newt	chew
blew	crew	stew	knew
flew	drew	shrew	view

-ue

due	clue	sue
blue	glue	true

-u—e

duke	crude	rule	tune
dune	lure	brute	truce
June	prune	flute	
nude	rude	tube	

-ou

group

soup

tour

wound

you

youth

(Unknown, Super Teachers Worksheets: Grammar and Phonetics, 2010)

Puzzled:

Purpose:

To identify the oo sounds and to on learners build vocabulary.

Resources:

Word puzzle and word search activity.

Procedure:

- Ask the learners to complete the activities on the following page by identifying/ filling in the oo sounds.

Search for the words in the block, and draw a circle around them:

c	h	e	b	u	s	h	e	l	few
s	t	a	f	r	i	c	h	o	chew
u	c	r	s	g	l	u	e	f	true
i	u	e	u	l	i	t	s	r	buisel
t	s	f	c	e	t	r	t	u	cushion
g	c	h	e	w	m	s	u	i	suit
l	b	u	s	o	u	f	o	t	glue
s	u	t	b	g	l	c	e	s	fruit
c	u	s	h	i	o	n	u	w	

Spelling Words:

few	school	true	goose
cookie	cushion	noodle	bookmark
fruit	balloon	suit	chew
clue	Thursday	bushel	

Fill in the missing words:

1			___	o	o	k	_	_
2			n	o	o	___	___	___
3		___	___	___	o	o	___	
4			___	o	o	___	___	
5			___	o	o	___	___	___
6	___	___	___	___	o	o	___	

(Hext, 2010)

Dictionary Building: Revision

Purpose:

To build vocabulary.

Resources:

Handmade dictionary (From week 4)

Time: Allocate one-two sessions for this activity

Procedure:

- The learners must collect all the new letter sound combinations learned over the past three weeks.
- Ask the learners write these words into their existing dictionaries.
- Learners may work in pairs or groups.

Week 7:

My music

Purpose:

To recognize and use different air sounds in context of a song.

Resources:

Word list for air sounds.

Any form of musical instrument (Handmade or bought).

Time: Allow five sessions.

Procedure:

- Divide the learners into groups of 4-6 learners.
- Give each group a copy of the air word list.
- Ask the learners to use the words from the list in order to write their own song.
- Inform the groups that they must also perform their song with the help of a musical instrument that they made themselves. (The group members can choose how many instruments they want to use).
- The group members can select their own topic.
- The learners' songs must also be made available to be stuck up against the wall.
- Encourage the learners to be creative.

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Wainaina, E. (20, July 2007). *Make 4 Fun*. Retrieved May 12, 2010, from Keep it short and simple: <http://www.make4fun.com/funny-short-stories.php?stuff=the-tale-of-princess-laughing-dove&id=4344>

Appendix B: Minutes of the meetings

1 **GET + SMT MEETING**

DATE: 07/05/09

VENUE: DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

TIME: 11H30

2 **AGENDA:**

3 1. OPENING

4 2. REMARKS

5 3. B.O.D

6 3.1 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS (GRADE 10)

7 3.2 CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

8 4. WAY FORWARD

9 5. A.O.B.

10 6. CLOSURE

11 1. Z.G. Mxxx opend the meeting with a prayer

12 Welcoming in the meeting of grade 10

13 Feeling free

14 Put flesh into bones to make our school a living environment

15 Let us ensure that we iron out the challenges we have with our learners

16 Everybody should be free to contribute.

17 It is not SMT meeting but grade 10 educators

18 Common language should be used (English) for understanding (language of teaching of
19 and learning)

20 **APOLOGY-** The principal won't be in, he attended some official issues at Exxxxx.

21 3.1 Out of 113 learners= 112 fail and one manage to get a pass

22 The graph was shown to educators with the average results for each learning area.

23 Looking at the graph most subject rate 19%

24 We should keep in mind SWOT analysis when looking at this result

25 * Home language

26 *English less than 10

27 **3.2 Challenges**

28 a. laziness

29 b. work schedule

30 c. LTSM (in physics) shortage reading 2.3 Classroom resources and culture (shortage)

31 d. not preparing enough

32 e. lack of understanding questions

33 f. language barriers

34 g. lack of motivation

35 h. indiscipline

36 i. lack of reading skills

37 j. transition from GET to FET

38 **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES**

39 *Language barrier - Reading culture structures culture 3.2 School reading

40 - Library period should appear

41 -Learners should be encourage to speak/communicate with English

42 - So to say it starts with educators inside the classroom and outside.

43 - Learners should buy dictionaries

44 * Work schedule – up the pace

45 - extra classes

46 - 8h00-14h30

47 *Shortage of LSTM – On behalf of the principle a lot of ordering was made but nothing came up

48 - submit to Z.G or SMT for any shortage

49 - checking with other schools (borrowing)

50 -meet with various colleagues at cluster meetings and communicate

51 - let us order books that we need, when the requisition circulate.

52 * Laziness - give more class work and less homeworks.

53 -we should be role model to our learners e.g don't mark in the classroom instead of teaching

54 Prepare thoroughly

55 monitor the laziness of our learners by giving them presentations

56 *Lack of motivation - call learners by their names

- 58 - team teaching also motivate learners
- 59 - classroom rules and subject rules
- 60 -educators should support one another
- 61 -call them individually (learners)
- 62 - alternatives to co-oral punishment book can help if SMT can
- 63 get if for us (educators)
- 64 *Transition from GET to FET
- 65 -paragraph or essay writing should be given to learners
- 66 -educators will bring in games e.g scrabble
- 67 - our learners need to be fully prepared in terms of different
- 68 types of assessment.
- 69 **CONCERN**
- 70 -condoment is a concern from grade 10 educators
- 71 - pass one pass all (from grade 8)
- 72 - challenges we are facing form previous phase e.g. paper setting
- 73 - we will support learners on this so that by June we produce
- 74 something different
- 75 -working as a team also-we say our classes will be fully occupied
- 76 for the purpose of teaching and learning process.
- 77 - At the right time we are at the right place
- 78 - hoping that there will be no one to push to class
- 79 - something that use to happen will change as from now
- 80 - The meeting was closed with a prayer by P.J. Xxxxx at 14:02

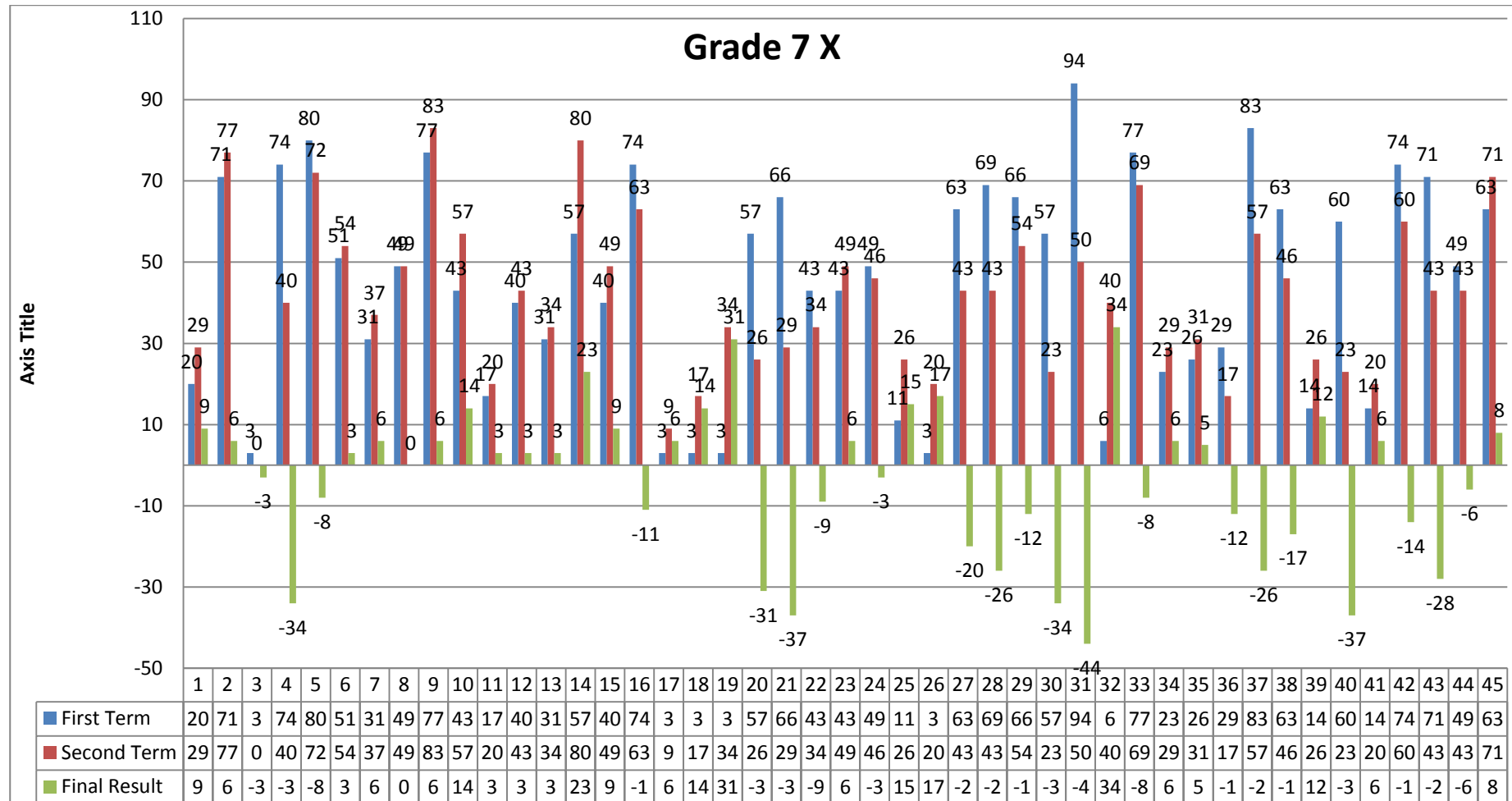
- 1 **GET + SMT MEETING** **DATE: 21/05/09**
- 2 **VENUE: DEPUTY PRINCIPALS OFFICE** **CHAIRPERSON: Xxx**
- 3 **TIME: 11H05**
- 4 **AGENDA:**
- 5 1. OPENING
- 6 2. REMARKS
- 7 3. B.O.D
- 8 3.1 CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES
- 9 3.2 DOCUMENTS NCS
- 10 3.3 ASSESSMENT
- 11 4. WAY FORWARD
- 12 5. A.O.B.
- 13 1. PROGRAMMES
- 14 2.
- 15 3.
- 16 6. CLOSURE
- 17 Ms Xxx opened the meeting with a prayer.
- 18 **2. WELCOMING**
- 19 - view for the betterment of the school
- 20 - language of learning and teaching should be used for communication on the meeting
- 21 - educators should be free to participate / contribute
- 22 **APOLOGY**
- 23 - Xxx left the school
- 24 - Xxx is not in today
- 25 - Xxx is not in today
- 26 - Xxx apologised
- 27 - Let us all be involved to take resolution
- 28 - we want to see our school as the best around town (here)
- 29 - producing best learners
- 30 **3.1 CHALLENGES**
- 31 1. Language & Literacy barriers
- 32 2. Test

33	3. Discipline	
34	4. Lack of study skills	
35	5. Condition of progression	
36	IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES	
37	- learners should communicate in English	
38	- reading period	(3.2 School structures: Implementation of reading period)
39	- debate and speech contest	
40	- awards should be given to learners	(2.1 Teachers' teaching and
41	- dictionary usage (improve vocabulary)	learning practices in the Classroom: strategies)
42	- provision of enough LTSM	
43	- improvement of the library (it should be equipped)	(3.1 – Library and reading Culture: library usage)
44	*the learners should be orientated	
45	* and time should be given for learners to use it.	
46	2. Test are important and should stay.	
47	3. We will support each other as a team	
48	* don't pass learners on the stoep rushing to grade 9 whereas grade 7 & 8 are still left outside	
49	let them get in the classroom	
50	* clean the wall and make environment	
51	Conductive for learners. (pasting charts with meaning on the walls)	
52	- learners should be identified	
53	- and educators as team should talk to those learners.	
54	5. The principal said a learner is not allowed to repeat the phase twice	
55	- learners problems has to be identified and parents has to be called, explanations to be	
56	Made to him/her that we want to retain the child because of some reasons, this has to be	
57	written down and kept on file.	
58	- and if the learner go to the other grade the educator on the phase should be informed.	
59	- regular subject meetings and	
60	- grades meeting	

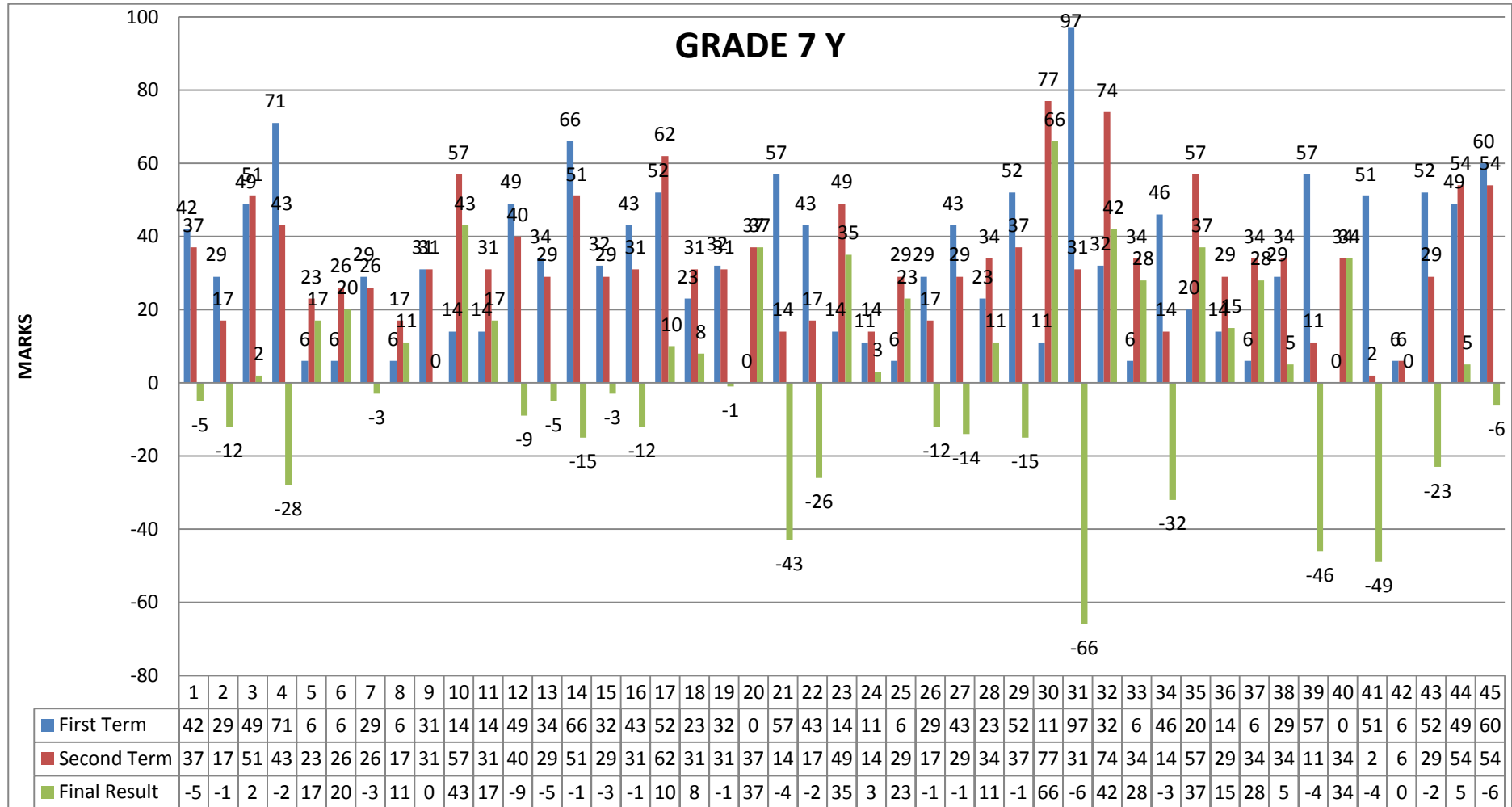
- 61 - Xxx will be the grade head of grade 8
- 62 3.2 – All educators should have the NCS documents
- 63 a. Assessment guideline
- 64 b. Subject statement (where Lo and As are mentioned) Policy statement
- 65 c. Work schedule
- 66 d. Program of Assessment
- 67 3.3 – range of questions should be asked
- 68 - We have 1 ½ hour time allocated for testing only to find that the learners sit only for
- 69 20 minutes because the assessment is not up to standard.
- 70 - All assessment should indicate the Lo's and the As's
- 71 - For now onwards we will set the standard papers
- 72 - Emphasizing integration (it will help our learners)
- 73 The minutes for this meeting will be presented to us
- 74 5. AOB
- 75 - The principal requested the programmes for Grades Heads
- 76 6. Xxx close the meeting with a prayer at 14:08

Appendix C: Term marks

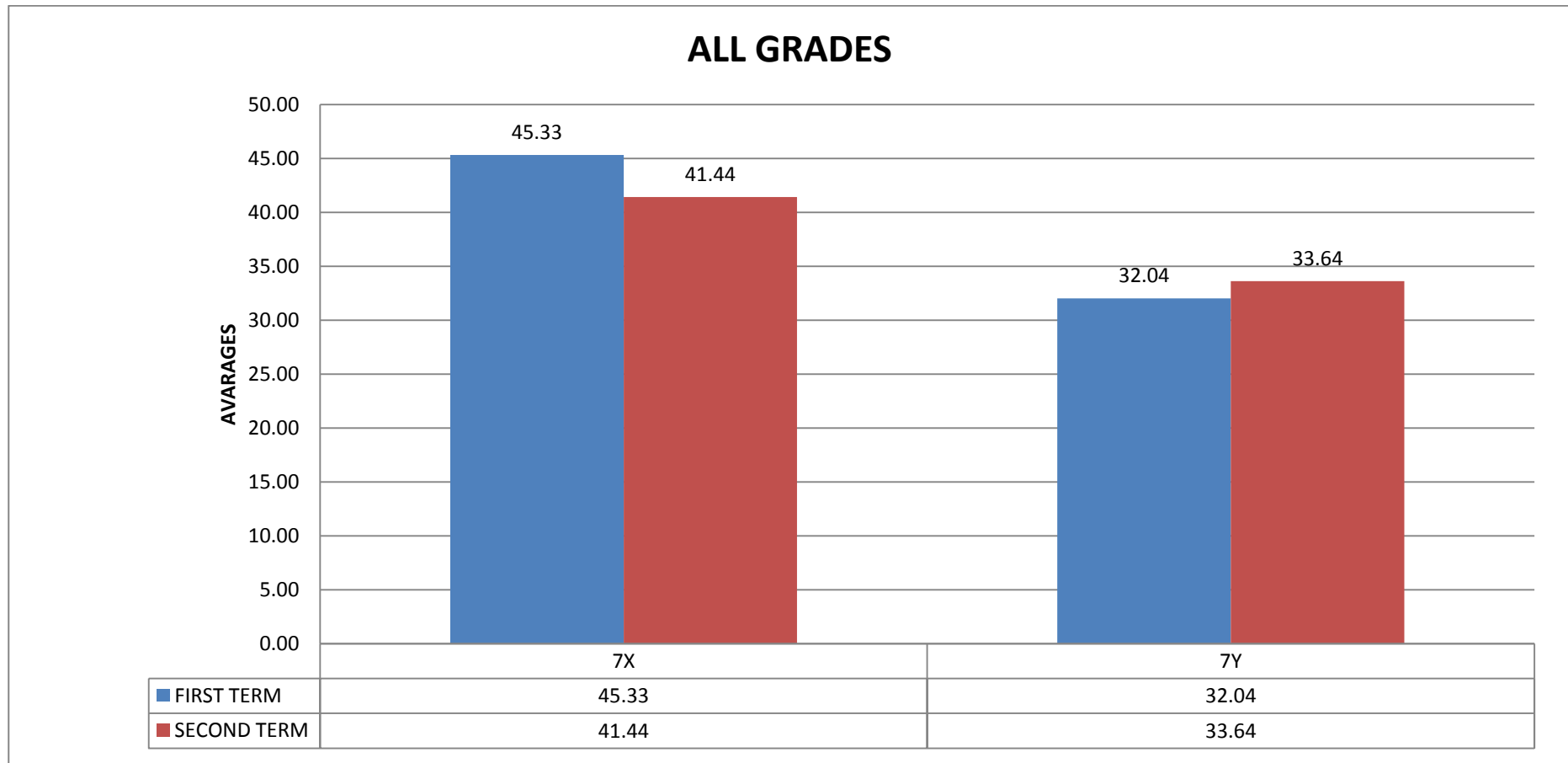
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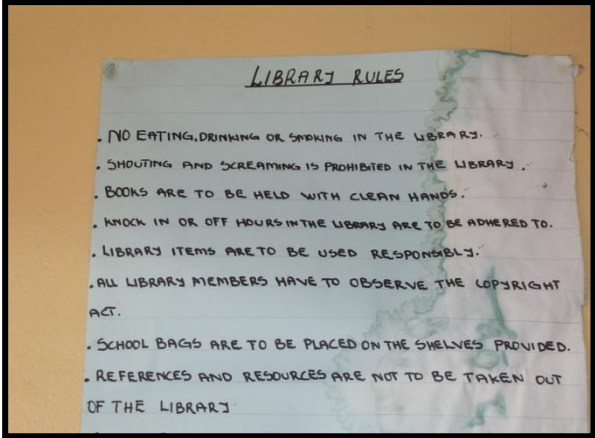
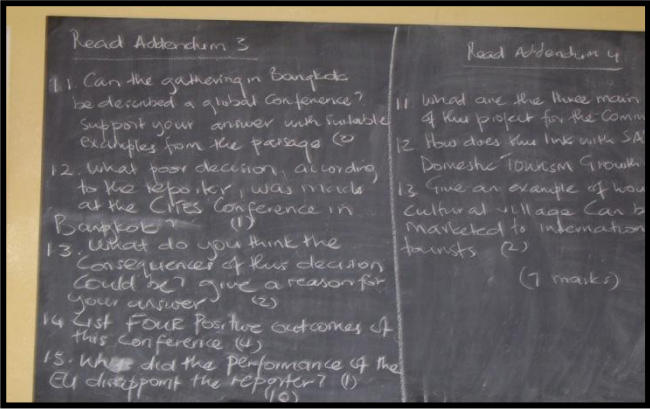
GRADE 7 CLASS Y



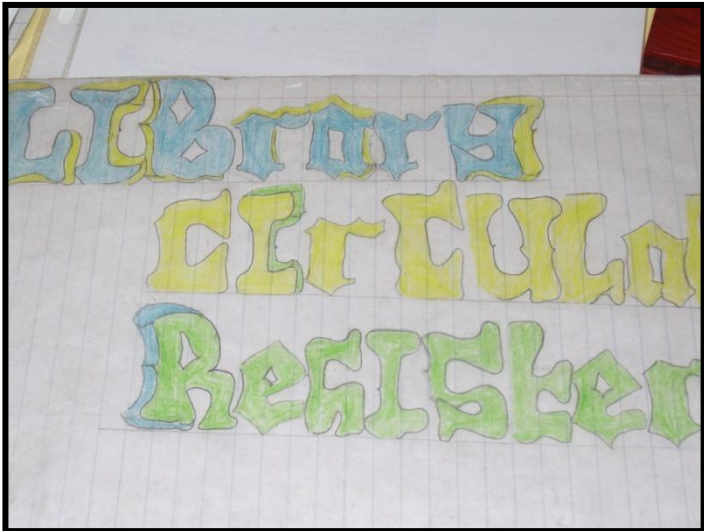
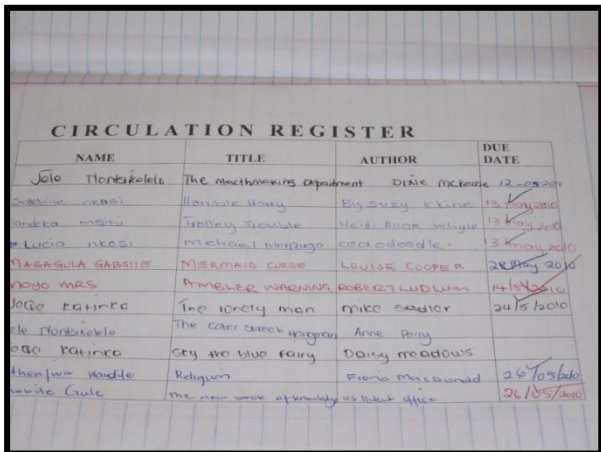
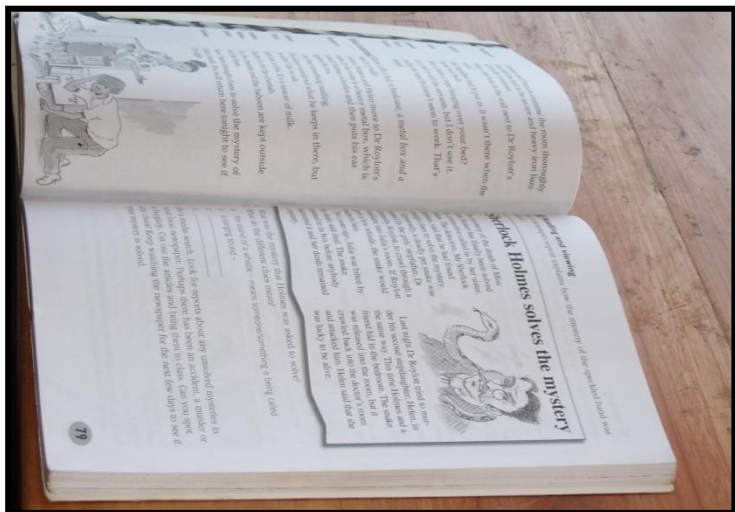
GRADE 7: SUMMARY OF BOTH CLASSES

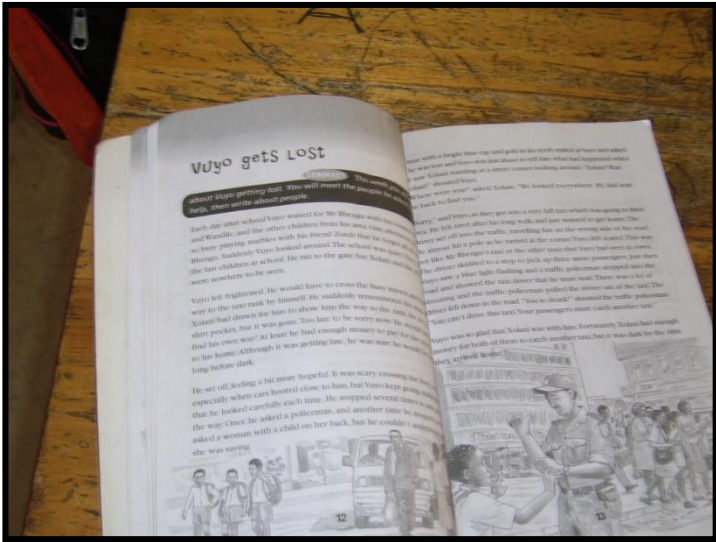
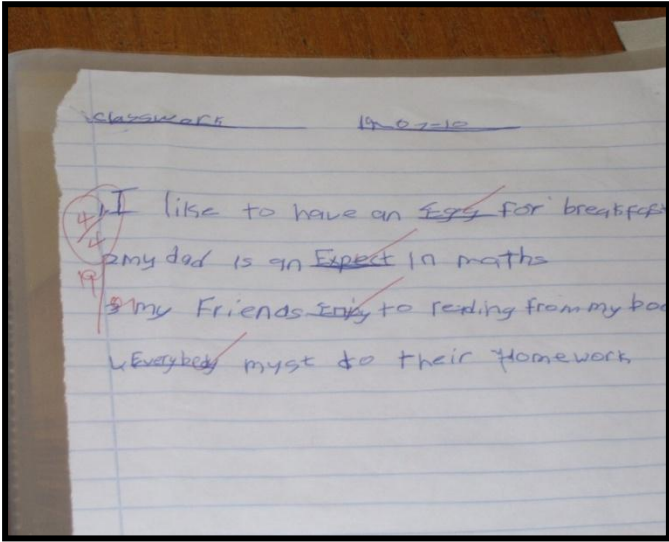
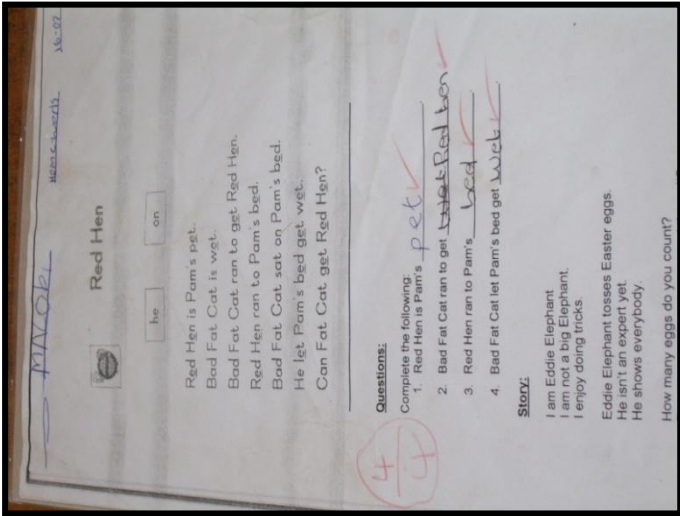


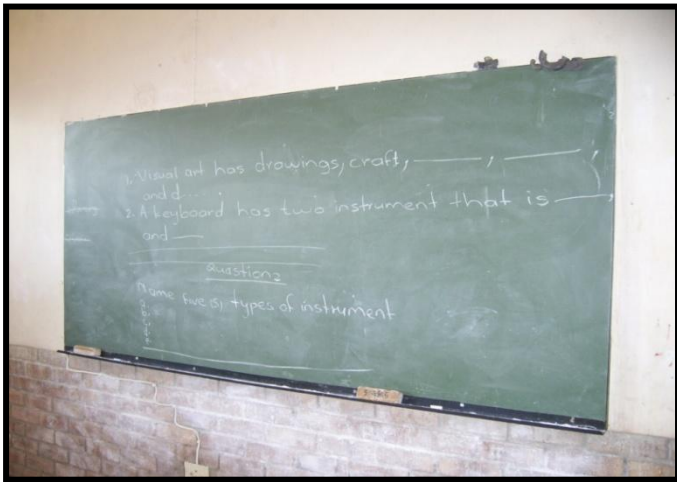
Appendix D: Photographs

1		3.1. Photograph 1: Library and reading culture: Library rules written on a board (August 2010).
2		2.1. Photographs 2: Teachers teaching and learning practices in the classroom: Teachers gives an activity for the learners to complete (May 2009). 2.3 Photograph 2: Classroom resources and reading culture: teachers are using a black board as a teaching resources (May 2009).
3		2.3. Photograph 3: Classroom resources and reading culture: Different posters displayed on the walls (August 2010).

4		3.1 Photograph 4: Library and reading culture.: Library equipped with books (August 2010). 2.3 Photograph 4: Library and reading culture: Library equipped with books and shelves (resources) (August 2010).
5		3.1 Photograph 5: Library and reading culture.: Library equipped with books (August 2010). 2.3 Photograph 4: Library and reading culture: Library equipped with books and shelves (resources) (August 2010).
6		3.1 Photograph 6: Library and reading culture: Library equipped with newspapers (August 2010).

7		3.1. Photograph 7: Library and reading culture: Procedure for library attendance in place (August 2010).																																												
8	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NAME</th><th>TITLE</th><th>AUTHOR</th><th>DUE DATE</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Jelo Montakele</td><td>The machineries department</td><td>Diane MacKenzie</td><td>12-08-2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>Lucia Masi</td><td>Trilogy Trouble</td><td>Heidi Anne Kinsley</td><td>13-08-2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>Michael Mphahlele</td><td>Michael Mphahlele</td><td>Cecil Doodie</td><td>13-08-2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>MAKAGULA GABRIEL</td><td>Mermaid's curse</td><td>LOUISE COOPER</td><td>24-08-2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>MOJO MAS</td><td>Amateur Wonders</td><td>ROBERT LUDWIG</td><td>14-08-2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>MOJO RAHINA</td><td>The lonely man</td><td>MIKE SADLER</td><td>24/8/2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>MOJO RAHINA</td><td>The color book program</td><td>Anne Perry</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>MOJO RAHINA</td><td>Sty the blue fairy</td><td>Daisy Meadows</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Phenwa Mandle</td><td>Religion</td><td>Fiona Macdonald</td><td>26/08/2010</td></tr> <tr> <td>Phenwa Mandle</td><td>The new voice of knowledge as book office</td><td></td><td>26/08/2010</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	NAME	TITLE	AUTHOR	DUE DATE	Jelo Montakele	The machineries department	Diane MacKenzie	12-08-2010	Lucia Masi	Trilogy Trouble	Heidi Anne Kinsley	13-08-2010	Michael Mphahlele	Michael Mphahlele	Cecil Doodie	13-08-2010	MAKAGULA GABRIEL	Mermaid's curse	LOUISE COOPER	24-08-2010	MOJO MAS	Amateur Wonders	ROBERT LUDWIG	14-08-2010	MOJO RAHINA	The lonely man	MIKE SADLER	24/8/2010	MOJO RAHINA	The color book program	Anne Perry		MOJO RAHINA	Sty the blue fairy	Daisy Meadows		Phenwa Mandle	Religion	Fiona Macdonald	26/08/2010	Phenwa Mandle	The new voice of knowledge as book office		26/08/2010	3.1. Photograph 8: Library and reading culture: Procedure for library attendance in place (Log Book) (August 2010).
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9		2.3 Photograph 9: Classroom resources and reading culture: Textbooks used in class (teaching resources) (August 2010).																																												

10		2.3 Photograph 10: Classroom resources and reading culture: Textbooks used in class (teaching resources) (August 2010).
11		2.2. Photograph 11: Learners' learning behaviour: The learner is learning. Learner receives full marks for an activity from the classroom (August 2010).
12		2.2. Photograph 12: Learners' learning behaviour: The learner is learning. Learner receives full marks for an activity from the classroom (August 2010).

13		2.3. Photograph 13: Classroom resources and reading culture: Alphabet charts placed on the wall (August 2010).
14		2.3. Photograph 14: Classroom resources and reading culture: Phonetic programme (phase 2) given to teachers (August 2010).
15		2.1. Photographs 15: Teachers teaching and learning practices in the classroom: Teachers gives an test for the learners to complete (May 2009). 2.3 Photograph 15: Classroom resources and reading culture: teachers are using a black board as a teaching resources (May 2009).

16		1.1. Photograph 16: Learner's motivation and attitudes towards reading: Learner learning and participating in a classroom activity from the programme (phase one) (August 2010).
17		2.3. Photograph 17: Classroom resources and reading culture. Teacher is using an overhead projector as a resource (teaching aid) in class.
18		1.1 Photograph 18: Learner's motivation and attitudes towards reading: Learners are attempting to answer questions.

Appendix E: Researcher Journal⁴¹

110	<i>Being able to read of for</i>	
111	<i>that matter possible improving the</i>	
112	<i>learners' reading skills seem to</i>	
113	<i>have made all the difference!!!</i>	
114	<i>The learners was amazing, they gave a</i>	
115	<i>demonstration of the programme and</i>	
116	<i><u>everybody participated!!!</u></i>	2.2 Learners' learning behaviour in the classroom
117	<i>The learners used a lot more</i>	
118	<i>English in the classrooms! It still</i>	
119	<i>seems as if the learners are still</i>	
120	<i>struggling, however there has</i>	
121	<i>definitely been a change! ☺ ☺ ☺</i>	
122	<i>Yolanda and I also felt like it might</i>	
123	<i>have been better visiting the classes</i>	
124	<i>if the learners did not expect it, that</i>	
125	<i>way the learners might be more</i>	
126	<i>natural! What stood out for me is</i>	
127	<i><u>that the learners could read more now that</u></i>	1.2 Learners' reading abilities
128	<i><u>they were able to read. I really enjoyed</u></i>	
129	<i>the informal conversational interview I</i>	
130	<i>had with Xxxx! The feedback was very</i>	
131	<i>positive! <u>The kids was using the library.</u></i>	3.1 Library and reading culture
132	<i>I think the overall feedback today</i>	
133	<i>was very positive!</i>	
134	<i>I really started to feel a bit</i>	
135	<i>emotional during the last session.... ☹</i>	
136	<i>I couldn't believe that everything was</i>	
137	<i>coming to an end. I have a lot of</i>	
138	<i>compassion for the school and the</i>	
139	<i>people I worked with! I wished that</i>	
140	<i>I could be involved in future projects</i>	
141	<i>at the school! I would love to help</i>	
142	<i>the school in any way possible!</i>	
143	<i>Today was very sad and emotional</i>	
144	<i>for me! Hopefully this is not the END!</i>	

⁴¹ This is an extract from the researcher journal. For all the researcher journal entries, see the DVD Appendix E.

Appendix F: Focus-group transcriptions⁴²

Pre-intervention focus-group discussion one: transcriptions

55	name and surname on the first line, put your signature on the second	
56	line and write today's date – 13 May 2009 on the third line. Does	
57	anybody need a pen? (furniture moving, people walking around)	
58	(writing on the blackboard)	
	Facilitator 3:	
59	I think we must add at the bottom of the page whether you want your	
60	identity know or unknown. And when we publish the research if you	
61	want to be seen on the photos or not. You can just copy from the board	
62	and mark the option that you choose.	
	Facilitator 1:	
63	We hear that you as educators are experiencing some problems with	
64	the learners regarding their language. The learners do not understand	
65	the language. So we are forming a group today that have to work	
66	together to find an answer to this problem. That is why we are here	
67	today to discuss this problem. Maybe we must start to discuss where	
68	we are going to start to fix this problem.	
	Facilitator 3:	
69	Our aim with this study is to work with the educators. To find a solution	
70	for this problem together.	
	Participant A:	
71	<u>We have to start with reading. If the learners can not speak or write</u>	3.2 School structure Reading Culture,
72	<u>English so how are they supposed to read it?</u>	1.2 Learner's reading abilities.

⁴² In this Appendix, only extracts from the pre-focus group discussions (one and two) and the post-focus group discussion are presented. All the pre-focus group discussions (one and two) and post-focus group discussion are available on the DVD (Appendix F).

73	Participant A: <u>We do not have a lot of textbooks and storybooks.</u>	2.3 Classroom resources and reading culture.
74	Facilitator 2: So what do you use for the learners to read?	
75	Participant B: <u>We make a copy of the extract.</u> But the photocopier is out of order.	2.1 Teachers' teaching and learning practices in the classroom
76	Facilitator 4: Are there newspapers and magazines available at the school?	
77	Participant E: <u>Sometimes we bring them from home.</u>	2.1 Teachers' teaching and learning practices in the classroom
78	Facilitator 3: How do you plan for a lesson?	
79	Participant B: <u>We look at the LO's and the AS of the curriculum then we work from</u>	2.1 Teachers' teaching and learning practices in the classroom
80	<u>there.</u>	
81	Facilitator 3: How able are the learners?	
82	Participant C: <u>Most of the time we must translate the work for the learners. They do</u>	1.2 Learner's reading abilities.
83	<u>not understand English.</u>	
84	Facilitator 4: Maybe learners can write their own stories. All the stories can then be put in a book – form. Then that book can be used as reading material.	

85	How do you feel about something or a technique like that?	
86	Participant B:	
87	<u>We first need to help the learners to read before they can write their</u>	1.2 Learner's

Pre-intervention focus-group discussion two: transcriptions

45	confusing to the learners	
	Participant B:	
46	<u>I don't even speak SiSwati.</u>	2.1 Teachers' teaching and learning practices in the classroom
	Facilitator D:	
47	<u>Me neither.</u>	2.1 Teachers' teaching and learning practices in the classroom
	Facilitator 3:	
48	Can I ask you do you think it is because the learners do not	
50	understand the language or they just choose not to speak the	
51	language?	
	Participant B:	
52	<u>Some of them are not even interested in learning it.</u> They will even	1.1 Learner's motivation and attitudes towards reading.
53	claim that English is not our mother-tongue.	
	Facilitator 3:	
54	They would be right.	

55	Participant B: <u>I think it is a negative attitude.</u>	1.1 Learner's motivation and attitudes towards reading.
56	Facilitator 2: Sir you had your hand up.	
57 58 59	Participant A: <u>What I wanted to say is communication is important. You see the learners are not using the language of learning and teaching. They are not confident.</u>	1.2 Learner's reading abilities 1.1 Learner's motivation and attitudes towards reading.
60 61 62	Facilitator 2: You feel it's also that they don't have the confidence because xxx said it also that they don't want to or they feel they can't, they are not able to.	
63	Participant A: <u>Yes, they lack confidence.</u>	1.1 Learner's motivation and attitudes towards reading.
64	Facilitator 4: How are the other educators experiencing this?	
65 66 67	Participant B: Ja, I agree with what they said. <u>And you can say they have a negative attitude, but there are some who cannot understand a single sentence in English. So if you give them anything to do they don't.</u>	1.2 Learner's reading abilities

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Post-intervention focus-group discussion: Transcriptions

	Participant F:	
52	<u>They need to improve their pronunciation</u> and the <u>learners'</u>	1.2 Learners' reading abilities
53	<u>have a lot of confidence.</u>	1.1 Learners' motivation and attitudes towards reading
	Facilitator 3:	
54	When they did the class observation, they could see that the	
55	learners were not as worried about reading and spelling.	
	Participant F:	
56	The program is working. (Pause) <u>The learners are using the</u>	3.1 Library and reading culture
57	<u>library.</u> (Pause). <u>They want to read more without the help of an</u>	1.1 Learners' motivation and attitudes towards reading
58	<u>educator and their attitudes has changed.</u> (Pause). They stick	
59	to their timetables and <u>return the books after five days and then</u>	
60	<u>begin with a new one.</u> That is a big thing.	
	Facilitator 1 :	
61	Uhm...If I understand you correctly, their attitude has changed?	
62	Do you think they can now read better?	
	Participant F:	
63	Ja.. <u>they can now read better.</u> (Pause). This is why they are	1.2 Learners' reading abilities
64	coming here. (Chair moving). I think the educator that is using	3.1 Library and reading culture
65	the program is making the program work. <u>They were always</u>	

66	<u>scared of the library and now they are coming here.</u>	
	Facilitator 2:	
67	Something specifically that you did in the classes that made the	
68	learners' come to the library?	

Appendix G: Field notes⁴³

280	What is different/What has changed at the school:	
281	<u>The learners have improved: They are able to write stories</u>	2.2
282	They can give it their own ending	
283	They can even dramatize it.	
284	<u>If you even give them a familiar story they can dramatize it.</u>	2.2
285	<u>They can translate a story</u>	
286	<u>They made the musical instruments to accommodate the</u>	
287	<u>stories from the programme. They also write songs</u>	
288	<u>that goes with the story. It is very creative.</u>	
289	<u>They can write short stories and do a role play (from the</u>	
290	<u>programme). We motivate them by allowing home cloths.</u>	2.1
291	<u>Next week we have: speech competitions on the topic</u>	
292	<u>drug abuse.</u> Grade 7 B and 7 E the last two periods.	
293	We all sit in front of the library with umbrellas.	
294	1 st prize: Dictionary	
295	2 nd prize: Pencil bag and eraser	
296	3 rd prize: Pencil bag	
297	<u>And we publish the winners story and poem in the Newspaper</u>	2.1
298	<u>We are proud, we put it up on the wall and use it as a resource</u>	
299	<u>and we put it on the school's story board.</u>	
300	<u>We have a literacy corner in the library</u>	2.1, 3.1
301	<u>the learners can work there.</u>	
302	<u>Reading: the learners work together, the help each other</u>	2.1
303	<u>More learners are willing to read one by one it</u>	2.2
304	is a good strategy.	
305	<u>Every period we spend 10 minutes reading</u>	2.1
306	<u>We pair one stronger learner, match with the weaker</u>	
307	<u>learner and let them read outside.</u>	
308	Or the read in the office. <u>We also divide the learners</u>	
309	<u>in groups: adjust difficulty level.</u>	
310	<u>Informal conversational interview with Xxxx, Xxx, Xxx, Xxx</u>	
311	<u>and Xxx.</u>	
312	What would you say is still difficult to do? The pronunciation of	
313	the alphabet sounds.	
314	<u>What has changed? The learners showed an improvement in:</u>	2.2
315	<u>reading</u>	
316	<u>writing</u>	
317	<u>spelling</u>	

⁴³ In this Appendix, only extracts from the field notes are presented. All the field notes are available on the DVD (Appendix G).

318	<u>They also spend more time reading</u>	1.1
319	<u>The number of learners taking books</u>	
320	<u>from the library has increased</u>	
321	<u>The learners enjoy reading more</u>	
322	<u>The learners bring back books and ask to take another</u>	
323	<u>It seems as if the learners found reading to be more enjoyable</u>	
324	<u>and they also showed more confidence when reading</u>	1.2
325	It is a good programme.	
326	<u>The learner's marks have also improved.</u>	2.2
327	<u>They can write their own plays, before they could not.</u>	
328	They didn't deserve their oral marks before	
329	now their marks are much better.	
330	<u>They took the learners books to the HOD</u>	2.1
331	<u>because they were very proud and impressed.</u>	
332	Doing the alphabet and pronouncing the	
333	words made the difference.	
334	<u>With the CAS moderation we did not</u>	2.1
335	<u>always have the time to do the programme</u>	
336	<u>so we gave it for homework.</u>	
337	Observation in Xxxx class	
338	Xxx read to the learners <u>(the learners received textbooks)</u>	2.3
339	We are distracting the learners. They have to read a	
340	dialog. <u>The learners talk among each other.</u>	2.2
341	<u>They talked about the play, they used more vocab even</u>	
342	<u>difficult words. The learners understood the work and</u>	
343	<u>interacted with the teacher. The learners were able</u>	1.2
344	<u>to read the play, they read it well.</u>	
345	<u>The learners seem to enjoy the play</u>	2.2
346	<u>The learners pay more attention.</u>	
347	<u>They learners followed in their books.</u>	
348	<u>There are no posters from the programme up in the classroom.</u>	2.3
349	<u>Xxx has to help the learners, few are doing the play</u>	2.1
350	<u>The learners make mistakes, but Xxx helps them.</u>	
351	<u>Learners talk to each other.</u>	2.2
352	<u>They showed little emotion when they read.</u>	1.2
353	Xxx ask the learners to be quite.	
354	The discipline is not so good, <u>learners doesn't listen.</u>	2.2
355	It might be better to visit the classes unexpectedly.	
356	<u>The teacher replaced one of the characters, a</u>	2.1
357	<u>learner had to read.</u> The lesson is ended.	

Appendix H: Consent forms⁴⁴

Educator consent for participating in a research study

A research project of the University of Pretoria

Invitation to participate

We would like to invite you _____ (full name), to participate in a research study. To decide whether or not to participate in this study, it is important to know more about this study. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and a decision not to participate will not in any way be held against you. If you decide to take part in this study please sign this consent form.

Description of the research

The purpose of our research is to gain a better understanding of resources and strengths identified within the teaching paradigm. The aim also includes looking at techniques to use to advance career development. This study will help you, the educator, with teaching strategies in order to improve your career. It will therefore assist you with techniques to use while teaching. There will be various focuses, such as career development, as well as linguistic difficulties identified within teaching. If you decide to participate in the study you will spend some time with us answering some questions. There is no right or wrong answer, so you need not be concerned. We will spend time with you during the next few days and possibly in August of this year again.

Risks and Confidentiality

We do not foresee any risks in your participation in this study. If at any time you do not wish to continue, you may withdraw. Your identity, as well as the information gained will be kept strictly confidential. Only the research team will have access to this information. Because confidentiality is important we would expect that any information you provide, be kept private and that you would not discuss this information with anyone.

⁴⁴ This is only an example of the consent form given to the teacher participants.

Benefits

We hope that you will benefit from this study that you will have the chance to add to our teaching techniques, or even learn some new ones in order to develop your career. There are no financial benefits to this study.

What are your rights as participants?

As mentioned earlier, participation in this study is voluntary. If you at anytime wish to withdraw from the research, you may do so. No questions will be asked, regarding this matter.

Ethics review

This study has been approved by the Health Sciences Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria.

Questions

If you have any enquiries or if something is not clear to you, you are welcome to ask questions before or during the course of the research.

Informed Consent (Signatures)

I have read and I understand the information given in this consent form. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have had time to consider my participation. My participation is voluntary, and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

Name: _____ (please print)

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix I: Department of Education consent forms

Appendix J: Previous round of thematic analysis⁴⁵

Themes Identified:	Sub Themes:	Data: Field notes	Data: Transcriptions – Pre-intervention focus group discussion one	Data: Transcriptions – Pre-intervention focus group discussion two	Data: Transcriptions – Post-intervention focus group discussion	Data: Researcher Journal	Data: Photographs	Data: Minutes of Meeting Documentation
Reading Culture in the School System T1 Including Criteria: Reading behaviour and attitudes identified outside school practises. Excluding Criteria: Reading behaviour and attitudes identified in school practice.	1.1 Library and reading culture 1.2 School Reading Culture 1.3 Influences and changes in the community 1.4 School influences and strategies to encourage a reading culture	1.1 Line: 57-58: Media is currently not being used. 1.2 Line 210-211: He informed us that a formal reading period have been implemented since the third term of this year (2010). 1.3 Line: 219-220: ...would implement a formal reading period as from next week. 1.3 Line: 230-231: The principal informed us that they have already implemented a formal reading period at the school.	1.2: Line: 71: We have to start with reading. 1.2: P-B: Line: 93: We can discuss a time where the whole school can read.	1.3 Pre, P-B: Line: 73-75: ...there is no one to help them and there is very little encouragement that they get from the school to use English. 1.2: P-F: Line: 77: Even reading is not reinforced in the school it is not reinforced.....	1.1 Post, P-F: Line: 56-57: The learners are using the library. 1.1. Post, P-F: Line: 65-66: They were always scared of the library and now they are coming here. 1.1 Post, P-B: Line: 151: They will even come to the library.	1.1: Line 131: Die kinders gebruik die biblioteek.	1.1/2/3, P1: Library rules written on a board. 1.1. P4: Library equipped with books and shelves (resources). 1.1./2.3 P5: Library books organised according to sections (Resources). 1.1. P6: Reading news papers independently. 1.1. P7: Procedure for library attendance in place 1.1. P8: Library implemented a circulation register. 1.1. P9: Reading English books independently. 1.1. P10: Reading	1.4 MOM – 21 May: Line 37: ...learners should communicate with English... 1.2 MOM – 21 May: Line 38: ...reading period (also newspapers and old magazines). 1.4 MOM – 21 May: Line 39-43: ...debate and speech contest...awards should be given to learners... dictionary usage (improve their vocabulary)... provision of enough LTSM. 1.3 MOM – 21 May: Line 43: Improvement of the library (it should be equipped). 1.4 MOM – 21 May: Line 50-51: Clean the wall and make environment conducive for learners.

Reading Culture in the Classroom system T2 Including Criteria: Reading behaviour and attitudes in classroom. Excluding Criteria: Reading behaviour and attitudes outside classroom practice.	2.1 Teachers' teaching and learning practices 2.2 Learners learning 2.3 Classroom resources	2.3 Line: 72-73: Limited resources available (only four textbooks per class). 2.3 Line: 61-62: We are aiming at making approximately 15-20 starter packs. The idea behind this is to equip the grade seven and eight educators with some resources to help them. 2.1 Line: 147-149: Simon noem ook dat hy bekommerd is oor die toepaslikheid van tyd en die besturing daarvan binne klaskamer konteks. 2.2 Line: 206-208: I immediately notice that some of the learners had textbooks, and they were lip reading along with one of the students who was reading aloud. 2.2 Line: 212: ...improvements in	2.3 P-A: Line: 73: We do not have a lot of textbooks and story books. 2.1 P-B: Line: 87-88: We first need to help the learners to read before they can write the own story. Everybody agrees. 2.1 P-C: Line: 94: We also need to motivate the learners to read more.	2.1 Pre, P-D: Line 34-37 Sometimes it is difficult for you, when you want to move your pace setter you have to talk about writing constantly. Which means if you teach composition, how do they express themselves. You all want them to pass and have good marks. It's quite difficult. 2.1 Pre, P-B: Line: 46: I don't even speak SiSwati. 2.1 Pre, P-D: Line: 47: Me neither. 2.2 Pre, P-A: Line: 58: ...learners are not using the language of learning and teaching. 2.2 Pre, P-B: Line: 66-67: ...but, there are some who cannot understand a single sentence in English. So if you give them anything to do they don't. 2.2 Pre, P-B: Line: 71: I think it is English as a whole,	2.2 Post, P-G: Line: 22-23: They look at the picture and then they learn by looking at the picture. They don't forget the information. 2.1 Post, P-F: Line: 34-35: Sometimes I use it for homework or I adjust the programme they help themselves among one another. 2.2 Post, P-F: Line: 69-70: I encourage them to read more English and take out books from the library. 2.1 Post, P-F: Line: 70-71: If they come up with a difficult word they must come and ask for help. 2.1 Post, P-C: Line: 91-92: I used the ABC for them to pronounce and	2.2 Line: 116: Everybody participated.	English books independently 2.1, P2: Teachers teaching and learning practised in the classroom: Teachers gives an activity for learners to complete. 2.3, P2: Classroom resources and reading culture: Teachers are using black boards as a teaching resource. 2.3, P3: Classroom resources and reading culture: Different posters displayed on the walls 2.3, P4: Library and reading culture: Library equipped with books and shelves. 2.3, P5: Library and reading culture: Library equipped with books and shelves. 2.3, P9:	2.1 MOM – 21 May: Line 40-41: ...awards should be given to learners... dictionary vocabulary).
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⁴⁵ In this Appendix, only screen-capture examples from the thematic analysis (round one and two) are presented. The complete copy of the thematic analysis (round one and two) is available on the DVD (Appendix J).

Appendix K: Ethical clearance certificate



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

DEGREE AND PROJECT

INVESTIGATOR(S)

DEPARTMENT

DATE CONSIDERED

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

EP 07/02/04

M.Ed

A literacy intervention with teachers: describing reading culture in a secondary school

Michelle Loraine du Plessis

Educational Psychology

22 June 2012

APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

**CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS
COMMITTEE**

Prof L Ebersohn

DATE

22 June 2012

CC

Jeannie Beukes

JC Joubert

Liesel Ebersohn

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.