



University of Zululand

**EXPERIENCES OF TEACHING READING IN ISIZULU IN GRADE 3 IN
ILEMBE DISTRICT SCHOOLS**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Prisca Hlengiwe Shoji-Kunene, assert that:

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ABSTRACT

There is much concern regarding learners who struggle with reading. The study aimed to look into teachers' experiences teaching reading in isiZulu in Grade 3 in iLembe District schools. All of the learners spoke isiZulu as their home language. The research was conducted qualitatively. The interpretive paradigm was the study's paradigmatic position. Individual teacher interviews, classroom observations, and content analysis were used to gather data. After the interviews were taped, transcribed, and analyzed, the data were grouped into themes. Three schools were chosen, each with three Grade 3 classes. Learners participated because the primary goal was to observe teachers' experiences teaching reading in isiZulu. The purpose of this study was to learn more about the teachers' experiences teaching reading in isiZulu in Grade 3 classrooms, rather than to assess learners' performance. The goal of this study was to find out how teachers in isiZulu classrooms teach reading. The study's findings suggested that the teachers who took part had a weak understanding of reading skills. They saw teaching reading as a difficult task because they had no idea what reading tactics were or how to use them. Teachers spent little time with learners discussing reading, and there was no consistent approach to teaching reading among them. Teachers also demonstrated a lack of theoretical knowledge and practical expertise in teaching reading skills, which leads to teachers adopting a negative attitude toward their learners (who struggle to read). Although the participating teachers claimed to understand reading, interviews and classroom observations demonstrated no correlation between what they stated and what they performed in practice in their classes.

Teaching reading has been an ongoing challenge in Grade 3 classrooms. These findings revealed that teachers' classroom practice was not consistent with current best practice and the modern theories of teaching reading. This factor negatively affects their expertise in teaching reading using the CAPS (2011) recommended reading methodologies in general. The challenges faced by applying different reading methodologies might be the reason for learners' inability to achieve successful reading outcomes in Grade 3 classrooms. They felt forgotten because the instructions were only in English and not African languages like isiZulu. As a result, there are no isiZulu teachings for teachers with isiZulu examples. Workshops had also been ineffective for isiZulu teachers. In other schools, the survey found a dearth of learning

support tools, a scarcity of books, and a lack of a variety of reading materials for learners.

Key words: Comprehension, Foundation Phase, Grade 3, Guided Reading, Home Language, isiZulu, Literacy, phonemic awareness, Reading, Shared Reading, Vocabulary

ACRONYMS

CAPS	: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	: Department of Basic Education
FP	: Foundation Phase
LoLT	: Language of Teaching and Learning
LiEP	: Language in Education Policy
PIRLS	: Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
UNESCO	: United Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
ZPD	: Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Early reading has risen to the top of the priority list for continuous learning throughout a learner's schooling career. Reading and comprehending texts is critical to a child's success in school and throughout life. Teacher's, particularly those in Grade 3, face a significance challenge in making reading a reality for all learners. The process of developing the fundamental abilities required for learning to read, namely "the ability to acquire meaning from print", is known as reading skills acquisition (Verhoeven, 2000, pp.313-330).

Poor literacy and numeracy are generally related to historical disadvantages and poor socio-economic conditions. In South Africa, there are a number of specific reasons for the problems related to illiteracy, and these need to be addressed through schooling and other development strategies. Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write. Hence, the teaching of both skills is a key teaching component in early literacy. The current study will concentrate on reading only. (Joubert et al.,2008, p. 81) state that "Reading is more than merely decoding of signs and symbols into sounds and words. It is a message-getting, problem solving activity, which increase in power and flexibility the ore it is practiced."

The National Reading Strategies emphasizes that "Reading is, doubt the most important linguistic skill that needs to be developed in young children. Reading serves as a building block upon which all other learning takes place. Reading failure begins in early grades, and it is at that level that interventions must be made" (DoE, 2008, p.19). In 2001 and 2004, the Department of Education conducted national systemic evaluations to establish literacy and numeracy level in primary schools. These surveys showed shockingly low levels of reading ability across the country. Large numbers of our children simply do not read. The Department of Education continues to investigate why the levels are so poor, and to find ways to deal with the problem.

The National Strategy for Reading (2008) was part of its response in improving the teaching of reading. South Africa faces many challenges in promoting literacy,

especially reading. It is rare to find schools with well-used general libraries. Many homes have no books. Books in African languages are scarce. Some classrooms have no books, and even those

classes which do have sets of readers, often have them at the wrong level. The books are not enough to assist learners to improve reading skills in the classrooms.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There are undoubtedly various challenges which influence Grade 3 learners' poor reading skills in isiZulu mother tongue as discussed above. The study aimed to investigate teachers' practices in teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue to Grade 3 learners in iLembe District. Research on teachers' experience in teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classroom is limited.

This study will make a great contribution on the importance of reading as part of literacy development in isiZulu. It will benefit parents, teachers, iLembe District Schools and KwaZulu Natal Department of Education officials by highlighting literacy classroom practices and factors that influence reading practices in isiZulu Home Language literacy. As a result, the language and

literacy curriculum policy will be informed on effective methods for teaching reading in Grade 3 isiZulu Home Language Literacy.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The low reading level of primary school learners is a concern across sub-Saharan Africa (Dubeck et al., 2012). These authors highlight that amongst the many reasons associated with literacy challenges in the sub-Saharan region are poverty, poor health, learner's limited access to print resources, lack of parent involvement, the low quality of teaching, lack of experience to the language of learning and teaching (LOLT), inadequate teacher training. NEEDU (2012) in different research studies have stressed that teachers in South Africa lack the capacity for teaching reading, writing and

numeracy. It has been established that learners in foundation phase schools struggle to read in isiZulu at the appropriate level.

The 2011 Annual National Assessment (ANA) systemic evaluation literacy reports discovered that learners' performance in almost all grades was below the expected standard. The poor performance of Grade 3 and 6 learners' reading and writing skills is associated with the poor teaching of literacy in the foundation phase (Howie et al., 2006, Howie et al., 2011). Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2011) included questions and passages from newly created reading assessment passages. For nations where most children are still learning core reading skills after the primary school cycle, PIRLS Literacy was offered as a bridge to PIRLS to measure basic reading skills.

According to PIRLS 2016, rural areas achieved much lower results (291). PIRLS 2016 gathered data on home literacy supports, curriculum and curricular implementation, instructional approaches, and school resources in each participating country. The goal is to test reading comprehension, track literacy trends, and expand effective reading literacy measurement at the lower end of the accomplishment scale. Reading comprehension and making sense of written words are undervalued. The PIRLS Literacy and PIRLS examinations share reading pas

sages and questions, allowing the two exams to be linked and their results to be compared. When reading online, the computer-based assessment of learner competence is acquiring and utilising information.

According to the country's findings for school success, girls performed better in reading than boys. According to PIRLS 2016, results from rural settings achieved significantly below (291) whereas urban areas achieved 384-393 and township low score was 312. Only 78% of South African Grade 4 children could not reach the lowest benchmark, i.e., the lowest international benchmark of 400 PIRLS (2016, p.4).

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The lack of limited research on foundation phase studies of teachers experienced in teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms prompted the study's aim. There is a knowledge gap on teaching reading in African languages apart from

research by Nkosi (2011). Nkosi asserts that if learners become literate in their mother tongue, they can read in any language. Furthermore, PIRLS, 2016 findings revealed that learners could not read in English or their native language. Language policy debates also influence the study's rationale.

The study was also motivated by a lack of knowledge about teachers' current literacy teaching strategies and their impact on learners' literacy development. According to NEEDU (2012), teachers are not well-versed in teaching literacy in the mother tongue. This study will also determine the teachers' knowledge of teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue in grade 3 classroom. The study aims to understand the strategies and approaches that teacher's use when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms. What challenges do teachers face when teaching reading, and how do they address these challenges in the classroom?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To achieve the aim of this study, the following objectives were formulated:

- To determine the tactics and approaches teachers to utilize in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu.
- To find out what problems teachers have when teaching reading in the isiZulu mother tongue in grade three.
- To establish how teachers, address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to address the research questions, the following were to be asked:

- What tactics and approaches do teachers employ in the classroom when teaching reading isiZulu in mother tongue in Grade 3?
- What challenges do teachers encounter when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3?
- How do teachers address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3?

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in the Phambela circuit, which comprised 17 primary schools. The researcher sampled one teacher from one school teaching Grade 3. Three schools were purposively sampled, which represented comparatively extreme levels of reading pace difference. Grade 3 is the exit point in the Foundation Phase. Learners are more likely to read once they have reached Grade 3 level.

1.8 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

1.8.1 Exit Point (Level)

The exit point means Grade 3, which is the final grade of the Foundation Phase in the GET band in primary schools. Learners from this grade will progress to Grade 4 provided they have met the progression requirements. They are exiting the Foundation Phase and commencing the Intermediate Phase, which is Grade 4-6, and this marks the change in pedagogy as mother tongue language becomes the subjects and first additional language becomes the LOLT.

1.8.2 Foundation Phase

In South African schools, a phase in General Education and Training (GET) band constitutes Grade R to Grade 3. Languages (Home Language and First Additional Language), Numeracy and Life Skills are taught in these grades with different time allocations stipulated in the CAPS document. In this study, the Language of Teaching and Learning is isiZulu mother tongue. LoLt refers to what used to be the medium of instruction. Besides being more appropriate in the context of the new approach to schooling, the new term places the emphasis on the language in which the child learns, usually the home language.

1.8.3 Grade 3 learners

Grade 3 learners are usually between the ages of nine and ten. Learners at this stage begin to apply reasoning to tangible experiences, allowing them to progress beyond one-dimensional thinking. The concrete operational stage, according to Mwamwenda (2004, p.103), marks the beginning of logical reasoning based on experiences and

factual data. Grade 3 is the last grade of the Foundation Phase, which includes Grades R, 1, 2, and 3. Grade 3 comprises students aged nine to ten years old for this study.

1.8.4 Mother tongue

The mother tongue specifies the language that the individual is most familiar with and proficient at conversing in (Erling et al., 2017). Mashiya (2010, p.94) defines mother tongue as “the language that the child knows better when they first come to the school environment.” In this study, the concepts underlying mother tongue and home language used substitutable as they have the same meaning (Denizer, 2017). Home Language is the language spoken in the child’s environment, specifically at home and in the community. The DBE (2011) stipulates that a home language is a language that the learner best understands first entry into the school environment.

1.8.5 Reading

Many researchers have many definitions of reading, yet the simplest definition agreed by many is that reading is a complex process of understanding and interoperating a text composed of written signs. Readers use background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand a written text. NEEDU (2012) defines reading as the process by which learners learn to engage meaningfully with what they learn in a text. The DoE (2008) defines reading as the ability to decode meaning from texts and also the ability to recognize each word separately in a text, using the knowledge of letter and sound.

1.9 CHAPTER DIVISION

There are five chapters in the study report:

The First Chapter

The first chapter serves as an introduction to the subject and provides background information. The problem statement, objectives, and goals of the study, the significance of the study, definitions of operational terminology, and the overall study strategy were all included in this chapter.

Chapter Two

This chapter presents critical overview literature on the teacher's experiences and challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu in Grade 3 classrooms and interventions of addressing them and explains more on the research topic and its aims.

Chapter Three

The research design and methodology used in the study are presented in this chapter.

Chapter Four

The data collected was presented, analysed, and discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Five

The chapter presented the summary, findings and recommendations from the study. Suggestions were extended for future researchers of the study.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter one introduced the study laying out the research objectives and research questions. The delimitations and limitations of the study were outlined as well. The next chapter discusses the literature review.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 OVERVIEW

This chapter focusses on reviewing relevant literature to this study international and local perspectives. International literature was reviewed to be aware of the approaches that are used worldwide. Furthermore, local perspectives were vital understanding the current state of reading in South African schools, challenges teachers experience in teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in grade 3 classrooms. Some of the approaches that are used to teach reading as well as theories that underpin this study.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

Reading is observed as an ability to recognize and say each separate word in a text using knowledge of letters and sounds. Ramabenyane (2012, p. 29) provides a detailed description of the term reading, as having “different but related meanings in the education context”, which can refer to a “skill or a process”. She adds that as one of the four necessary language skills, reading enhances the ability to turn the collection of written symbols (letters) into spoken language; however, this is a complex process of constructing meaning from the written text. Similarly, reading is explained as “a process in which information from the text and the reader’s background act together to provide meaning” (Read, cited in Joubert, Bester, Meyer & Evans, 2013, p. 102). Unfortunately, learners who cannot read do not often succeed academically. For this reason, the DBE (2008) provided a well-planned reading programme aimed at developing learners to become skillful readers. The planned reading programmes indicate the importance of enriching and equipping the Grade 3 learners with reading skills and strategies to use in becoming fluent readers.

2.3 CURRENT STATE OF READING IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

A growing body of research indicates a deepening crisis in our schooling system indistinguishably linked to the low levels of literacy being achieved by learners at all

levels of the education system (Goodman, Gary & Wood, 2014; Ssentanda, 2014). In 2001 and 2004 the National Department of Education (DoE, 2008) conducted two national systemic evaluations to establish the literacy and numeracy levels in primary schools. The findings of the evaluations revealed that 54% of Grade 3 learners fell below on reading competency. The surveys showed low levels of reading ability across the country. The average score for reading and writing of 52,000 Grade 3 learners from 1,400 mainly urban schools was 39%. The Department of Education (DoE, 2008) stated that large numbers of learners simply do not read. There is evidence that learners attending South African schools have reading problems (Hugo, 2010). From research reports, it seems as if the teaching of reading in the foundation phase is not effective resulting in many young learners attending South African schools having a reading problem (Hugo, 2010). Hugo (2010, p. 135) argued that “learners who do not learn to read in their first and second grades are likely to be at risk of academic failure and/or dropping out of school”.

As a means to improve the teaching standards and to assess, teachers’ performance the Annual National Assessment (ANA) was implemented (Rensburg, 2015). The Department of Education (DoE, 2014) conducted an Annual National Assessment (ANA) in September 2014 for learners in Grades 1-3 in Language and Mathematics. According to the diagnostic report, key findings were that learners could not read with comprehension, wrote words and sentences that were incoherent; lacked the ability to make inferences from the given information in a text and were unable to spell frequently used words correctly. The most striking weakness is the inability of learners to read with understanding (DoE, 2014). In the foundation phase more than 60% of learners achieved 50% or more in English. The statistics indicate that “there are still challenges regarding the teaching of reading in South Africa schools beginning in the foundation phase” (Rensburg, 2015, p. 111).

2.4 COMPONENTS OF TEACHING READING

Because this study will focus on what the notion indicates, learning to read is one of the most essential abilities learners can master the concept of reading as defined underpins this research. When a learner begins learning to read, it is crucial to

remember the five essential components of reading that every learner requires to become a confident and fluent reader. Teaching Reading in the Early Grades, a teacher's handbook published by the Department of Education in 2008, highlighted five components of reading. Phonemic awareness, word identification, understanding, vocabulary, and fluency components.

- **Phonemic awareness**

Learners acquire phonemic awareness by learning sounds (phonemes), syllables, and words. The ability to hear, identify and manipulate these discrete sound units is known as phonemic awareness. It is one of the essential abilities that learners must master to learn to read. According to Hugo and Lenyai (2013), phonemic awareness can isolate the different sounds in a language. DoE (2008) suggested that phonemic awareness is the ability to think about and work with individual sounds and notice the sounds in the spoken words. DoE (2008) noted that before learners learn to read some print, they need to be aware of how the sounds in words work.

It went on to say that learners must comprehend that words are made up of speech sounds or phonemes, which are the smallest elements of a spoken word's sound. Phonemic awareness can also be adopted through the use of songs, rhymes, and poems, according to the Department of Education (2008). Furthermore, according to the DBE (2011), phonemic awareness occurs when learners recognize that speech is made up of separate sounds that make up words, which then make up sentences. Wium, Louw and Ellof (2011) also see phonological awareness as necessary in teaching reading. They also sustain, like the DBE, that songs and rhymes need to be included when teaching reading.

- **Word recognition**

A growing vocabulary is an essential component of academic and reading success. The more words a learner knows, the better he or she will be at reading and comprehending literature. Every learner has different abilities when it comes to reading. A child's speaking and listening vocabulary will determine how many words they can add to their reading and writing vocabulary. One of the most effective strategies for learners to expand their vocabulary is to read a range of books.

Word recognition refers to readers' abilities to read new words (DoE, 2008). The Department of Education (2008) emphasises the importance of phonemic awareness and sight words in word recognition. Similarly, Cofu (2013) points out that learners must distinguish some individual words to read unfamiliar words when it comes to word recognition. High-frequency words are encouraged, especially in isiZulu, where words are spelt as they sound.

- **Comprehension**

Reading comprehension is the ability to process text, understand its meaning, and integrate with what the reader already knows. Maphumulo (2010) states that comprehension is the ability to understand the message conveyed by the author. She further explains that learners can read with understanding once the message has been grasped. The CAPS document states that in trying to comprehend, learners can often read in their language but cannot understand what they read, which results in what people call 'barking at print' as they read without meaning. The text says that learners do not have enough vocabulary or grammar to understand what they are reading.

It recommends that teachers build the learners' vocabulary and grammar by exposing them to different readings at their level and reading more in their language. The DoE (2008) stated that comprehension has to be developed from the beginning. They have asserted that comprehension cannot be left until learners learn by breaking the words into components or until they can read a certain number of sight words. They went on to say that activating learners' prior knowledge, reading aloud to them, developing learners' decoding skills, assisting them in using clues in and around the text, developing fluency, increasing vocabulary, and developing learners' ability to apply higher-order thinking skills like analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting are all excellent ways to help them develop comprehension.

- **Vocabulary**

Hugo and Lenyai (2013) highlight that vocabulary is the set of words with a particular language familiar to a person. According to the Department of Education (2008), learners need to know and grasp a variety of terms in order to communicate various ideas. They further explain that engaging learners in reading different material can increase their vocabulary and that knowing many words will help them with fluency and the comprehension of text. The DoE (2008) argued that some vocabulary could be

learned incidentally, but it strongly emphasized that there is still a need to teach vocabulary in a planned and deliberate way.

- **Fluency**

A fluent reader is able to read aloud a connected text at a good (conversational) pace, accurately and with meaningful expression. The learner is able to decode the familiar words in the text automatically and is able to decode words not seen before. Accurate, well-placed reading with appropriate expression should sound like spoken language.

Fluency is the bridge between word recognition and comprehension (in which meaning is gained from what is read). The key terms for understanding the components of reading fluency are pace, accuracy, expression (or prosody), and automatic decoding.

2.5 READING PROCESSES

The reading process focuses on two fundamental aspects: cognitive process, and social process. The interaction of teachers and learners through text is a social process, whereas the cognitive process includes the reading processes before reading, during reading, and after reading. According to the DBE (2008), reading processes are familiar to those who have the reading skills. Teachers, being those implementing the reading process, are the more the MKOs as indicated by Vygotsky (1978). Hence, teachers need to equip learners with skills that will help them make sense of the text. This involves the need to predict what the text is all about, sound words, decode, and blend words. The different reading methods are incorporated in the reading process: shared reading, guided reading, and reading aloud, and incorporating the pre-read, during-read, and post-read process.

The cognitive process is about the thinking functions of readers as they read the text. The cognitive processes are bottom-up and top-down approaches. The bottom-up approach has its roots in behaviourist principles. According to Lenjani (2018, p.31), the Behaviourist Theory "is a learning theory that only focuses on objectively observable behaviours and discounts any independent activities of the mind."

Dechant (1991) believes that a bottom-up reading model emphasises a single-direction to part-to-whole processing of text. Bottom-up is about decoding letters into words,

phrases, and sentences. The top-down approach is rooted in the Psycholinguistic Theory. As a top-down theorist, Goodman (1971) defines reading as a “psycholinguistic guessing game” and emphasises that readers benefit by making predictions from their prior knowledge to understand their reading. Nordquist (2018, p.31) believes that the psycholinguistic theory “is the study of mental aspects of language and speech. It is primarily concerned with how language is presented and processed in their brain”. It means learners as readers create meaning by using their prior knowledge, predictions, speculations, and questions to understand text.

2.5.1 Before-reading

In the before-reading process, the teacher should use the text to be read and allow the learners to read the title page, content pages, sub-headings, titles of chapters, the back of the book, and the pictures (DBE, 2008). Asking learners questions before reading will assist the teacher in determining learners' prior-knowledge, and where the learner needs assistance (scaffolding) which will enable learners to construct their meaning through texts, as promoted by Vygotsky (1978).

2.5.2 During-reading

The during-reading process is when the teacher can ask learners' questions to see if the meaning is clear to them, and this involves the following steps:

- Lead the learners via questions to identify if they have the core idea concerning meaning;
- Allow them to read the paragraph to determine what they will do if they find the unfamiliar word; and
- Check if they will be able to use the five-finger strategy to read and grasp the meaning and pronunciation of unfamiliar words.

2.5.3 After-reading

The after-reading process is when the teacher asks the learners questions to determine if they will be able to relate the text to their real-life experiences, and to see if they still remember the meaning of the new words when seeing them in a different context.

The practical part of this lies in the reading methods; for example, shared reading. In shared reading, we follow the reading processes. The learners will be asked questions that will motivate them to talk about the cover page, do picture tours, and predict what will happen in the next page or inside the book. They will also be asked to re-tell and sequence the story.

The questions asked will address phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension. Asking learners to clap hands when they hear the word with the sound /ph-/ , and pronounce the word, is word recognition. When this process is applied in conjunction with shared reading, learners are asked questions that will require them to use their thinking skills and relate the text to their everyday lives.

In teaching reading, there are different aspects that teachers need to focus on to equip learners with skills to read fluently and with understanding. The different aspects of reading methods are integrated and involve components of teaching reading, stages of reading, reading processes, and word-attack skills. The teacher will ask questions from the text to scaffold learners' thinking abilities and involve them actively as they engage with the text. If the learners acquire such skills, they will be able to use the five-finger strategy when they come into contact with difficult words while reading a piece of text.

To support the integrative or interwoven aspects of reading methods, Wegenhart (2015) recommends Scarborough's (2001) breakdown of the interwoven strands into single threads for simple reading that will help teachers understand individual skills of reading.

2.6 THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

Since this study is about the teachers' experiences of teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classroom, I think it is just as important to understand the significance of reading to the learners. Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) maintain that reading for learners helps them obtain meaning from print and familiarises them with frequent, regular spelling-sound relationships. When the learners obtain meaning from

the text, their word recognition, accuracy, and fluency skills will also improve (Snow *et al.*, 1998). In support, Davis (2016) states that reading develops the learners' thinking. Davis (2016, p.3) adds that the "mind is a muscle," and as a muscle, it needs exercise. Reading as a means of exercising the mind, helps learners to understand the written text. Davis (2016) further states that when teachers read to the learners, they help to develop their necessary language skills. When a learner can read, it is easy to interpret what he/she is reading and relate it to his/her real situation in his/her life world (Gordon & Browne, 2014). Besides, learners' ability to read can help them to acquire knowledge, self-actualise, and enhance their self-esteem. The significance of reading relates well with the social constructivist component of MKO, which insists that teachers as MKOs can help learners effectively develop their reading skills.

The importance of reading to learners extends far beyond the mere acquisition of vocabulary. Ramabenyane (2012) states that reading to learners also assists them to demonstrate their ability to comprehend, interpret and respond to a text, based on the learner's prior knowledge. Reading different texts to learners stimulates their creativity and imagination (Short, 2017). In support, Bonfiglo (2017) emphasises that when learners identify the characters, they can relate to the real story and develop an emotional attachment with the characters. Identifying characters becomes evident when the learners can role-play and dramatise the read stories.

2.7 CHALLENGES TEACHERS EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING READING

As a developing country, South African teachers are faced with challenges in the sphere of education which have a direct impact on the literacy level of learners (Dorasamy & Reddy, 2014). Mudzielwana (2014) conducted a study on the teachers' perceptions on foundation phase learners' low reading performance which revealed that reading competency level is in crisis in the foundation phase. Mudzielwana (2014) infers that there is a need to gain a better picture on the challenges experienced by teachers in the foundation phase.

Sethusha and Makeleni (2014) conducted a study on the experiences of foundation phase teachers in implementing the curriculum; the study revealed that foundation

phase teachers experience challenges with regard to the language of teaching and learning. According to the Department of Education (DoE, 2007, p.1), “home language instruction is encouraged in the first four years of formal schooling”. However, this is not always attained as learners are taught in a language (English) which is not their home language. On such occasions, learners are incapable of using the richness and depth of their mother-tongue knowledge to enhance the reading experience and this affects reading competence.

Learners’ level of language development is a crucial feature in their ability to read. Language skills are directly associated with success at school and are separated into the following categories: vocabulary, correct language usage, correct sentence construction, language comprehension, reading and spelling. Mudzielwana (2014) points out that the home language education policy specifies that learners should start learning at school in their home language until Grade three. In most schools, the language of instruction changes from African languages to English, which means that more than 80% of South Africans learn in a language different from their home language (Howie, Venter & Van Staden, 2008). Hinkel (2005) stated that for second language reading to take place the reader must have developed proficiency in that language.

Studies have shown that ineffective teaching approaches and weak subject knowledge are contributing to poor quality teaching and learning (Mudzielwana, 2014; Sethusha & Makeleni, 2014). The National Reading Strategy (DoE, 2008, p.10) states that “most teachers in South Africa have an under-developed understanding of teaching reading”. Many teachers simply do not know how to teach reading, the use of one teaching method does not benefit all learners. Class teaching can have the effect that a group tempo is maintained without considering individual differences. Some teachers have no knowledge of the learners’ individual reading problems and how to rectify them. Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008) suggest that teachers should know a variety of reading approaches and not resort to one method of teaching.

The findings of studies by Condry and Blease (2014) and Mudzielwana (2014) attest to the challenges teachers experience in the teaching of reading in the foundation phase such as poor availability of reading books; large classes; lack of parental involvement; inappropriate approaches used to teach reading and insufficient time allocation. The findings also revealed that the learners' ability to read does not depend on the circumstances but on the dedication shown by the teacher and the experience of the teacher in teaching reading in the foundation phase.

In a study conducted by Mahdavi and Tensfeldt (2013) in Sweden and Finland, there were many factors that contributed to low literacy achievements. Among the factors were poor availability of books; a lack of political and social discussions in the home; large classes, learners' personal interest and attitudes. A study conducted by Dorasamy and Reddy (2014) revealed similar findings that having little or no parental support, as well as the challenges of teachers who are not proficient in English as a medium of instruction and large class sizes, also contribute to the low literacy levels. South Africa's performance in terms of the international reading tests, as well as the national literacy tests, has confirmed the seriousness of the problem and the urgency of finding solutions.

2.8 APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES IN TEACHING READING

Learning to read is dependent on the teaching of basic reading skills in the foundation phase (Di Orio, Cofini, Vittorini, & Cecilia, 2014). Sethusha and Makeleni (2014) state that there are two best known methods and approaches used to teach reading in the foundation phase, namely look and say method and the phonic approach. The look and say method are a unique methodology whereby learners compose and read their own sentences even before they can write. It requires learners to recognise words and derivative phonic sounds. Phonics involves the teaching of initial sounds to written letters and applying that knowledge in recognising words and reading. Research shows that learners, who are taught phonics directly and systematically in the early grades, achieve higher scores on reading achievement than learners who do not receive this instruction (Sethusha & Makeleni, 2014).

Mudzielwana (2014) states that learners learn best when teachers employ a variety of strategies to model and demonstrate reading knowledge, strategy and skills. These are strategies such as shared reading, reading aloud, oral reading, guided reading and individual or independent reading. In a shared reading session, the teachers read with the class or group using a large storybook that has big, bold print (DoE 2008). Learners share the reading task with the teacher and gradually learners take over the task of reading (DoE 2008). Shared reading involves a child and teacher or other adult reading together, in one-to-one interaction, from a book. It is a practice frequently used in early years' classrooms and it is a practice commonly used by many parents at home. In shared reading the teacher works with the whole class.

Group guided reading is regarded as one of the key components of a balanced language programme (DoE 2008). It involves using carefully selected books at the learners' instructional level. Department of Basic Education (2011, p. 11) refers to group guided reading as "an ability-group reading teaching strategy where all the members in the group read the same text under the direction of the teacher and should take place every day". Guided reading involves the teacher in a session with a group of between 6 and 10 children. The teacher plans the lessons to include a range of word-attack strategies that children will learn to apply when meeting challenges in texts. The 'text talk' between teacher and learners (and learners with each other) is central to this approach. During this time the teacher should not be interrupted by other learners who are doing independent activities. Each group session should be between 10 and 15 minutes long with two groups reading with the teacher every day (approximately half an hour per day in total).

Independent reading is important in reading comprehension. During this activity, learners learn to apply the comprehension strategies independently that they were taught during guided reading (Mudzielwana, 2014). According to the Department of Education (2008), independent reading is a purposeful planned activity. The teacher has a structured daily time during which learners associate themselves with books.

Reading aloud is another approach that can have a positive effect on the development of reading comprehension (Mudzielwana, 2014). Read-aloud times should be a well-planned activity and not unplanned (Mudzielwana, 2014). Teale (as cited in Mudzielwana, 2014) stated that the teacher should be well prepared, read to the whole class or to a small group, using material that is at the listening comprehension level of the learners.

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this study, the Social Constructivism Theory, as my theoretical framework, will map a better understanding of the knowledge about teaching reading. The fact that Social Constructivism encourages interaction and teamwork makes it one of the most effective teaching strategies, claim Powel and Kalina (2009). Considered the founder of Social Constructivism, Vygotsky (1978). Based on his theories of cognitive development, social constructivism was developed. According to this idea, three elements—the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO), Scaffolding, and Zone of Proximal Development [ZPD]—are present (Donald et al., 2008). In this study, the teachers' expertise is more than the learners', which they use to their advantage when teaching reading by giving the learners cues.

The second component, which is scaffolding, implies a process of mediating the appropriate structures and strategies of a particular knowledge area (Donald *et al.*, 2008). The specific knowledge area in this case is teaching reading. When teaching reading, teachers start by introducing the knowledge structures and instructional strategies that learners must learn and master. A few of the knowledge structures and learning approaches needed for teaching reading and learning to read include approaches and strategies in teaching reading, the five components of teaching reading, reading processes, and the current state of reading in South African Schools. The third component of the Social Constructivism Theory, namely ZPD, is described by Donald *et al.* (2008, p. 59) as follows:

That critical space where a child cannot quite understand something on his/her own, but has the potential to do so through proximal interaction with another person. A parent, peer, teacher, or another mentor

who helps him/her think forward into that space (i.e., to make connections between the familiar and unfamiliar) acts as a mediator.

According to the explanation given above by Donald et al. (2008), it is important that teachers connect closely with the learners in order for them to develop their own meanings of a particular idea. The teacher reduces the quantity of help given to the learners once they begin to master the knowledge, skills, understand, and internalize it. Social Constructivism enhances interconnectedness amongst the three components and consequently improves the teaching and learning of reading in Grade 3 classroom.

Vygotsky's constructivist theory (1978) promotes an interactive process of learning, which implies that learners construct knowledge in active engagement with the More Knowledgeable Other [MKO] (Van Staden, 2018). When the teachers, as MKOs, use the different reading methodologies like shared reading, guided reading, paired reading, and reading aloud, they need to model reading effectively to the learners to read independently. Hill (cited in Moosa, 2018) indicates that demonstrations would enable learners to acquire the necessary reading skills by allowing them to talk about the picture, sounding, reading after the teacher, reading independently, and listening to the teachers when they read aloud. As the MKO, the teacher must interact meaningfully with the learners to facilitate the acquisition of necessary reading skills for the development of their critical thinking. Through these reading methodologies, the teachers will be scaffolding learners to understand as they will ask learners questions that will assist them in establishing the learners' understanding and level of development.

2.10 CONCLUSION

Reading is a cognitive process associated with the bottom-up approach which involves knowledge of phonemic awareness and phonics and individual words. On the other hand, reading is a social process which involve construction of meaning. It involves understanding vocabulary, fluency and comprehension in order to comprehend text teachers and learners use a constructivist approach which involve top-down and

meaning emphasis approaches. Therefore, the use of bottom-up and top-down approaches makes reading an interactive social constructivist activity.

In the following chapter I focus on research methodology to illustrate how data was collected.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study set out primarily to explore and record the teaching of reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 learners. Constructivism is the underpinning research paradigm of this study. The reason for this is because I attempted to construct multiple realities during the teaching of reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms. This study is qualitative in nature and used an interpretive paradigm to understand which strategies teachers employ in teaching reading.

The study was divided into three phases. The first phase of the study entailed individual interviews with two Grade 3 teachers. The second phase involved classroom observations. During the classroom observations, I acted as a nonparticipant observer. The objective of the classroom observations was to establish whether what the teachers had said during the individual teachers' interview sessions was borne out in practice. I observed one reading lessons per class to determine which strategies teachers used before, during and after reading.

The paradigmatic considerations of this study are concerned with interpretivism. In this chapter, I have described the informal and formal phases of the study and explained the methodology of individual teachers' interviews and classroom observations with the teacher participants. In addition, I explained the content analysis that relate to the teaching of reading comprehension. Then I discussed the data analysis process and the strategies employed to enhance validity of the study.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions are important for understanding the choice of the methodology and the direction the study took. The research questions were derived from the aim of the study, which was to investigate the teaching of reading in isiZulu mother tongue to Grade 3 learners. The process of collecting data was informed by content analysis, individual teachers' interviews and classroom observations with the participant teachers. Each instrument helped me to answer the research questions. The research

questions are dealt with individually and linked to the methodology for data collection. These research questions were the key to the study.

The purpose of conducting individual interviews and classroom observations was to identify the method and strategies they used for teaching reading. Interviews were audio-recorded and this provided rich data. The interviews consisted of three teachers, one from each school. A content analysis was carried out of all policy documents related to the teaching of reading in the primary grades. My attempt to answer the three-research question led me to pose a number of questions. Three research questions guided me to focus on the most appropriate research methodology.

Research question 1: What tactics and approaches do teachers employ in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue?

I distinguished how teachers understood the teaching of reading. The teachers were asked about their familiarity with the concept of reading and the teaching methods and strategies they used to teach reading. By focusing on the teachers' classroom practice, I gained insight into their beliefs and theoretical base. This was particularly important because there is an integral relationship between beliefs and actions. I believe that teachers' beliefs play a major role in their decision-making about the teaching of reading.

This question was key to understanding teachers' knowledge of the concept of reading. Therefore, through individual teachers' interviews and classroom observation with the Grade 3 teachers, I gathered information on how the three teachers that participated in the study conceptualised reading.

Research question 2: What challenges do teachers encounter when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3?

This research question is linked to what challenges do teachers encounter when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classroom. The findings of studies by Condry and Blease (2014) and Mudzielwana (2014) attest to the challenges teachers experience in the teaching of reading in the foundation phase such as poor availability of reading books; overcrowding in classrooms; lack of parental involvement;

inappropriate approaches used to teach reading and insufficient time allocation. It probed the teachers' knowledge base and understanding of the concept of reading, teaching challenges and the relevant policy documents. I conducted two individual teacher interviews and classroom observation.

Research question 3: How do teachers address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue?

The third research question was a key to understanding how teachers address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms.

Through these sessions of individual teachers' interviews and classroom observation, I had the opportunity to listen to the teachers and find out their views regarding the way they're going to address these challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms. Classroom observations were done in three government schools, each with three Grade 3 classes and where isiZulu is used for teaching and learning. Through classroom observations, I saw and observed how teachers teach reading. Classroom observations were conducted to explore and to find out if what they said during the interviews match or not.

Sethusha and Makeleni (2014) state that teachers were using the two best known methods and approaches to teach reading in the foundation phase, namely look and say method and the phonic approach.

According, (DoE, 2008), learners share the reading task with the teacher and gradually learners take over the task of reading. Shared reading involves a child and teacher or other adult reading together, in one-to-one interaction, from a book.

3.3 PARADIGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

3.3.1 Qualitative Research Approach

Creswell (2008, p. 14) defines qualitative research as that "which explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences through methods such as interviews or observations in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their setting". Schumacher and McMillan (2010, p. 323) defines qualitative research as "a type of

educational research in which the researcher relies on the views of the participants, asks broad and general questions, collects data consisting largely of words or text from the participants, then describes analyses and conducts an enquiry in a subjective, biased manner". The researcher has chosen a qualitative research approach as the researcher was interested in exploring teachers' experiences in teaching reading in mother tongue in grade 3 classrooms.

3.3.2 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm contains the researcher's underlying assumptions and serves as a lens for organizing the principles by which reality is organized (Creswell, 2009). The research paradigm influences the researcher's theoretical and methodological approach to the study. Interpretivism was an appropriate epistemic approach for this inquiry. Through communication with participants, an interpretivist approach helps the researcher to get a profound grasp of their experiences (Ebersohn & Eloff, 2004). This paradigm's ultimate purpose is to collect in-depth and detailed data.

"The interpretivist paradigm prioritizes understanding social phenomena by emphasizing the meaning that individuals or groups assign to their experiences" (Jansen, 2010, p.15).

The need for a fuller knowledge of how humans experience their life-world through language, local and historical context, and the inter-subjective behaviours of the persons involved drives interpretivist study (Angen, 2000). Interpretivist research aims to understand and interpret human behaviour rather than generalize and anticipate it. Human beings and their behaviours are not easily quantified, and they cannot be comprehended in a vacuum, according to the interpretivist paradigm. Humans are neither reducible nor inert, living outside history and social contexts (Parry, 1997). Interpretive research emphasizes the relationship between the researcher and what is being studied and the environmental limits, rather than the various influencing variables that affect the validity and reliability of qualitative research.

As an interpretivism researcher, the intention was to understand how teachers interpret and make sense of their daily experiences of teaching reading in Grade 3 classes. The researcher would be able to see reality and obtain answers to the study questions relevant to the teachers' experiences of teaching reading in isiZulu in Grade 3

classrooms at the research sites by employing the interpretivism paradigm. The researcher would be better able to comprehend the scenario in the classroom as it relates to children's reading and experiences and responses to the study questions.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

For this study, the researcher has adopted an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative research approach which was built on an emerging design. A case study has been employed as a methodology which was conducted at three specific primary school in iLembe District with grade 3 teachers as participants. In order to create a holistic understanding of the problem being studied, a case study was chosen as the appropriate research design. Case study research was an appropriate approach to use in an educational setting as it is made up of a number of individuals. In this case, teachers and learners who all have reciprocating effects on one another. It is not a closed system and therefore outside influences can and generally does impact on the research participants, the phenomenon under study and the environment in which the research is conducted. These three aspects are interrelated and therefore cannot be studied independently (Creswell, 2008).

The sample for this research was foundation phase teachers.

A reiteration of the aims for this study indicates the direction to be followed. The objectives of this study were:

3.4.1 To determine the tactics and approaches teachers to utilize in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu.

3.4.2. To find out what problems teachers have when teaching reading in the isiZulu mother tongue in grade three.

3.4.3 To establish how teachers address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms.

3.5 RESEARCH SITES AND PARTICIPANTS

The research consisted of investigations at three schools. The schools (A, B, and C) were situated in the Phambela Circuit, iLembe District. I chose three schools with three Grade 3 classes each, who participated in the study. The reason was to ensure that the data generated by such a number of participants would be manageable given the

limited time in which I had to conduct the research (Mugo, 2006). I selected three government schools situated within 15 to 20 kilometres of each other.

Maxwell (2005, p. 88) defines purposeful selection of cases as “a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that cannot be forgotten as well from the choices.” This study used purposeful selection of cases because purposeful selection of the schools. The teacher participants were selected from public schools where isiZulu is the language of teaching and learning. The easy accessibility to the schools increased the study’s feasibility as the schools are close to my workplace. Maxwell (2005, p. 26) defines the choice of cases as “decisions about where to conduct the research and whom to involve, an essential part of the research processes.” He adds that the choice of cases usually involves people and settings, events and processes. McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 434) define purposeful selection of choices of cases as “a strategy to choose individuals likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon of interest”. This implies that a convenience choice of cases refers to the selection of an accessible geographical area. I used pseudonyms to protect the schools and teachers’ privacy and to maintain confidentiality. During selection of cases, consideration was given to variables that were rationally relevant for the study.

3.5.1 Profile of the three schools

The three schools in the study are situated in a rural setting. Each had three Grade 3 classes. All School classes ranged from Grade R to Grade 7.

In this research project, the focus was on the teaching of reading. Learners were also primary respondents because I could not observe how teachers teach reading without the presence of the learners in the classrooms. Schools have been categorised into quintiles 1, 2, 3 and 4, for example, school A, B and C were referred to as quintile 1. Schools under quintiles 1 and 2 are both no-fee schools. These schools cannot ask parents for any payment at all. In terms of funding from the department, quintile 1 gets more funding. Most of these learners speak isiZulu because their parents grew up in this area and they speak isiZulu as their home language.

School A is a primary school with an enrolment of 745 learners. There are 34 teachers in the school, teaching classes from Grade R to Grade 7. School B is a primary school with an enrolment of 1254 learners. There are 38 teachers in the school, teaching classes from Grade R to Grade 7 and School C is a primary school with an enrolment of 675 learners. There are 29 teachers in the school, teaching classes from Grade R to Grade 7.

What is interesting about the case study schools is that they have come to realise that Foundation Phase is important. The new classes have been provided for the Foundation Phase learners.

3.5.2 Profile of the teacher respondents

The profile of the participating teachers as my participants enabled me to gather important information on the teaching of reading, for example, their academic and professional qualifications were an indication of the high calibre of the respondents I worked with. It also provided me with a picture of the level to which these teachers were likely to understand the dynamics of teaching reading comprehension within their context. This was pertinent because I needed to know this when gathering and interpreting the data. My teaching experience also assisted me in determining whether the views and opinions of respondents were appropriate and in line with their knowledge of the job.

The selected teachers were all qualified to teach in the Foundation Phase. In order to gain an even deeper understanding of the respondents, I collected data on their teaching experience, age, qualifications and experience in teaching Grade 3. The teachers who participated in the study were quite mature in age. The fact that these teachers were mature might have an influence on their views of the teaching of reading.

The teachers who participated in the study were all females. This may simply mean that in many schools most teachers in the Foundation Phase are females. These teachers were not selected but randomly sampled as coincidentally were found to be in Grade 3. Since the focus of the study was on Grade 3, I had to focus on those teachers only.

Teacher qualifications were important for this study, because teachers all need quality education and training in order to meet the learning needs of the learners in South African schools, especially in the Foundation Phase. With adequate professional and academic qualifications, teachers may be able to promote efficiency in their classrooms. In addition, it is well known that teachers in possession of professional degrees are perceived as being better qualified for the teaching profession than those with diplomas and certificates only (Naidoo, 2001). I assumed that these teachers with their wealth of experience and professional qualifications were likely to give valuable responses. Therefore, if educational qualifications are a factor in teaching reading, then one may conclude that these teachers are better informed in so far as teaching reading to Grade 3 is concerned. This implies that the presence of well qualified professional teachers therefore acts as an enabling factor as far as the teaching of reading is concerned.

They were all experienced in teaching in the Foundation Phase as none of the participants had fewer than ten years of teaching experience in Grade 3. This suggested that the participating teachers in this study were generally mature and experienced in the Foundation Phase, in particular in Grade 3. This characteristic thus became an enabling factor in terms of the research questions of this project, because the longer the teaching experience of an individual in a particular class, the better he/she is likely to understand the methods and strategies of teaching reading and its related issues and be able to facilitate them effectively. Based on their teaching experience in Grade 3, I assumed that these teachers were information-rich and would provide valid and meaningful data that would contribute to an understanding of how teachers teach reading.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

In this study, the principle of triangulation for determining validity and reliability was applied as a wide range of data collection methods were used in this study (Schurink, 1998, p. 253). The triangulation principle of hypothesis-generating, writing theoretical memos and theoretical sampling was applied.

I first develop an objective and constraints of the problem. The hypothesis generating phase involves a careful review of data and careful studying of the phenomenon in

question. It furthermore indicates the set of data that may be relevant to the investigation.

I kept the record of theoretical memos. These can be anything written or drawn in the constant comparison that makes up a grounded theory (GT). Theoretical memos are important tools to both refine and keep track of the experiences just after they happen.

I collect data, codes, and analyses and then decide what data to collect next and where to find it in order to develop theory. Charmaz, (2000) suggests that theoretical sampling is best used when key concepts have been discovered. Initial data collection is commenced with a fairly random group of people, who have experienced the phenomenon under study to begin to develop concepts. Theoretical sampling is then used to generate further data in order to confirm and refute original categories. Content analysis was reviewed to determine what is understood by the teaching of reading. In the next paragraphs, each data collection instrument is discussed in detail.

3.6.1 Interview Process

Bloom and Crabtree (2006, p. 318) emphasise that "the in-depth interview is meant to be a personal and intimate encounter in which open-ended, verbal questions are used to elicit detailed narratives and stories". Myburgh and Struss (2000) identify interviews as a prerequisite for the researcher to generate relevant information from the participants who are directly in contact with the site of research. Denzil and Lincoln (2000) expressed that semi-structured interviews give researchers time to question participants as individuals without creating boundaries. Semi-structured interviews start by asking pre-determined prepared questions that allow the participants to freely express their ideas and experiences.

Bloom and Crabtree (2006) state that semi-structured interviews should briefly acknowledge the "life history" of interviewees as it discloses biography for understanding the participant's background. In the researcher's interview questions, the questions required participants' biographies.

Further, Bloom and Crabtree (2006) acknowledge that for the participant to be interviewed positively, the first question should be broad and open-ended to create a comfortable environment for the participants. During the interviews, the first question was open-ended.

Moreover, Schumacher and McMillan, (2014, p. 386) believe that "qualitative interviewers prefer a conversational tone to indicate empathy and understanding while conveying acceptance to encourage elaboration of subtle and valid data". Starting by asking open-ended questions led to a conversation that helped the researcher to make clear distinctions on aspects of the topic that led to rich data generation.

Bloom and Crabtree (2006) indicate that the information elicited from interviews and observations should be recorded and later analysed. One can use an audio-recorder/video recorder, camera or take notes. The most used method (with the signed consent of the participants) for verbal interviews is audio-recording, which must be later transcribed.

Wahyuni (2012, p. 74) states that the interviews and observations should start with an explanation of the research purpose and objective, followed by explaining issues of "confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary nature of the study". The researcher should also hand out consent forms for signing by all participants. The participant should also grant permission for recording the interview. In this study, audio-recorder was used, and consent forms were duly signed by all participants before the interviews. The consent forms indicated that their names, school names, and responses, were confidential and anonymous; pseudonyms or codes will be used to protect identities (See appendix F).

Maree (2007) indicated that by audio-recording the interview, the researcher would be able to generate data speedily. In support, Creswell (2014) advised that interview responses need to be tape-recorded to save time. Data was recorded through audio-recording individual participants. The interviews were on a face-to-face basis, and each participant was given 30 minutes to respond.

Bloom and Crabtree (2006, p. 315) indicate that; "the individual in-depth interview allows the interviewer to delve deeply into social and personal matters, whereas the group interviews allow interviewers to get a wider range of experience, but, because of the public nature of the process it prevents delving as deeply into the group like the individual".

In addition, Petty, Thomson and Stew (2012, p. 4) state that; "the conduct of semi-structured interviews involves a few pre-determined areas of interest with possible

prompts to help and guide the conversation”. The open-ended questions helped me to delve deeply into the social and personal backgrounds of the participants.

Questions need repetition (if necessary) for the interviewee to clearly interpret the question before deciding how to answer the question. Probing techniques were used, in order to get clarity or further information on the said question, which helped to draw a subtle distinction between the participants' responses and their views. As such, the intention of eliciting in-depth rich information from teachers teaching reading was also accomplished.

After the interview, the researcher needs to determine the crucial aspects raised and to identify the similarities and differences in data (De Vos *et al.*, 2014). All the data from the interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed, and analysed according to set procedures which enabled the researcher to also acquire an understanding of teachers' attitudes of teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms. As such, the researcher was able to answer the research question: *What challenges do teachers encounter when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3?*

The durations for each interview will take 30 minutes for each participant to respond in all questions.

Table 3.1: Duration for interview sessions

Due Date	Item	Action	Time	Duration
3/09/2019	Interview at school A with participant no. 1.	One-on-one interview using audio-recorder	9:00 to 9:30	30 minutes
10/09/2019	Interview at school B with participant no. 2.	One-on-one interview using audio-recorder	13:00 to 13:30	30 minutes per

17/09/2019	Interview at school C with participant no. 3.	One-on-one interview using audio-recorder	11:30 to 12:00	30 minutes
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3.6.2 Classroom observation

In this study, I conducted classroom observations. I adopted a naturalistic approach to studying teachers' techniques of teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms. I wanted to gain insights into the strategies teachers employed in teaching reading. I hoped that I would be able to understand more fully how teachers taught reading to Grade 3 isiZulu-speaking learners. Through this method I could observe what was actually happening in the classroom when reading was taught, and which strategies teachers used for teaching reading. As a non-participant observer, I wanted to give myself a chance to observe the interactions in the classroom freely without influencing them.

I systematically recorded what I observed. I observed one lesson per teacher, which gave me a total of 3 lessons to be analysed. Merriam (2002, p. 101) argues that observations are the major means of collecting data in qualitative research. She further says they offer a first-hand account of the situation under study and when combined with interviews and content analysis, allow for a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon being investigated. Classroom observation assisted me to answer my research question. The advantage of classroom observation was that it assisted me to actually see what the teachers were doing rather than what they said they were doing. I could replay the audio tape to listen to how the teacher was teaching and ask follow-up questions. The disadvantage of classroom observation was that I was very close to the teachers during their lesson presentation. I realised that this may have led to subjectivity on my account that could jeopardise the factual reliability of the data (Merriam, 1998, p. 95).

The classroom observations took two weeks. The longer I stayed in the classroom, the more I became part of the classroom environment. A special detail from these

observations was discussed during each classroom observation. This classroom observation data was coded, transcribed and integrated to the themes emerged from interviews.

3.7 SAMPLING DESIGN/PARTICIPANTS

The sample for this research was taken from 3 schools teachers teaching reading in grade 3 classrooms as the teaching of reading appears to be a common problem. The researcher proposed a minimum sample size of 3. The number of participants in the focus group was determined by: the number of teachers teaching reading in grade 3; the number of teachers willing to participate in the study. There were three classes in the foundation phase in each school. Since, there were three teachers teaching reading in the foundation phase therefore, all teachers voluntary participated in this study.

According to Schumacher and McMillan (2010, p. 651), the “logic of the sample size is related to the purpose, the research problem, the major data collection strategy and the availability of information-rich cases”. Previous studies (Condy & Blease, 2014; Sethusha & Makeleni, 2014) have used purposive sampling methods in their research of experiences of foundation phase teachers in teaching reading. Purposive sampling was used to select participants in this study. Purposive sampling indicates that participants are selected because of some defining characteristics that make them the holders of the data needed for the study (Creswell, 2008).

Creswell (2008) stipulates that this type of sampling is chosen for a specific purpose and is used in order to access ‘knowledgeable people’. Therefore, foundation phase teachers have been specifically chosen for this study as they are information rich. Purposive sampling decisions involve the settings, incidents, events and activities to be included for data collection (Creswell, 2008). The most accessible school was chosen.

3.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Reliability and validity are the two concepts of critical importance in understanding measurement issues in scientific research. In this study, trustworthiness will be determined by triangulation data collection methods. Triangulation is a technique for

enhancing the credibility and reliability of study findings. Johnson and Christensen (2011, p. 439) define triangulation as "the act of bringing more than one source of data to bear on a single point," while Marshall and Rossman (2011, p. 252) define it as "the act of seeking convergence and corroboration of results from different methods studying the same phenomenon." Denzin and Lincoln (in Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler 2010, p. 35) envisage qualitative researchers adopting multiple data gathering methods in the same study and comparing the results.

In this study, the researcher collected data through observation and interviews, which will aid in cross-checking what is said in one paper with other information. The researcher sought to employ these strategies once more to increase the study's completeness, richness, and depth of understanding. Finding diverse views for confirming social theory is more important than gaining "the truth" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 254). The study will be conducted in schools, where the researcher interacts with participants and collects information about the subject under investigation.

According to Jick (in De Vos 2002, p.312), triangulation in qualitative research has the following advantages: It permits researchers to have more faith in their findings. It may also aid in discovering a phenomenon's deviant or off-quadrant dimension. The application of multiple methodologies can result in a theory synthesis or integration.

3.9 DEPENDABILITY

According to Gay, Mills, and Airaian (2006, p. 403), trustworthiness can be established by looking at the study's credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Although positivists frequently dispute the reliability of qualitative research because validity and reliability cannot be addressed in the same way in a naturalistic study, positivists frequently challenge the reliability of qualitative research Shenton (2004, p. 63). According to Mahlo (2011, p. 97), trustworthiness is a way to ensure rigour in qualitative research without sacrificing relevancy. The following measures were explored in order to assure the study's credibility.

3.9.1 Credibility and Trustworthiness

Bower (2005, p. 215) defines credibility as one's belief in the veracity of the findings. During the instructors' interview, in-depth information regarding teachers' experiences teaching reading in isiZulu in Grade 3 classrooms. Credibility can be defined as extracting relevant data from the findings.

3.9.2 Trustworthiness

The consistency of the research findings, if they yield the same outcomes when the investigation is duplicated with the same individuals or in a similar situation, is dependability. (Gay and colleagues, 2006). Shenton (2004, p.7) suggests that the study's methodologies should be detailed, allowing a future researcher to redo the work if necessary to obtain the same results. The researcher offered in-depth information regarding the research strategy and research procedure against this backdrop. Data collection methodologies, interviews, observation, and document analyses were explicitly discussed.

3.9.3 Transferability

The term "transferability" refers to the researcher's ability to adapt the study's findings to their work (Bower 2005, p. 216). The findings from the Grade 3 teachers might be used to the intermediate phase, which contains a variety of learning disciplines and multiple teachers to represent those areas in the classroom. Shenton (2004, p. 64) agrees that qualitative research findings are peculiar to a small number of specific environments and persons, making it impossible to generalize the findings and conclusions to other settings and groups. In contrast to the preceding remark, Gay et al. (2006, p. 405) noted that a complete descriptive and context description must be gathered to transfer study findings. Based on the preceding, the researcher gathered enough information regarding teacher support and its obstacles to enable the reader to comprehend the context and nature of the issue.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected was analysed using thematic procedures. This is in line with Schumacher and MacMillan, (2006)'s reason for inductive data analysis. Differences, similarities, relations and interactions within the themes were identified. Bryman, (2004) argued that this method would ensure that the collected data is broken down into manageable sections that will be analysed thoroughly and objectively. Blanche, Painter & Durrheim, (2014) point out that the key to doing a good analysis is staying close to the data and interpreting it from a position of empathic understanding.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Simons and Usher (2000, p.1) stated that "ethics has traditionally been seen as a set of general principles invariantly and validity applied to all situations ... on the contrary, ethical principles are mediated within the different practices, and this takes on different significance concerning those practices." Therefore, researchers have to consider all ethics in the specification of the research situation. The researcher fully revealed her identity and background to the participants. She operated within an ethic of respect to all the participants involved in the study.

Gardner (2011, p.5) asserts that ethics must be observed, and individuals should be treated fairly, sensitive, with dignity, and within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural identity, partnership status, faith, disability, political belief, or any other significance. The researcher was not engaged in any of these or related discriminatory factors.

As the main participants were teachers, their research ethics in this study were highly considered. This involved protecting them from harm or risk in activities during the study, confidentiality and privacy for teachers, and consent signed by them to participate in the study and withdraw at any time if they wish to opt-out (Powell, 2011). Burns (2000) argues that these ethical problems can relate to the study's subject matter with its methods and procedures and go well beyond treating persons in a free society. The researcher ensured that the principle of non-maleficence was in place,

thus, considering that there is no harm or suffering to all participants and others who might be affected by the research (Cohen et al., 2007).

The researcher sought out consent to research iLembe District for the three schools concerned, teachers and learners, to be participants before the commencement of the study. See Appendix A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H; informed consent in writing from all participants concerned was obtained. The researcher further ensured that teachers fully understood the whole process of the research and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Confidentiality agreements were made known to all those involved in the study. There was confidentiality and anonymous treatment in the participants' data (Cohen et al., 2000). The researcher recognized the participant's entitlement to privacy, and their rights to confidentiality and anonymity were made known to them. Gardner, (2011, p.7) mentions that in such cases, it is in the researcher's interests to have such a waiver in writing. Disclosure of information that might jeopardize the welfare of the participants was highly restricted. Therefore, pseudo names for the selected schools and all the participants were used. The researcher applied for an ethical clearance certificate from the ethics committee of the University, which was awarded before the gathering of data commenced. See appendix C.

3.12 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a detailed description of the research paradigm was presented: the research design, sampling, data collection methods and data analysis. The researcher also illustrated how evidence was constructed by integrating multiple data collection methods. This study therefore, forms the pillars on which the following case study rests. The following chapter will present the data obtained, and analyse it through the theoretical framework established in the literature review.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology employed in this study. In this chapter, data analysis and findings are presented. Data analysis is a process of managing data to be understood White (2005, p.156). It is also known as data reduction. Bertram and Christiansen (2014, p.116) explain that data reduction involves organizing and sorting data into codes or categories and looking for patterns or relationships of coded data. This study focus on teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms.

In order to address **the research questions**, the following were to be asked:

- What tactics and approaches do teachers employ in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue?
- What challenges do teachers encounter when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3?
- How do teachers address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue?

The study aimed to learn more about teachers' perspectives on teaching reading in isiZulu in Grade 3 classes. Reading is a process in which the learner seeks to engage with the material in a meaningful way. If learners do not comprehend a written text in a meaningful way, the material's intellectual and creative value may be lost.

Research objectives

To achieve the aim of this study, the following objectives were formulated:

- To determine the tactics and approaches teachers to utilize in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu.
- To find out what problems teachers have when teaching reading in the isiZulu mother tongue in grade three.
- To establish how teachers, address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu.

Qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis were utilized in keeping with the design and methodology of the study. The analysis is presented in three sections. Section 4.2 presents an analysis of data collected from semi-structured interviews held with three teachers. The analysis of data collected from lesson observations is presented in two sections: Section 4.3 presents an analysis of findings from phonics lessons, and Section: 4.4 presents an analysis of reading lessons from all three teachers.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data in the study. It is usually applied to a set of texts such as interview transcripts and observations and the analysis of documents. The researcher closely examines the data to repeatedly identify common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning. As the first step of thematic data analysis, transcripts were read and coded using interview questions to guide data coding. Data coding is the process of driving codes from the observed data. The data was obtained from observations, interviews, or questionnaires in qualitative research. Data coding reveals the essence and meaning of the data respondents have provided. Themes emerged out of coded data, and emerging themes were compared to the research literature to identify findings (Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 92). Further comparisons were made to identify similarities and differences in the themes and preliminary findings.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Data generated from semi-structured interviews were relevant in identifying the teachers' knowledge and understanding of how they teach reading in isiZulu in Grade 3 classrooms. Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with each teacher that taught isiZulu lessons in each school.

Table 4.1: **Biographical information of participants**

Participants (P)	Qualifications	Teaching experience in years	Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT)	Grade currently teaching

P 1	3 years Degree, PGCE and Hons in Inclusive Education	13	isiZulu	three
P 2	3-year Diploma in Education	31	isiZulu	three
P 3	3-year Diploma in Education, ABET and Hons in Management	26	isiZulu	three

Interview questions were utilized to identify categories. Interviews were coded in a table with responses from each participant based on each question asked. After coding and analyzing data from the interviews, nine themes emerged, which will be discussed in the section as follow:

1. Challenges encountered when teaching reading.
2. Approaches and guidelines used to teach reading.
3. Resources necessary for teaching early reading.
4. Reading activities held with learners and emerging strategies.

4.3 RESULTS

4.3.1 ANALYSIS

4.3.1: Data organized into themes

4.3.1.1 **Theme one:** Challenges encounter when teaching reading.

What are some of the challenges that Grade 3 teachers' experience in teaching reading skills to learners?

Teacher A stated that:

"The learners cannot even apply their minds when the teacher asked questions".

Teacher B stated that:

"If the learner did not grasp phonics in the beginning classes, it becomes difficult for the teacher to do anything".

Teacher C stated that:

"Others are unable to identify even the letters that are in their names".

Teacher A, B and C expressed their concerns regarding some of the challenges they encounter in teaching reading in Grade 3 classrooms. They felt dissatisfied with their learners who performed poorly in reading.

4.3.1.2 **Theme two** – Approaches and guidelines used to teach reading.

What approaches and guidelines used by teachers to teach reading?

Approaches and guidelines in teaching reading.

Teacher A, B and C revealed that the approaches they used to teach reading were look and say method, phonic method and word and word picture. Teachers were asked how they taught reading in their respective grades 3 classrooms'

Each individual Teacher shared how she taught reading in her Grade 3 class.

Teacher A in Grade 3 stated that:

"If the learner did not grasp phonics in the beginning classes. It becomes difficult for the teacher to do anything. Everything becomes stuck such that a teacher needs to go back to the previous grades work to assist the learner".

Teacher B stated that:

"Yes, I also use learner's book because every book has text to read I also believe that every teacher is a language teacher because all the subjects use language hence there

is nothing that can prevent me from using learners' books for teaching reading i.e. as long as there is text, and as long my activities has been properly planned".

Teacher C stated that:

"Sometimes we use learner's book. We also design our own words with different syllables (flashcards/charts). We also use articles from different newspapers and make handouts for learners".

The main methods of teaching reading in the foundation phase are the alphabetical method, phonic method, the whole-word or look and say method and the sentence method. Phonics is a behaviorists teaching approach and it was the most widely methods of reading based on the assumption that if a learner does not grasp phonics at the beginning he or she would not be able to make it in the next grade. Learner's books were also used for reading thus promoting a text-based teaching approach of reading actual texts for children, although not to the same extent as phonics. Teachers were using English guidelines when they teach reading. All the guidelines were published in English and not in isiZulu version. Phonic education certainly is very important for learners in Grade 3 because that is when learners learn to read.

4.3.1.3 **Theme three** - Resources necessary for teaching early reading.

What are some of the resources used to teach reading?

In response to this question, two respondents indicated that young children love to read colored books with pictures.

Teacher A in Grade 3 explained that:

"Choosing a child's books is a matchmaking process, not all children will love the same book. Very young children are attracted by bright coloured pictures of simple objects".

Teacher B explained that:

"Very young children are attracted by bright coloured pictures of simple objects".

Both respondents mentioned that they used textbooks as one of the resources when teaching reading for example IsiZulu Soqobo learners' book for Grade 3. From the books learners gain new vocabulary and are able to make their own sentences by

using words that they learned from the story. Teachers stated that colourful textbooks and attractive materials were good for helping learners to learn to read and increase their vocabulary.

4.3.1.4 **Theme 4** - Reading activities held with learners and emerging strategies.

What are activities and strategies used to improve learners reading skills.

They used activities from newspapers and books in order to assist learners with reading. Another way was story talk when learners talk about what they read; it developed language and thinking skills. Teachers expressed that for effective teaching of reading to take place in the foundation phase, the most useful strategies to improve learners reading levels and skills are as follows:

Teacher A stated that:

“Newspapers are a form of daily communication with outside world, and they provide lots of learning activities for children”.

Teacher B stated that:

“I use activities that have the following: Repetition: this makes books predictable, and young readers love knowing what comes next”.

Teacher C stated that:

“Picture reading, guided reading, paired reading, group reading, silent reading, shared reading and individual reading”.

The teachers understood that any text can be read including newspapers and textbooks. Guided reading includes a variety of teaching strategies that can be used by any teachers to increase learners’ vocabulary and comprehension skills. Teacher C helped learners to strengthen learners’ phonological skills namely, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency in small group activities.

The main finding was that activities consisted of picture reading, story-telling, reading and listening to stories. Strategies used include guided reading, paired reading, group reading, silent reading, shared reading and individual reading.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS OF PHONICS LESSON

The data were used to analyze how teachers teach reading in isiZulu was collected using lesson observations and semi-structured interviews to follow up on some practices and experiences in their classrooms. The main focus of the lessons was reading. Three lessons focusing on teaching were observed in the Grade 3 classes. The selection of three phonics lessons and three reading lessons were made in which shared reading and phonics were integrated.

After reading the data consisting of practical lessons, the researcher identified that teachers were using two main approaches to teaching reading. They were using phonics and a combination of shared reading and guided reading to use integrated methods as a reading strategy to suit the varied needs of learners. The teachers' attempts were recognized as efforts to improve the teaching of reading. Integration is used to take care of varied learners' needs and their similarities to the whole language.

4.4.1 Introduction to the phonics lessons

In all the phonics lessons, the teachers started with a rhyme and singing of the A, B, C, rhymes and sounding of the alphabets. One of the teachers used the vowels to remind learners of the sounds. For example, A and C used rhymes to introduce their phonics lessons. Teacher B introduced the lesson analytically by asking learners to identify the repeated sound in several words she gave. This indicated that teachers would use different ways to introduce a Phonics lesson, but the commonly used way is singing some alphabet letters and using a rhyme done in many Foundation Phase classrooms for teaching phonics in the mother tongue.

Lesson 1: Phonics

The first lesson taught by Teacher A from the first school was a phonics lesson on the blending of sounds to make syllables and words. The lesson's purpose was to teach learners how to form words using their knowledge of blends and combining syllables to form new words. The lesson was taught using an exclusive phonics approach to read in isiZulu. Further, the lesson demonstrates that reading is a cognitive skill that requires learners' understanding of the phonological structure of words, known as phonological awareness. Words are formed using different phonemes through blending.

Revision of previous sound

The phonics lesson began with a revision of the five vowels in isiZulu. She asked learners to name the five vowels she wrote on the board. Learners read the vowels chorally. Revisions from previous work on blending were used to remind learners of the sound already learned—for example, mtha, mthe, mthi, mtho, mthu. Teacher A wrote these sounds on the board and asked an individual to read them for the whole class. The teacher asked the learners to give her two words about the sound. She asked one boy and one girl to give her the words. For example, mthulise and mthathe – the other learners responded by saying yes to the correct answer.

Presentation of the sound –mkh-

Below the vowels, the teacher wrote the sound –mkh-. She asked learners to say the sound of this letter. Some learners raised their hands, and another was able to identify letter –mkh-. The teacher asked all learners to read –mkh-. Teacher A told them, “lona umsindo ka mkhulu”. (This is a sound in the word *mkhulu*).

Blending the consonant “mkh” with vowels

The teacher explained to the learners that this sound did not make sense on its own and that they needed to make it ‘speak’. She also asked learners if they could make sense of meaning of the sound. One learner responded that -mkh- needs “*ukushada*” with a vowel ‘a’ so that it can speak as –mkha- (‘mkh’ needs to “marry” with a vowel ‘a’ to make sense). All the learners participated in blending the sound with the vowels, for example, mkh + o = mkho, mkh + i = mkhi, mkh + u = mkhu. The teacher also asked them to form short words as follows:

Table: 4.3 Learners blend the sounds in words

u	+	mkh	+	u	+	l	+	u	=	umkhulu		
mkh	+	o	+	kh	+	e	+	l	+	e	=	mkhokhele
u	+	Mkh	+	l	+	z	+	e	=	uMkhize		

Teacher A taught a phonics lesson on the formation of words by blending sounds to make syllables and make words out of syllables. Learners were allowed to form words with all the sounds they had learned. The teacher proceeded to this level of making

words with the learners. Learners contributed to the formation of words. Hence the combination of other sounds with the new sound that they had learnt helped provide a cognitive understanding of the sound system of isiZulu.

Lesson 2

The second lesson taught by Teacher B was based on teaching phonics through play. In addition, play sustains learners' attention span, creates fun and develops their reading skills faster. It was also based on the teacher's belief that the phonic method, when integrated with play, learners do not forget easily when they are taught using this method. However, its emphasis was also on phonics teaching the phoneme (/nhlw/) through play activity. Teacher B focused on all learners. She asked them to come and pick up one card, read and show it to the whole class. Then the whole class read after her if it was correct. If it were not correct, learners would correct that learner.

Revision of the vowels and sounds

The phonics lesson began with a revision of the vowels and the previous sounds that they learnt, for example, ndlwa-. The learners sort the cards about ndlwa, ndlwe, ndlwi and place them on the board. All learners read the sound chorally while the teacher pointed at each sound.

Presentation of the phoneme /-nhlw-/

Teacher B firstly asked learners about each sound as follows:

New sound “**nhlw-**”

n– umsindo wenunu h- umsindo wehawu

l- umsindo welala w- umsindo wewashi

She also asked learners to read the sound 'nhlw'. The teacher told them, “lona umsindo wenhlwathi”. (This sound is a sound in the word *inhlwathi*).

Blending the consonant /nhlw/ with vowels

The teacher explained to the learners that the /nhlw/ sound did not make sense on its own and that they needed to make it 'speak'. She also asked learners if they could make sense of the meaning of the sound. One learner responded that /nhlw-/ needs “ukushada” with a vowel so that it can speak as –nhlwa- (/nhlw- needs to “marry” with

a vowel to make sense). All the learners participated in blending the sound with the vowel, for example:

Table: 4.4 Learners blend consonants with vowels

nhlw	+	e	=	nhlwe
nhlw	+	a	=	nhlwa
nhlw	+	i	=	nhlwi

Table:4.5 Blending of consonants with vowels to make words

i	+	nhlwa	+	thi	=	inhlwathi		
i	+	zi	+	nhlwa	=	izinhlwa		
i	+	nhlwa	+	bo	+	si	=	inhlwabosi

The phonics method was used effectively in class. Both the teacher and learners were very comfortable with teaching as an essential method of reading. However, a bottom-up approach takes long before learners learn to read. A teacher might use this method for a very long time before learners learn to read. It is not suitable for teaching reading meaningfully. It does not help learners comprehend text as advocated by the CAPS curriculum. It is classified within the behaviourist tradition of teaching reading. It is dissimilar from the constructivist approach in teaching reading and meaning-making. It emphasizes the code more than the meaning of what is read.

Hugo and Lenyai (2013, p. 104) state that the code-emphasis model of reading or the bottom-up model accentuates technical aspects of learning to read. The phonics approach is an example of the code-emphasis model of reading. The researcher observed that learners were given eight words as a spelling assessment. Few learners managed to get all words correct while others were still struggling. It is, therefore, evident that learners who learn through play learn more effectively than when the teacher is not using an integrated method.

Lesson 3

Teacher C used picture of a pineapple to identify the sounds ‘-ph-’. Learners give names that start with the letter –ph- e.g., iphuphu, upholi, phephetha, uphuthu, uphephela, etc.

Table: 4.6 Learners sound out and then read the words

a	e	i	o	u		
u	+	pha	+	phe	=	uphaphe
i	+	phu	+	phu	=	iphuphu
u	+	pho	+	li	=	upholi

Learners give their own words with the same sounds. Lastly, learners choose five words on the board and make their sentences independently. The lesson demonstrated that the teacher first modelled the forming of a few words. She pointed at the vowel and syllable that she read when forming a word. Learners were also able to form different words on the chalkboard by pointing at sounds and syllables as they formed different words. They also wrote the words they formed on the chalkboard. They were able to form words like iphela, phihliza and phephetha. Finally, the teacher consolidated her lesson by allowing learners to copy the words they had formulated together into their handwriting exercise books.

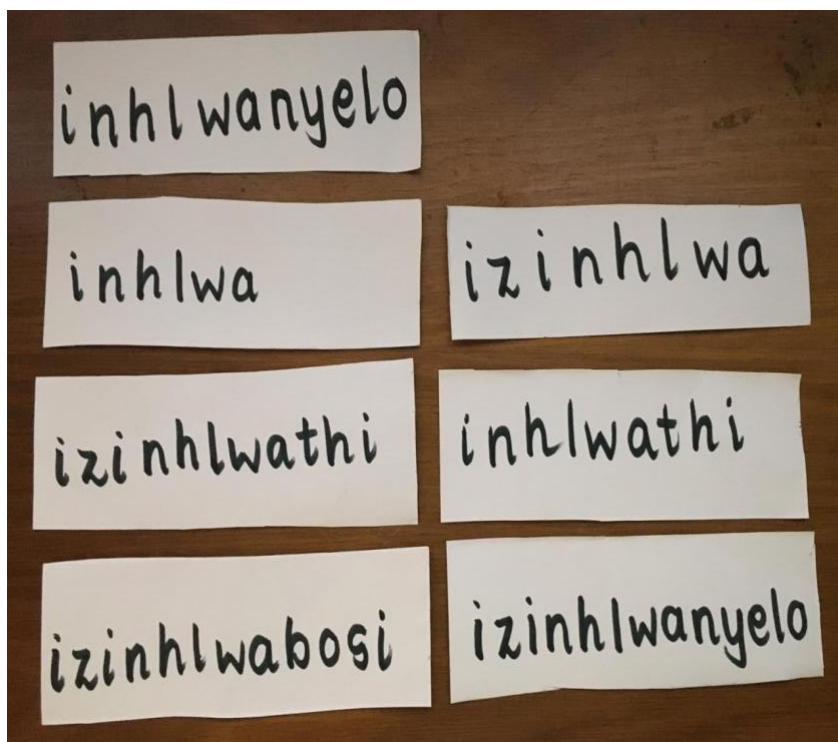
4.4.2 Lesson objectives of phonics lessons

The phonics method was used effectively in class. All teachers and learners were very comfortable with teaching as a primary method to teach reading. However, a bottom-up approach takes long before learners learn to read. It is classified within the behaviourist tradition of teaching literacy and reading. It is dissimilar from the constructivist approach in teaching reading and meaning-making. It emphasizes the code more than the meaning of what is read. Hugo and Lenyai (2013, p.104) state that the code-emphasis model of reading or the bottom-up model accentuates technical aspects of learning to read. The phonics approach is an example of the code emphasis model of reading.

4.4.3 Teaching content and activities

All three teachers asked learners to make sentences using the phonics words they learned. The learners could sort the flashcards with a sound they learned, i.e., mkha, mkhe, mkhi and ndlwa, ndlwe, ndlwi. Learners were able to choose and read the flashcards with the sounds 'mkh' and 'ndlw' as revision for previous work, e.g., umkhosi, mkhuze, umkhaya, umkhohlisi, indlwana, esandlwana, izindlwana, endlwaneni. The learners were able to pick up words with sounds 'nhlw-' on the table prepared by Teacher B and read for the whole class e.g., inhlwanyelo, izinhlwabosi, inhlwathi, inhlwa, izinhlwa, izinhlwabosi.

Figure 4.1: Flashcards with '-nhlw-' sound



4.4.4 Teaching methods

Almost all three lessons were on phonics. The phonics approach believes learners need explicit instruction on the rules and printed text to learn and learn the correspondences between the sound phoneme and the letter grapheme (Phatudi et al., 2015, p. 159). CAPS insist that schools select and follow a phonics programme of their choice. It is thought that when a good reader reads, he or she decodes print using the language's sound-symbol relationship (Hugo and Lenyai, 2013). One of the components of reading is the requirement to teach students phonemic awareness.

Teachers often get entrenched and focus entirely on this one component of reading, which is phonics. Other components of reading such as vocabulary, fluency, word recognition and comprehension get neglected and take long to be introduced. Though influential and useful, exclusive phonics becomes a disadvantage to the learners' reading ability in the home language and an additional language. Hence there are other methods, such as the whole language approach. The whole language approach falls within the constructivist theoretical framework of teaching reading.

More than merely reading was done with language. All five language learning skills were taught: hearing and speaking, reading and phonics, writing, and language structure (DBE, 2011). This strategy stressed comprehension and meaning. Hugo and Lenyai (2013) connected the meaning emphasis model to this concept-driven approach. This method incorporates the psycholinguistic viewpoint. This required a top-down strategy, in which teachers encouraged students to share personal news and experiences. Learners participate in class discussions and use the language for various purposes. Where learners are exposed to reading without focusing on the components of a word, Teacher B focused on reading whole words. She was not concerned with the parts of a word.

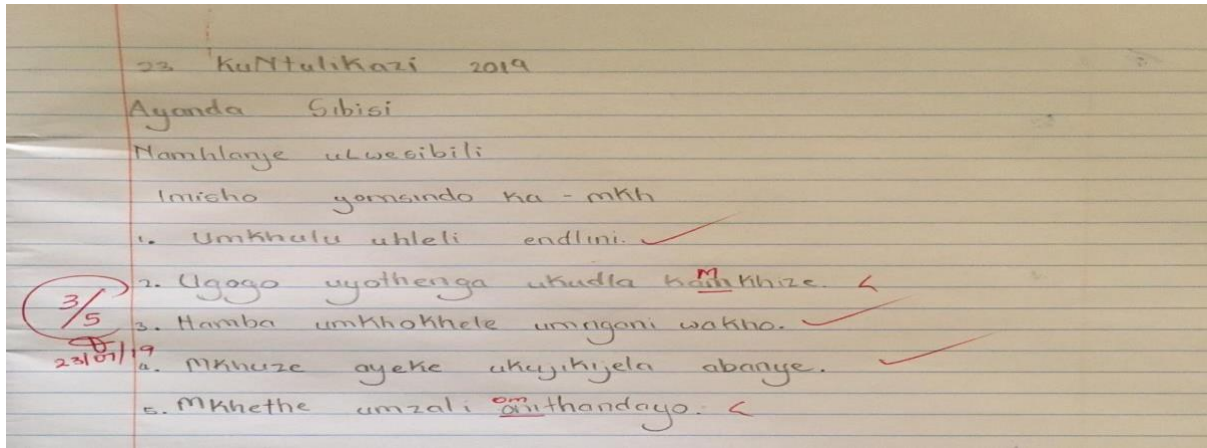
4.4.5 Learning and assessment activities (Phonics activity)

All teachers asked learners to build their own words using the sounds they learned using different methods during teaching. Learners' activities were varied and included sorting cards with the sounds taught on the teacher's table and wiring sentences with those words. Each teacher had their list according to the phonics taught in their lessons. Teacher B placed cards on a table and asked learners to sort previous sounds, pick the card up, and read it for the whole class. She also asked learners to choose flashcards on the table to select and read for the whole class. She also asked learners to give meaning to each word. The learners were able to read the words correctly.

The words were as follows: Inhlwathi, Inhlwanyelo, Izinhlwathi, Inhlwabosi, Izinhlwabosi. Teachers A and C wrote words on the board and asked learners to write

their five sentences independently. The words were as follows mkhuze, mkhokhele, mkhethe, umkhulu, uMkhize. Learners work for Teacher A:

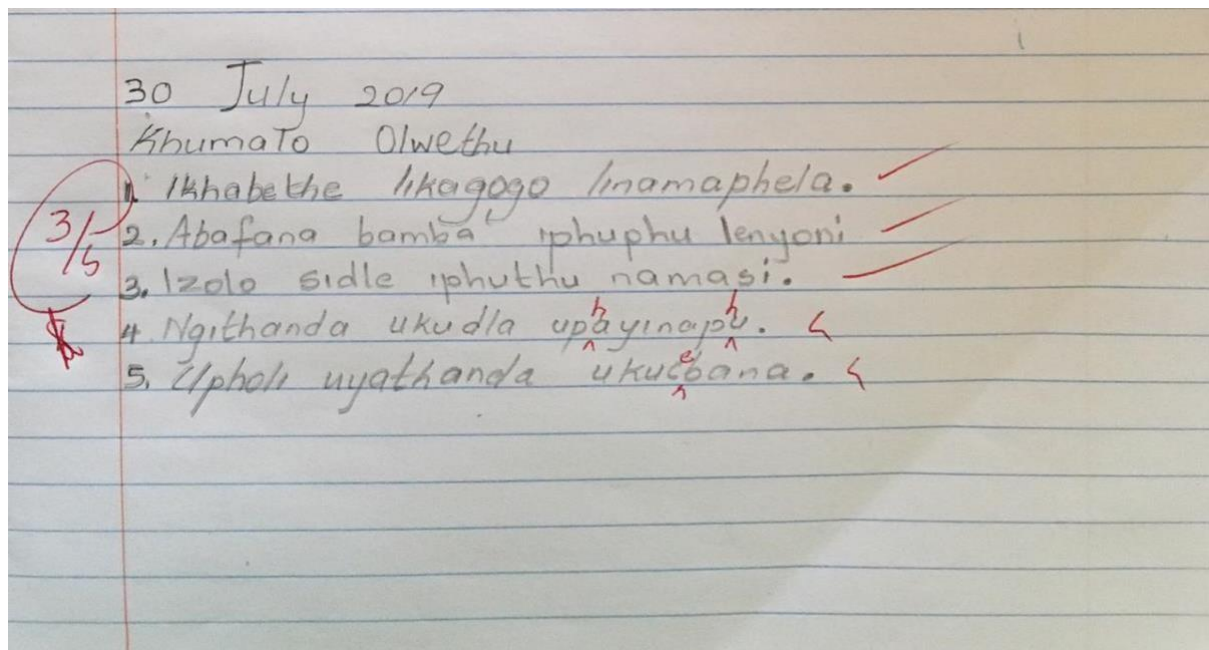
Figure: 4.2 Learners work: Sentences



Teacher C's word were iphuphu, uphuthu, uphayinaphu, upholi, iphela. Teacher Bs had prepared more activities than others.

Learners work for Teacher C:

Figure 4.3: Learners work for Teacher C



It seems that Teacher B had moved to new words with 'nhlw-'sounds. Although the words were phonic related, she did not use synthetic or analytical phonic methods.

Teacher A had also moved to a new sound, 'mkh-'. Teacher C was still on the sound 'ph-', and it seemed that she did not move further as the other two teachers did.

4.4.6 Dealing with challenges during lessons

The teacher is expected to demonstrate excellent reading behaviour and offer the students methods they can use anytime they encounter problems. As learners gain confidence in their ability to complete a task, such as reading a text and applying comprehension skills on their own, the help of scaffold can be gradually removed (Vygotsky, 1978). It is critical to be smart and intentional while teaching beginners to read. Effective strategies for teaching phonological awareness, word recognition, and other advanced reading skills to students, including those with learning difficulties, have been established.

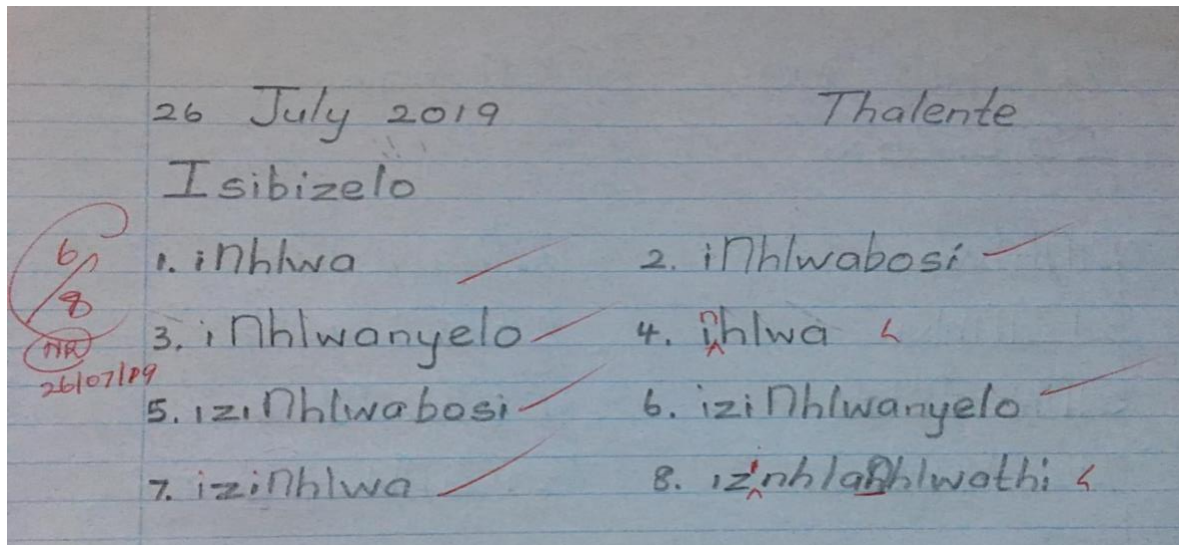
Learners' experience with written language is enhanced through phonological awareness practices (e.g., playing with words). In theory, a beginning reader with good phonological awareness and letter knowledge learns how words are represented in print. Early, strategic, systematic, and properly tailored intervention for learners who struggle with phonological awareness is required. It must be founded on a curriculum that acknowledges and balances the value of both phonics education and meaning appreciation. Effective reading instruction tactics should help struggling readers develop phonological and alphabetic knowledge. These strategies should be stated explicitly, with phonemes occupying a prominent position in the learner's attention and perception. Teachers can, for example, model-specific noises and then encourage students to imitate them.

Many early readers will require more assistance and support from their teachers. According to a research-based method known as scaffolding, teachers should offer learners much instructional help in the beginning stages of reading teaching and gradually lessen the support as learners learn more about reading abilities. The ultimate goal is for students to read independently without the assistance of a teacher.

4.4.7 Assessment

All teachers did spelling assessments with the sounds they learned to check if learners had mastered them. Teacher A did spelling with 'mkh' sound with the following words: mkhuze, mkhokhele, mkhethe, umkhulu, uMkhize, umkhosi, umkhaya, umkhohlisi, Teacher B did spelling with 'nhlw' sound with the following words: inhlwanyelo, izinhlwabosi, inhlwathi, inhlwa, izinhlwa, inhlwabosi and izinhlwanyelo. Teacher C did the spelling with 'ph' sound with the following words: uphaphe, ukotopheya, ipheya,

Figure 4.4: Spelling Assessment for Teacher A



iphepha, i-aphula, iphuphu. Some learners could read their own words with the sound they learnt successfully.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF READING LESSONS

The data used to analyze how teachers teach reading was collected using lesson observations and semi-structured interviews to follow up on some practices and experiences in their classrooms. The main focus of the lessons was reading. Six lessons focusing on teaching were observed in the Grade 3 classes, and a selection of reading lessons was made in which shared reading and phonics were integrated. The integrated lesson consisted of reading a text from the readers by association through pictures, and the other three lessons were phonics lessons. The teachers' attempts were recognized as efforts to improve the teaching of reading. Integration is used to take care of varied learners' needs and similarities to the whole language.

The analysis of the teachers' lessons was guided by theories, teaching methods, and approaches. The English teaching methods in CAPS (DBE, 2012, Fountas and Pinnell, 1996, and DoE, 2008) Teaching Reading in the Early Grades and methods of teaching reading learned in teachers' workshops were used to analyze teachers' practices used when teaching reading in isiZulu, as mentioned in the literature review. Thematic and content analyses were used to analyse interviews and observed lesson transcripts. Alhojailan (2012, p. 39) defines thematic analysis as “a type of qualitative analysis, it is used to analyse classifications and present themes (patterns) that relate to the data”. The analysis of reading lessons was conducted according to the stages of reading.

4.5.1 Introduction

Data collection took place in two stages, as described earlier in the chapter. Individual interviews with three Grade 3 teachers were conducted in the first phase of the research. Classroom observations for phonics and reading lessons were part of the second phase. The reading lesson was introduced using rhyme, and the learners were given different activities to do. Teachers used different approaches to handle reading difficulties, and the learner's performance was not the same. All three teachers introduced the reading lesson in different ways. They also used the phonics approach in handling reading difficulties. Learners were given activities to do after the lessons, and at the end of the week, all teachers assessed them with the phonics sound they learned. The learner's performance was not the same.

4.5.2 Methods used to teach reading in Grade 3 classrooms

The major goal of reading comprehension is to help learners develop the knowledge, skills and strategies they must possess to become proficient and independent readers who read with meaning. While reading, a learner is expected to simultaneously, mentally interact and construct meaning from text. Teacher A used individual and group reading. Teacher A read a portion and asked a question based on the text being read. After her, the whole class read. Teacher C asked four volunteers to read, and then the whole class read after them. She also allowed learners to read paragraphs in groups.

Teacher B employed reading aloud by having students read the words on the board that she had prepared for them, which were taken from the story:

Teacher B: izingxabulela

Learner's: izingxabulela

Teacher B: ukungcwaba

Learner's: ukungcwaba

Teacher B: izingqwembe

Learner's: izingqwembe

Teacher B: impesheni

Learner's: impesheni

She also asked learners to read aloud in groups. Learners also give meaning for each word e.g., izingxabulela (old shoes) – izicathulo ezindala.

The finding was that both Teacher B and C allowed learners to read the text after them. Teacher A also allows volunteers to lead the class during reading. She also asked different questions based on the text, while she allowed learners to make predictions about what would happen next. All teachers used different teaching methods in Grade 3, but they aimed to assist learners in reading the story with understanding.

4.5.3 The structure of a reading lesson

The structure of the reading lessons consists of activities before reading, during reading and after reading such as follows:

Introduction Lesson 1

The first lesson discussed below used shared reading, guided reading and phonics. The resource used in the lesson was a learner's book. It was taught by Teacher A.

The lesson was taught following the teaching structure recommended in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document (DBE, 2012). A method of teaching reading often advocated in reading workshops is guided reading. According to Fountas and Pinnell (1996), guided reading consists of three stages: previewing before, during, and after reading.

Stage 1 – Before reading

Teacher A introduced her lesson by asking learners to say a rhyme titled uGeke. The rhyme made learners focus on the lesson. Rhyme is a good way of bringing learners

attention to a lesson but is not previewing the stage of reading. The teacher then explained that they were about to read a book to the learners. She explained that the volunteer would first read the book alone, and then they would join in by reading together. The teacher proceeded to preview the book.

Previewing

The teacher conducted the preview of the book by asking learners questions based on the structure of a book. This allowed them to predict the content of the story. She used pictures to allow learners to make predictions about the story. She also let the learners guess what they thought would happen. The teacher aroused the learner's interest in reading when she asked different questions about the text. Some of the questions the teacher asked at this stage were as follow:

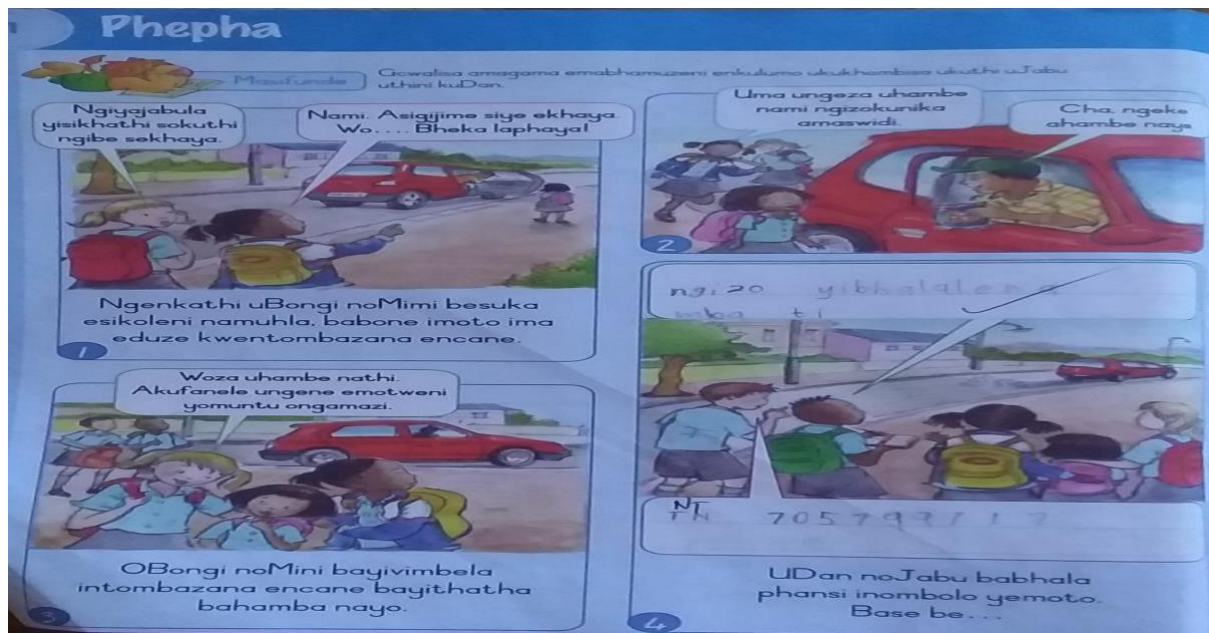
Uthisha (Teacher A): Lencwadi siyibiza ngokuthini? (What do we call this book?).

Abafundi (Learners): ISIZULU ULIMI LWASEKHAYA - Incwadi yabafundi (learner's book).

During reading

In this stage, the volunteers modelled the reading of the text. That was two boys and two girls. This was done while learners sat quietly in groups. When the first reader read the paragraph, the whole class used fingers to point at each word that the reader was reading and at the same time, they read silently. Whilst reading, she asked some questions based on the story.

Figure: 4.5 Extract



Some of her questions were:

Teacher A (uthisha): Babonani uMimi noBongi ngenkathi bephuma esikoleni? (What did Mimi and Bongi see on their way back to school?)

Learners (Abafundi): Babona imoto ima eduze kwentombazane encane. (A little girl who was about to be kidnapped).

Teacher A (Uthisha): Umlisa wayithembisani intombazane? (What did the man promise to the girl?)

Learners (Abafundi): Ukuyinika amaswidi. (To give her a sweet).

As this was the modelling stage of reading, the questions did not correctly describe how a teacher models reading to learners. There was no modelling of reading, but there was a dominance of checking the learner's knowledge about the understanding of the story. Up until then, reading seemed not to be the teacher's focus; instead, understanding the text was her main concern rather than reading.

Ideally, after a teacher has modelled reading a text, she must read with learners. She should scaffold and read together with the learners. She should scaffold the reading process. The teacher should direct the learners to read with her and help them read at this stage. In this lesson, the volunteer-led, the learners followed after them while the teacher was also reading silently. The teacher asked questions on what they perceived in the book rather than reading. She then invited the students to make predictions

about what would happen next as the volunteer read the text aloud. These are some of the questions the teacher asked in this section, as well as the learners' responses:

Teacher A (Uthisha): Bayisiza kanjani oMimi noBongi intombazanyana? (How did Mimi and Bongi help the little girl?).

Learners: Bayithatha bahamba nayo. (They went away with her.)

Teacher (Uthisha): Obani ababhala phansi inombolo yemoto? (Who wrote the number plates?)

Learners (Abafundi): U-Dan no Jabu. (It was Dan and Jabu).

In a chorus, students responded to questions. The teacher did not help students learn to negotiate the text's meaning. The constructivist approach to reading allows learners to interpret the text. The constructivist approach to reading allows learners to interpret the text and seek teacher understanding. The teacher's interest was in answering questions but not reading.

The learners would still need to show if they can read independently, with the teacher only providing the scaffold and guidelines. The attempt to provide modelling and ask questions about the learners' knowledge of reading and their actual reading skill was not developed. Scaffolding the reading process was not done. Making meaning of the text was not done using any reading teaching approaches. Nothing was done to develop comprehension during the reading stage. Seemingly, the text chosen for reading was also not good enough to help the learners learn how to read. The readers have small sentences. Scaffolding which may help learners to comprehend a text was not done. The teacher's attempt to scaffold reading was applied to decoding words in the texts.

After reading

The main goal of reading a text is understanding it and grasping its meaning. The after reading stage consist of checking the learners' understanding of a text, seeking opinions and consolidating its meaning. After reading the book with the learners, the teacher asked learners to answer the questions on the book based on the story that was read. Some learners could complete those questions, but others failed to do so.

For example:

Teacher A (Uthisha): Bhala isiphetho sendaba usho ukuthi ubona ukuthi Kensuke ekugcineni. (Conclude the story by telling what happened at the end.)

*Learners (Abafundi): Dan no Jabu bakwazi ukusiza intombazanyana ekuthathweni yindoda yemoto.
(Dan and Jabu assisted a girl who was nearly kidnapped by a man who was driving a car).*

The whole class did a class activity after reading. It was not clear which aspect of reading the teacher was emphasizing. The purpose of the activity was clear. Literature on the teaching of reading emphasizes that the ultimate goal of teaching reading is comprehension, yet it was not done in this lesson. The teacher also asked learners questions about the title, but not the meaning and content of the text.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The main aim of the study was to explore teachers' experiences faced by teachers in the teaching of reading in grade 3 classrooms in iLembe District. In this chapter the researcher presented and analysed the data gathered through the use of interviews and classroom observation. The researcher further analysed the data by focusing on the following important areas: challenges encounter when teaching reading, approaches and guidelines used to teach reading, resources necessary for teaching early reading and the reading activities held with learners and emerging strategies. The next chapter presents the summary, recommendations and conclusions from the study's findings.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The previous chapters have all in their different viewpoints attempted to answer the research questions. The objectives of the study were to explore some of the challenges grade 3 teachers experience in teaching reading in isiZulu in grade 3 classrooms, to determine the approaches that are used by teachers to teach reading and to explore some of the strategies that can be used to improve learners' reading skills. The results of semi-structured interviews have been analysed in relation to the aim of the study and the significance of the findings. In this chapter, the findings are summarised under each of the research questions of the study and the researcher discusses the findings, limitations, and recommendations of the study.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that the present study attempted to answer were as follows:

- What tactics and approaches do teachers employ in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue?
- What challenges do teachers encounter when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3?
- How do teachers address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu in mother tongue?

5.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to explore teachers experienced in teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3 classrooms in iLembe District.

5.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were:

- To determine the tactics and approaches teachers to utilize in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu.

- To find out what problems teachers have when teaching reading in the isiZulu mother tongue in grade three.
- To establish how teachers, address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu.

5.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology in this study is qualitative research methods, and they involved research design, sampling design, data collection, and data analysis.

5.5.1 Research Paradigm

The researcher employed an interpretive paradigm for this study. This design was considered most appropriate for determining teachers' views on problems in teaching reading in their school without the manipulation of variables and provided answers to the research questions.

5.5.2 Qualitative Research Design

A case study was employed as mode of inquiry. In order to gain an in-depth understanding about some of the challenges teachers faced in teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in grade 3 classroom, the researcher conducted a case study at three primary schools.

5.5.3 Sample Design

The researcher obtained information from grade 3 teachers. Purposive sampling of participants was done in this study as a selection procedure. The study sample comprised of three grade 3 teachers. The sample was selected, as they were information rich. Previous authors have detailed this sampling procedure (Condy & Blease, 2014; Dorasamy & Reddy, 2014).

5.5.4 Data Collection

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading. Semi-structured questions were utilised to probe teachers in order to get clarity on specific issues regarding the challenges they faced

in the teaching of reading in isiZulu in grade 3 classrooms. The researcher used audiotapes to record the data which allowed her to familiarise herself with the educators in the foundation phase and promoted more thorough understanding of the discussions and engagements.

The literature study revealed that many South African teachers in the Grade 3 experience challenges in teaching reading (Pretorius *et al.*, 2016). This was evident in the participants' practices during my classroom observations.

5.5.5 Data Analysis

The data was transcribed and organised into themes. The researcher integrated the themes and responses into the text of the report. This procedure allowed the researcher to gain a sense of the whole by reading all the transcriptions and field-notes carefully, jotting down ideas as they came to mind.

5.6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

➤ Findings with regard to Research Questions number one.

The first Research Question was to determine the tactics and approaches teachers used to utilize in the Grade 3 classroom when teaching reading in isiZulu.

Findings revealed that the methods of teaching reading that teachers used were the phonic, look and say methods. According to Sethusha and Makeleni (2014), these are the two best-known approaches used to teach reading in grade 3. The look and say method are an extraordinary approach whereby learners compose and read their own sentences even before they can write. It requires learners to recognise words and derivative phonic sounds. Phonics involves the teaching of initial sounds to written letters and applying that knowledge in recognizing words and reading. Research shows that learners, who were taught phonics directly and systematically in the foundation phase, achieve higher scores on reading achievement than learners who do not receive this instruction (Sethusha & Makeleni, 2014). However, Mudzielwana (2014) suggests to the fact that learners learn best when teachers employ a variety of strategies to model and demonstrate reading knowledge.

➤ **Findings with regard to research questions number two.**

The second research questions were to find out what challenges do teachers encounter when teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in Grade 3?

The findings of the present study revealed that the challenges teachers' experience in teaching reading skills to learners was These findings also support previous researchers (Condy & Blease, 2014; Sethusha and Makeleni (2014) & Mudzielwana, 2014). Challenges teachers experienced in the teaching of reading in grade 3 were: shortage of reading sources, large classes, lack of parental involvement and inappropriate approaches used to read. Literature revealed that home language instruction is encouraged in the first four years of formal schooling. However, this is not always attained as learners are taught in a language (English) which is not their home language. Language skills are directly related to success at school and are divided into the following categories: vocabulary, correct language usage, correct sentence construction, language comprehension, reading, and spelling. A study conducted by Mudzielwana (2014), revealed that the home language education policy specifies that learners should start learning at school in their home language until grade three. Very important finding and stipulation.

➤ **Findings with regard to research questions number three.**

The last questions were to establish how teachers, address the challenges of teaching reading in isiZulu.

The findings revealed that the strategies to improve learners' reading were to do team buildings and include parental involvement. The parents or caregivers of young learners play an integral role in guiding them in reading. Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008) argue that parental involvement can either be very successful or it can lead to stress at home, depending on how the teacher approaches the matter.

Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008) are of the opinion that if the learner is told to read something to their parents, it must be to show off their progress the learner should be able to show their parents how much success he or she has already had with reading. The cooperation between parents and the teacher is extremely important for learners

to develop their reading skills. Cairney (as cited in Joubert, Bester & Meyer, 2008) asserts that this collaboration can be strengthened through mutual communication and by giving parents access to the curriculum.

The findings of reducing the class size were irrelevant due to the school under study being a mainstream school that caters for learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds and the Department of Education (DoE, 2011) has the authority to increase or decrease the number of learners in the school. Literature revealed that some schools in South Africa were closed down due to enrolment being very low.

5.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was achieved by exploring teachers experience in teaching reading in isiZulu mother tongue in iLembe District. However, the study sample of three teachers was drawn from three primary school in iLembe District. This is a limitation of the study since the results do not represent the total population of teachers experiencing challenges in teaching reading in South African schools, therefore the results cannot be generalised. The researcher selected the most accessible school as the site of study as this aided in being more cost effective.

The school was also selected due its relevance and information rich participants.

A further limitation of the study was the instrument used to obtain information from teachers. Semi-structured interviews were employed to obtain an understanding of some of the challenges that teachers faced in teaching reading. The researcher has ensured that the validity of the instrument was checked by the people who were experts in the field of research. Employing semi-structure interviews has enriched the study, however due to a small sample size and obtaining information from only three school has limited the study to explore challenges faced by teachers at other schools.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study on the teachers' experiences in teaching of reading in isiZulu mother tongue in grade 3 classrooms produced the following avenues for future researchers:

- a. The present study has shown that teachers' recommendations were drawn from three primary school; it would be proper to undertake the study in other schools to determine recommendations regarding the challenges faced in teaching reading in grade 3.
- b. There is an essential need to do more team building teachers and also to conduct workshops that will empower both parents and teachers on how to teach learners reading in other schools. This workshop should be conducted within and outside the school environment.
- c. There is a basic need to present a community-based program that encourages and empowers parents to fully participate in their children's education.
- d. It is necessary for school curriculum revision and redesign, as well as the establishment of adequate teaching and learning support material.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

Teachers need to change their attitude and become supportive towards learners who are experiencing difficulty in reading. Teachers must embrace the motto that every child can learn. According to the constructivist assumption, teachers should not teach in the traditional way but rather should structure a reading lesson such that learners are actively involved, provide support and guidance rather than lecturing, and place emphasis on reflective teaching (Schunk, 2014).

Teachers can focus on effective communication, meaning, comprehension and respect for language in the classroom (Mudzielwana, 2014). Mudzielwana (2014) points out that the constructivist approach has implications for teaching reading comprehension because in facilitating learning, the teacher must take the cultural context of the learners into consideration as it influences their thinking and actions.

The best alternative or accommodation for teaching learners reading in the foundation phase is to use a variety of teaching methods to improve learners reading skills.

5.9 CONCLUSION

Teaching reading is undergoing transformation. There is evidence that teachers are using the bottom-up approaches however they are also embracing the top-down approach. The Department of Basic Education provides do workshops to improve teaching of reading hence I say there is transformation and teachers are also embracing it therefore it is still a mix bag in the sense that the level of reading has improve according to PIRLS study, (2016). Teachers are teaching in the right directions but there is still to need to be further attempt to adopt the constructivist approach which emphasises comprehension as the final goal of teaching reading.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter to the District Office to request permission to collect Data

Enq: Hlengiwe Shoji-Kunene

Cell no: 0731781515

E-mail: hlengikunene@gmail.com

PO Box 223

Kwa-Dlangezwa

3886

01 February 2021

The District Manager

KZN Department of Basic Education (ILembe District)

Kwa-Dukuza

4450

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FOR RESEARCH

- I am currently conducting research on "**A teacher's perspective on teaching reading in IsiZulu in Grade 3 at ILembe district schools**" and would like to request your permission to collect data from primary schools of Phambela Circuit.
- I am presently attached to the School of Education at the University of Zululand.
- I would like to assure your department that there will be no risk involved during the data collection process. Prior arrangements with the principals of schools will be made to ensure that there is no disruption in the daily

activities of the schools. I would like to indicate that I shall conduct myself with great diligence and professionalism throughout the data collection exercise.

- The following are my other particulars in full:

Institution: University of Zululand

Student no: 19981154

Thanking you in anticipation

Regards

Shozi-Kunene P.H

Appendix B: Ethical clearance certificate

**UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**
(Reg No: UZREC 171110-030)



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Website: <http://www.unizulu.ac.za>
Private Bag X1001
KwaDlangezwa 3886
Tel: 035 902 6731
Fax: 035 902 6222
Email: DlaminiA@unizulu.ac.za

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Certificate Number	UZREC 171110-030 PGM 2018/509								
Project Title	TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF TEACHING READING IN ISIZULU IN GRADE 3 IN ILEMBE DISTRICT								
Principal Researcher/ Investigator	PHS Kunene								
Supervisor and Co-supervisor	Prof TA Mbatha-Ngubane				Dr S Xulu				
Department	Early Childhood Development								
Faculty	Education								
Type of Risk	Med Risk- Data collection from people								
Nature of Project	Honours/4 th Year			Master's	x	Doctoral		Departmental	

The University of Zululand's Research Ethics Committee (UZREC) hereby gives ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project. The Researcher may therefore commence with data collection as from the date of this Certificate, using the certificate number indicated above.

Special conditions:

- (1) This certificate is valid for 2 years from the date of issue.
- (2) Principal researcher must provide an annual report to the UZREC in the prescribed format [due date- 22 August 2019]
- (3) Principal researcher must submit a report at the end of project in respect of ethical compliance.
- (4) The UZREC must be informed immediately of any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the documents that were presented to the meeting.

The UZREC wishes the researcher well in conducting research.


Professor Gideon De Wet

Chairperson: University Research Ethics Committee
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research & Innovation
22 August 2018



Appendix

C: Letter to the principals requesting permission for their teachers to take part in the study

Hlengiwe Shoji-Kunene

0731781515 032-4376192

hlengikunene@gmail.com

Dear Principal

I am currently doing my Master's Degree at University of Zululand researching on the teacher's experience in teaching reading in IsiZulu in Grade 3 classroom. I would like your teacher to be part of my study. She is not going to be interrupted in any of his learning activities.

The findings of this study will be made public, but identifying information such as your teacher's name and school will be kept private. There are no costs for your teacher to take part in the study. You are free to withdraw your teacher from participating at any time and that will not affect his rights.

If you are happy for your teacher to take part in this study please fill in and sign the attached consent form. Should you have any queries regarding the study, please fill free to contact me at any time in the above stated numbers.

Thank you

P.H Shoji-Kunene

Appendix
D: Consent form

I _____ (principal) give consent for my teacher
_____ to take part in the research study
conducted by Hlengiwe Shoji-Kunene from the University of Zululand towards her
Master's Degree. I understand that all references of my teacher will be anonymous
and untraceable.

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Appendix

E: Letter to teachers requesting them to take part in the study

Hlengiwe Shoji-Kunene

0731781515

032-4376192 hlengikunene@gmail.com

Dear Teacher

I am currently doing my Master's Degree at University of Zululand exploring on Teachers experience in teaching reading in IsiZulu in Grade 3 classroom. I would like you to be part of my study.

Results of this study will be published but confidentiality of identifying information like your name and your school will be strictly maintained. There are no costs for you to take part in this study. You are free to withdraw from participating at any time and that will not affect any of your teaching rights.

If you are happy to take part in this study please fill in and sign the attached consent form and return it to school. Should you have any queries regarding the study, please fill free to contact me at any time in the above-stated numbers.

Thank you

P.H Shoji-Kunene

Appendix
F: Consent form

I _____ (teacher) agrees to participate in a Master's degree research study performed by Hlengiwe Shoji-Kunene of the University of Zululand. (teacher) agrees to participate in a Master's degree research study performed by Hlengiwe Shoji-Kunene of the University of Zululand. I understand that all references will be anonymous and untraceable. I understand that I have the rights to withdraw anytime if I am no longer interested to take part in this study.

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Appendix

G: Schedule interviews for Grade 3 Teachers

Questions to Ask in an Interview

1. Why do you believe reading is crucial in the early years of a student's education?
2. Who is in charge of teaching children to read at a young age? Explain.
3. What factors do you consider when selecting a narrative to teach reading?
4. What kind of reading book do you use in class to teach reading?
5. What kinds of reading exercises do you usually teach your students?
6. Do you usually use a learners' book with all of the ways and criteria for teaching reading to your students?
7. When teaching reading, how easy or difficult is it for you and your class to stick to the timetable?
8. When it comes to teaching reading, do you face any challenges or strengths?
9. What strategies do you use to help students overcome linguistic barriers?
10. Did you get the supports from the school management? Explain

Appendix

H: Schedule to be used for observing learners during data collection

Observation of a Few

The participant's name is.....

Date of observation:

Signature:

Title:

Name of Observer: P.H Shoji-Kunene (Mrs)

Lesson Duration: 30 minutes

Resources:

The lesson's goals and objectives are as follows: To encourage active involvement and self-assurance. to help students expand their vocabulary and fluency To read with comprehension and to respect punctuation marks

Description of the story:
.....
.....

Teachers Plan.....
.....
.....

Is the link to the lesson provided by the teacher?		Y
		N
Was the teacher clear about the objectives?		
		Y
		N
The lesson will be presented.		
Is the teacher enthusiastic?		Y
		N

Appendix

Was the teacher's reading clear enough for the students to understand?		
		Y
		N

Did the teacher follow the guidelines for teaching reading		
		Y
		N
Is the teacher involving all students?		
		Y
		N
Is the teacher concluding the class in a positive and straightforward manner?		
		Y
		N

Observational remarks:

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Appendix I: EDITORS CERTIFICATE



Editing Services Certificate

This certifies that the THESIS:

EXPERIENCES OF TEACHING READING IN ISIZULU IN GRADE 3 IN ILEMBE DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Commissioned to us by:

PRISCA HLENGIWE SHOZI-KUNENE

Has been edited for the following:

- English language: grammar, punctuation, vocabulary enhancement, sentence structure, phrasing and spelling, syntax, paraphrasing and summarising
- Proofreading

Mrs Deshnee Chetty-Sherief

Editor and Transcriptionist

Mi-PA (Pty) Ltd

Date: 20/01/2022

Disclaimer: The author is free to accept or reject our changes in the document after our editing. However, it is to be noted that **we do not bear responsibility for revisions made to the document after our edit on <20/01/2022>** All editing after the date of edit is chargeable at full rate.

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