

**DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

**THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF INTERMEDIATE PHASE READING  
THROUGH INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

**BY**

**USHADEVI NAIDOO**

**20927206**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE**

**OF**

**MASTER OF TECHNOLOGY (QUALITY)**

**DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT  
IN THE FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

**SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR K. REDDY**

**CO-SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR N. DORASAMY**

**Date submitted: April 2012**

**SUBMISSION APPROVED FOR EXAMINATION**

---

**SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR K. REDDY**

---

**DATE**

---

**C0-SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR N. DORASAMY**

---

**DATE**

## DECLARATION

I..... declare that

- i) The research reported in this dissertation/thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research;
- ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university;
- iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons;
- iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
  - a) their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced, and
  - b) where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed in quotation marks, and referenced; and that
- v) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation/thesis and in the reference sections.

---

**USHADEVI NAIDOO**

---

**DATE**

## **ABSTRACT**

Reading is fundamental to functioning effectively in today's society. Learners with poor reading abilities have low opinions of themselves and their abilities (Patil, Saraswathi and Padakannaya, 2009:93). Behavioural problems may arise as these learners feel isolated and frustrated. The development of learners' literacy in South Africa as a developing country is accentuated by several challenges. Many learners in South Africa have difficulty understanding the language in which they are taught as they are not taught in their mother tongue. However, the language of instruction is not solely responsible for the poor performance in international reading tests and schooling in general. Learners are faced with socio-economic issues, very little or hardly any parental supervision and educators are faced with the challenge of finding reading methods and strategies suitable to improving reading. Learners in the foundation phase are explicitly taught reading skills. In the intermediate phase, learners are expected to apply the skills acquired in the foundation phase to access the curriculum. In reality, this is difficult to achieve.

The focus of this study is on preparing current intermediate phase educators in the development of learner literacy by contributing possible strategies that will enable the improvement of the quality of intermediate phase reading.

The study was conducted at primary schools to the north of Durban. A questionnaire was distributed to intermediate phase educators, including members of school management. Of the selected sample of 450, 366 of the respondents returned the questionnaire with no inaccuracies, declaring an 85% response rate.

The Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) Version 18.0 was used to analyse the data collected from the responses. The results are presented in the form of graphs, cross tabulations and other figures.

An analysis of the data revealed significant statistics from the different aspects explored (biographical data; factors impacting on reading literacy; language and reading instruction; strategies for teaching reading; library and computer resources; systems for improving reading quality; and homework).

The study contributes to several academic disciplines and the development of society in general, as it proposes strategies and recommendations that may be

implemented to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading, and thereby contribute to schooling experience in general.

The study recommends that all stakeholders (home; school management; educators; and the department of education) be held accountable for the improvement of literacy in our country. Educators need to be trained in the teaching of reading and parents need to play a more active role in the learners' lives. It is imperative that remedial educators and special personnel be employed by the department of education to assist learners with reading difficulties.

The study further recommends that the time allocated for intermediate phase literacy education be reviewed. The reinstating of collapsed libraries is vital to improving the quality of reading. In addition, the administrative workload of educators requires re-examination in light of the poor results achieved in the national (ANA) and international (PIRLS) literacy programmes.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express her earnest appreciation to the following:

- **First and foremost, the Supreme God**, for His kindness, unobtrusive presence and guidance in enabling me to complete this thesis;
- **Prof K. Reddy**, for his professionalism, assiduous dedication and exceptional management of the process;
- **Prof N. Dorasamy**, for her valuable input and constructive comments;
- My dear husband **Kubendran Naidoo** and daughters **Denisha, Divasha and Monisha** for their unrelenting support and love;
- My dad (late) **Ramdev Ganpath** who taught me never to give up and my dearest mum, **Thara Ganpath** for her motivation and love;
- **Deepak Singh**, statistician (DUT) for his sincere assistance with the data analysis;
- **Mercillene P. Mathews**, for her professional editing; and
- All the respondents for completing the questionnaire and for their enthusiasm to contribute to this research.

## **CONTENTS**

<b>TITLE PAGE</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>xvii</b>

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

<b>1.1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 Background and reasons for the study</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.3 Aim of the study</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.4 Research objectives</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.5 Rationale for the study</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.6 Scope of the study</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.7 Study limitations</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.8 Research method</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.8.1 Literature Study</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.8.2 Empirical Research</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.8.3 Study population</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.9 Clarifications</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.10 General outline of the study</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.11 Summary</b>	<b>8</b>

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR READING AND QUALITY IN EDUCATION**

<b>2.1 Introduction</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.2 Literacy</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2.2.1 Why improve literacy in South Africa</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.3 Organizations and Management Systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.3.1 ‘Umalusi’</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.3.2 Tertiary teacher education programmes</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.3.3 Five-Year strategic and performance plan</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.4 Quality assurance principles</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.4.1 General principles for improving the quality of intermediate phase teaching and learning</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.4.2 Integrated quality management systems (IQMS)</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.4.3 Annual National Assessments (ANA)</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2.4.4 ‘Trisano’</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.5 Improving the quality of reading and writing in the intermediate Phase</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.5.1 Foundations for learning campaign</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.5.2 Principles for improving the quality of reading and writing in the intermediate phase</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.5.3 Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS)</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.6 Imperative for advanced reading</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.6.1 The reading development curriculum</b>	<b>25</b>



2.6.2 Barriers to learning	27
2.7 Reading in South Africa	28
2.7.1 Principles applicable to intermediate phase education	29
2.7.1.1 Promotion to the next grade	29
2.7.1.2 Department of education intermediate phase education principles/programme	30
2.8 International reading programmes	32
2.8.1 Reading in the United States of America	32
2.8.2 Reading in England	33
2.8.3 Reading in Singapore and Hong Kong	34
2.9 Factors in the education system that contributes to poor reading and writing abilities of learners	35
2.9.1 Contextual	36
2.9.2 Communication	36
2.9.3 Teacher Quality	37
2.9.4 Early Childhood Development	38
2.9.5 Availability of Resources	39
2.9.6 The socio-economic order of the classroom	41
2.9.7 Gaps that exists in schools	41
2.9.8 Class Size	42
2.9 The relationship between reading and writing	42
2.10 The writing challenges for learners with reading problems	44
2.11 Strategies for reading and writing	46
2.12.1 David Rose's Pedagogy	48
2.12.1.1 Introduction	48
2.12.1.2 Learning to read reading to learn (LRRL)	49
2.12.1.3 The scaffolding learning cycle	50

2.12.1.4 The task of reading and writing and the language model	51
2.12.1.5 The LRRL Curriculum cycle	54
2.12.1.6 Results from the research done by David Rose	55
2.12.2 Genre-based literacy approaches in English literacy to improve the quality of reading and writing	57
2.12.3 Further strategies	60
2.12.3.1 Activating prior knowledge	61
2.12.3.2 Oral language	61
2.12.3.3 Phonological and phonemic awareness	61
2.12.3.4 Vocabulary knowledge	62
2.12.3.5 Keyword Memorization	62
2.12.3.6 Reciprocal teaching	63
2.12.4 Summary of the chapter	64

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction	66
3.2 The Research Design	66
3.3 Research Objectives	67
3.4 Qualitative Research Designs	68
3.5 Quantitative Research Designs	68
3.6 Survey Methods	69
3.7 Target population, sampling procedure and description of the sample	70
3.8 Data Collection	71
3.8.1 Data Analysis	71
3.8.2 Instrument of Research	71

<b>3.8.3 Description and Development of Questionnaire</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>3.9 Piloting</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>3.10 Validity and Reliability</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>3.11 Ethical Consideration</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>3.12 Limitations to the study</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>3.12 Summary</b>	<b>75</b>

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

<b>4.1 Introduction</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>4.2 Analysis of Questionnaire</b>	<b>77</b>

#### **SECTION A**

<b>4.2.1 Biographical/Demographic information</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>4.2.1.1 Composition of sample: Gender and age</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>4.2.1.2 Highest qualification</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>4.2.1.3 Composition of sample: Race and position</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.2.5 Number of learners</b>	<b>81</b>

#### **SECTION B**

<b>4.2.2 Factors impacting on reading literacy</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>4.2.2.1 Number of educators attending workshops</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>4.2.2.2 Reading levels of learners</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>4.2.2.3 Second language learners</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>4.2.2.4 Factors impacting on reading literacy</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>4.2.2.5 Language of instruction</b>	<b>86</b>

4.2.2.6 Common reading problems experienced by learners	87
4.2.2.7 Corrective teaching	88
 <b>SECTION C</b>	
4.2.3 Language and reading instruction	90
4.2.3.2 Annual national assessment results	91
 <b>SECTION D</b>	
4.2.4. Strategies for teaching reading	92
4.2.4.1 Reading as a group activity	92
4.2.4.2 Strategies used to teach reading	94
4.2.4.3 Resources for learners with reading difficulty	95
4.2.4.4 The method of scaffolding	96
4.2.4.5 Development of reading and comprehension skills	97
 <b>SECTION E</b>	
4.2.5 Library and computer resources	99
 <b>SECTION F</b>	
4.2.6 Systems for improving quality reading	101
 <b>SECTION G</b>	
4.2.7 Homework	103
4.3 Cronbach's Alpha	104
4.4 Reliability	106
4.5 Summary	106

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>5.1 Introduction</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>5.2 Conclusions drawn from the review of related literature</b>	
<b>5.2.1 Factors that contribute to poor reading abilities</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>5.2.2 Organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>5.2.3 Strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>5.3 Conclusions drawn from the field study</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>5.3.1 Factors that contribute to poor reading abilities</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>5.3.2 Organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>5.3.3 Strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>5.3.4 Diagrammatic Representation of the results from the field study</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>5.4 Summary of conclusions</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>5.5 Recommendations</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>5.5.1 Factors that contribute to poor reading abilities</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>5.5.2 Organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>5.5.3 Strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>5.5.4 Diagrammatic Representation of recommendations for the study</b>	<b>122</b>

<b>5.6 Further Research</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>5.7 Conclusion</b>	<b>125</b>

## **LIST OF TABLES**

<b>TABLE NUMBER</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>IEA Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (Pirls) 2006</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Composition of sample: Gender and age</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Composition of sample: Race and position</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Experience: Teaching and training</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>The method of scaffolding</b>	<b>96</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
2.1	Reading development sequence in schooling	26
2.2	The Scaffolding Interaction Cycle	51
2.3	Three levels of language patterns	53
2.4	The LRRL Curriculum Cycle	54
2.5	Strata of language in social context	59
3.2.1	Flow diagram of the research design	67
3.7.1	Map of schools north of Durban, KZN	70
4.1	Highest qualification of respondents	78
4.2	Number of learners in respondent's classes	81
4.3	Attendance at workshops on reading strategies	82
4.4	The Reading levels of the learners is above average	83
4.5	Second language learners	84
4.6	Socio-economic factors that impact on reading literacy	85
4.7	Language of instruction	86
4.8	Common reading problems experienced by learners	87
4.9	Common trends relating to corrective teaching	89
4.10	Adequate allocation of for specific areas of instruction	90
4.11	Performance of learners in the intermediate phase	

	of the Annual National Assessment (ANA)	91
4.12	Learners are taught reading according to the specific learning styles	93
4.13	Strategies used during reading instruction time	94
4.14	Resources available to assist learners who have reading difficulties	95
4.15	Ways in which reading and comprehension skills can be developed	97
4.16	Resources used during reading instruction	99
4.17	Outputs of other factors that referred to resources	100
4.18	Management systems that control quality in reading	102
4.19	Reading as a homework activity	103
5.1	Results from the Field Study	117
5.2	Improving Reading Quality-Accountability of Stakeholders	123
	List of References	126
	APPENDICES	127
	Questionnaire	
	Ethical Clearance – Permission to conduct research	



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ABBREVIATION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
<b>AEE</b>	<b>Alliance for Excellent Education</b>
<b>ANA</b>	<b>Annual National Assessments</b>
<b>B Ed</b>	<b>Bachelor of Education</b>
<b>BE</b>	<b>Bilingual Education</b>
<b>CEA</b>	<b>Centre for Evaluation and Assessment</b>
<b>CEOM</b>	<b>Catholic Education Office Melbourne</b>
<b>CEPD</b>	<b>Centre for Education Policy and Development</b>
<b>CPTD</b>	<b>Continuing Professional Teacher Development</b>
<b>DAS</b>	<b>Development Appraisal System</b>
<b>DBE</b>	<b>Department of Basic Education</b>
<b>DoE</b>	<b>Department of Education</b>
<b>ECD</b>	<b>Early Childhood Development</b>
<b>ELRC</b>	<b>Education Labour Relations Council</b>
<b>FAL</b>	<b>First Additional Language</b>
<b>FFL</b>	<b>Foundations for Learning</b>
<b>GET</b>	<b>General Education and Training</b>
<b>GMR</b>	<b>Global Monitoring Report</b>
<b>HL</b>	<b>Home Language</b>
<b>IAEEA</b>	<b>International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement</b>
<b>IAR</b>	<b>Instructional Assessment Resources</b>
<b>IPTD</b>	<b>Initial Professional Teacher Development</b>
<b>IQMS</b>	<b>Integrated Quality Management Systems</b>
<b>ISC</b>	<b>International Study Centre</b>
<b>ISO</b>	<b>International Standards Organization</b>
<b>KZN</b>	<b>Kwa-Zulu Natal</b>
<b>LLP</b>	<b>Literacy Learning Programme</b>

<b>LOLT</b>	<b>Language of Learning and Teaching</b>
<b>LRRL</b>	<b>Learning to Read Reading to Learn</b>
<b>NCLRC</b>	<b>National Capital Language Resource Centre</b>
<b>NC3R</b>	<b>National Centre for the Research Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research</b>
<b>NCS</b>	<b>National Curriculum Statement</b>
<b>NETF</b>	<b>National Educational and Training Forum</b>
<b>NGO</b>	<b>Non-Governmental Organization</b>
<b>NPDE</b>	<b>National Professional Diploma in Education</b>
<b>NPFTED</b>	<b>National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development</b>
<b>NRS</b>	<b>National Reading Strategy</b>
<b>NSC</b>	<b>National Steering Committee</b>
<b>OBE</b>	<b>Outcome Based Education</b>
<b>OSD</b>	<b>Occupation Specific Dispensation</b>
<b>PASW</b>	<b>Predictive Analytical Software</b>
<b>PGCE</b>	<b>Post Graduate Certificate in Education</b>
<b>PGP</b>	<b>Personal Growth Plan</b>
<b>PIRLS</b>	<b>Progress in International Reading Literacy Study</b>
<b>PMS</b>	<b>Performance Measurement System</b>
<b>QLTC</b>	<b>Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign</b>
<b>QRM</b>	<b>Qualitative Research Methods</b>
<b>REQV</b>	<b>Relative Education Qualification Value</b>
<b>RNCS</b>	<b>Revised National Curriculum Statement</b>
<b>SABS</b>	<b>South African Bureau of Standards</b>
<b>SACMEQ</b>	<b>Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality</b>

<b>SAL</b>	<b>Second Additional Language</b>
<b>SDT</b>	<b>Staff Development Team</b>
<b>SFL</b>	<b>System Functional Linguistics</b>
<b>SMT</b>	<b>School Management Team</b>
<b>THRASS</b>	<b>Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills</b>
<b>TIMSS</b>	<b>Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies</b>
<b>U.S.</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</b>
<b>UP</b>	<b>University of Pretoria</b>
<b>WSE</b>	<b>Whole School Evaluation</b>

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Quality is defined as the degree of excellence which an item possesses (ISO 9001; 2000). The quality of something can be ascertained by comparing a set of basic characteristics with a set of requirements. If the basic characteristics satisfy all requirements, eminent or significant, quality is accomplished. If those characteristics do not meet all requirements, a mediocre or insignificant quality is achieved (ISO 9001, 2000).

There are many important reasons why there should be a focus on quality in education. The achievement of worldwide participation in education is essentially determined by the quality of education available. How well learners are instructed and how much they learn determines how regularly learners attend schools. Parents evaluate the schools their children attend based on the quality of teaching and learning provided at particular schools (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005:28). If the quality of education is high, then the influential roles of schooling in assisting learners with the accomplishment of their own economic, social and cultural objectives, will be strengthened. Learners procure the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes for being accountable, involved and productive citizens by developing creatively and emotionally, in schools that focus on quality (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005:28). The following literature examines the established practices and associated concepts regarding quality in education.

Quality in education involves the educational outcomes and the processes leading to them. Examples include the manner in which a school is organised and managed, a safe school environment, good community involvement; and incentives for good results. The quality of education is further affected by the following factors: time spent learning by learners, assessment methods for monitoring learner progress, styles of teaching, education spending, the language of instruction, and classroom organisation strategies (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005:32).

Hence, defining quality and developing approaches to monitoring and improving it involves clarifying the aims and objectives of education; developing a framework for

the analysis of quality that enables the extent to be specified, an approach to measurement that facilitates the identification and assessment of significant variables, a framework for advancement that extensively covers the interrelated components of the education system and acknowledges opportunities for change and amendments to be identified (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005:29). Various methods of cognitive development are employed and the accumulation of particular values, attitudes and skills are important objectives of education systems (EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005:32). It may be suggested that the key to improving the quality of education is a universal issue.

Before discussing the quality of education in South Africa, it is important to understand the history of education and the necessity of improving the quality of teaching and learning in this third world country.

## **1.2. BACKGROUND AND REASONS FOR THE STUDY**

South Africa's democratic government inherited a divided and unequal system of education. Under apartheid, South Africa had nineteen different educational departments disconnected by race, geography and ideology. This educational system developed learners' readiness in different ways, for the positions they were expected to engage in, for example in social, economic and political life under apartheid. In each department, the curriculum played an authoritative role in reinforcing inequality. In terms of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) Policy (Department of Education, 2002:4), what, how and whether learners were taught, was in contrast to the different roles they were envisaged to play in the wider society.

After the national elections in South Africa in 1994, the National Education and Training Forum (NETF) began a process of syllabus revision and subject rationalisation. The NETF curriculum developers removed racist and other insensitive language from the existing syllabi. The RNCS which was accepted as policy in 2002 focussed on improving educator orientation and training, and providing learning support materials and provincial support (Department of Education, 2002:5).

South Africa has 6 million adults over the age of 16 who have never attended school and cannot read or write and, therefore, cannot contribute effectively to the economy

(Centre for Evaluation and Assessment, University of Pretoria, 2006:7). South Africa has been undergoing many changes in education, for example, a new curriculum with the introduction of the outcomes based education and the introduction of a single Department of Education, which replaced 19 different education departments of the past era. The rationalization of the civil service caused thousands of experienced, skilled and valuable educators to be removed from the education system, which had ultimately impacted on the quality of education in South Africa (Centre for Evaluation and Assessment, University of Pretoria, 2006:8).

An equal opportunity to all learners irrespective of race, religion or creed, to develop holistically through education in South Africa, has become the main focus. According to Mr Jacob Zuma, ANC president of South Africa (Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign, 2008:2):

*Education must be elevated from being a departmental issue, or even a government issue, to a social issue-one that occupies the attention and energy for all our people. A commitment should be made to a “Code for Quality Education”, which describes the responsibilities and discipline required of them – the ‘non-negotiables’. It must be seen as a revolutionary act for cadres to subscribe to and act within this code.*

The political history of South Africa has impacted on the quality of literacy and education in general in the country. During the apartheid era, South Africa had nineteen different educational departments disjointed by race, geography and ideology. This educational system advanced learners’ readiness in different ways, for the positions they were likely to connect in, for example in social, economic and political life under apartheid.

South Africa participated in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006, which is an assessment of the reading comprehension of learners in the intermediate phase (grade 4 and 5). In 2006, PIRLS was administered to learners in the United States as well as 44 other jurisdictions around the world. Of the forty participating countries, South Africa was placed last with a score of 302 with a benchmark of 400 being the cut point for low achievers. PIRLS scores are revealed on a scale from 0-1000 with the scale average predetermined at 500 and a

standard divergence of 100 (University of Texas, United States of America DoE, 2007:4).

### **1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study is to investigate the quality of reading in the intermediate phase of schooling and the role of organisations and management systems in monitoring reading quality.

### **1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The study envisions investigating improving the quality of reading in the intermediate phase of schooling using intervention strategies.

The following objectives were identified as relevant to the study:

- Investigate the organisations and management systems responsible for quality education insofar as it impacts on reading;
- Establish the factors that impact on reading literacy; and
- Examine strategies for the improvement of reading literacy.

### **1.5 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

Many educators in South Africa believe that learners do not have well developed reading abilities (Hugo, Le Roux, Muller and Nel, 2005:211). This research seeks to investigate new and efficient approaches that can be exploited to improve reading quality. The following research study will be beneficial to:

- Educators in the inter-mediate phase;
- Educators of level 2 learners with an interest in improving reading and writing skills;
- Curriculum development specialists;
- Regional and National policy makers; and
- The overall development of learners.

## **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The focus of the study was confined to primary schools located north of Durban; in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. The educators represented an amalgamation of diverse races with African, Indian, Coloured and White influences creating a vibrant cosmopolitan society. The learners comprised different races from different socio-economic backgrounds. This enabled the study to being unbiased.

## **1.7 STUDY LIMITATIONS**

The study was reserved to intermediate educators only. The grade 7 educators that teach reading at a primary school were excluded. Other areas of Kwa-Zulu Natal were excluded from the study.

## **1.8 LITERATURE STUDY**

A literature study was undertaken with a view to assembling and integrating material relating to the quality of reading in the intermediate phase of schooling. Organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa as well as international reading programmes were investigated. Further, factors in the education system that contributes to poor reading and writing abilities of learners and strategies to improve the quality of reading, were examined.

## **1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.9.1 Empirical Research**

A questionnaire was designed to collate information on factors impacting on reading literacy, language and reading instruction, strategies for teaching reading, resources available for reading, systems for improving quality reading and reading as a homework activity. The questionnaire was the most appropriate instrument of data collection as it enabled educators to present reading related issues in writing. The information acquired revealed the status of the intermediate phase reading in South Africa.



### 1.9.2 Study population

The recent restructuring of the Education Department effected the merging of the former circuits into clusters. The cluster geographically extends from Umlazi in the south to Umhlanga in the north and from the Bluff in the east to KwaSanti (Pinetown) in the west. All schools in the Cluster represent both public state schools and independent schools. These schools are serviced by ward managers. The Cluster is divided into 8 wards and each of the wards is managed by a ward manager who is the Superintendent of Education (management). Each ward on an average comprises about 40 schools. The target respondents for this study are educators and management in the Umgeni north region, which represents one of the 8 wards in KwaZulu Natal.

A sample of 450 educators was selected. The questionnaire was completed by 366 respondents. A fair sample of educators from schools representing different race groups (Coloured, Indian Blacks and Whites) was selected to ensure an unbiased participation.

### 1.10 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Key concepts used in this study are clarified below:

- **Literacy** - Literacy involves the ability to read and write. Skills obtained through reading enables a person to think critically and allow the use of language (oral and written) for all purposes (Taking IT Global, 2010).
- **Quality Management System** - An organised structure together with planning, processes, resources and documentation that can be used to achieve quality objectives to provide improvement of products and services to meet the customer's (learner's) requirements (ISO 9001, 2000).
- **Quality Assurance** - "is an assemblage of tasks aimed to institute confidence that quality requirements be accomplished (ISO 9001, 2000).

- **Barriers to learning** - This refers to learners who are possibly experiencing a multiplicity of problems to learning and who subsequently cannot realise their optimal potential (Weeks, 2008:12).
- **Scaffolding** - “Scaffolding supports all learners to do the same high level tasks, but provides the greatest support for the weakest learners. Learners acquire independent competence through repeated practice with high level tasks, and the scaffolding support is gradually withdrawn as learners take control” (Rose, 2005:42). This involves hints from the teacher or feedback in order to master a task, strategy or skill using easier material. The learner moves upwards with more confidence and understanding.
- **Mode** - “That is the level of literate or technical language” (Rose, 2005:160).

## **1.11 GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

### **i. Chapter 1: Introduction and background**

This chapter serves as the point of reference and provides an explanation of the background, as well as the problem statement, purpose, goals, objectives and outline of the chapters in the dissertation. Clarifications of key concepts are also presented.

### **ii. Chapter 2: Theoretical framework for reading and quality in education**

This chapter provides the theoretical framework for reading and quality in education. The factors in the education system that contributes to the poor reading abilities of the learners are investigated. Strategies for improving reading quality are discussed.

### **iii. Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter outlines the plan for the collection and analysis of data. The researcher discusses the sampling method, data collection method and data analysis techniques. Details of the questionnaire design used are also presented.

### **iv. Chapter 4: Data Analysis**

This chapter encompasses the findings and analysis of the empirical investigation.

## **v. Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter outlines the conclusions from the study, as well as the recommendations for improving the quality of reading in the intermediate phase of schooling.

### **1.12 SUMMARY**

The main aim of the study is to investigate the quality of intermediate phase reading. The factors that contribute to poor reading ability are investigated and strategies to improve the quality in the intermediate phase are discussed.

The conclusions to the study will be informed by a questionnaire to be completed by educators in the intermediate phase of schooling.

The following chapter elaborates on the theoretical framework for intermediate phase reading and quality in education.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTERMEDIATE PHASE READING AND QUALITY IN EDUCATION**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Government, at all levels has made significant efforts to make primary school education to accessible learners of school age regardless of their environmental locality, religion, socio-economic status and political associations. Research conclusions and the personal interpretation of classroom sessions by researchers have also divulged that a significant proportion of learners are deficient in many of the literacy skills they are obliged to have in their formal and informal learning circumstances (Komolafe and Yara, 2010:531-539). Literacy encompasses the basic learning skills of listening, reading and writing. The impact of language in literacy development and the process of obtaining language are constant and unrelenting. The pitiable performance of learners in reading and writing can be attributed to many factors. The educator's selection of teaching technique is one of the foremost issues that are related to poor performance in learners' accomplishments in the English language (Komolafe and Yara, 2010:531-539).

This chapter investigates the quality principles applicable to intermediate phase education in South Africa. The organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa are described insofar as they impact on intermediate phase reading. The reasons for the need to improve the quality of reading and writing in this country are investigated as South Africa performed poorly in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). The literature review further investigates whether a correlation between reading and writing exists. Some of the factors in the education system that contribute to the poor reading and writing abilities of learners are examined. Special reference is made to the importance of David Rose's (2005) methodology in reading and writing. The impact of this method on improving the overall quality of reading and writing in the intermediate phase is described.

## 2.2 LITERACY

Literacy has been popularly and conventionally defined as the ability to read and write at an adequate level of proficiency that is necessary for communication (Taking IT Global, 2010:1). More recently however, literacy has taken on several meanings. Technological literacy, mathematical literacy, and visual literacy are just a few examples (ibid). While it may be difficult to ascertain the degree to which literacy has an effect on an individual's overall state of being, it can be inferred that an increase in literacy will lead to the advancement of an individual's life and the progress of societies.

While in progressively advanced nations, the majority of the population over the age of 17 possess basic literacy skills in reading and writing, the rate of literacy in developing nations is much lower ( Taking IT Global,2010:1).

The importance of literacy has become evident in the 50 years since the United Nations declared it to be a basic human right along with the right to sufficient food, housing and health care. The United Nations Literacy Decade was declared for 2003 to 2012 (Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), University of Pretoria (UP), 2006:3).

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) statistics, about 861 million people (20% of the world's adults) cannot read or write and therefore cannot be fully fledged members of their societies. UNESCO is of the opinion that approximately one billion remain illiterate worldwide at the turn of the century, and prospects of a radical improvement seem to be unlikely (Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), University of Pretoria (UP), 2006:3).

In view of the fact that the focus of this study is on South Africa, it is strategic to commence by explaining the National Department of Education's (DoE) perception of literacy. The Department of Education National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2002:23) refers to a 'balanced approach' to literacy development as it starts with learners' emergent literacy, subsequently connecting learners in reading 'real books', and writing for authentic reasons with a focus on phonics.

Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) has played an essential role in dominating recent teaching methodology. The NCS (2002:20-21) policy document describes six learning outcomes for the language learning area. While these are offered as separate outcomes, they should be incorporated into teaching and learning. The National Reading Strategy (DoE, 2008:14) affirms that learners should be acquainted with a variety of techniques to facilitate appropriate reading levels with comprehension; to extract information; and for pleasure.

### **2.2.1 WHY IMPROVE LITERACY IN SOUTH AFRICA?**

The South African education system has the challenge of providing quality education to a multicultural learner population in which there are 11 different official languages. English as a first language is spoken by less than 10% of the population (Howie, Venter and van Staden, 2008:552) and is one of the languages most frequently used by schools (the other being Afrikaans). As English is not the most frequently spoken language at home, the acquisition, mastery and learning of a second language is a reality for the majority of learners in South Africa. According to Howie *et al.* (2008: 553), this language system is one of immersion, where a language that is not the language of the larger society, is used as a medium of instruction.

The South African situation is complex. The National Department of Education's language policy stipulates that South African learners should receive instruction at school from grades 1 to 3 in their home language. However, in grade 4, learners are instructed in a second language, either English or Afrikaans. White, Indian and Coloured learners continue to receive instruction in the same language of instruction from grades 1 to 12, namely English or Afrikaans. However, African learners whose home language is not English or Afrikaans, receive instruction from grade 4 onwards in English or Afrikaans. This is despite current government language policy which advocates that learning should take place in their home language from grades 1 to 12 (Howie *et al.* 2008: 552).

Reading literacy has become the main focus in South African schools. It is viewed as an important aspect of learners' functionality as developing individuals, both within and outside schools. According to Rose (2006b:13), the history of schooling in South Africa completed with classroom methods and systems that have developed in western education, benefit the selected upper class and marginalise the majority.

The Department of Education (DoE) of South Africa conducted a study in 2003 to determine the literacy levels amongst grade 3 learners. The results indicated that 61% of learners cannot read and write at their appropriate age levels and that up to 18.5% of learners in some provinces had to repeat grade three after being unable to satisfy the requirements of promotion to the next grade (Alliance for Excellent Education, University of Pretoria, 2006:8). The question is whether the problem of low levels of language and learning skills are unique to South Africa or is it synonymous with other developed and developing nations? Can a person expect a higher level of literacy when a pupil has access to language instruction in the same language as his or her home language?

The following aspects elaborate on the importance of approaches to and the monitoring of the quality of education in South Africa through organizations and management systems. These systems focus mainly on improving teaching in South Africa. A discussion on the present teaching qualification follows, followed by literature on reviewed post graduate qualifications, which aim to improve the quality of teaching in South Africa.

### **2.3 ORGANIZATIONS AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS THAT MONITOR THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

According to Luneta (2008:16-17), quality education links to social and economic benefits for individuals and countries. Therefore, the monitoring of systems and organizations for quality management in education is vital for progress. Luneta (2008:16-17) is of the opinion that literacy levels should be increased in all schools as literacy is an indicator of the quality of education in a country.

Educators at all levels are conceptualised as being key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa. The National Curriculum Statement of South Africa envisages educators who are qualified, competent, dedicated and caring. However, the quality of current teaching is being questioned since what happens in the classroom is critical to the success of the system as a whole (Luneta, 2008:1). The following section examines the organizations and systems (Department of Education, Umalusi, School Management Teams, District Managers and ELRC) that monitor standards of quality for education in South Africa, from quality assurance in teacher training to the improvement of tertiary level education and

qualifications; Quality Assurance is an assemblage of tasks aimed to institute confidence that quality requirements be accomplished (ISO 9001:2000). Quality Assurance is a division of quality management.

### **2.3.1 'UMALUSI'**

'Umalusi' is a statutory organization which sets and monitors standards for general education and training in South Africa with the purpose of continually enhancing the quality of training (DoE, Umalusi-Council For Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (Umalusi), 2008:1). Sixteen years after the birth of democracy, despite the huge strides made in dismantling centuries of colonialism and apartheid in the South African education system, much remains to be done. In particular, teacher education needs to receive the concerted attention it warrants (DoE, Umalusi, 2008:1).

As a newly established democratic state, South Africa had inherited a highly fragmented and unresponsive education system. Commissions, white papers and legislation laid the basis for transcending this legacy and transforming the tertiary sector to better serve the needs of the country. The National Teacher Education Audit in 1995 found 281 institutions offering in-service and pre-service teacher education to some 481 000 students. These institutions comprised universities, technikons, and colleges of education, private colleges and non-governmental organisations. The audit also concluded that the quality of teacher education was generally poor, inefficient and cost-ineffective (DoE, Teacher Education in South Africa, 2005:3).

A need for teacher education programmes to improve the quality of teaching and learning is inevitable. Therefore, the government of South Africa has this under review. The following section discusses the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED) (DoE, 2007), which has two sub-systems in teacher education.



### 2.3.2 TERTIARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Tertiary-level education impacts on the overall quality of education as the quality of and access to, teaching and learning, complements each other. There is a need to improve the quality of teaching for the mainstream and not just for a privileged few. According to Christie, P. Butler, D and Potterton, M. (2007 in Welch, 2008:2):

*Mainstream schools are black schools in relatively poor socio-economic circumstances. It is these schools, not the privileged schools 'on the edge' that are the 'normal schools' for most South African learners. It is mainstream schools whose potential must be developed if South Africa is to meet its goals of equity and quality for all, achieve its human resource development targets, build the next generation of citizens and do justice to its young people.*

The present educator education programme is not organized to meet the requirements of the conventional situation in schooling (Welch, 2008:3). According to Welch (2008:3): "Quality is both fitness of purpose and fitness for purpose – purpose referring to meeting the educational needs of mainstream schools and well as of those of the privileged few". The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED) (DoE, 2007) has two sub-systems in teacher education, namely, Initial Professional Teacher Development (IPTD) and Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD). Presently, the two main avenues available for people wanting to become educators are the Bachelor of Education (B Ed) degree on one hand, and the Post-graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) following a basic degree, on the other. These courses are available on a full-time and part-time basis at universities.

Presently, the South African system is producing 7 000 new entrants to the teaching profession each year, whilst approximately 15 000 are needed. Research conducted by Professor Wally Morrow (2007) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, indicates that only 5.3% of educators registered for IPET are Foundation Phase African students. According to Welsh (2008:6), this is problematic as the B Ed and PGCE qualifications are coming across new entrants of the advantaged type (non-mainstream). It is her belief that attention should be on the 380 000 educators presently in the system if there is going to be a positive result on the quality of teaching in schools.

Educators form a diverse group in terms of qualification and experience, requiring differing kinds of further development for upgrading of the profession as a whole. Presently, the Relative Education Qualification Value (REQV) is a guide as to the level at which an educator is qualified. REQV 13 is a proxy for qualified educator status. The result of the Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) by the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) (2007) stipulates that educators on REQV 13 need to upgrade to REQV 14 by 2013. This compounds the problem as there are 138 000 educators who will be affected by this upgrading. Further, the number of educators' teaching and learning areas for which they are not qualified, has not been quantified at all (ELRC, 2007).

The National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) presently caters for the needs of the under-qualified educators. The CPTD is a policy that contains clear statements for developing and improving the quality of teaching and not simply upgrading unqualified educators.

From the literature reviewed above, it is explicitly clear that educators need to be suitably qualified and perpetual upgrading is necessary to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is maintained. However, this is not happening at an adequate rate in South Africa.

### **2.3.3 FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC AND PERFORMANCE PLAN**

The recent governance structure in education, which is part of the new political dispensation, has necessitated that an innovative set of priorities be unwavering for the 5 years between 2005 to 2010 (DoE, 2005:1). Reinforcing these priorities is the need to develop and deliver quality public education for all learners whereby learners' develop skills through quality education programmes and institutions. This is important for the economic growth of the country and will facilitate a decrease in poverty. The three most important areas that contribute to improving the quality of education are: firstly, all learners are provided equal access to institutions; secondly, a cadre of committed, stimulated and duly qualified educators need to be developed; and, thirdly, particular emphasis must be given to improving levels of achievement amongst all learners (DoE, 2005:2).

## **2.4 QUALITY ASSURANCE PRINCIPLES**

The following quality principles aim to improve the quality of teaching and learning in South Africa by paying special attention to quality assurance measures, whereby proper implementation and systematic evaluation is monitored (Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), 2008:16).

### **2.4.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF INTERMEDIATE PHASE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The acceptance of a quality management system should be an important decision of an organization. The design and execution of an organization's quality management system is guided by diverse needs, specific objectives, the products available, the processes employed and the size and structure of the organization (ISO 9001:2000).

A framework to inform, supervise and enhance the quality of education with the intention of improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools is necessary (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005:35). A discussion on one of the methods presently used in South African schools to monitor quality in education follows.

### **2.4.2 INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (IQMS)**

According to Letsoalo (2009:1-6) there is a belief that the IQMS will improve educators' morale, dedication and diligence by providing them with pay progression and development. The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is the new instrument to evaluate and measure the performance of educators. Its implementation started formally in 2004 in the absence of a formal instrument to appraise educators for development purposes and to evaluate them for salary progression. The lack of an instrument to appraise educators might have contributed towards substandard results in learner achievement (Letsoalo, 2009:1-6).

In order to improve the delivery system of quality education in South African Schools, the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) was initiated. The Integrated Quality Management System is informed by schedule 1 of the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998. In terms of Resolution 8 of 2003, an agreement was reached in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) to incorporate

programmes which encompass the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), the Performance Measurement System (PMS) and Whole School Evaluation (WSE).

The Integrated Quality Management System sought to integrate the DAS, PMS and WSE. The views of the IQMS are underpinned by the purpose of quality management systems, which is to establish proficiency, assess strengths and areas for further development, ensure sustained development, promote accountability and monitor the overall effectiveness of an institution.

Previously, there were three programmes that existed in the education system which controlled the quality management in education, namely:

- The Development Appraisal System (DAS);
- The Performance Measurement System (PMS); and
- Whole School Evaluation (WSE).

The aim of the DAS is to assess individual educators with a view to ascertaining areas of strength and weakness. The overall purpose is to develop programmes for individual improvement. The aim of PMS is to assess individual educators for salary advancement, grade (REQV) progression, and confirmation of appointment as educators, rewards and incentives. The aim of WSE is to evaluate the comprehensive efficiency of a school with special emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning (Rabichund, 2011:12-13).

However, an agreement in the ELRC encouraged an integration of the existing three programmes, which formed the IQMS. The IQMS is an integrated quality management system which focuses on strengthening and monitoring the performance of the education system (ELRC, 2003:16).

According to the ELRC (2003:16), the purpose of IQMS is:

- To identify specific needs of educators, schools and district offices for support and development;
- To provide support for continued growth;
- To promote accountability;

- To monitor an institution's overall effectiveness; and
- To evaluate an educator's performance.

IQMS is implemented professionally and is informed by specific principles that encourage transparency and consistency. The principal of a school has the responsibility of ensuring that the IQMS is executed efficiently and effectively at the school. The responsibility of the educator is to evaluate his or her performance and, thereafter, develop a Personal Growth Plan (PGP) (Rabichund, 2011:158)

School Management Teams (SMT) notify educators of relevant programmes for progress and generally assists with the implementation of IQMS. The role of the Staff Development Team (SDT) is to work with the SMT to ensure that all staff members are trained on all aspects of IQMS. The SDT coordinates staff development programmes and offers guidance when necessary (ELRC, 2003:17).

The SDT completes all necessary administrative work whilst liaising with the WSE team and ensuring that the process of IQMS is transparent and consistent. The overall responsibility for IQMS rests with the district/local office. The district/local office moderates the evaluation results of schools and captures and processes the results in order to facilitate the successful implementation of salary and grade progression (de Clerq, 2008:8). The district/local offices need to ensure that IQMS is conducted on an ongoing basis to ensure the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

#### **2.4.3 ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS (ANA)**

According to Soobrayan, the Director-General of basic education in South Africa, (Department of Education, Annual National Assessment (ANA) (2011:4), there has been inadequate reliable measurement of the quality of teaching and learning below Grade 12. In the absence of credible monitoring of what learners gain knowledge of, there is no potential for parents and district officials or educators to identify what needs to be exploited.

Consequently, establishing a first-rate system of standardised national assessment is the priority of the Department of Education. This system fundamentally engages all learners in key grades (Grades 1 to 6) and learning areas to write standardised tests which are similar across provinces and schools (DoE, ANA, 2011:4).

ANA is a strategy of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to develop the quality of learning outcomes in the education system. The results of ANA will facilitate a critique of how the various strategies and interventions that the DBE applies impacts on the critical aspect of education, especially learner achievement (DoE, ANA, 2011:5).

The intention of ANA is to pursue learner performance each year in literacy and numeracy with the purpose of improving learner performance, aligned with pledges made by government. The ANA results scrutinize progress, guide planning and the allocation of resources to facilitate improvement in Literacy/Language and Numeracy/Mathematics knowledge and skills of learners in the grades concerned (Meier, 2011:6). The results are utilized for meaningful interventions to improve teaching and learning; especially in areas of specific knowledge and skills that learners were not competent in the ANA tests (DoE, ANA, 2011:8).

ANA 2011 additionally exploits the experiences achieved in a number of international assessment programmes in which South Africa has keenly participated in during the last decade. These include the regional Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) programme, the global Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) programmes (Meier, 2011:2).

#### **2.4.4 'TRISANO'**

There is growing consensus that experiences during a learner's early years have dramatic consequences for the rest of childhood and adolescence (Republic of South Africa (RSA), Department of Education (DoE), 2001a:6). The early years are the ideal phase for the transmission of the values that are essential for an educated, peaceful, progressive and democratic society (R.S.A., DoE, 2001a:7).

The Department of Education, South Africa has identified the need for intervention in the early years for learners and envisages that (Department of Education,2004),

which is a five year plan, focuses on improving the quality of teaching and learning with a special focus on improving learners' language, mathematical and life skills.

According to the ECD (R.S.A., DoE, 2001a:9) policy, by 2010 all learners that enter grade 1 should have participated in an accredited Reception year programme.

It is evident that much depends on the implementation of 'Trisano' and the ECD policy to ensure that learners as early as grade 1 are exposed to quality education, which will ultimately empower all learners to be successful socially and economically in the future. In the Foundation Phase, the emphasis is on "learning to read". In the Intermediate Phase, the focus is on "reading to learn" (Department of Education (DoE) Foundations for Learning (FFL), 2009:9).

The following section discusses the importance of the Foundations for Learning Campaign, which presents clear directives on the need to improve learner performance in reading and writing in all South African schools.

## **2.5 IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF READING AND WRITING IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE**

### **2.5.1 FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING CAMPAIGN**

The Education Department of South Africa envisages that every learner in South Africa should develop a solid foundation for further learning. With this aim in mind and in order to concentrate explicitly on improving the quality in literacy and numeracy, the Minister of Education in South Africa declared that the national Department of Education would set in motion the "Foundations for Learning" (FFL) campaign in South African schools in the Government Gazette of 14 March 2008 (No. 30880) (DoE, 2008).

The FFL is a four year campaign to generate a national focus on enhancing learner achievement in reading, writing and numeracy with the vision that by 2011 every learner should demonstrate age-appropriate levels of Literacy and Numeracy. This will be determined by a national evaluation at the end of 2011. The campaign is managed and controlled by a National Steering Committee (NSC) composed of leading educationalists from universities, research institutions and NGO's (Non-

Governmental Organization) with proficiency and experience in literacy (DoE Foundations for Learning, 2008:5).

The Foundations for Learning Assessment Framework is a document which contains the 'milestones' for learners in the foundation and intermediate phase. The 'milestones' document indicates the expected level of achievement of learners in reading and writing for each term in the intermediate phase.

### **2.5.2 PRINCIPLES FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF READING AND WRITING IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE**

A technique used to improve the quality of reading and writing in the intermediate phase in South Africa is 'scaffolding' (DoE Foundations for Learning, 2008:9). In scaffolding, the educators' support is necessary to encourage the development of skills in learners. When a task is demanding or arduous, the learner may require the complete support and encouragement of the educator. Once the learner progresses and gains skills and knowledge to become independent, the scaffolding (by the educator) is removed (DoE Foundations for Learning, 2008:9).

The literature reviewed gives prominence to quality in general and quality in education in particular. Special reference is made to educator qualifications, which inevitably impacts on the quality of education in a country. There is considerable focus on improving literacy with substantial emphasis on improving reading and writing in the intermediate phase. IQMS is an influential system aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning in South Africa. The document that supports reading and writing in the intermediate phase, namely the FFL, provides much needed guidelines for educators.

The following discussion explores South African learners' participation in an international reading test. A brief explanation and analysis of the test is outlined to provide insight into the need to improve reading and writing in South Africa in the intermediate phase.



### **2.5.3 PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL READING LITERACY**

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006 is an assessment of the reading comprehension of learners in the intermediate phase (grades 4 and 5). In 2006, PIRLS was administered to learners in the United States as well as 44 other jurisdictions around the world. The PIRLS assessment framework developed by the International Study Centre (ISC) in the U.S. was used to measure learners' performance on a combined reading literacy scale and on a literary sub-scale and an informational sub-scale. The literary sub-scale assessed performance in reading for literary experience, and the informational sub-scale in acquiring and using information.

All participating jurisdictions use the same text which is translated into the primary language or languages of instruction in that jurisdiction. PIRLS derives nationwide empirical data that is valuable to inform decisions on curriculum and language policy (PIRLS, 2006: iii). Data is derived from questionnaires which are administered to all stakeholders including parents, educators, heads of institutions and learners.

PIRLS is administered every 5 years, first in 2001 and then in 2006. Quality control monitors trained by the International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IAEEA), visited schools in each jurisdiction to ensure that the procedures specified by the IEA were implemented properly (U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DoE, 2007:3). PIRLS assists participating jurisdictions to understand the literacy skills of their learners within an international context. A comparative study reveals areas of strength, as well areas in need of improvement (U.S. DoE, 2007:1).

The results of the PIRLS 2006 revealed that out of the forty participating countries, the Russian Federation, Hong Kong SAR and Singapore were the top-performing countries. Countries that participated in PIRLS 2001, for example, Singapore, Slovenia, the Slovak Republic, Italy, Germany and Hungary, showed significant progress and gains in achievement. There were only 7% of learners in the majority of the countries who reached the Advanced International Benchmark, while nearly one-fifth of learners did so in Singapore and the Russian Federation. When comparing results of PIRLS 2001 and 2006, it was ascertained that girls had a higher reading achievement than boys in all countries (Mullis and Martin, 2007:1).

Of the forty participating countries, South Africa was placed last with a score of 302 with a benchmark of 400 being the cut off point for low achievers. PIRLS scores are reported on a scale from 0-1000 with the scale average fixed at 500 and a standard deviation of 100 (U.S. DoE, 2007:4). Table 2.1 reveals the scores for PIRLS (2006).

Table 2.1: IEA Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (Pirls) 2006

Country or Province	Average		Standard Error
Russian Federation	565	?	(3,4)
Hong Kong	564	?	(2,4)
Canada, Alberta	560	?	(2,4)
Singapore	558	?	(2,9)
Canada, British Columbia	558	?	(2,6)
Luxembourg	557	?	(1,1)
Canada, Ontario	555	?	(2,7)
Italy	551	?	(2,9)
Hungary	551	?	(3,0)
Sweden	549	?	(2,3)
Germany	548	?	(2,2)
Netherlands	547	?	(1,5)
Belgium (Flemish)	547	?	(2,0)
Bulgaria	547	?	(4,4)
Denmark	546	?	(2,3)
Canada, Nova Scotia	542	?	(2,2)
Latvia	541	?	(2,3)
United States	540	?	(3,5)
England	539	?	(2,6)
Austria	538	?	(2,2)
Lithuania	537	?	(1,6)
Chinese Taipei	535	?	(2,0)
Quebec (English)	533	?	(1,6)
Canada, Quebec	533	?	(2,8)
Quebec, (French)	532	?	(1,2)

New Zealand	532	?	(2,0)
Slovak Republic	531	?	(2,8)
Scotland	527	?	(2,8)
France	522	?	(2,1)
Slovenia	522	?	(2,1)
Poland	519	?	(2,4)
Spain	513	?	(2,5)
Israel	512	?	(3,3)
Iceland	511	?	(1,3)
Moldova, Rep of	500		(3,0)
Belgium (French)	500		(2,6)
Norway	498		(2,6)
Romania	489	*	(5,0)
Georgia	471	*	(3,1)
Macedonia, Rep. of	442	*	(4,1)
Trinidad and Tobago	436	*	(4,9)
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	421	*	(3,1)
Indonesia	405	*	(4,1)
Qatar	353	*	(1,1)
Kuwait	330	*	(4,2)
Morocco	323	*	(5,9)
South Africa	302	*	(5,6)

? Country average significantly higher than the international average.

\*Country average significantly lower than the international average.

International average                      500                      (0,0)

The following discussion examines principles applicable to the intermediate education phase regarding the promotion of learners to the next grade and the requirements of reading and writing.

## **2.6 IMPERATIVE FOR ENHANCED READING**

Results of the above-mentioned international reading test indicate that South Africa is in urgent need of reading programmes that will encourage and maintain appropriate literacy levels nationally, as well as internationally.

Reading is a component of nation-building. The need to improve reading is essential to encourage and promote the confidence of learners in modern society and the wider world. Reading prepares learners to attain new information and knowledge that supports lifelong learning. Through reading, learners are enabled to be creative and engage critically in a world which is constantly fluctuating and ambitious in nature (DoE, National Reading Strategy (NRS), 2008:6).

South Africa has embarked on a National Reading Strategy which is focussed on improving the reading competency of all learners, including those learners who encounter barriers to learning (NRS) (DoE, NRS, 2008:5). The NRS (DoE, 2008) aims to improve the reading and writing of learners so that they progress from grade to grade in the education system and contribute productively to the economy of South Africa.

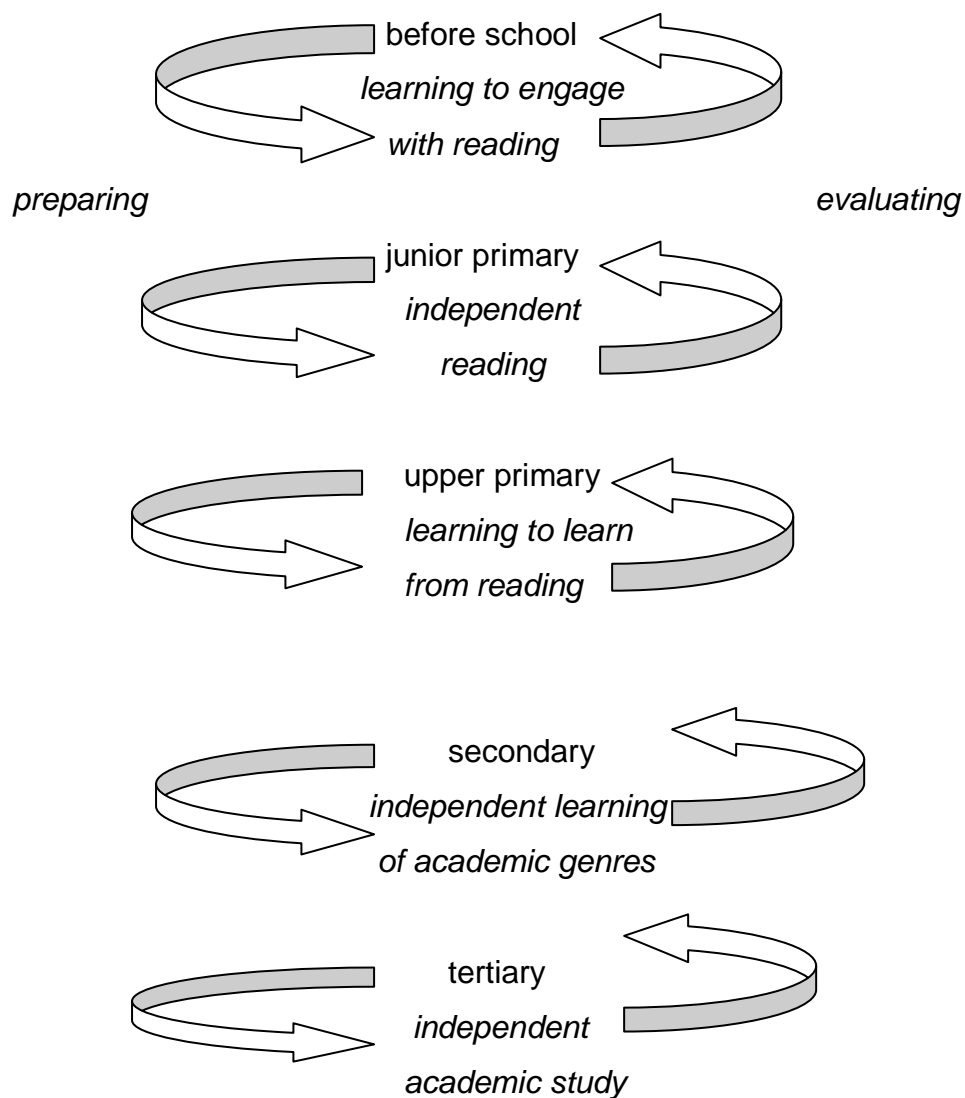
### **2.6.1 THE READING DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM**

Reading is a primary mode of learning in formal education and should be a central focus of classroom teaching. As reading becomes more and more important for learning, it becomes less and less a part of teaching. Most educators have received no previous training in teaching reading. Learners who are well prepared by their homes speedily learn to be independent readers in the early years, and are thus well prepared to start learning from reading in the upper primary years, while learners without this stage of home grounding are less well organized for upper primary, and may be harshly disadvantaged (Rose, 2006a:3).

The following reading development curriculum illustrates how learners are prepared for each stage based on prior learning of the previous stage. Learners are taught reading skills in the junior primary phase. In the intermediate, senior and tertiary phase learners are not explicitly taught reading skills but acquire them tacitly (Rose,

2006a:4). This series of instruction forward and assessment back is illustrated in Figure 2. 1.

Figure 2.1: Reading development sequence in schooling (Rose, 2006a:4)



## **2.6.2 BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

The term “learners who experience barriers to learning” is an all-encompassing concept. This refers to learners who are possibly experiencing a multiplicity of problems with learning and who subsequently cannot realise their optimal potential (Weeks, 2008:12). It has already been asserted that barriers can be located within the learner, within the centre of learning, within the education system and within the broader social, economic and political context.

These barriers are noticeable in different ways and only become apparent when learning breakdown occurs, when learners ‘drop out’ of the system or when the excluded become perceptible. Closely related to the lack of access to basic services are the consequences which sustained poverty has on learners, the learning process and the education system (DoE, 2002:2). These present themselves as physical and/or physiological impairments, developmental problems, learning problems, emotional problems or behavioural problems. Frequently, these difficulties occur simultaneously. The causes of barriers to learning and development include intrinsic causes (for example physical and/or physiological impairments) in addition to extrinsic causes (for example insufficient environmental influences, poor education and a system of education that does not provide for a diversity of learners (Weeks, 2008:17).

In South Africa, political influences were instrumental in allowing various systems to run parallel, yet have enormous differences. There were separate schools for learners with different categories of physical impairments and there was hardly any potential of communication and movement between ordinary and specialised education. The move towards education tended to be powerfully medical, with clinical criteria for admission, and multi-disciplinary education teams. Services were separate and there was a lack of coordination between the Health, Welfare and Education departments. There were discrepancies in supplies for schools, particularly for black learners. There were inequalities in the accessibility of educational support services and a lack of available teaching support and equipment (Weeks, 2008:80).

Since the first democratic election in South Africa in 1994, there has been a purposeful determination to cooperate and collaborate in planning the future of an integrated system of specialised education (Weeks, 2008:81). Certain general trends have begun to emerge in some significant documents. Most of these are reflected in the new White Paper (1995).

A review of the reading programmes in South Africa is conducted in the next section.

## **2.7 READING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

In South Africa, language learning is organized according to the Foundation Phase programme called the Literacy Learning Programme (LLP). The main focus is to give learners the foundations of reading, writing and basic literacy. In the intermediate phase, the programme is called the Languages Learning Programme (LLP). The main focus here is to develop the basic literacy that learners acquired in the earlier phase together with their thinking skills (DoE, 2007:1).

The time allocation in the LLP for reading and writing literacy, for grade R, 1 and 2 is 9 hours 10 minutes per week. For grade 3, the time allocation is 10 hours and the LLP for grades 4 to 6, is 7 hours and 30 minutes. Many schools teach English as the home language and Afrikaans as the first additional language. IsiZulu is taught as the second additional language. Ultimately, the language hours for grades 4 to 6 is shared between English, Afrikaans and IsiZulu. The time allocated for English is usually 5 hours in schools, which is insufficient to successfully teach the Learning Outcomes that underpin reading and writing (DoE, 2011:28).

In November 2009, The National Department of Basic Education of South Africa emerged which, in collaboration with all major stakeholders in education, mounted a major mobilization programme to ensure that all schools become centres of excellence. The programme is known as the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC) (DoE, 2009:2).

The Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, launched the Foundations for Learning document (which is a four-year campaign) in 2008, to improve the performance of learners in reading and writing in all South African schools. This campaign seeks to ensure that the average reading abilities of learners in grades 1 to grade 6 is

increased by no less than 50% by 2011 (Mkhwanazi, 2008:3-4). The critical and developmental outcomes motivated by the Constitution, is the core foundation on which the Revised National Curriculum Statement (DoE, 2002:6) builds its Learning Outcomes. There are 6 main learning outcomes. Learning Outcome 3, which is Reading and Viewing, indicates that the learner will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts. Learning Outcome 4, which is “Writing”, indicates that the learners will be able to write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes (DoE, RNCS, 2002:6). OBE’s assessment framework defines specific language milestones for the intermediate phase (DoE, FFL, 2008:27-35).

A National Framework for quality education in rural areas was devised and is the focal point for improving the quality of teaching and learning in rural and farm schools (SACMEQ, 2011:2). A further initiative of the Department of Education in South Africa to improve reading in schools is the National Reading Strategy which focuses on providing professional support to educators and making reading resources accessible to learners (SACMEQ, 2011:2).

## **2.7.1 PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO INTERMEDIATE PHASE EDUCATION**

### **2.7.1.1 PROMOTION TO THE NEXT GRADE**

According to KZN circular no. 74 (DoE, 2008: 1) progress requirements are determined on the basis of 100% continuous assessment. In grades 4 to 6, the national rating codes (1-4) are used for recording and reporting learner performance. The minimum requirement for progression to the next grade is the achievement of rating code 2, which indicates partial achievement of the milestones in all learning areas. However, should a learner obtain a rating code 1 in Literacy and/or Numeracy, which indicates the inability of the learner to satisfy the minimum requirements for promotion, the learner is usually retained in that grade (DoE. 2008:1). Ideally, all learners in the intermediate phase should progress with their age cohort. Progression is based on a learner’s performance against the recorded assessment tasks.

Fisher and Frey (2008:3) concur that good reading ability can produce good academic performance and poor reading ability does not allow a learner to meet the



promotion requirements. Learners who read well generally are more successful in writing.

Rose (2005:132) views the main function of teaching, not as much as the transmission of skills and knowledge, but rather as “order, relations and identity”. The main practice that educators are presented with daily is one of moral order of inequality in the classroom, whereby learners are classified as successful, average or unsuccessful. This inequality is globally accepted as learners’ “ability”. Rose believes that educators are ill-prepared in their training to manage such relations in classes where learners are unequal. This results in learners internalising these identities of being successful, average or unsuccessful and as such these identities become the main tool in reproducing socio-economic inequality.

It can be inferred from the above that all learners must be able to positively achieve all learning outcomes to be able to read and write successfully and progress to the next grade. However, it is important for educators to play a pivotal role in ensuring that learners are explicitly taught reading and writing skills, and given the knowledge in learning areas, with an emphasis on understanding what is being taught.

An analysis of the above indicates that if a learner cannot read, then the implications are that the learner will not be able to comprehend information in all learning areas. Evidently, there is a need to enhance reading skills. The importance of reading programmes cannot be over-emphasised. The following discussion examines some of the stipulations from the Department of Education (DoE), with reference to educators and learners commitment to reading and writing in the intermediate phase.

#### **2.7.1.2 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INTERMEDIATE PHASE READING PRINCIPLES/PROGRAMME**

Prior to implementing the quality principles applicable to reading, it is important to investigate reasons for the need to improve the reading competency of learners. The analysis that is pursued in the following discussion relates to the reasons to improve reading.

According to the South African Department of Education (2008:6), every educator in the intermediate phase is envisaged to devote at least 30 minutes daily to reading for

enjoyment and at least 1 hour to extended writing every week. Educators are presumed to have adequate resources to warrant the effective teaching of reading and writing. This includes wall charts, writing materials, reading series, workbooks and writing materials (DoE, 2008:6).

In South Africa, the formal teaching allocations for Literacy (Languages) in Grades 4, 5 and 6 are 7 hours and 30 minutes. The Literacy Focus Time (60 minutes) in the intermediate phase is 3 times per week in the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) or Home Language (HL) and 2 times per week in First Additional Language (FAL) or HL. In the Language development (30 min), learners do Writing and Listening and Speaking in the LOLT each once a week and in the FAL each once a week. The Second Additional Language (SAL) can be introduced in the fifth weekly time-slot (DoE, FFL, 2008:15).

In the intermediate phase (grades 4, 5 and 6), learners extend their literacy skills and raise their confidence and fluency in using oral language. Cross-curricular work forms an integral part of learning activities. Learners are introduced to oral and written literature and to important social and environmental issues by using texts that are longer and more intricate (RNCS, 2002:56).

It is anticipated that every school should assess, monitor and capture the learners' progress and achievement in the key areas of reading and writing. Learners are to be subjected to annual national assessments in literacy, using standardized tests to measure progress regarding the achievement of set objectives (DoE, 2008:7).

The primary goal of a reading programme should be to assist learners to acquire the skills and confidence to become successful independent readers. Readers benefit from observing the aspects a more proficient reader demonstrates and requires guidance in practicing and applying strategies independently without support. (DoE, 2008:9). According to the FFL (2008:9), "read aloud", "shared reading" and "guided reading" by the educator and learner form the components of a reading programme. The "guided reading" constitutes a significant segment of the reading process.

In the intermediate phase, during "guided reading", learners of similar reading requirements are grouped and instructed under the guidance of an educator. The educator selects the text that is at the learners' instructional reading level and will

reinforce or introduce appropriate reading strategies and concepts. The format of the lesson is dependent on the stage of reading development of the learners. As the fluency of learners increases, the lesson format and preparation increases to varying degrees of intensity. During the guided reading lesson, the educator assists learners in employing different cueing methods that will support them as they read (FFL, 2008:15).

According to Pretorius (2005:799), most school systems generally provide explicit teaching of reading in the foundation phase, by the end of which learners are expected to be independent readers. Learners in the intermediate phase whose reading and writing skills in the foundation phase were not mastered, experience barriers to reading and writing. As maintained by Rose (2005:133), the problem is further compounded as many educators in the intermediate phase lack the skills and knowledge of teaching reading (phonics, decoding and syllabification: methods which foundation phase educators are usually familiar with in their teaching training).

Moore and Hart (2007:16) believe that many learners in the first three years of schooling focus on decoding skills at the expense of comprehension. The result is that many learners resort to 'barking at the print', reading with accurate pronunciation, but with little understanding of what they read.

The "Learning to Read: Reading to Learn" approach by Rose (2005:152) does not depend on the ability of the learner to name or sound out letters of the alphabet. It emphasises "meaning in context" as the starting point for teaching reading in manageable tasks. This method focuses on repeated practise until every learner can read and write sentences and then paragraphs.

## **2.8 INTERNATIONAL READING PROGRAMMES**

An analysis of reading programmes in the United States of America, England, Singapore and Hong Kong follows.

### **2.8.1 READING IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

For many years, three basic definitions of reading have driven literacy programmes in the United States. According to the first definition, learning to read means learning

to pronounce words. According to the second definition, learning to read means learning to identify words and get their meaning. According to the third definition, learning to read means learning to bring meaning to a text in order to get meaning from it. Current literacy research aforementioned the above and places learning skills in the context of authentic reading and writing activities (U.S. DoE, 2007:14)

For PIRLS (2006), reading literacy is defined as “the ability to understand and use those written language forms required by society and/or valued by the individual. Young readers can construct meaning from a variety of texts. They read to learn, to participate in communities of readers in school and everyday life, and for enjoyment.” (Mullis, Kennedy, Martin and Sainsbury, 2006:3).

According to the U.S. DoE (2007:14), 68% of learners in the U.S.A. received reading instruction for six hours on a weekly basis. This was higher than the international average of 25%. The percentage of learners in the United States receiving more than 6 hours of reading instruction per week was higher than the percentage of learners receiving the same amount of instruction in all participating PIRLS jurisdictions. Almost 99% of certified educators instruct fourth- grade learners, with the U.S. percentage being higher than the international average of 97% (U.S. D.o.E., 2007:15).

## **2.8.2 READING IN ENGLAND**

In England, there are many factors that affect reading, such as the emphasis of the curriculum, use of texts books, strengths and weaknesses in curriculum implementation and the grade or age at which reading comprehension strategies are introduced. Recently, however, the national literacy strategy in England has placed a strong emphasis on reading for information, as well as on reading for literary purposes. Girls in England were significantly better readers than boys. Research conducted in England involves early literacy activities in the home, including what ten-year olds choose to read and their attitudes towards reading (Twist, Sainsbury, Woodthorpe and Whetton, 2006:28). The study showed that learners from disadvantaged (socio-economic) backgrounds, performed less well than those learners from affluent communities. The findings also indicated that educators engaged in guided reading sessions and used a variety of textbooks when the strategy was introduced (Twist *et al.*, 2006:28).

Child-centred approaches are a feature of the English system and the National Curriculum in English schools provides clear guidelines to educators about expected performance standards at each stage of their education (Tse, Lam, Lam, Chan, and Loh, 2005:84).

### **2.8.3 READING IN SINGAPORE AND HONG KONG**

The mainstream of the Hong Kong and Singaporean populace share a comparable Chinese language and cultural foundation and both cities are located in East Asia. Both places have been prejudiced by the British education system for a number of years. According to PIRLS (2001), learners in Singapore had the highest reading aptitude and read and performed significantly better than learners in England and Hong Kong (Tse *et al.* 2005:83). According to Tse *et al.* (2005:84) quoting Gregory and Clarke (2003), this may be the case as the education system in Singapore is ability driven, with the learners being streamlined. The education system is performance-based, has a comprehensive political philosophy and superior resources. It also values educators, originality and reasonable education policies. These factors, according to Tse *et al.* (2005:85), may have contributed to Singaporean learners scoring the highest in the world for mathematics and science. Hong Kong learners achieved the lowest scores on measurements affected by social and educational factors as the learners have become accustomed to being under examination and competition pressure. The Hong Kong government has been criticised for implementing changes to advance education. These changes have been seen as being rushed, ill contemplated and interfering (Tse *et al.* 2005:84).

Emanating from the aforementioned discussion, it can be argued that reading and writing is an international problem.

In England, research reported that there were a much higher proportion of learners with special needs in relation to reading and writing than most countries (Twist *et al.* 2006:31). Grade 5 educators reported that they had on average about five learners per class with reading difficulties. According to Twist *et al.* (2006:31), in the Netherlands, these learners are assisted by support educators who work with learners away from the usual classroom. Educators in England and New Zealand indicated that this type of support was available all the time.

In South Africa, educators do not have the assistance of support educators. Learners with special needs are incorporated into the mainstream. This is termed 'inclusive education'. This approach caters for learners with special educational needs and those with mild to severe learning difficulties. Previously, learners with special needs were referred to school psychologists and could be transferred to schools with remedial education. The long term plan in operation identifies learners with reading, writing and learning difficulties. Schools are tailoring the curriculum, the instruction and assessment methods in order to assist these learners (Republic of South Africa, Department of Education, 2001b:14-17).

Reading and writing skills are an international dilemma and any attempt to facilitate the improvement of reading and writing requires an investigation into factors that contribute to the poor reading and writing abilities of learners.

From the above discussion it can be inferred that there is more time spent on reading in the USA than any of the other countries participating in PIRLS. Learners in England who came from low-socio-economic backgrounds performed poorly as compared to those who came from affluent backgrounds. Learners in Singapore had the highest reading aptitude.

## **2.9 FACTORS IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT CONTRIBUTE TO POOR READING AND WRITING ABILITIES OF LEARNERS**

Writing fosters critical thinking and learning. Transactional writing (writing to communicate) envisages writing to accomplish something, to inform, instruct or persuade. Writing to learn enables a person to objectify our perceptions of reality. The primary function of this 'expressive' language is not to communicate, but to bring to order our experiences and our understanding. Language presents a unique way of knowing and becomes a mechanism for discovering, for shaping meaning and for reaching understanding. Proficiency in language forms the basis of all learning (Lessing and Mahabeer, 2007:138).

According to Lessing and Mahabeer (2007: 139), learners who are instructed in a language different from their mother tongue, will experience problems in reading and writing. For example, African learners in South Africa who are Zulu-speaking and are entering grade one, have little vocabulary and knowledge to serve as a

foundation because most often they are not exposed to the English language at home. The following are factors that are barriers to low literacy achievement.

### **2.9.1 CONTEXTUAL**

Socio-economic conditions, parental commitment, parents' educational achievement and the language and culture of the community are some of the contextual factors that many second language learners (L2) acquire as barriers to learning. These factors may explain the lack of advancement in the areas of reading and writing (Lessing and Mahabeer, 2007:140). However, in recent decades the ambition towards social equity through education has been associated with a mission for economic success and competitiveness. There has been a trend whereby self-government of schools; the establishment of more private schools, special curricular needs and external funding are increasing. Parental involvement in schools is more evident.

According to Linnakyla, Malin and Taube (2004:232), parents' educational circumstances, occupational and financial status, impacts on the means to providing private tuition, the availability of books and computers, and has an orientation on promoting or hindering learners' academic performances. In a study conducted by Linnakyla *et al.* (2004:239) in Sweden and Finland, there were many factors that affected low literacy achievements. Learners from lower socio-economic backgrounds with big families; single-parent families; poor availability of books; a lack of political and social discussions in the home; learners' personal interest and attitudes indicated low literacy achievements. The study concluded that, although the learners' socio-economic status could not be changed, parents of low literacy achievers should form a home-school partnership that was positive whereby parents could become more involved in their children's lives. Another factor that contributes to the low literacy achievement is communication.

### **2.9.2 COMMUNICATION**

South Africa is a developing country and, as such, learners who are not adequately competent in the language of instruction, which is English, will experience barriers to learning a second language. There are many factors which encourage and guide reading and writing achievement. Language structure, phonics, extension of

vocabulary and the meaning of words are some of these factors (Lessing and Mahabeer, 2007:140).

The National Reading Strategy (DoE, NRS, 2008:4) states that South Africa faces many challenges in promoting literacy. It is uncommon to find schools with fully fledged libraries. Numerous homes have no books or valuable reading literature. Books in African languages are rare, and learners do not have the opportunity to read in their home language. A number of classrooms have no books, and even those classes which do have sets of readers, often have them at an inadequate level. The matriculation results are poor owing to the shortfalls experienced in learners' reading skills (DoE, NRS, 2008:4). According to the National Reading Strategy (DoE, NRS, 2008:4), learners' enrolled at universities are not proficient in reading when compared to international standards.

### **2.9.3 TEACHER QUALITY**

International research shows that in most developing countries, illiteracy is a serious impediment. More than half the population in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia possess no literacy skills. On the other hand affluent countries are also experiencing difficulty in managing literacy challenges (DoE, NRS, 2008:7).

Poor literacy and numeracy are commonly communicated as being associated with historical disadvantages and underprivileged socio-economic conditions. In South Africa, there are many explicit explanations for the problems, and these need to be concentrated on in executing the National Reading Strategy (DoE, NRS, 2008:8).

Parents of learners in South Africa blame large class sizes as the reason their children are not receiving individual attention and they are forced to seek extra tuition for them (South African Democratic Teachers Union (SadtU), 2009:12) According to the Daily News (ibid) universities indicated that thousands of matriculants entering universities were not equipped for higher learning. The National Benchmark Tests Project discovered that only seven percent of new university students were proficient in mathematics tests that were taken. Furthermore, 47 percent of students were proficient in academic literacy test written, 46 percent; had intermediate skills and 7 percent had basic skills.



According to Lessing and Mahabeer (2007:141), the National Teacher Education Audit of 1995 (DoE, 2007) revealed that many South African educators are under qualified or unqualified. It was further emphasised that educators are not reasonably knowledgeable in the principles that underpin bilingual and multi-lingual education. Lessing is further of the opinion that there are many contributory academic factors, including educators who are not acquainted with the home language of the L2 learners; L2 educators who are not proficient in English as a medium of instruction and educators who teach large classes and are therefore unable to assist learners with individual learning barriers.

Concern was also expressed over the poor pass rate of learners in mathematics and science in South Africa. The South African Democratic Teacher Union Secretary, Mathonsi, blamed the high failure rate in these learning areas to a lack of educators who are qualified to teach mathematics and science (Sadtu, Daily News, August 13:2009).

It can be inferred from the above that educators are viewed as important resources to ensure that learners are guided up to university level. However, it can be deduced that the shortages of educators in mathematics and science and the unavailability of libraries, has led to the decline in producing academically proficient learners in these areas. Furthermore, it is noted that large classes inhibit the growth of learners and individual attention for learners is difficult to achieve.

#### **2.9.4 EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

Early childhood development (ECD) refers to an inclusive advancement to policies and programmes for learners from birth to nine years of age with the dynamic involvement of their parents and caregivers (R.S.A., Doe, 2001a:1). It involves the development by which learners prosper physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially.

According to the White Paper 5 on early childhood education (RSA, DoE, 2001a:1), approximately 40% of young children in South Africa are prone to under-development in poverty stricken areas. These children are neglected in these poor households and are therefore at high risk of infant death, low birth-weight, stunted growth and subsequently do not adjust to school easily. These children are often

school dropouts. Such children never reach their full potential. However, with quality early childhood development (ECD), these children will acquire language skills, perception-motor skills that are required for learning to read and write, basic numeracy concepts and skills; problem-solving skills; and a love of learning.

Preceding governments stated that early childhood development is the responsibility of parents and families and not that of the State. It is further exemplified by an extensive record of prejudiced provision with regard to race, geographic location, gender, special needs and funding (DoE, Interim Policy for Early Childhood, 1996:5)

The insufficient financial support of ECD services for Black communities (mostly rural) has according to the interim policy for early childhood (DoE, 1996:5), has consequences in ECD provisioning for these communities. This is symbolized by:

- A lack of financial resources for salaries for practitioners and for equipment and food for the children;
- The lack of inspiration of ECD staff and a high turnover of non-formally trained ECD practitioners;
- A low morale amongst practitioners due to the non-recognition of their non-formal qualifications;
- The unavailability of appropriate physical structures for ECD services resulting in multi-purpose halls and informal structures being operated as ECD centres; and
- Difficulties occurring from unreasonable regulations relating to norms and standards such as physical requirements for facilities and state-recognised qualifications for practitioners, thereby making the subsidisation of community efforts very complicated.

## **2.9.5 AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES**

General lack of resources includes textbooks for reading and general teaching aids. Some schools in South Africa have inadequate furniture and lack basic facilities like water and electricity. Resources from home like stationery, including pens and glue are very limited (Lessing and Mahabeer, 2007:141).

In South Africa, the matriculation (grade 12) results are a good annual indicator of the state of affairs of the education system. Higher Education and Training Minister, Blade Nzimande, emphasised the need to provide libraries, laboratories and computer facilities to schools. According to Nzimande, 67.9 percent of schools had no computers for teaching and learning and 79.3 percent had no library space (The Star, January 6, 2010:8). Mangona emphasises in The Star (2010:8) that although the Fifa World Cup “would be wonderful for South Africa, ultimately its importance cannot compare to the need for every South African to read and write fluently, skills that will carry them through life”.

The financial Budget for South Africa 2010, prepared by the Finance Minister, Pravin Gordhan, has allocated the sum of R165 billion to improve education. This makes it the largest budget allocation for government since 1994. According to Daily News reporter Kgkosana (18 February, 2010:5), President Jacob Zuma announced during his State of the Nation address, that learners will write independently moderated literacy and numeracy tests. These tests, which are provided for in the budget, will provide indicators as to the remedial measures needed to improve performance in literacy and numeracy and improve the quality of education. The aim is to improve the matric (grade 12) results. The president further indicated that schools were to receive workbooks in all of the official languages and that substantive educator increases in salary were to be implemented.

However, Anthony Pierce, KZN Chief Executive Officer of the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa, whilst optimistic about the provision of workbooks, expressed concern about infrastructure backlogs. He referred specifically to learners who are still being taught under trees and those who had no desks. In his opinion, the South African government should make provision for adequate funding for resources in education (Daily News, 18 February 2010:5, 12)

According to the Reading Strategy in South Africa (DoE, 2008:7), the language of the resources at school (for example, books, posters) is not equivalent to the home language of the learner.

### **2.9.6 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORDER OF THE CLASSROOM**

Rose (2005:133) is of the opinion that there is a moral order in the classroom that defines learners as successful, average or unsuccessful. He believes that the education system favours the reproduction of an unequal socioeconomic environment by not designing the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. Rose criticizes the education system and defines its comprehensive function as one that specialises in producing occupational roles as “professional”, “vocational” or “manual”. In such instances educational outcomes are unable to keep abreast with socioeconomic changes. Therefore, there is a focus on literacy worldwide.

There is much concern in South Africa as the literacy levels are declining at a time when they need to be rapidly advancing. Rose (2005:135) advocates that the focus in education should be the explicit teaching of knowledge and language, instead of learners being involved in “self-discoveries”.

### **2.9.7 GAPS THAT EXIST IN SCHOOLS**

As an imperative for learners to advance themselves in reading, they should be exposed to a proper programme structured to facilitate progression. Research conducted by Condry, Chigona, Chetty and Thornhill (2010:269-270) investigated final year student-teachers’ responses relating to a teaching method bearing the acronym THRASS (Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills). The respondents indicated that the learners are not encouraged to read for enjoyment, neither do they frequent the library. Furthermore, learners rarely witness educators reading. The final year student-teachers indicated that the resources applicable to the THRASS method are expensive and most schools lack the resources as THRASS is dependent on sponsors.

According to the Reading Strategy (DoE, 2008:10), numerous educators in South Africa have an inadequate perception of teaching literacy, reading and writing. Many educators simply possess a modest understanding of teaching reading. Educators are not familiar with methods of teaching reading which may be suitable to the learning approach of all learners. The Reading Strategy (DoE, 2008:1)) emphasises that educators are not acquainted with how to motivate reading inside and outside the classroom.

It may be suggested that educators require sufficient preparation in their classrooms so that effective teaching and learning, specifically in reading and writing, occurs.

There are many concerns as to why learners in South Africa achieve disappointingly low results in reading and writing. It is perhaps necessary to examine education policy and practice. It may be suggested, from the authors referred to above, that reading and writing in particular gives learners skills that exceed language. Due consideration should be given to the teaching and learning of reading, so that learners can enhance their achievements in education in general.

The following discussion relates to the correlation between reading and writing.

### **2.9.8 CLASS SIZE**

According to the Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) (2011:2) the educator-learner ratio and class size impacts on teaching and learning. It is deliberated that a smaller class size supports quality education. Lower class sizes allow for more interaction between the educator and learner, resulting in quality teaching and learning. The recommended educator-learner ratio and class size in South African primary schools is forty learners per educator (SACMEQ, 2011:2).

## **2.9 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING AND WRITING**

For years, the nation's education representatives have highlighted the significance of literacy instruction in grades R to 3, where learners develop the basic reading and writing skills which lead to them building their potential educational success. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE) (2006:1), learners should receive precise instruction in reading and writing from kindergarten to grade 12. Particular attention should be paid to vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing that will facilitate learners to master the more sophisticated skills required to be successful in the general education and training (GET) phase and beyond. Fisher (2008:1) is of the opinion that reading is best taught in conjunction with writing. The more time learners spend on reading, the more their vocabulary knowledge increases. This ultimately improves learners' comprehension abilities as well. These learners become proficient in writing. Thus, the more a learner reads, the

greater the chances of him/her becoming a better writer. Presently in South Africa, the Foundations for Learning (2008:28-35), requires learners in grade 4 to plan, draft and revise stories in paragraph form (2-3 paragraphs) and write for playful and creative purposes. The activities are more challenging for each progressive grade.

According to Graham and Herbert (AEE, 2010:28) writing exercises cannot acquire the position of efficient reading practices. As an alternative, writing practices complement reading practices and ought always to be exploited in conjunction with each type of practice supporting and reinforcing the other. In a study conducted by Graham and Herbert (AEE, 2010:29), learners' abilities advanced by writing texts they had read and by obtaining unequivocal instruction in spelling, in writing sentences, in writing paragraphs, in text structure and in the fundamental processes of composition. This was further enhanced by how regularly learners wrote. These writing activities improved learners' comprehension of texts as compared to traditional methods.

According to Colorado (2007:1), there is a very important correlation between writing and language development. This concurs with LO 6 in the FFL (2008) document of South Africa. As learners develop language skills, they often develop listening skills first (input they can understand), then speaking skills (they begin to formulate their ideas in the second language), then reading skills (they can understand the sound/symbol correspondence of the new language and make sense of the words); and finally writing skills (they have enough language to express their own ideas in writing). This is not applicable for all language learners, but it is true for the majority of them.

Learners from other cultures may have developed a story-telling style that involves laying out a lot of background information and detail and takes quite a while to get to the point. In most western writing, a topic sentence or a lead paragraph expresses what the point is, and then everything written after that leads to a direct conclusion. According to Colorado (2007:1) many learners have great difficulty connecting their ideas of what they read in writing this way.

Mahurt (2005:1) believes that writing supports reading instruction. What is the link then between reading and writing? There are common principles in reading and writing practices. Writers cultivate ideas or subject matter for different types of texts, while readers anticipate what the text or story is about. Readers examine texts for information using their knowledge of letters and letter sounds, syntax, and semantics to understand the text, while writers use corresponding knowledge to create meaningful text. Writers and readers use similar information about language and language processes. The writing a writer develops or invents becomes reading. Both the accomplishments amalgamate. Readers and writers both revise what is read to authenticate their work. In writing, this is part of the revision and editing processes, and in reading this is part of problem solving and monitoring. In reading, print is changed into language and the language into print to ratify. In writing, language is converted into print then print into language to authenticate (Mahurt, 2005:1). The processes are complementary.

According to Mahurt (2005:1), learners become proficient readers and writers if they are able to understand reading. When a writer experiences different writing forms and understands how text structures work, it enables a writer to develop his/her writing skills. Phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension are important areas in reading that enable early literacy learning, as expressed by Mahurt.

## **2.10 WRITING CHALLENGES FOR LEARNERS WITH READING PROBLEMS**

The quality of reading and writing remains a global issue. According to Moore and Hart (2007:15), the root cause of these problems is the ineffective teaching and learning relating to reading and writing in schools. Rose (2005:133) believes many educators in the intermediate phase lack the skills and knowledge of teaching reading and writing. Drummond (2005:1) concurs with Rose and is of the opinion that educators need to acquire a profound understanding of reading theory and practice and apply the correct methods to remediate errors in reading and writing as they occur.

Learners with poor reading abilities present poor quality writing. Writing, for struggling learners, is an exasperating task. These learners produce writing with

errors in the selection of words, shorter text that lack quality and the inability to conform to the topic, usually a comprehension issue (Goddard and Sendi, 2008:408-433). An increase in the vocabulary of these learners will contribute to an improvement in the quality of their writing. According to Rose (2005:138), learners in the intermediate phase should demonstrate what they have learnt in the foundation phase by engaging in written assessment tasks. These skills are essential in the senior and tertiary phase as the fundamental pedagogic mode is through independent learning from reading. However, these skills are hardly taught in the intermediate phase. Learners acquire them tacitly by practising reading and writing over the years (Rose, 2005:138).

In the “sentence making” activity of David Rose’s methodology (2005:156), three broad functions are identified as allowing learners to have greater control of the reading and writing process. Firstly, sentence making intensifies the identification and discussion of meanings and wordings from detailed reading. Secondly, it enables learners to manipulate wordings to create meaningful sequences without the load of writing. Thirdly, individual words are cut out and can be used to practise spelling. Once the learners can spell most of the words in a paragraph, they can practise writing the whole paragraph from memory.

According to Barr (2006: 28), many learners rely on the system of recognition memory to recognize answers on a multiple-choice exam, and then forget. As this is a very superficial and ephemeral form of memory, their retention rate is low. Barr (2006:28) believes that these learners are unable to identify relationships across topics or disciplines. Their writing abilities are low as they have very little experience of it. Some struggle with reading comprehension and cannot sift and evaluate information they have read.

According to Komolafe and Yara (2010:4), learners who want to be better writers need to be better readers. They also express the view that learners are not good writers because they possess a reduced familiarity of the rules of grammar, unawareness of acceptable sentence patterns; and the incapacity to construct a



complete sentence while educators lacked the knowledge of modern methods of teaching reading and writing.

It can be deduced that the learning of reading and writing presents learners with skills that surpass language. Liao (2009:11) is of the opinion that when learners learn to read and write they are acquiring admission to a wider range of information and skills that support the consciousness of an individual's own accepted wisdom. The discussion that follows illustrates successful strategies for the empowerment of learners in reading and writing.

## **2.11 STRATEGIES FOR READING AND WRITING**

Helping learners improve their reading and writing skills is a community effort. Educators should be able to get to know the families of their learners especially those whose first language is not English. Parents should be part of the shared reading process as this is an integral part of literacy progress at home. Schools should assist struggling learners with support programmes. Specialist educators who have a wealth of knowledge regarding learning difficulties should be consulted in serious cases. It is important to continuously integrate the five components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension) into the daily reading instruction (Meier and Freck, 2005:1).

According to Condry *et al.* (2010:270), literacy approaches that use phonics may seem efficient in the short term, but unless they are entrenched within focused texts and reading activities, they may well be analysed as drills for school and not as reading 'for real' authentic purposes. Liao (2009:11) is of the opinion that oral English is very beneficial for the development of reading and writing skills and that there should be a correlation between them as learners who have low levels in reading will perform poorly in writing.

There are many types of effective writing instruction used in classrooms including process writing, graphic organizers as writing planning tools and vocabulary stretchers all of which are beneficial to English Second Language (ESL) learners.

Writing exercises, when graded according to learners' age and reading levels are more meaningful and appropriate to learners' acquisition of knowledge (Drummond, 2005:1). Drummond further states that when a learner has a reading-related difficulty, whether he or she has been formally identified as having a disability or not, the key is to:

- Correctly assess the nature and source of the learner's difficulty;
- Provide specific instruction to remediate difficulties and increase skills level; and
- Cater for a learner's weaknesses and build upon his or her strengths

This will enable learners to write well.

Meier and Freck (2005:1) believe that educators should be familiar with learners' interests and blend them into teaching methods and texts that are chosen for reading purposes. Furthermore, educators should be informed about learners' health issues. For example, vision and hearing impediments. This information is easily available on cumulative record cards which will assist educators to identify learners with reading and writing difficulty.

According to Reading Rockets (2008), the teaching of reading and writing involves providing an equal distribution of the diverse components including the development of decoding skills (through connecting sounds to print, learning rules for spelling and developing a knowledge of printed words) and the development of oral language skills (through building vocabulary, enhancing grammar by forming correct sentences, and increasing listening comprehension). These are effectively taught concomitantly, and not separately, as reading and writing instruction to stabilize the oral and written aspects.

Many studies have revealed that reading and writing skills sustain and strengthen each other as they are learned (Reading Rockets, 2008). These skills include morphological awareness (for example, awareness of the structures of words, roots and affixes) which makes an important contribution to the improvement of reading comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, and fluency for students. The direct and systematic development of beginning readers' awareness of phonemes in spoken

words and print-sound connections through phonics skills, significantly improves their acquisition of traditional spelling skills (Reading Rockets, 2008).

The above indicates some strategies that improve reading and writing skills. The next section scrutinizes the effect that David Rose's methodology has on reading and writing and on the overall quality of reading and writing.

### **2.12.1 DAVID ROSE'S PEDAGOGY**

Rose develops and trains educators in strategies for scaffolding reading and writing across the programme of study, at all educational levels from early childhood to undergraduate learning (Rose, 2006a :3)

#### **2.12.1.1 INTRODUCTION**

According to the Alliance for Excellence Education (AEE) (2006:5), two-thirds of a nation's secondary school learners read below grade level. Schools discontinue the teaching of reading after grade 3, and learners are left to struggle as they encounter much more highly developed material. The AEE believes that unless learners receive progressive and unambiguous instruction with special attention to vocabulary, reading, comprehension and writing, they will experience difficulty in mastering the more sophisticated skills required for being successful in secondary school, tertiary institutions and the workforce. Occupations stipulate better than average literary skills in an era of swift technological change, knowledge-driven markets and fierce global opposition (AEE, 2006:5).

Evidently, a large number of intermediate and secondary school learners require assistance with their reading and writing skills. In the intermediate phase the onus is on all educators to teach reading and writing skills. However, at secondary school educators are conventionally defined as specialist in their learning areas and the accountability for teaching reading and writing appears to belong to nobody in particular. According to AEE (2006:6), English educators look upon themselves first and primarily as educators of literature and only secondarily, if at all, as reading and writing instructors.

It can be suggested from the above that senior learners must be trained at reading to learn; but it is also factual that they never complete learning to read. In agreement with the above, educators should provide instruction in the reading and writing skills in each content area

#### **2.12.1.2 LEARNING TO READ READING TO LEARN (LRRL)**

“Learning to Read Reading to Learn” (LRRL) is a literacy instruction course intended to assist all learners to read and write at levels suitable to their age, grade and area of study. It has been developed with educators of primary, secondary and tertiary learners across Australia and internationally, to sustain reading and writing across the syllabus (Rose, 2006a:3). The instruction strategies of the course have been proven to allow weak readers to speedily learn to read and write at grade-appropriate levels, and superior learners to develop language understandings, further than their self-regulating competence. This method is termed ‘scaffolding’ (Rose, 2006a:3). Learners draw on values of scaffold learning, purposeful linguistics and genre approaches to writing in a structure that is easily reached, practical and meets the needs of educators and learners.

The Reading to Learn programme remodels classroom teaching prototypes to initiate success for all learners. According to Acevedo and Rose (2007:1), this approach can be employed in a mainstream or withdrawal context, with whole classes or small groups, and it represents literate language characteristics in both fiction and accurate texts. Moreover it is capable of broadening the learning of the most knowledgeable learners in the class or group.

Expertise in independent reading requires a learner to read with comprehension and engagement. However, they are not explicitly taught reading skills in the intermediate phase in primary school, except sometimes in remedial teaching for learners who are “at risk” or learners who experience difficulty with literacy. These learners are usually English second language learners (Rose, 2005:6).

The LRRL programme is supported by three central ideologies: Firstly, reading is a primary method of learning in the primary and secondary phases of school and therefore logical teaching of reading and writing needs to be incorporated with the teaching curriculum at each and every level. Secondly, educators need to possess the necessary skills to teach reading and writing in their learning areas. Furthermore, all learners should be instructed at the same level of skills in reading and writing across the school curriculum so that the gap between more and less thriving learners is constricted, instead of broadening over the school years. Thirdly, learning is acquired when educators support learners to perform learning tasks that are beyond their self-determining measured capacities, thereby permitting learning performance to be planned to support all learners to be accomplished at the same high level (Acevedo and Rose, 2007:2).

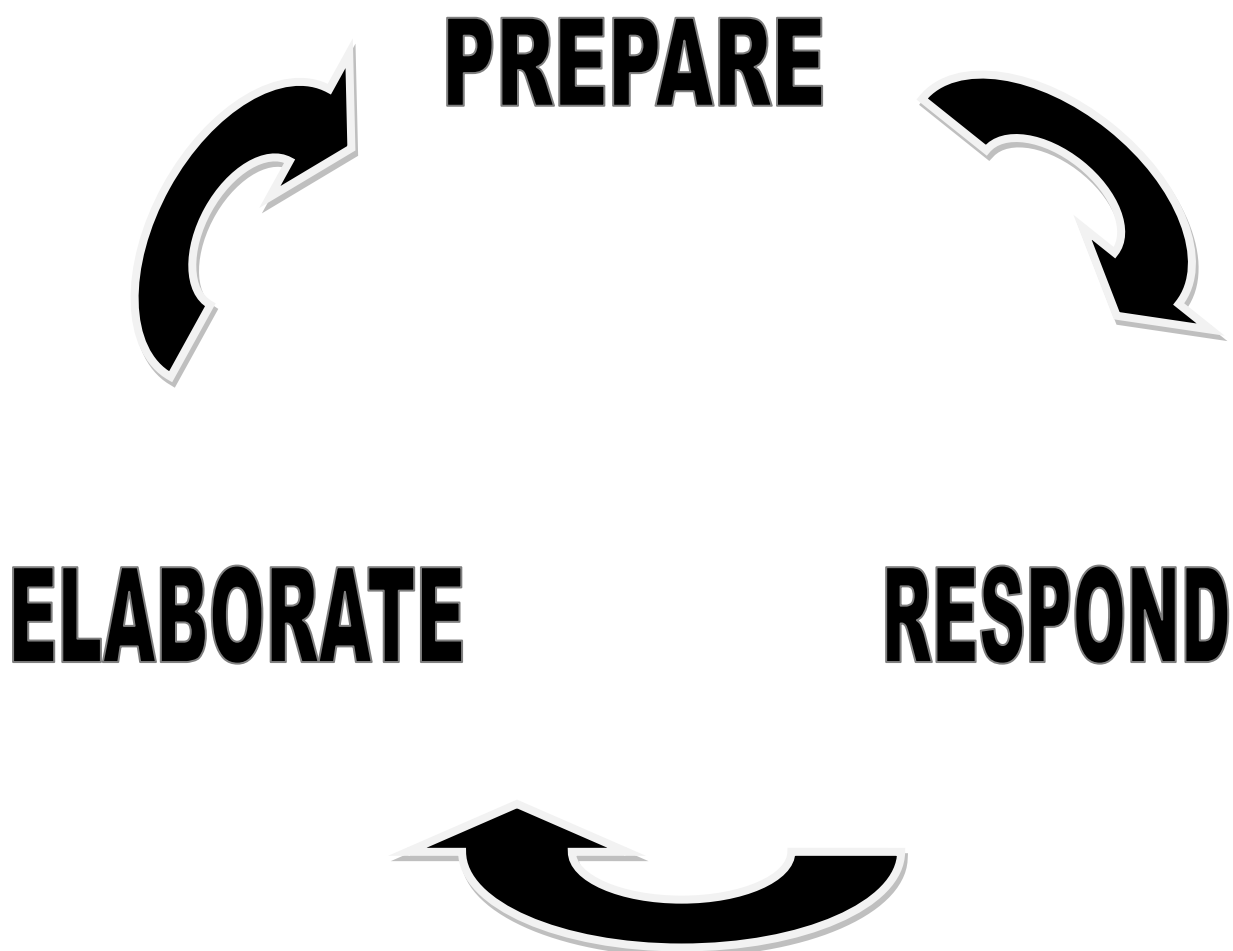
### **2.12.1.3 THE SCAFFOLDING LEARNING CYCLE**

(LRRL) makes available to educators two sets of expertise for accelerating learning and closing the 'ability' gap in their classrooms. The first is a set of skills for interrelating with learners around written texts, which assists learners in a class to read high-level texts with significant comprehension, and to apply what they have learnt from their reading to write encouraging texts. The second is a set of skills for choosing understandable texts in the curriculum to work with rigorously, and to examine the language patterns in these texts to plan their classroom sessions (Rose and Acevedo, 2006:1).

The centre of the pedagogy is a cautiously planned model of classroom interaction, in which the educator prepares all learners in a class to productively identify features of reading texts or selecting elements to write. Learners' responses are constantly acknowledged and then detailed by defining new words, explaining new concepts, or discussing learners' experiences (Rose, 2006a:6). Rose defines this as the scaffolding interaction cycle (Figure 2.2) whereby all learners are engaged in activities and their learning is extended.

The following diagram, Figure 2.2 specifically illustrates the interaction involved between the educator and learner in the scaffolding method. Scaffolding means preparing learners to execute a learning assignment successfully by demonstrating to them how to do the task. In addition to organizing learners for a task, learning activities often involve another step, during or after the task is done. These three learning stages of prepare, task and elaborate are identified as the scaffolding learning cycle, illustrated in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: The Scaffolding Interaction Cycle (Rose, 2006a:6)



#### **2.12.1.4 THE TASK OF READING AND WRITING AND THE LANGUAGE MODEL**

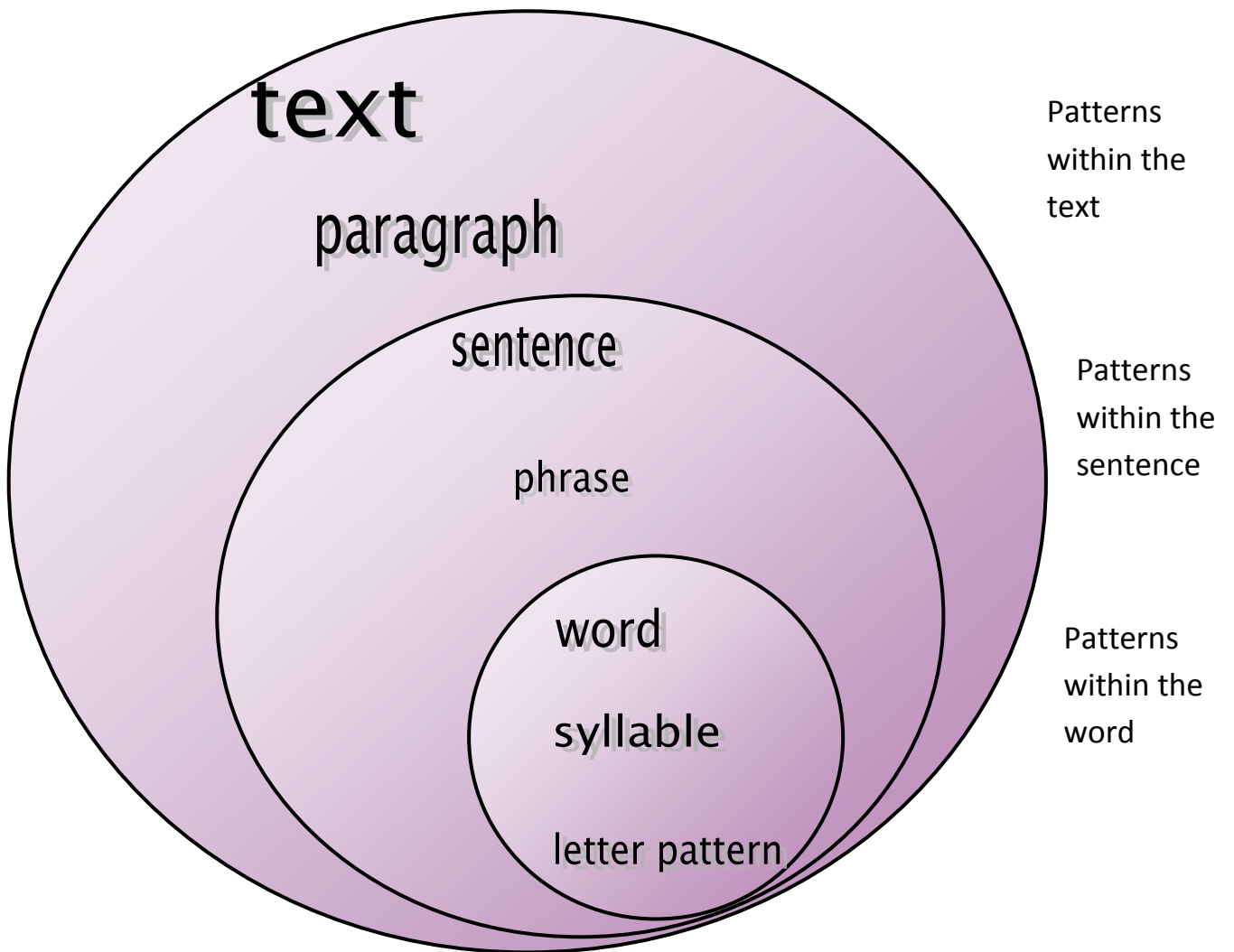
The analysis of learning assignments and the amount of preparation and explanation is essential to explore the tasks of reading and writing in terms of the model of language in context developed in systemic functional linguistics (SFL), followed by the sequence of learning activities in the LRRL approach (Rose and Acevedo, 2006:3).

The different layers of organisation of the language model are the three strata of the SFL representation using the reasonable terms 'texts, sentence and word'. The tasks of reading and writing are then included in terms of identifying, and by means of patterns within the text, patterns within the sentence, and patterns within the word, or spelling, grammar and discourse patterns. Each of these levels engages intermediate levels of organisation (Rose and Acevedo, 2006:4).

A text is not just a string of sentences. It includes phrases of meaning that are often organised in paragraphs. A sentence is made up of groups of words or phrases that present information. A word consists of one or more syllables. All of these patterns of meaning are absorbed in realising contexts further than the text, which have four dimensions. The first is what it concerns, the fields of experience that it is an element of. The second is the reader/writer commitment, how the reader is connected in the text (that is the dimension its tenor. The third dimension is whether it is exceedingly written or more spoken, its mode. The final dimension is the category of text it is, how it is related to other texts its genre. This approach enables educators to be au fait to the enormous involvedness of language in the context of the reading and writing tasks which are organised within the SFL model of language in social context (Rose and Acevedo, 2006:5).

The task of reading and writing and the language model is illustrated in Figure 2.3 (Rose and Acevedo, 2006:40).

Figure 2.3 Three levels of language patterns (Rose and Acevedo, 2006:41)





### 2.12.1.5 THE LRRL CURRICULUM CYCLE

The LRRL programme concentrates on each level of involvedness systematically, preparing learners to productively execute all the tasks of reading and writing in six stages. Figure 2.4 illustrates the LRRL curriculum cycle.

Figure 2.4: The LRRL Curriculum Cycle (Rose, 2006:6 and Rose, 2007:6)

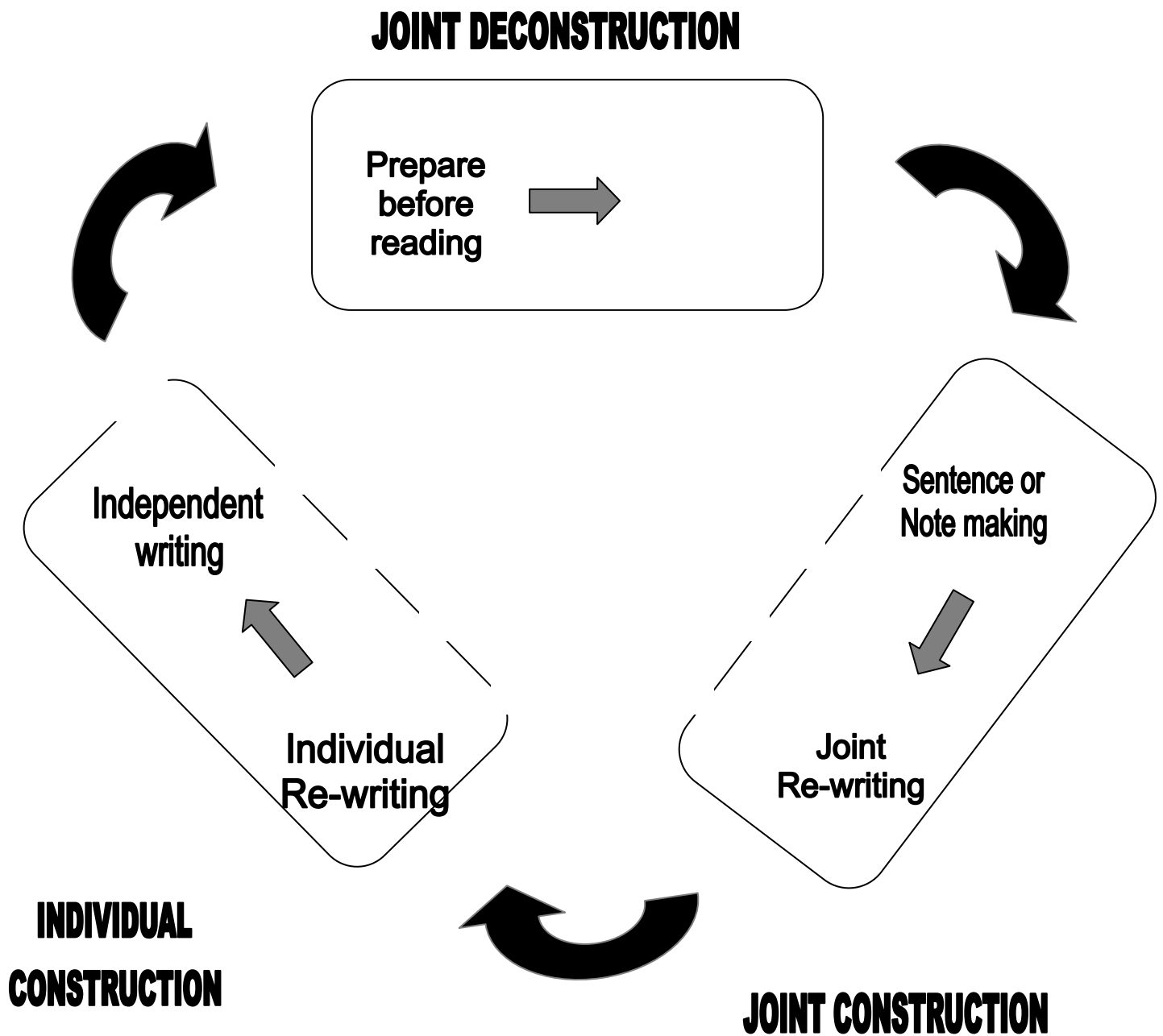


Figure 2.4, exemplifies the method whereby educators assist learners to read a high level text, initially by preparing them to understand the text as it is read aloud. Learners are then provided with significant cues to be acquainted with and to understand words within each sentence. This permits learners to follow the text with broad understanding as it is read aloud, without having to struggle to work out what is taking place at each step, nor to struggle decoding letter patterns of unknown words. This is called 'preparing before reading' (Rose, 2006a:5). While learners enthusiastically recognise words for themselves, these reading skills are transmitted to other contexts over time. Once learners can read and understand a text, they practise to write by spelling words and writing sentences from it, or by taking notes from it. This is referred to as preparing before writing. Through guidance from the educator, learners then together practise writing a new text that is structured very much on the individual text they have read, with the information from factual texts, or the literary language patterns from stories. This is termed 'joint writing'. According to Rose (2006a:5), the learners then perform writing their personal text that is strongly outlined in the original and jointly constructed texts. This is referred to as 'individual writing'. The final step explained by Rose, is for the learners to then separately research, plan and write texts of their own, exploiting the language resources they have acquired from the supported activities (Rose, 2006a:6 and Rose, 2007:6). This is termed 'independent writing'.

#### **2.12.1.6 RESULTS FROM RESEARCH DONE BY DAVID ROSE**

David Rose's literacy programme, LRRL, was used as a pilot project to research the integration of literacy development for Aboriginal learners. This project proved exceedingly successful with indigenous secondary-phase learners and intermediate phase learners. The aim of the project was predominantly on sustainable transformation in schooling practices that could provide long-term benefits for indigenous learners (Rose, 2006a:2). According to Rose (2006b: 31), the project established that the LRRL strategies are appropriate to facilitate all learners, including Aboriginal learners, to connect more productively with the English

curriculum than most do. Learners were able to achieve the outcomes of the curriculum and educators' professional developments were accomplished. According to the results of the project, an important finding indicated that it was obligatory that educators received training to teach reading and writing as part of the standard classroom practice, as well as guidance to facilitate all learners to succeed in learning activities at their grade level (Rose, 2006b:31).

The LRRL approach was implemented over three years in the 'Middle Years Literacy Project of the Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM). Educators participating in the assignment were motivated by their learners' elevated levels of commitment and restored eagerness for learning and were encouraged to share this approach with colleagues (Acevedo and Rose, 2007:6). According to Acevedo and Rose (*ibid*), there has been little confirmation of prevalent success in 'closing the gap' for the intermediate phase learners. However, this programme hastens the literacy development of 'at risk' learners.

The LRRL pedagogy offers a widespread approach to literacy that confront the 'remediation ethos' and provides mainstream educators with the knowledge required to teach quality reading and writing with an influential set of strategies that deal with the needs of all learners included in the background of standard classroom instruction practice (Culican, Rose and McKusker, 2004:57). The project implemented at the CEOM established the efficiency of the LRRL literacy pedagogy for learners in the intermediate phase, predominantly those measured to be educationally disadvantaged. According to Culican *et al.* (2004:58), the LRRL approach was exceedingly victorious in hastening the literacy performance of over 95% of the target learners underachieving in literacy.

Rose (2005:6) has implemented the LRRL programme in South Africa at the following institutions:

- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
- Peninsula Technikon
- Stellenbosch University

- University of Cape Town
- University of Kwa Zulu-Natal

The above represent tertiary institutions in South Africa. It may be suggested from the information above that the LRRL programme would be beneficial to South African schools as most learners who are from disadvantaged backgrounds, experience difficulties with reading and writing. These are learners who are instructed in English which is not their first language. The LRRL has significant reliability and validity for primary schools that function within multi-lingual reading cultures and varied reading approaches, particularly in economically developing regions of South Africa. Furthermore, according to Condy (2008:2), in December 2005, the South African national Grade 6 intermediate phase systemic evaluation report status indicated that 42.1% of all Grade 6 learners were functioning and attaining grade level literacy. Fourteen years into democracy, the Grade learner assessment established that the legacy of apartheid has impacted intensely on education achievements of learners in South Africa.

### **2.12.2 GENRE-BASED LITERACY APPROACHES IN ENGLISH LITERACY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF READING AND WRITING**

Genre-based approaches to improving the quality of teaching reading and writing have been extensively implemented in Australia and other western education systems, and have attained impressive improvements in learners' outcomes, from twice to more than four times the expected rates of learning (Acevedo and Rose, 2007:6). According to Martin and Rose (2007:1), the development of these pedagogies has been influenced by the increase of learners from non-English speaking environments that need academic skills. Likewise, trade and industry changes impacting on educational demands in China have ignited interest in inventive approaches to English literacy, particularly for academic purposes.

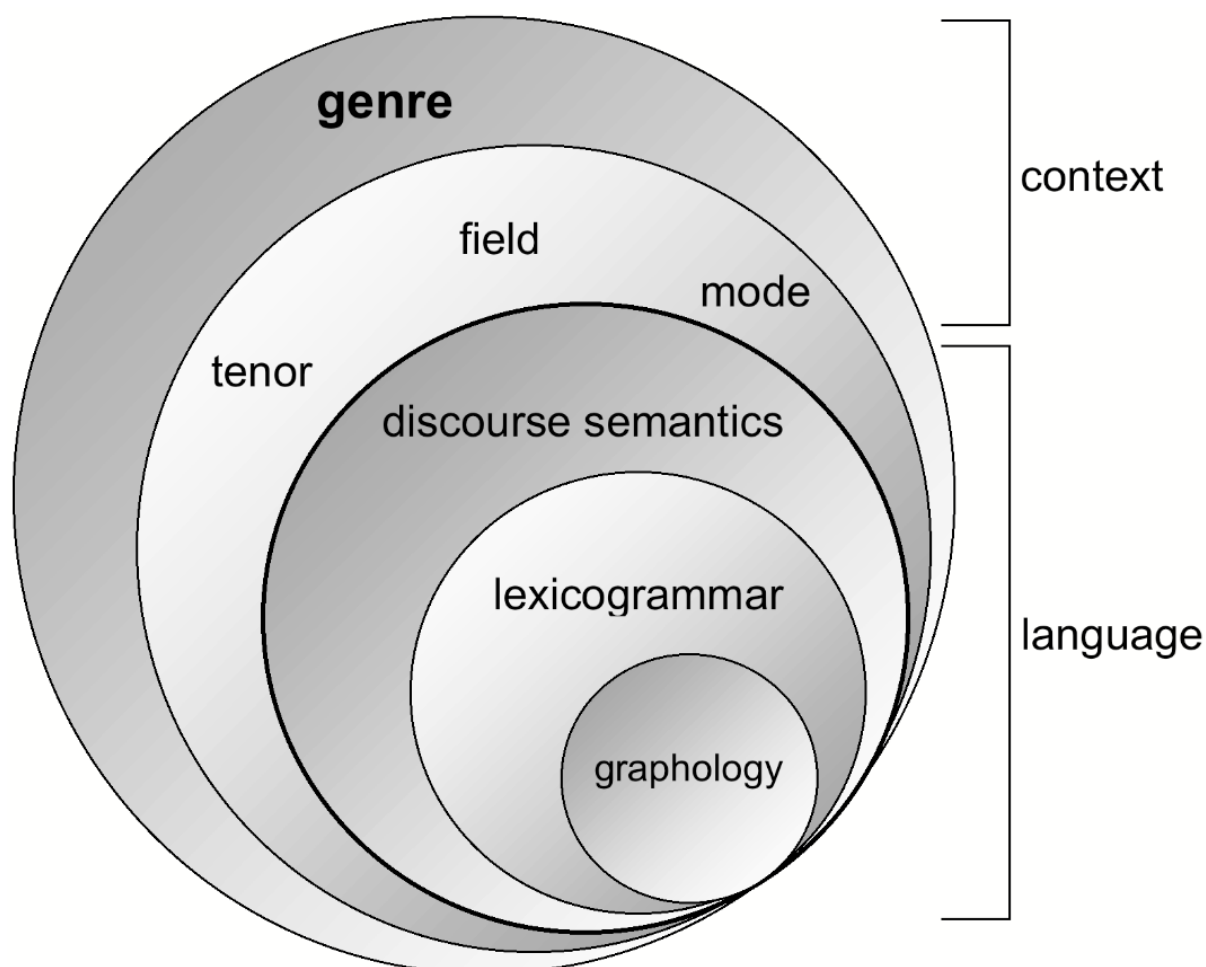
In South Africa, long-established approaches to teaching literacy in both the mother tongue and as a second language, is primarily viewed language in terms of many small tactful units which comprised syntax and parsing, phonics, spelling, grammar and punctuation. These skills are taught and often dedicated to recall from small to

larger units. Learners used this language structure learnt by drill, but without purpose or meaning (Condy, 2008:4).

Most progressive/constructivist theories advocate that language should be learnt in meaningful contexts (Figure 3) whilst traditional approaches assume that language should be taught in isolation. Martin and Rose (2007:4) are of the opinion that learners should be able to recognise categories of language patterns during their experiences of reading texts so that they (learners) apply these language patterns comfortably in their writing. The most important teaching focus is on developing identification skills that can be functional across academic study and furthermore on the acquisition of specific knowledge about language systems. As language systems are studied in the framework of actual texts, learners become skilled in the context of a higher level system, beginning with the genre and register of a text, followed by its most important discourse semantic patterns and grammatical features (Martin and Rose,2007:3).

From a linguistic viewpoint, the matter here is the stratification of language - its administration in levels or strata. In comparison to traditional linguistics and language Instruction, genre-based advances acquire a top-down perspective, starting with the comprehensive social purposes of texts, such as relating events, explaining processes, describing entities, evaluating issues, or considering other texts - in other words 'their genres'. Genre intertwines three other elements of the social context of texts: field, tenor and mode. The field of an academic text is positioned within one or more disciplines. These contextual dimensions - genre, field, tenor and mode – are understood as discourse semantic patterns in texts. Patterns of discourse are sequentially realised as lexico-grammatical patterns in clauses, which are captured as patterns of sounds in speaking or graphology in writing (Martin and Rose, 2007:3). These strata of language in social context are illustrated in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5: Strata of language in social context (Martin and Rose, 2007:3)



For many educators, language has “come alive” by means of its functional approach. In the more traditional manner, language was seen as a set of structures which is assessed as accurate or inaccurate. The above diagram illustrates language as means of interaction as part of our daily lives. Learners are also able to understand how language is used in different cultures to interact with each other. At genre level, learners are able to understand how language patterns add to effective meaning of the text and how language can be used to suit various audiences and purposes, (in Science or Maths the language is different) (Martin and Rose, 2007:4).

### **2.12.3 FURTHER STRATEGIES**

When learners read, they believe it means reading word by word, stopping to look up every unknown vocabulary piece, until they get to the close. Learners rely completely on their linguistic knowledge, a bottom-up strategy (National Capital Language Resource Centre (NCLRC), 2004). Educators should assist learners to progress past this idea and to employ top-down strategies as they do in their native language.

Learners should adjust their reading performance to deal with a variety of situations, types of input, and reading purposes. This enables learners to develop a set of reading strategies to aid each reading situation.

2.9.2.1 The following strategies assist learners to read more speedily and efficiently (NCLRC, 2004):

- Previewing: reviewing titles, section headings, and photo captions to acquire a sense of the structure and essence of a reading selection;
- Predicting: applying knowledge of the subject matter to build predictions about content and vocabulary and verify comprehension; applying knowledge of the text type and reason to formulate predictions about discourse structure; applying knowledge about the author to formulate predictions about writing style, vocabulary, and content;
- Skimming and scanning: by means of a quick investigation of the text to get the main idea, recognizing text structure, confirm or question predictions;
- Guessing from context: applying prior knowledge of the focus and the ideas in the text as clues to the meanings of unknown words, instead of stopping to look them up; and
- Paraphrasing: stopping at the conclusion of a section to test comprehension by declaring the information and ideas in the text.

### **2.12.3.1 ACTIVATING PRIOR KNOWLEDGE**

This comprehension strategy should be taught to learners continuously so that learners learn independently as they are reading. It should be taught explicitly and methodically over an extensive period of time, so that learners can use the strategy as an accepted part of their comprehension process (NCLRC, 2004). Prior knowledge should be examined before reading the text to facilitate an understanding of various aspects to be followed in the text. During reading, learners should be persuaded to make relations to the text from their experience. After reading, the core of the conversation should involve discussions on aspects that assisted the learners to better understand the text and how the text helped them to expand their foundation of prior knowledge (NCLRC, 2004).

### **2.12.3.2 ORAL LANGUAGE**

Early progress in reading depends on oral language growth. Learners need to learn the vocabulary, grammar and sound system of the oral language before they start writing. The capacity to concentrate on the individual sounds within words (phonological and phonemic awareness) is also an oral skill that is closely associated with reading ability. Learners develop their oral language skills through story-telling and show and tell activities (Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt and Kamil, 2003: 8).

### **2.12.3.3 PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONEMIC AWARENESS**

Phonological awareness refers to the capability to focus on the sounds of language as distinct from its meaning. Phonics is supported in the systematic teaching of sound and letter connection as well as sound and spelling pattern. Reading instruction and phonological awareness equally strengthen each other. This is closely associated with reading ability in the early and later years of schooling. Educators should develop learners' phonological skills by teaching a wide variety of activities including rhymes, alliteration and poetry (Pang *et al.*, 2003:9).



#### **2.12.3.4 VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE**

Vocabulary knowledge is important in the reading process and for reading development. Readers with good vocabulary knowledge generally read well and make sense of the word in context (Pang *et al.* 2003:10). According to Pang *et al.* (2003:11) the following are suggestions to educators:

- Vocabulary ought to be taught directly and indirectly. Direct tutoring includes providing word definitions and pre-teaching of vocabulary before reading a text. Indirect methods refer to incidental vocabulary learning. For example, mentioning, extensive reading and exposure to language-rich contexts.
- Repetition and numerous exposures to vocabulary items (for example, through speaking, listening and writing) are imperative.
- Vocabulary learning should engage active commitment in tasks (for example, learners should learn new vocabulary when involved in a class project).

#### **2.12.3.5 KEYWORD MEMORIZATION**

To enhance the possibility of learners using effective strategies, the following forms the framework for four major stages (Wright, 2001:4):

- Learners should be explicitly shown how to use the skill or strategy.
- Learners should practice the strategy under educator supervision. The educator should give frequent feedback and praise.
- Learners should use the strategy independently in real academic situation.
- Learners should use the strategy in a variety of other setting or situations.

According to Wright (2001:28-29), using the keyword as a memorization strategy (mnemonic) is an effective technique where learners select the central idea of a passage and summarize it as a 'keyword'. Learners then recode the keyword as a mental picture and use supplementary mental imagery to transmit other important facts to the keyword. Learners are then able to recollect the keyword when

necessary to retrieve the related information. Wright (2001:30) elaborates on memorizing facts using the keyword strategy by using the following techniques:

- underline important facts or ideas in a passage;
- write a “gist” sentence that summarizes the highlighted ideas or facts;
- choose a ‘keyword’ that will help to recall an essential idea about the article or passage;
- generate a mental picture to memorize the keyword; and
- include details to the mental picture or create a story around the keyword to commit to memory supplementary facts or ideas.

#### **2.12.3.6 RECIPROCAL TEACHING**

Reciprocal teaching involves reading comprehension intervention strategies. For example, text prediction, summarization, question generation and clarification of unknown or unclear content (Wright, 2001:46). Prediction involves examining the main title, scanning the pages to read the major headings, and glancing at any illustrations before predicting what the story relates to. Learners should construct one or two sentences to summarize the main ideas. Summarization permits learners to differentiate between main ideas and insignificant details (Reading A-Z, 2008:1). Summarization helps learners retain information. Thereafter, learners should engage in generating questions which relate to the main ideas that were summarized. This helps learners to identify confusion and encourages active learning. Learners should then clarify words, phrases or sentences that are difficult to comprehend by rereading for understanding or looking up meanings of difficult words in the dictionary (Wright, 2001:48).

Learners who believe that they are poor readers generally focus their efforts on word-perfect recognition. Many believe that saying the word right is good reading. Reading involves the manner in which readers use phonics, language and semantics (meaning) to develop an understanding of the text. The methods discussed above are some of the strategies that may assist in effective and meaningful reading.

## **2.13 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This literature review explored the deepening crisis of literacy in South African schools. The need to improve literacy in South Africa is as a result of national (ANA) and international (PIRLS) test scores and very importantly the language of instruction. In South Africa, only 10% of learners speak English (as a first language) which is the language of instruction in most schools. In South African society, reading is vital to improve the overall learning experience of learners in order to move ahead.

Some of the challenges faced by learners, as well as factors in the education system that contribute to the poor reading and writing abilities of learners were explained. The teaching of purposeful reading strategies can enable learners to accomplish improvement in reading quality. The strategies discussed above may improve learners' word recognition, comprehension and writing skills.

Reading promotes confidence in learners and allows learners to think critically and write creatively whilst applying knowledge gained through reading for life-long learning (DoE, NRS, 2008:5). Learners who are behind in reading are not the only ones who benefit from specific reading strategies

The organizations that determine the standards for education and training, Department of Education (Umalusi), School Management Teams, District Managers and ELRC, are vital stakeholders in managing the quality of teaching and learning in South African schools.

The gaps that exist in the education system were also elaborated on. The LRRL programme by David Rose was explored as an intervention for improving the quality of reading and writing in the intermediate phase education. 'Scaffolding' is explained as a method for individual learner support. This method facilitates a learner's ability to build on prior knowledge and internalise new information. The goal of the educator is to enable the learner to become an independent and self-regulating learner.

From the above discussion it may be concluded that learners are not automatically wired for reading. They need help and positive reinforcement to become successful readers. The literature review indicates that learners can improve their reading skills with proper intervention. Books need to be available and accessible to all learners.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) improves the chances of learners to succeed in the primary phase of schooling. More importantly, ECD can make a critical difference in the lives of disadvantaged learners. It is evident that no single model alone will suffice to improve the reading literacy of learners.

A serious commitment by educators, administrators and policymakers is important for the improvement of the quality of intermediate phase reading. Learning to read is one of the most crucial learning processes in a learner's primary school education.

The subsequent chapter will delineate the design of the research and methodology used during this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

According to Phelps, Fisher and Ellis (2007:1), research is a methodical and organized activity which produces quality outcomes. This study is significant as it aims to bridge the gaps identified in the literature study and to present consequential guidelines to identify problems and create a more apparent understanding of the contemporary operations regarding the quality of reading in the intermediate phase at schools.

This chapter sets out, with the aid of a flow diagram, the design for this study. The different types of research options and techniques available are discussed and those selected for the study are mentioned. The sampling design, data analysis techniques and research instrument are also described.

#### **3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

Creswell (2009:3) refers to research designs as the plans and measures for research that cover the choices from broad assumptions to detailed techniques of data collection and analysis. This plan engages several decisions. The overall decision entails a specific design, strategies and methods of data collection, analysis and understanding. The ultimate goal relating to educational research, according to Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010:19) is to ascertain general principles or explanation of behaviour that individuals can use to explain, predict, and control events in educational situations to create scientific theory. Research design constitutes a logical flow of activities to acquire research participants, to accumulate information from them and to formulate conclusions about a research problem. The design for this study entails a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

The literature review investigated organizations and management systems responsible for quality education. Factors that impact on reading literacy were established and strategies to facilitate improvement in reading literacy were examined. The study employed the survey method as an instrument for data

collection. The survey entailed the use of a questionnaire to collect facts, opinions and attitudes. This is indicated in the flow diagram in figure 3.1.

### 3.2.1 Flow diagram of the research design

The following research design for the study is outlined in figure 3.1.

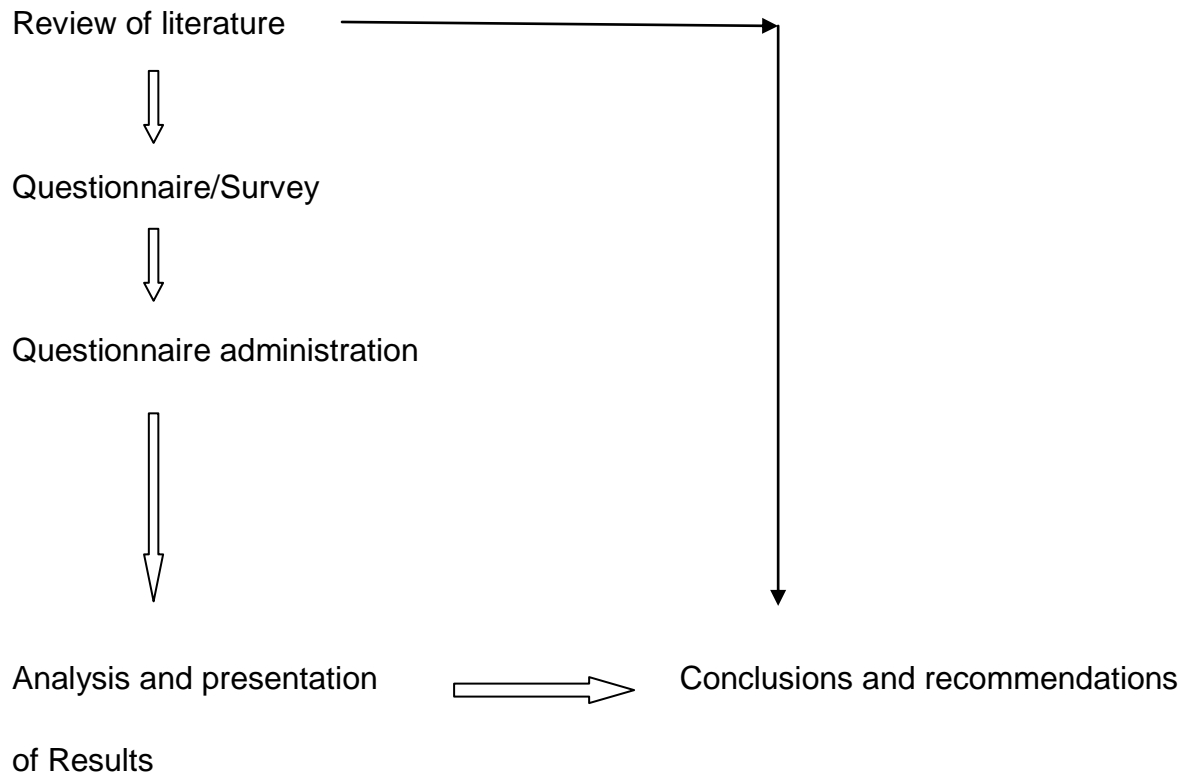


Figure 3.1: Flow diagram for design of research

### 3.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study envisions investigating improving the quality of reading in the intermediate phase of schooling using intervention strategies.

The following objectives were identified as relevant to this study:

- Investigate organisations and management systems responsible for quality education;
- Establish the factors that impact on reading literacy; and
- Examine strategies for the improvement in reading literacy.

### **3.4 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN**

Qualitative research can be categorised as scientific research which engages in investigations that look for answers to questions. These answers are sought systematically by means of a pre-defined set of measures. The evidence collected generates conclusions that were not established in advance and are also relevant beyond the direct confines of the study (Family Health International (FHI) 2005:1). This study therefore aims to establish the factors that impact on reading literacy in the intermediate phase as well as strategies for the improvement of reading ability.

According to Creswell (2009:3-5) qualitative research involves proposing questions and course of action, information characteristically assembled in the participant's surroundings, data analysis inductively building from fine points to general themes and the researcher producing interpretations of the meaning of the information. The written account has a flexible structure. This method values an inductive approach.

This study uses a combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches. In this study, a questionnaire was administered to school management members and educators relating to the monitoring, evaluation, assessment and improvement of reading ability of learners in the intermediate phase of education.

### **3.5 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGNS**

Quantitative research deals with questions of relationship, cause and effect, or current status that researchers answer by collecting and statistically analyzing numerical information (Ary *et al.*, 2010:39). Ary *et al.*, are of the opinion that it can be additionally categorized as experimental and non-experimental. In quantitative research, the constructs (intelligence, creativity, problem-solving ability and motivation) are quantified and attain values and are consequently referred to as variables. An innovative method in which the same study employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches is defined as mixed methods research (Ary *et al.*, 2010:23).

In quantitative research, the aim is to establish the relationship between one aspect (an independent variable) and another (a dependent or outcome variable) in a population. Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects usually measured once) or experimental (subjects measured before and after a treatment)

(Hopkins, 2008:1). This study is a descriptive study adopting the mixed method approach.

According to Health Care Reform Survey (2011:1), quantitative research includes surveys and questionnaires which could be completed face-to-face or over the telephone. These include structured and semi-structured questions. Structured questions are usually closed where respondents choose from a specific selection of answers, whilst semi-structured questions are open-ended.

This study administered structured questionnaires to respondents (educators) in the intermediate phase of schooling in the North Durban Region of KwaZulu Natal. Questionnaires were administered to a sample size of 450 respondents. From 366 respondents completed the questionnaires, thereby generating a response rate of 81%. In the quantitative method of research, including surveys and questionnaires, the respondents are asked identical questions in the same order. This consents to meaningful responses across respondents (Quality Research Methods, 2005:3).

The use of both the qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection was adopted because of their suitability for examining different facets of the occurrences under study, for triangulation and for adding breadth and depth to the assessment of the matters studied. This is in accordance with the views expressed by Creswell (2009:3-5) relating to the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of research in a singular study.

### **3.6 SURVEY METHODS**

A survey is a means of "gathering information about the characteristics, actions, or opinions of a large group of people, referred to as a population" (Pinsonneault, 1993:3). Surveys conducted for research purposes have three distinct characteristics.

Firstly, the function of a survey is to generate quantitative descriptions of some aspects of the study population. Survey analysis may be mainly concerned either with relationships between variables, or with projecting findings descriptively to a predefined population (Pinsonneault, 1993:3). Survey research is a quantitative method, necessitating standardized information from and/or about the subjects being



studied. The subjects studied might be individuals, groups, organizations or communities.

Secondly, the most important way of accumulating information is by asking people structured and pre-defined questions. Their answers, which might refer to themselves or some other unit of analysis, comprise the data to be analysed.

Thirdly, information is generally collected about only a fraction of the study population (i.e. a sample) but it is collected in a manner which enables generalisation of the results to the population. Usually, the sample is large enough to consent to extensive statistical analyses (Pinsonneault, 1993:4).

In this study, a survey was used to conduct research. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires.

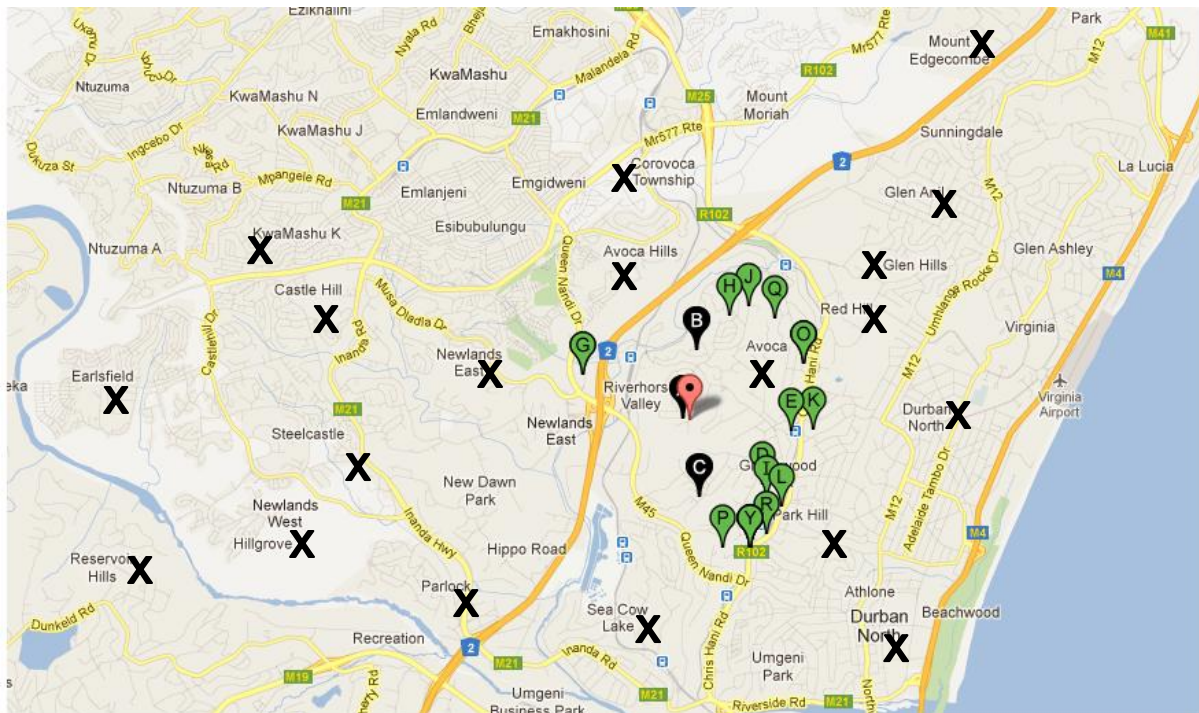
### **3.7 TARGET POPULATION, SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE**

A research study is conducted on a sample from a population. The purpose is to be able to discover accurate facts about the sample that will also be true of the population. For the sample to actually reflect the population, the sample has to be representative of the population. The finest method to employ to acquire a representative sample is to randomly select the sample from the population. A study that has a large, randomly selected sample is supposed to have external validity (Marion, 2004:1).

In this study, the population comprised educators and management members from primary schools. The target respondents for this study are educators and management in the Umgeni north region, which represents one of the 8 wards in KwaZulu Natal.

A sample of 450 educators was selected. The questionnaire was completed by 366 respondents. A fair sample of educators from schools representing different race groups (Coloured, Indian, Blacks and Whites) was selected to ensure unbiased participation. The following is a map outlining the district and sample selection areas the study was conducted in.

**Figure 3.7.1 Map of schools north of Durban, KZN, outlining the district and sample selection areas used in the study. Areas are marked with an 'X'**



### 3.8 DATA COLLECTION

The questionnaire was administered to managers and educators of primary schools in the North Durban region of KwaZulu Natal. The data was collected over a three week period. Questionnaires were distributed to 450 people and a response rate of 81% was achieved. The total number of questionnaires collected was 366 and there were no inaccuracies. The questionnaires were self explanatory.

#### 3.8.1 DATA ANALYSIS

The questionnaire was analysed statistically using SPSS. Statistical analyses are the principal tools for extracting, highlighting and organising information for developing theories, testing

#### 3.8.2 INSTRUMENT OF RESEARCH

The main instrument or method of data collection in surveys is the questionnaire According to EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005) standardized questionnaires are employed in the field of educational planning to accumulate information about

various characteristics of school systems. This is completed using oral interviews or administered questionnaires or a combination of these two methods.

The questionnaire used in this study was designed for managers and educators in primary schools. The researcher designed a quality survey questionnaire that was suitable for addressing the target population; identified the variables and indicators that addressed the research questions; ensured that the questions were appropriate and that the questions decreased biased response and maximized response rates. The researcher sought approval from the relevant parties, and also undertook pre-testing and revising, preparing the final copy and implementation of the questionnaire.

According to Lewis, Saunders and Thornhill (2008:355) a questionnaire comprises all techniques of data collection in which every individual is required to respond to the same set of questions in a pre-determined order. In this way the collection of the responses from a large sample for quantitative analysis is efficiently conducted.

### **3.8.3 DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire for this study was organised according to the specific research objectives. The structure of the questionnaire comprised forty two questions (Annexure 2) divided into the following sections:

SECTION A: Demographic Data

SECTION B: Factors impacting on reading literacy

SECTION C: Language and reading instruction

SECTION D: Strategies for teaching reading

SECTION E: Library and computer resources

SECTION F: Systems for improving quality reading

SECTION G: Homework

### **3.9 PILOT TESTING**

According to the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in research (NC3Rs) a pilot study is a miniature trial to test logistics and collect information preceding a larger study in order to improve the latter's quality and efficiency (National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animal Research, 2006). A pilot study plays a vital role in research, especially if the researcher uses questionnaires for data collection.

A pilot study can disclose deficiencies in the design of a proposed research study or practice and these can be addressed before time (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:386). A good research strategy necessitates cautious planning and a pilot study often is part of this strategy. A pilot study is small in relationship to the main experiment and therefore can present only restricted information on the sources and magnitude of variation of response measures. The pilot study may offer essential information on the severity of projected procedures. A pilot study may determine a number of logistical concerns. These issues may be resolved prior to the main study (National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animal Research, 2006).

This study involved ten educators in one of the primary schools north of Durban, KwaZulu Natal to pre-test the questionnaires. The researcher verified each completed pilot questionnaire from the respondents to ensure that respondents understood and answered the questions in the pilot study without doubt.

### **3.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Joppe (2000) cited in Golafshani (2003:598) defines reliability as "the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of the study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable".

According to Golafshani (2003: 599), if the results of the instrument, in the case of this study the questionnaire, are stable (that is the results are repeatable) then there is the possibility of reliability evident in the research.

Validity, according to Joppe (2000) in Golafshani (2003:599), is when the research instrument beyond doubt measures what it was intended to measure and the results are truthful.

It is imperative to conduct pilot testing with the instrument in the research with the target population to enhance the measurement of validity and reliability. Reliability was instituted in this research by pre-testing the instrument, in this case the questionnaire, with a few intermediate phase educators.

### **3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Ethical concerns are present in any research. Therefore, the safeguarding of respondents in any research is imperative. According to Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001:95), research should be conducted by the principles of respect including the recognition of peoples' rights, the right to be knowledgeable about the study, the right to without restraint decide whether to participate in a study and the right to withdraw at any time devoid of consequences. In qualitative research, this principle is coded by educated consent, which means making a reasonable balance between over-informing and under-informing. It also indicates that respondents employ their rights as autonomous persons to voluntarily accept or refuse to participate in the study. Consent has been referred to as negotiated trust (Orb et al., 2001:95).

According to Gallagher (2005:8), the need to ensure that the practice of research within the social sciences is supported by a sound ethical basis is not open to deliberation. Such principles are crucial in order to guarantee that conclusions drawn from research are legitimate and that the integrity of the methodology applied at reaching these conclusions is beyond reproach. Ethics, in effect, characterize the rules for deciding how desirable or undesirable states should be attained or evaded. Ethics are fundamentally rules for creating rules of conduct and action. This point is endorsed by Gallagher (2005:11).

This study on improving the quality of reading in the intermediate phase in schools deemed research ethics obligatory. The following ethical issues were considered during the study:

- The principle of voluntary participation which required that people not be coerced into participating in the research.
- Strongly connected to the perception of voluntary participation is the prerequisite of informed consent. This means that the potential research respondent ought to be fully informed about the procedures and risks implicit in research and must give their consent to participate.
- All research guarantees the respondents' confidentiality. They are assured that identifying information will not be made available to anyone who is not directly engaged in the study. The stringent standard is the principle of anonymity which fundamentally means that the respondent will remain anonymous throughout the study, even to the researchers themselves. The anonymity benchmark is a superior guarantee of privacy.

The researcher sought ethical clearance from the Director of Education (see Annexure 1) prior to distribution of the questionnaires to schools in the north Durban area.

### **3.12 LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY**

The recent restructuring of the Education Department effected the merging of the former circuits into clusters. All schools in the Cluster represent both public state schools and independent schools. The Cluster is divided into 8 wards. Each ward on an average comprises about 40 schools. The target respondents for this study are educators and management in the Umgeni north region, which represents one of the 8 wards in KwaZulu Natal.

### **3.13 SUMMARY**

This chapter outlined the research methodology and the research design used in the study. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted. Data was collected in the form of a questionnaire which was distributed to senior primary phase educators. The survey method was used in this study as it facilitated similar and meaningful responses which characterised the study. The importance of pilot testing and ethical considerations were discussed.

The next chapter focuses on the collation, summarisation, analysis and presentation of data findings generated using the different methods in the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the collation, summarisation, analysis and presentation of data obtained from the questionnaires in this study. The data collected from the responses was analysed using the Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) version 18.0. The results are presented in the form of graphs, cross tabulations and other figures.

Statistics represent an essential tool in converting masses of raw data into meaningful, constructive and functional information for decision-making by organisations. It is also an assessment support tool in that it maintains the decision process by reinforcing the quantifiable basis from which to reach a knowledgeable conclusion.

A detailed analysis of each section of the questionnaire is accompanied by numerical tabulations. A population size of 450 respondents was selected. A sample size of 366 respondents completed the questionnaire, generating a response rate of 81%. According to the Instructional Assessment Resources (IAR) of the University of Texas at Austin (2007), a response rate of 80-85% is good.

## 4.2 ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A

#### 4.2.1 BIOGRAPHICAL/DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The following section includes a statistical analysis concerning personal details of the respondent which relate to age, gender, education and number of learners per class.

##### 4.2.1.1 Composition of sample: Gender and age

Table 4.1 below indicates the gender composition of the sample by age.

Table 4.1: Age ( years) - Gender cross-tabulation

Age (years)			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
20	- Count		6	35	41
30	% of		1.6%	9.2%	10.8%
	Total				
31	- Count		10	99	109
40	% of		2.6%	26.1%	28.8%
	Total				
41	- Count		40	126	166
50	% of		10.6%	33.2%	43.8%
	Total				
51	- Count		14	42	56
60	% of		3.7%	11.1%	14.8%
	Total				
60+	Count		1	6	7
	% of		.3%	1.6%	1.8%
	Total				
Total	Count		71	308	379
	% of		18.7%	81.3%	100.0%
	Total				

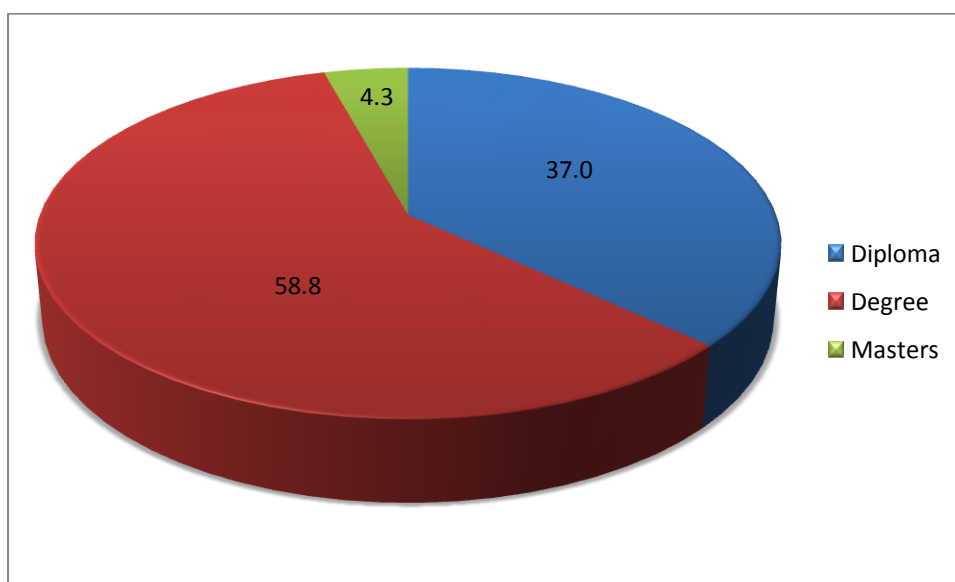


The sample comprised of 81.3% females and 18.7% males. Of the females, nearly 60% of the respondents were between the ages of 31 and 50 years of age. Most of the males (10.6%) were between the ages of 41 – 50 years. According to the Department of Basic Education, research indicated that the number of female educators in South Africa was at about 67 percent (Jones, 2011).

#### 4.2.1.2 Highest qualification

The highest qualification of the respondents is reflected in Figure 4.1

Figure 4.1: Highest qualification of respondents represented as a percentage



58.8% of the respondents had a bachelor's degree as their highest qualification. A small number (4.3%) of respondents had a Master's degree. According to Lessing and Mahabeer (2007:141), the National Teacher Education Audit (1995) revealed that many South African educators are under qualified or unqualified. However, in this case, the percentage (58.8%) of respondents having a bachelor's degree is reflecting only a small demographic area compared to the national audit which reflects otherwise. It was further emphasised that educators are not reasonably knowledgeable in the principles that underpin bilingual and multilingual education.

#### 4.2.1.3 Composition of sample: Race and position

Table 4.2 below indicates the composition of the sample in terms of race and position.

Table 4.2: Race and Level Cross tabulation

			Level				Total
			Educator	Head of Department	Deputy Principal	Principal	
Race	Black	Count	93	11	1	4	109
		% of Total	24.8%	2.9%	.3%	1.1%	29.1%
	Coloured	Count	19	3	1	1	24
		% of Total	5.1%	.8%	.3%	.3%	6.4%
	Indian	Count	174	33	4	4	215
		% of Total	46.4%	8.8%	1.1%	1.1%	57.3%
	White	Count	22	2	0	3	27
		% of Total	5.9%	.5%	.0%	.8%	7.2%
Total		Count	308	49	6	12	375
		% of Total	82.1%	13.1%	1.6%	3.2%	100.0%

The majority of the sample (82.1%) comprised of educators. Of these, 46.4% were Indian, 24.8% were Black, 5.1% were Coloured and 5.9% were White.

#### 4.2.1.4 Experience: Teaching and training

Table 4.3 indicates the number of years the respondents have taught at this level and whether they had had any training.

Table 4.3: Cross tabulation of years of teaching experience and whether the respondents had any formal training in teaching reading

			Have you had any formal training in teaching reading?		Total
			Yes	No	
How many years have you been teaching in the intermediate phase?	< 5	Count % of Total	37 9.9%	24 6.4%	61 16.3%
	6 - 11	Count % of Total	33 8.8%	28 7.5%	61 16.3%
	12 - 17	Count % of Total	34 9.1%	41 11.0%	75 20.1%
	18 - 22	Count % of Total	25 6.7%	44 11.8%	69 18.4%
	> 22	Count % of Total	59 15.8%	49 13.1%	108 28.9%
Total			188 50.3%	186 49.7%	374 100.0%

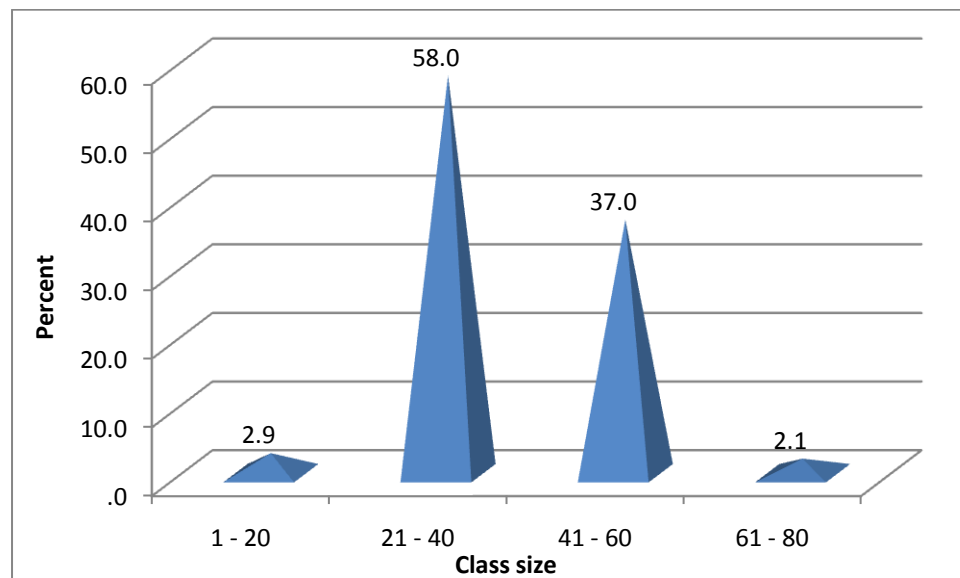
16.3% of the respondents have been teaching in the intermediate phase for 5 years and below and 16.3% have been teaching for between 6 and 11 years. 20.1% of the respondents have been teaching for between 12 and 17 years whilst 18.4% have been teaching for between 18 and 22 years. 28.9% of the respondents have been teaching for more than 22 years. The “Yes” response of the respondents in the first 4 categories of teaching experience had similar percentages. Approximately half of

the respondents (50.3%) had had training in teaching reading. However, nearly 16% of the respondents who had had training had been teaching for more than 22 years. This is significant to note, however, that 49.7% of educators received no training at all which represents almost half of the teaching population in the area from which the sample was taken. According to Rose (2006:3), most educators have received no previous training in teaching reading.

#### 4.2.5 Number of learners

The number of learners that are, on average, in the respondents' classes is shown in Figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2 Number of learners in respondents' classes



Most respondents have between 21 – 40 learners (58.0%) and a significant proportion (37%) have between 41 – 60 learners. 2.9% have between 1-20 learners, whilst, 2.1% have between 61 and 80 learners in their class. According to (SACMEQ, 2011:2), the educator-learner ratio and class size impacts on teaching and learning. The recommended educator-learner ratio and class size in South African primary schools is forty learners per educator (SACMEQ, 2011:2).

Parents of learners in South Africa blame large class sizes as the reason for their children not receiving individual attention and they are forced to seek extra tuition for them (Barbeau,2009:1).

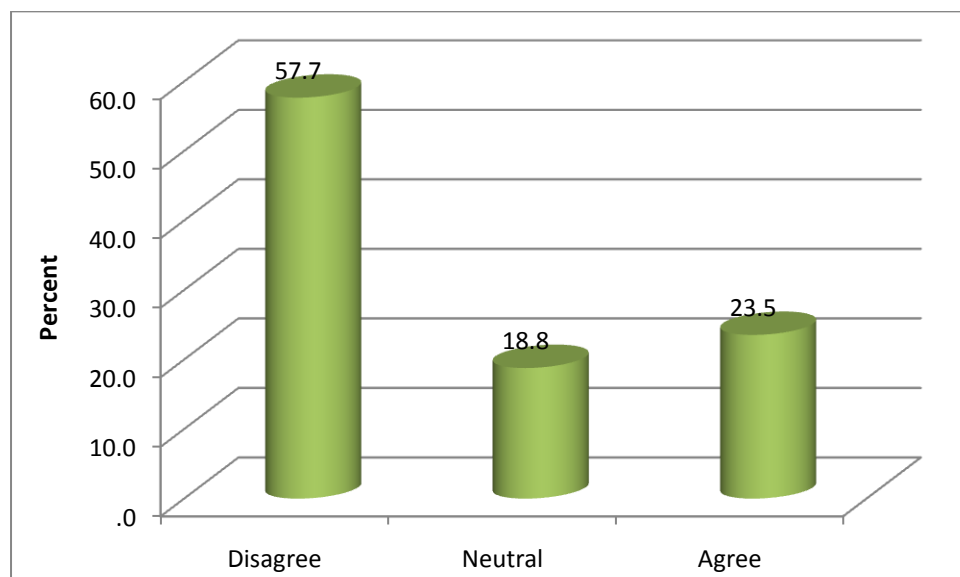
## SECTION B

### 4.2.2 FACTORS IMPACTING ON READING LITERACY

#### 4.2.2.1 Number of educators attending workshops (Q.9)

Figure 4.3 below indicates the number of educators that attended workshops.

Figure 4.3: Attendance at workshops on reading strategies

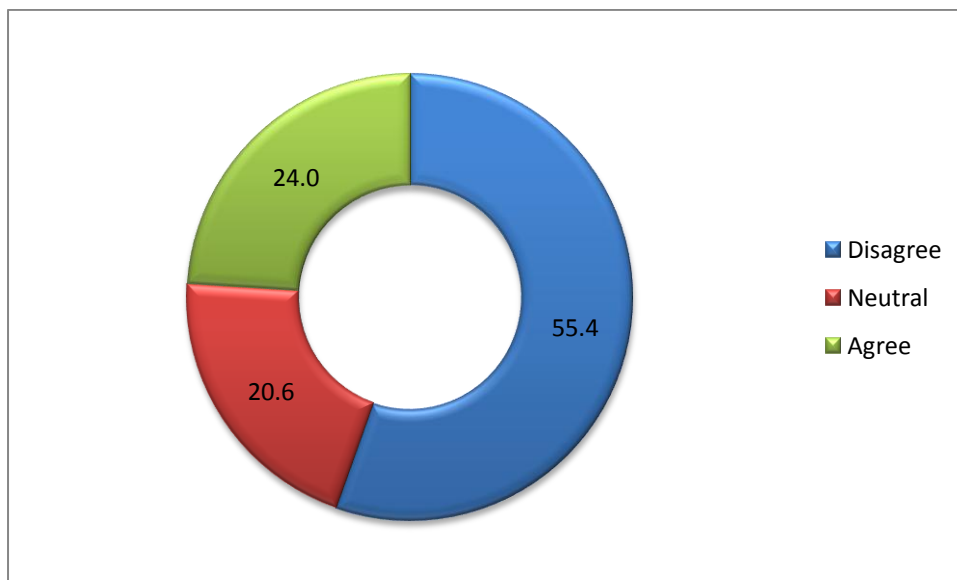


Approximately 58% of the respondents indicated that they did not attend workshops regularly. Nearly a quarter (23.5%) indicated that they did attend frequently. 18.8% of the respondents remained neutral about attending workshops on reading strategies. The responses indicate that the majority of educators are not workshopped regularly. There are no reading workshops provided by the DoE that are available for educators to attend, however, a few workshops, which are costly and usually benefit a few educators, are organised by a teacher union. According to the National Reading Strategy (Doe, 2008:10), numerous educators in South Africa have an inadequate perception of teaching literacy, reading and writing. Educators are not familiar with a method of teaching reading which may be suitable to the learning approach of all learners. All educators are involved with teaching reading in any learning area they may be instructing. The National Reading Strategy (Doe, 2008:1) emphasises that educators are not acquainted with how to motivate reading inside and outside the classroom.. This is a major challenge facing schools as it impacts on the quality of teaching of reading.

#### 4.2.2.2 Reading levels of learners

The respondents were asked if the reading levels of the learners in their class were above average. Figure 4.4 reveals the responses.

Figure 4.4 whether the reading levels of the learners are above average (Q.10)

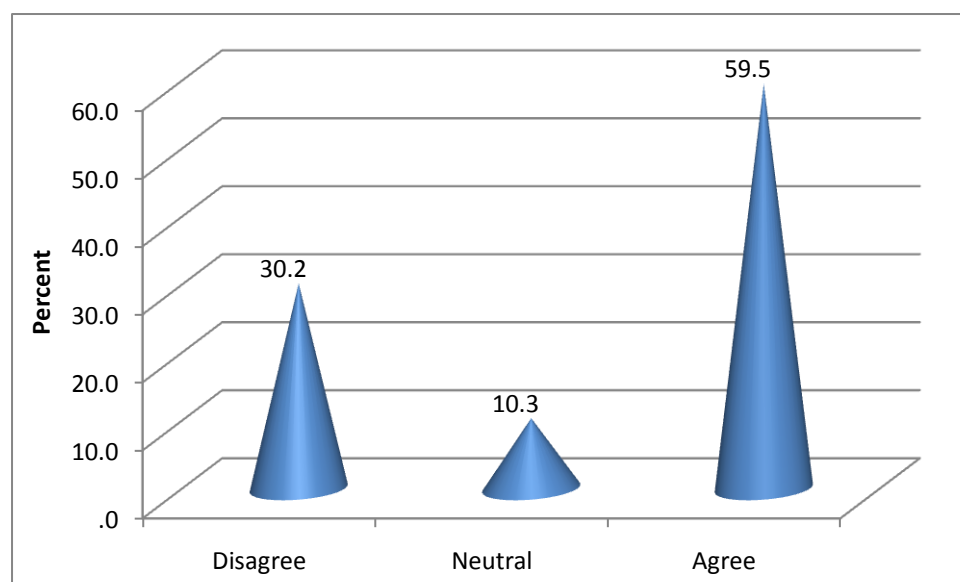


More than half (55.4%) believed that their learners did not have above average reading abilities. About a quarter (24.0%) of the respondents, however, indicated that their learners have above average reading abilities. 20.6% of the respondents remained neutral. According to the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) at the University of Pretoria(2006:8), the results of a study conducted by the Department of Education (DoE) of South Africa in 2003 to determine the literacy levels among grade 3 learners indicated that 61% of learners cannot read and write at their appropriate age levels and that up to 18.5% learners in some provinces had to repeat grade three after being unable to satisfy the requirements of promotion to the next grade (CEA,UP, 2006:8). There has been no survey conducted after 2003 concerning the literacy rate of learners in primary schools, although South Africa has participated in international reading literacy assessments.

#### 4.2.2.3 Second language learners

The respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement: “The majority of learners in my class are second language learners”. Figure 4.5 below indicates the results.

Figure 4.5: Second language learners (Q.11)

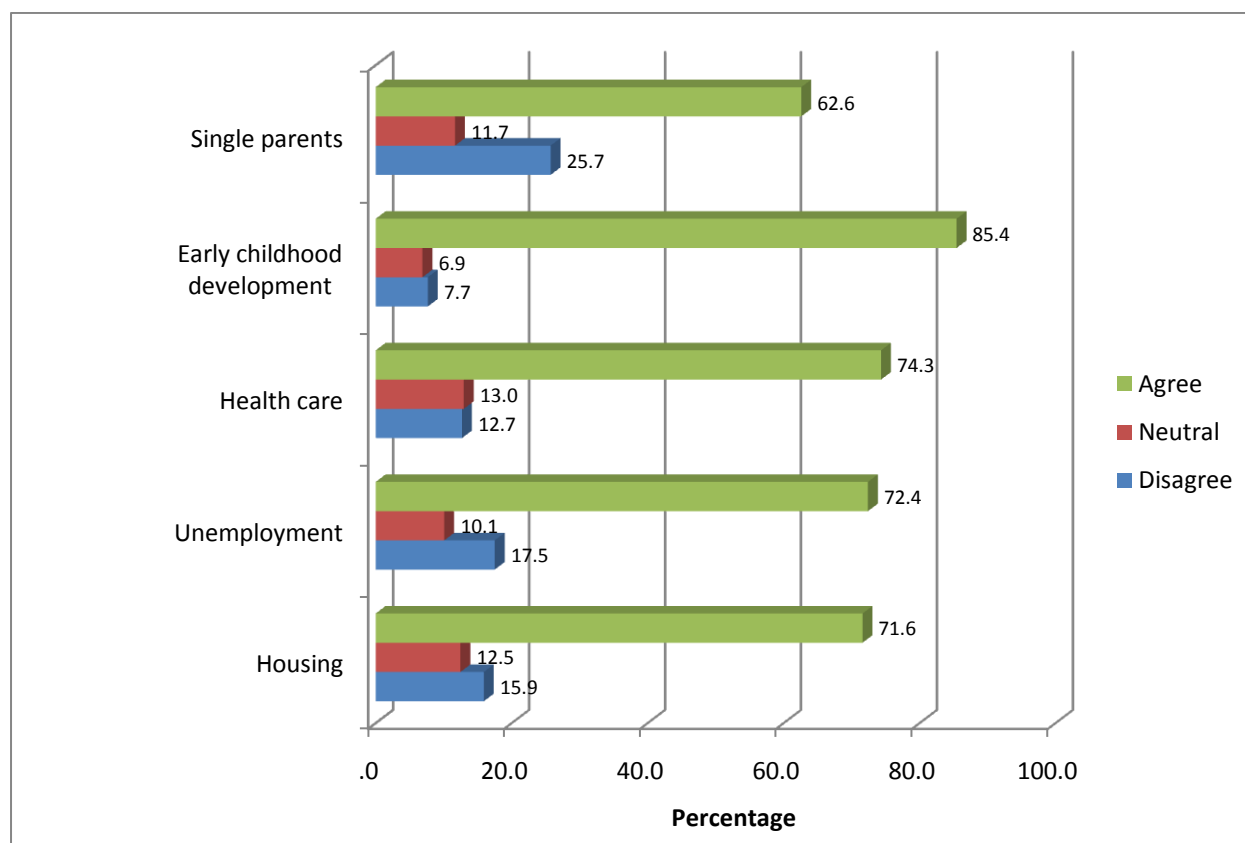


Nearly six out of ten (59.5%) of the respondents indicated that most of the learners in their classes were second language learners, while 30.2% of them disagreed with the statement and 10.3% were neutral. Socio-economic conditions, parental commitment, parents' educational achievement and the language and culture of the community, are some of the contextual factors that many second language learners (L2) acquire as barriers to learning. These factors may explain the lack of advancement in the areas of reading and writing experienced by second language learners (Lessing and Mahabeer, 2007:140). Even though many respondents (55.4%) had indicated that the reading levels were not above average, nearly 69% indicated that most learners were able to comprehend the language of instruction.

#### 4.2.2.4 Factors impacting on reading literacy

The respondents were asked to indicate which socio-economic factors impacted on the reading literacy of their learners. Figure 4.6 below indicates the results.

Figure 4.6 Socio-economic factors that impact on reading literacy (Q.12)



62.6% of the respondents indicated that single parenthood impacted on reading literacy. The financial demands placed on single parents are doubled and therefore reading literacy is of secondary importance to these single parents. 85.4% of the respondents demonstrated that early childhood development impacted on the quality of reading literacy. Learners with poor nutrition are unable to concentrate on reading. 74.3% of the respondents confirmed that health care affected the quality of reading literacy, whilst 72.4% indicated that unemployment influenced reading literacy. 71.6% of respondents indicated that housing had an effect on reading literacy. There is, on average, a 73% agreement level with the statements in Figure 4.6. Respondents believed that the most dominant of the factors was early childhood development (85.4%). This relates to a challenge in education whereby early childhood development is important for the learners' future literacy progress. It is evident that all the factors identified were rated high in respect of impacting on reading ability.



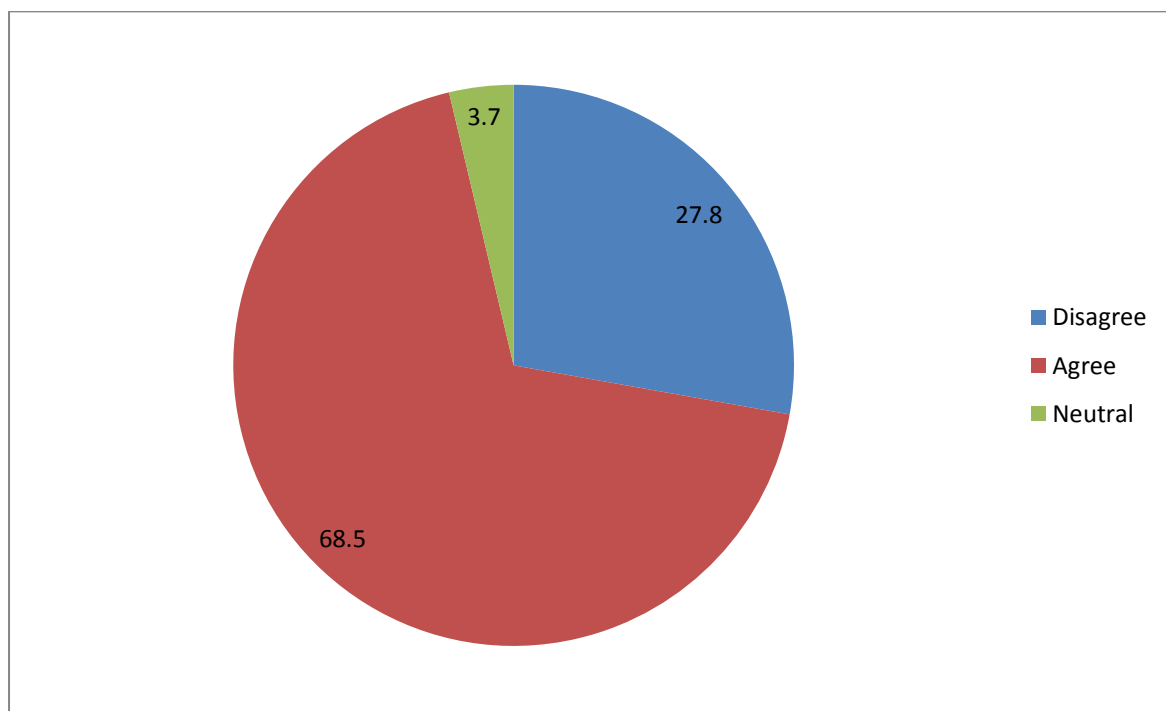
A significant observation is that single parents (62.6%) as a factor impacting on reading literacy was ranked lower than the other factors. According to Linnakyla *et al.* (2004:239), in Sweden and Finland, there were many factors that affected low literacy achievements. Learners from lower socio-economic backgrounds, big families, and single-parent families, indicated low literacy achievements. Other factors that affected low literacy achievements included the availability of books, political and social discussions in the home, as well as learners' personal interest and attitudes according to the study.

A further observation is that the results showed that there was a high prevalence of all the indicated socio-economic factors.

#### 4.2.2.5 Language of instruction

The respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement: "A few learners experience difficulties comprehending the language of instruction." Figure 4.7 below indicates the results as a percentage.

Figure 4.7: Whether learners comprehended the language of instruction (Q.13)



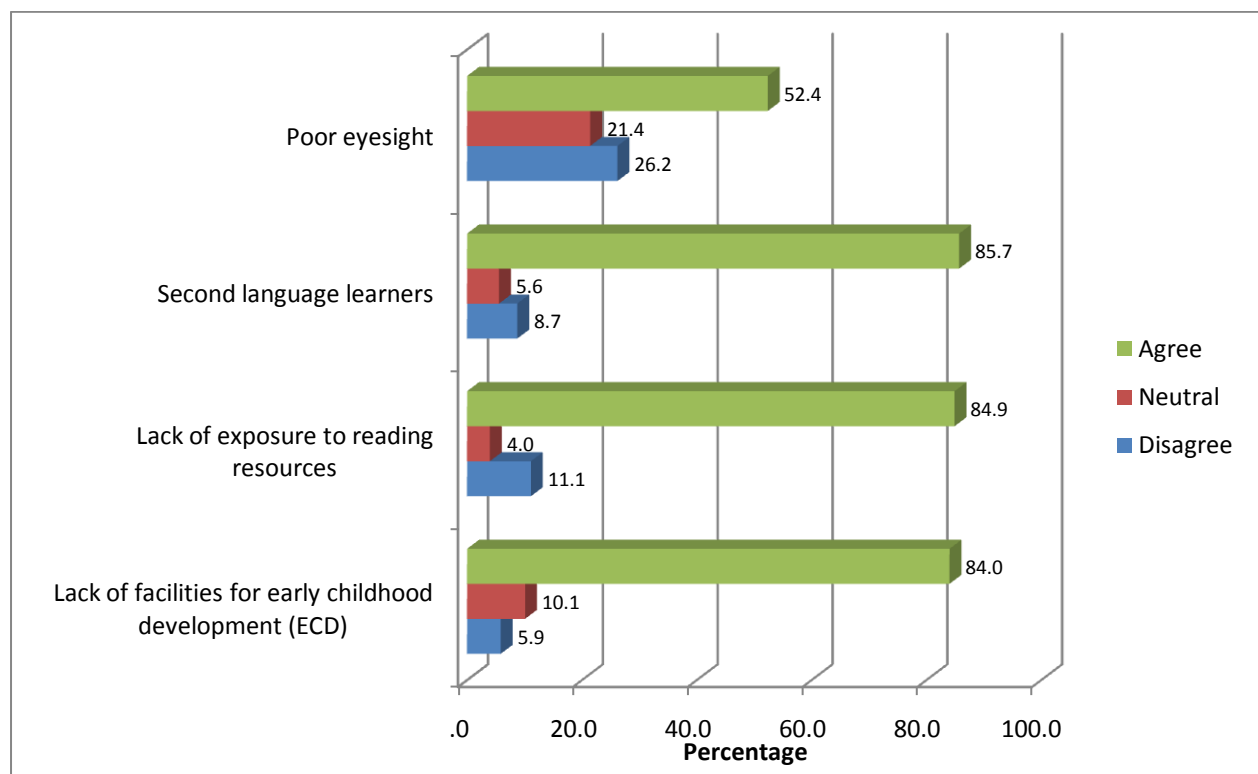
68.5% of the respondents agreed that learners experience difficulties comprehending the language of instruction. 27.8% disagreed with the statement,

whilst 3.7% of the respondents remained neutral. According to Howie et al. (2008:552), African learners in South Africa, whose home language is not English or Afrikaans, receive instruction from grade 4 onwards in English or Afrikaans despite the current government language policy which advocates that learning should take place in their home language from grades 1 to 12.

#### 4.2.2.6 Common reading problems experienced by learners

The respondents were asked to indicate the common reading problems experienced by learners. Figure 4.8 shows the results.

Figure 4.8: Common reading problems experienced by learners (Q. 14)



52.4% of the respondents agreed that poor eyesight was a common reading problem experienced by learners, while 26.2% disagreed. 85.7% of the respondents illustrated that second language learners experienced reading problems. According to Lessing and Mahabeer. (2007: 139), learners who are instructed in a language different from their mother tongue will experience problems in reading and writing. However, in Figure 4.7, 68.5% of the respondents agreed that a few learners experience difficulties comprehending the language of instruction.

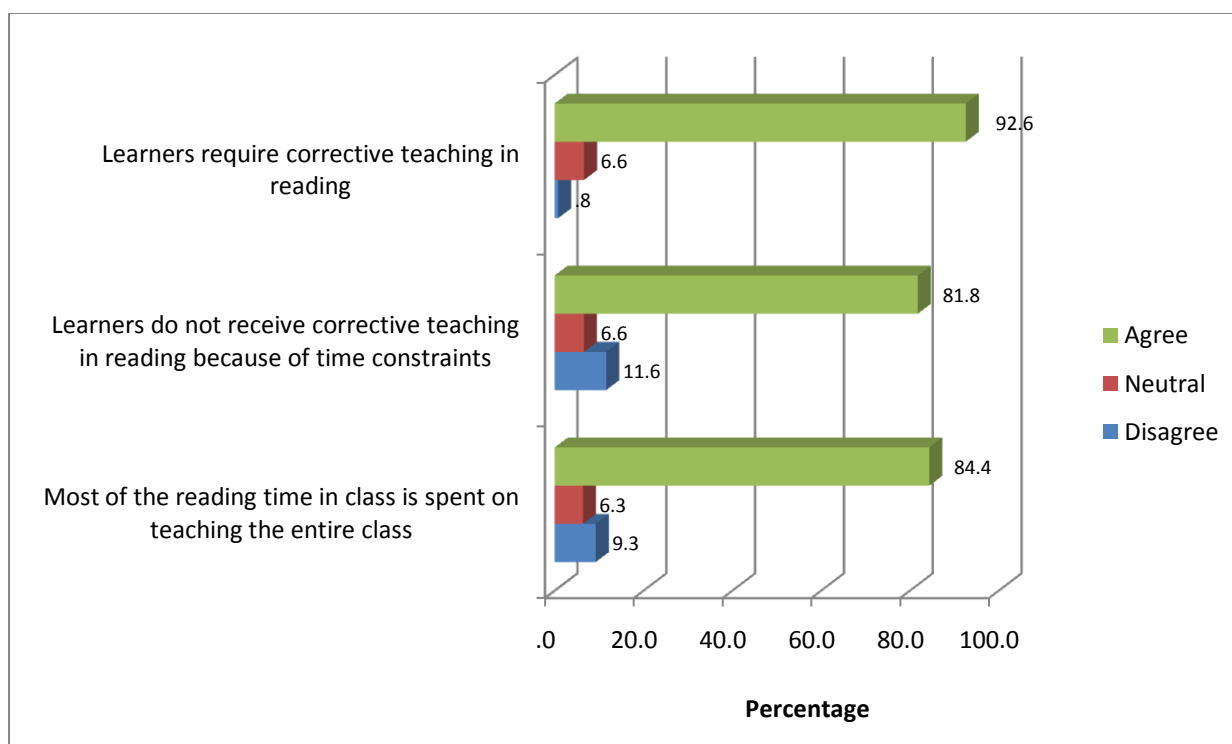
84.9% of the respondents agreed that a lack of exposure to reading resources influenced common reading problems and 84% of respondents agreed that the lack of facilities for early childhood development had an effect on learners' reading performance. Even though health problems in terms of poor eyesight (52.4%) ranked as the lowest of factors, it is alarming that more than half of the respondents have identified this as a reason. The other factors had a higher prevalence.

85% of the respondents indicated that second language learners' lack of resources and lack of facilities for ECD are problems relating to reading literacy. According to Weeks (2008:80), there were discrepancies in the supplies for schools, particularly for black learners. Inequalities in the accessibility of educational support services and the lack of available teaching support and equipment were also apparent.

#### **4.2.2.7 Corrective teaching**

With respect to corrective teaching and time spent in class, Figure 4.9 illustrates the common trends.

Figure 4.9: Common trends relating to corrective teaching (Q.15)



92.6% of learners required corrective teaching in reading and 81.8% of respondents agreed that learners are unable to receive corrective teaching in reading because of time constraints. According to the South African Department of Education (2008:6), every educator in the intermediate phase is envisaged to devote at least 30 minutes daily on reading for enjoyment and at least 1 hour on extended writing every week. 84.4% of the respondents indicated that the entire class is taught reading at the same time. There was a high percentage of agreement with the statements as indicated in Figure 4.12. According to Twist *et al.* (2006:31), learners who experience reading difficulties in the Netherlands are assisted by support educators who work with learners away from the usual classroom. Educators in England and New Zealand indicated that this type of support was available all the time (Twist *et al.*, 2006:31).

In South Africa, learners with special needs and severe reading problems are incorporated into the mainstream and educators do not have the assistance of support educators. This is termed inclusive education (R.S.A, DoE, 2001b:14-17).

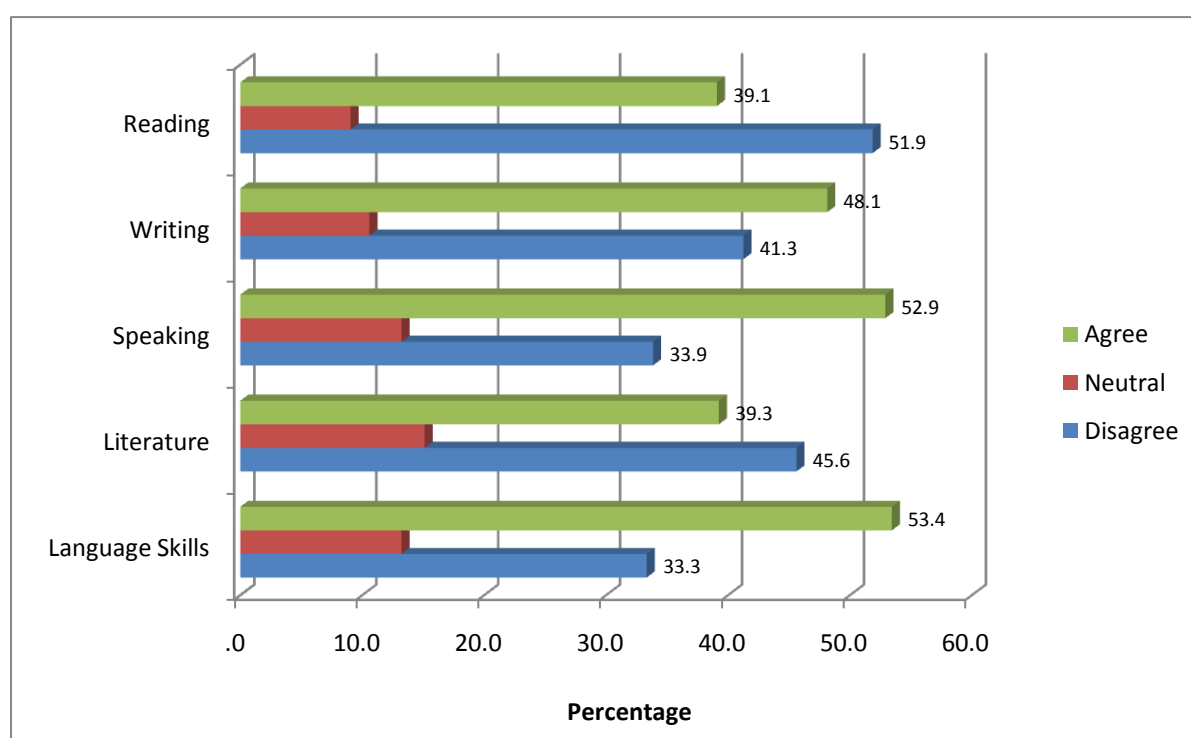
## SECTION C

### 4.2.3 LANGUAGE AND READING INSTRUCTION

This section examines the time allocated for each aspect of English as a learning area. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they agree with the following statement: “I feel that adequate time is given for each of the following areas of instruction.”

#### 4.2.3.1 Time allocation for different aspects of English

Figure 4.10: Adequate allocation of time for specific areas of instruction (Q.18)



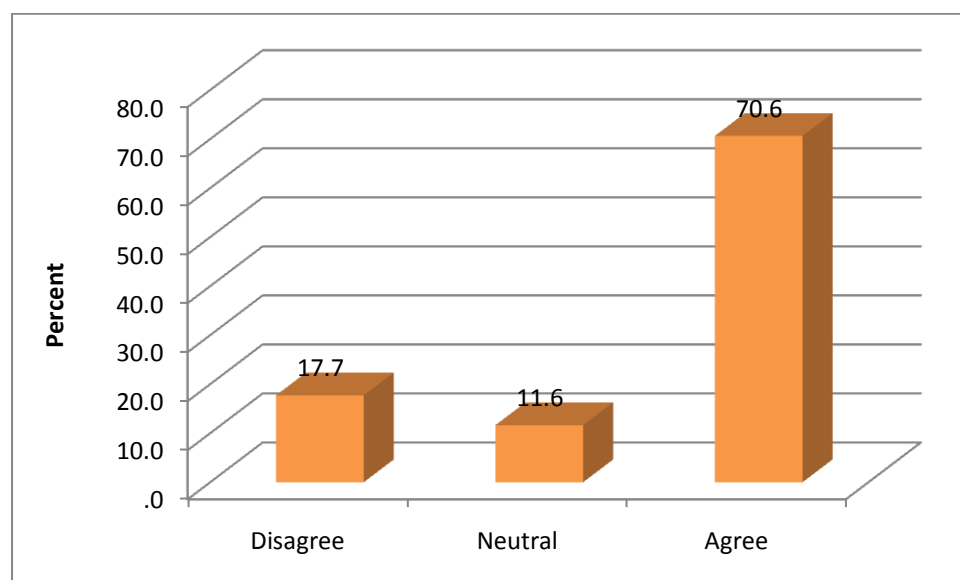
As indicated in Figure 4.10, 39.1% of the respondents agreed that adequate time is given for reading instruction which was a fair number of educators, while 51.9% disagreed. 48.1% of the respondents agreed that adequate time was allowed for writing activities, while 41.3% disagreed. 52.9% of the respondents agreed that adequate time was allocated for speaking as an area of instruction, while 33.9% disagreed. 39.3% of the respondents agreed that adequate time was given to literature studies, while 45.6% disagreed. 53.4% of the respondents agreed that sufficient time was allocated to the development of language skills, while 33.3% disagreed. There are much smaller differences between agreement and disagreement values in this section. Three of the factors show slightly higher levels of agreement whilst reading and literature show greater levels of disagreement with

the factors. 51.9% of the respondents stated that the time allocated for teaching of reading was inadequate. Remedial teaching is necessary in reading and owing to time constraints this aspect is limited. 45.6% agreed that the time allocated for literature studies is minimal. The time allocated for English is usually 5 hours in schools, which is insufficient to successfully teach the Learning Outcomes that underpin reading and writing (DoE, 2011:28) and this is supported by the majority response (51.9%) that time allocated for reading is inadequate.

#### 4.2.3.2 ANNUAL NATIONAL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

This section examines performance in the Annual National Assessment (ANA).

Figure 4.11: Whether performance of learners in the intermediate phase of the Annual National Assessment (ANA) test was poor (Q.19)



According to Figure 4.11, 70, 6% of the respondents agreed that learners performed poorly in the ANA, while 17.7% disagreed. 11.6% of the respondents remained neutral. There is a noteworthy difference (52.9%) between the respondents that agreed that the learners in the intermediate phase performed poorly in the ANA test and those that disagreed. A significant number of respondents agreed that learners performed poorly in the ANA test. According to the PIRLS 2006 scores (U.S. DoE, 2007:4), South Africa was rated last out of 40 participating countries. The results of the scores revealed by the respondents relate to the 2011 ANA test scores. It is also

significant to note that the respondents agree that the learners' performance is still poor. Learners are to be subjected to annual national assessments in literacy, using standardized tests to measure progress regarding the achievement of set objectives (Department of Education, 2008:7). Despite poor performance, no remedial measures seem to be implemented.

## **SECTION D**

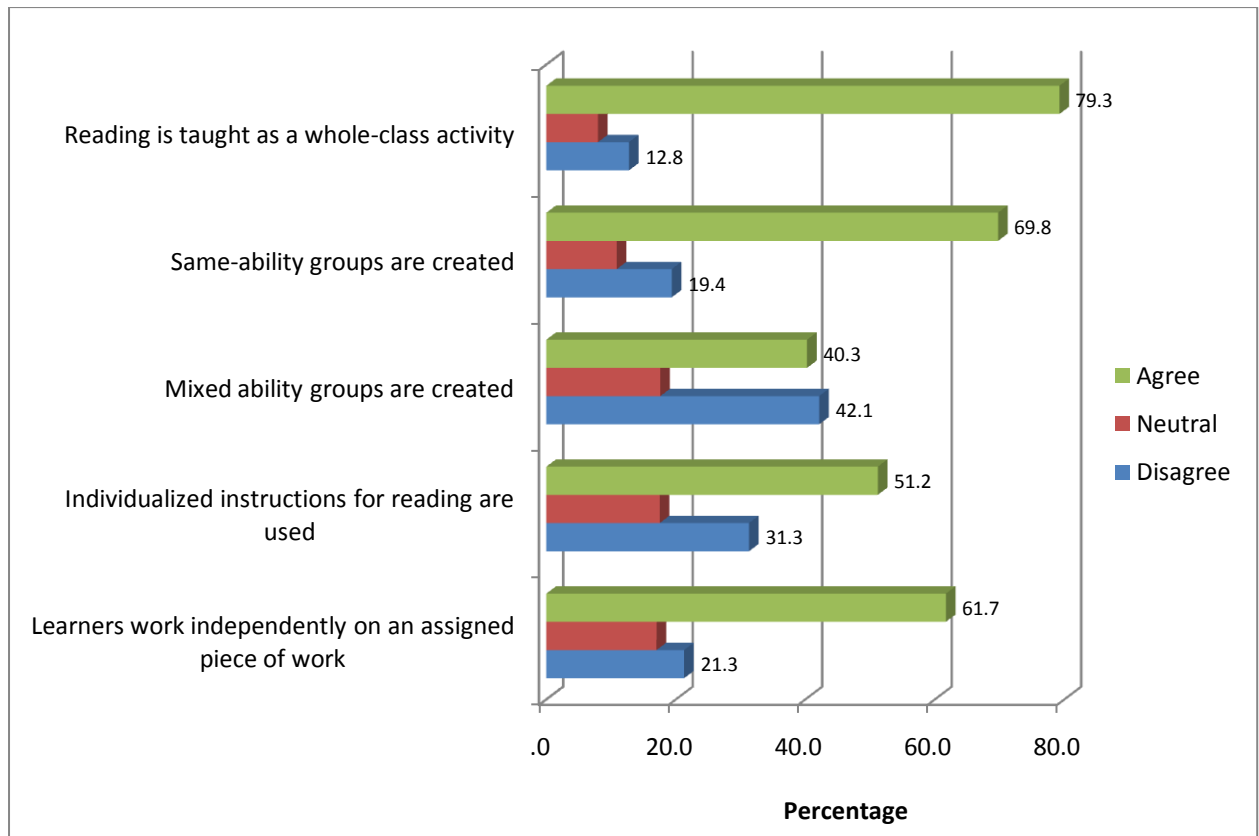
### **4.2.4. STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING READING**

This section focussed on the teaching of reading using different learning strategies.

#### **4.2.4.1 READING AS A GROUP ACTIVITY**

The respondents were asked whether learners are taught reading according to specific learning styles. The results are shown in Figure 4.12.

Figure 4.12 Whether learners are taught reading according to the specific learning styles (Q.20)



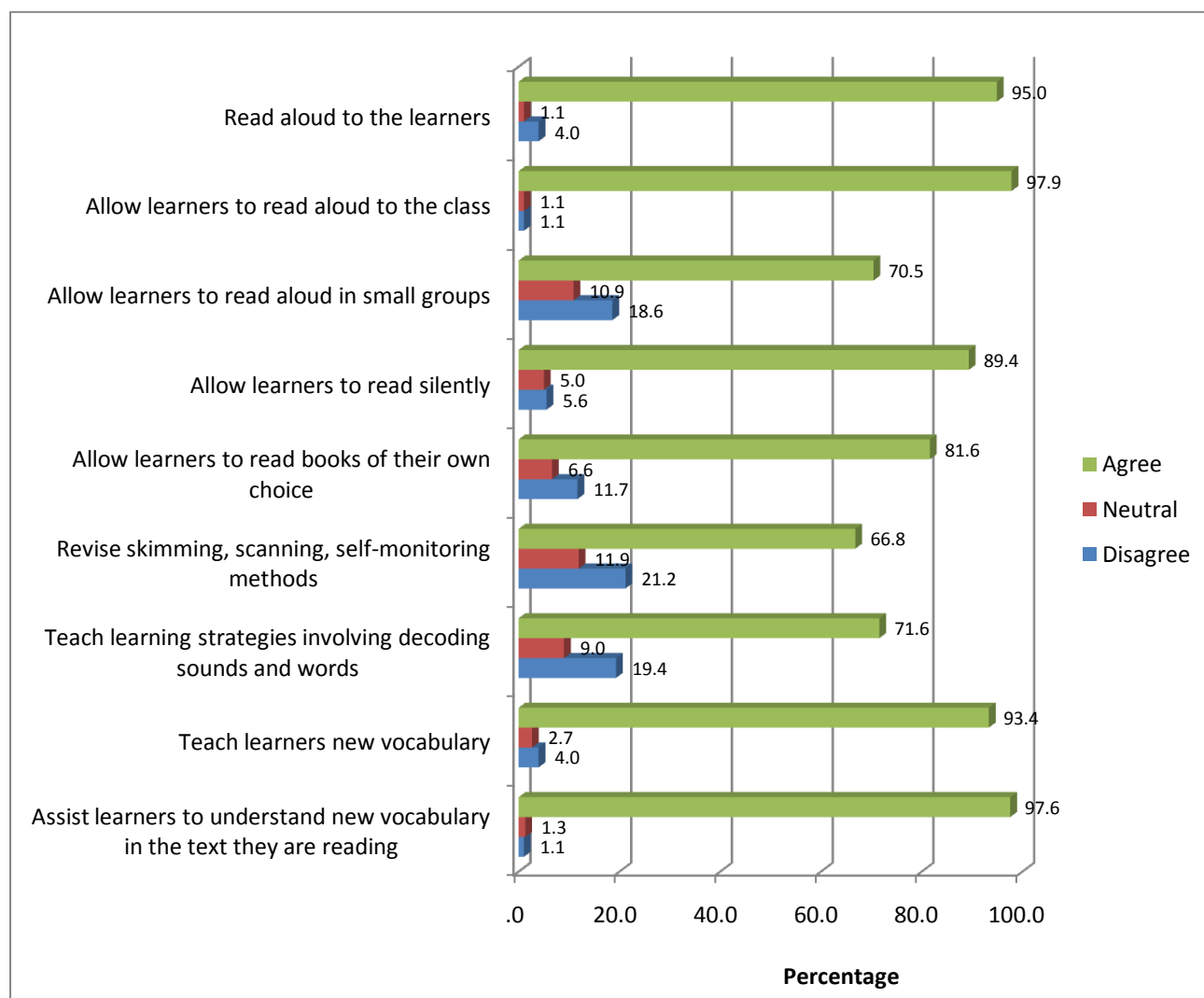
According to Figure 4.12, 79.3% of respondents prefer teaching reading as a whole-class activity, whilst 69.8% of the respondents indicated that learners of the same abilities are grouped together for the teaching of reading. 40.3% of respondents agreed that mixed ability groups are created, while 42.1% disagreed. 51.2% of the respondents agreed that individualized instructions for reading are used while 31.3% disagreed. 61.7% of the respondents agreed that learners worked independently on assigned pieces of work, while 21.3% disagreed. There is some level of agreement for the first two statements in Figure 4.12 above. These reduce in value for the last two with almost an even split regarding the creation of mixed ability groups. According to the Daily News (August 13, 2009:1), parents of learners in South Africa blame large class sizes as the reason for their children not receiving individual attention and they are forced to seek extra tuition.



#### 4.2.4.2 STRATEGIES USED TO TEACH READING

This section examines the strategies used during instruction time to improve reading literacy. The results are shown in Figure 4.13.

Figure 4.13: Strategies used during reading instruction time (Q.21)



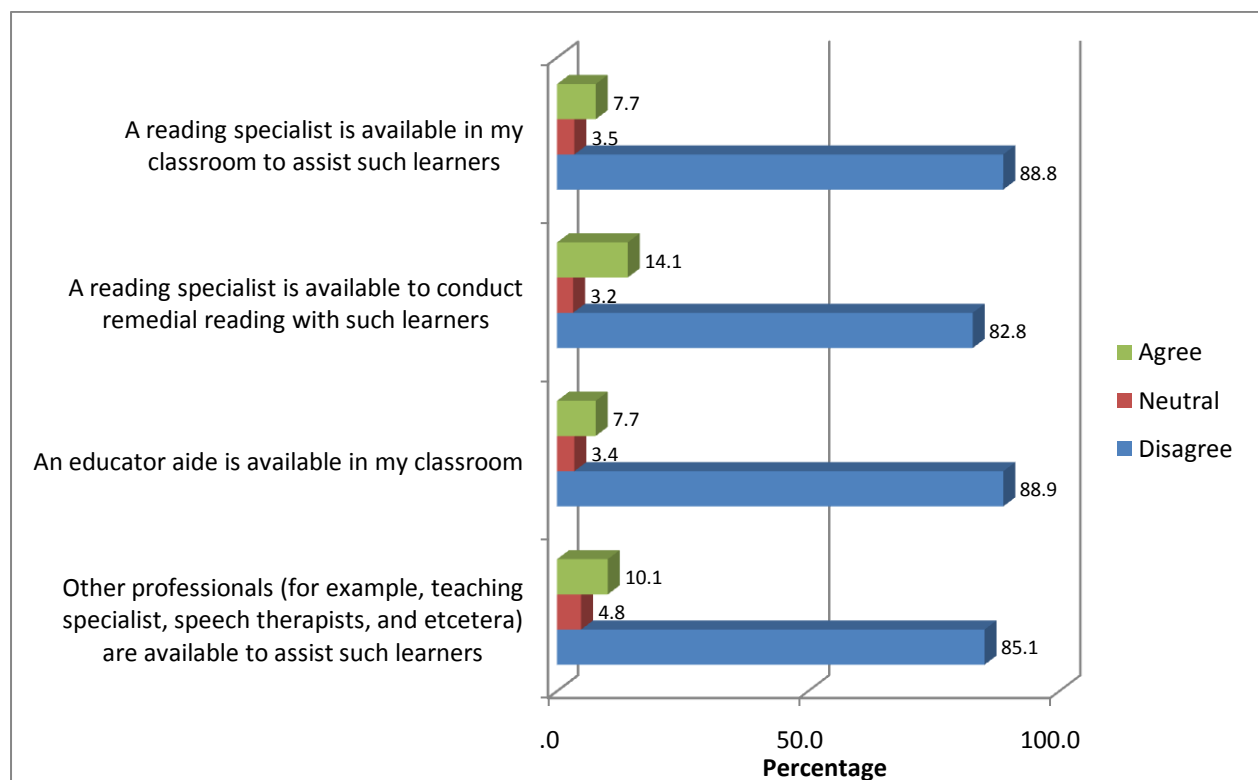
95% of the respondents applied “read aloud” as a reading strategy and 70.5% of the respondents allowed learners to read aloud in small groups. 89.4% of the respondents allowed learners to read silently. 81.6% of the respondents agreed that they allowed learners to read books of their own choice as a reading strategy. 66.8% of the respondents applied skimming, scanning and self-monitoring methods, while 21.2% disagreed. 71.6% of the respondents taught learning strategies involving decoding sounds and words while 19.4% disagreed. 93.4% of the respondents taught learners new vocabulary during reading instruction time and 97.6% agreed that they

assisted learners with learning new vocabulary from the text they were reading. The overall pattern is one of agreement with the statements. There is very strong agreement for four statements (first two and last two), strong agreement for statements 4 and 5, and agreement levels between 66% and 72% for the remaining three statements. It is interesting to note that 95% of educators are involved in reading aloud and that 97.9% of learners are allowed to read aloud. The strategies used in the teaching of reading are applied by most educators. According to the FFL (DoE, 2009:9), “read aloud”, “shared reading” and “guided reading” by the educator and learner, form the components of a reading programme. “Guided reading” constitutes a significant segment of the reading process.

#### 4.2.4.3 RESOURCES FOR LEARNERS WITH READING DIFFICULTY

As shown in Figure 4.14, the various reading resources available to assist learners with reading difficulties are discussed in this section.

Figure 4.14: Resources available to assist learners who have reading difficulties (Q.22)



88.8% of the respondents disagreed that a reading specialist was available to assist learners with reading difficult. 82.8% of the respondents disagreed that a reading specialist is available to conduct remedial reading with such learners. 88.9% of the respondents disagreed that an educator aide is available in the classroom to assist learners with reading difficulties and 85.1% disagreed that other professionals were available to assist learners with difficulty with reading. There are strong levels of disagreement with each of the statements in the figure above relating to the availability of resources. On average, 86.4% of respondents indicated that there are no specialist personnel or resources available for learners with reading difficulties.

Educators are presumed to have adequate resources to warrant the effective teaching of reading and writing. This includes wall charts, writing materials, reading series, workbooks and writing materials (DoE, 2008:6).

#### 4.2.4.4 THE METHOD OF SCAFFOLDING

Table 4.4 below gives the opinions of respondents with regards to the method of scaffolding.

Table 4.4: Cross tabulation – Whether scaffolding is applied during reading and whether scaffolding is important to improve reading (Q.23/24)

		The method of scaffolding is important to improve reading			Total
		Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
The method of scaffolding is applied during reading	Disagree	Count 36 9.7%	Count 35 9.5%	Count 113 30.5%	184 49.7%
	Neutral	Count 3 .8%	Count 59 15.9%	Count 29 7.8%	91 24.6%
	Agree	Count 2 .5%	Count 1 .3%	Count 92 24.9%	95 25.7%
Total		Count 41 11.1%	Count 95 25.7%	Count 234 63.2%	370 100.0%

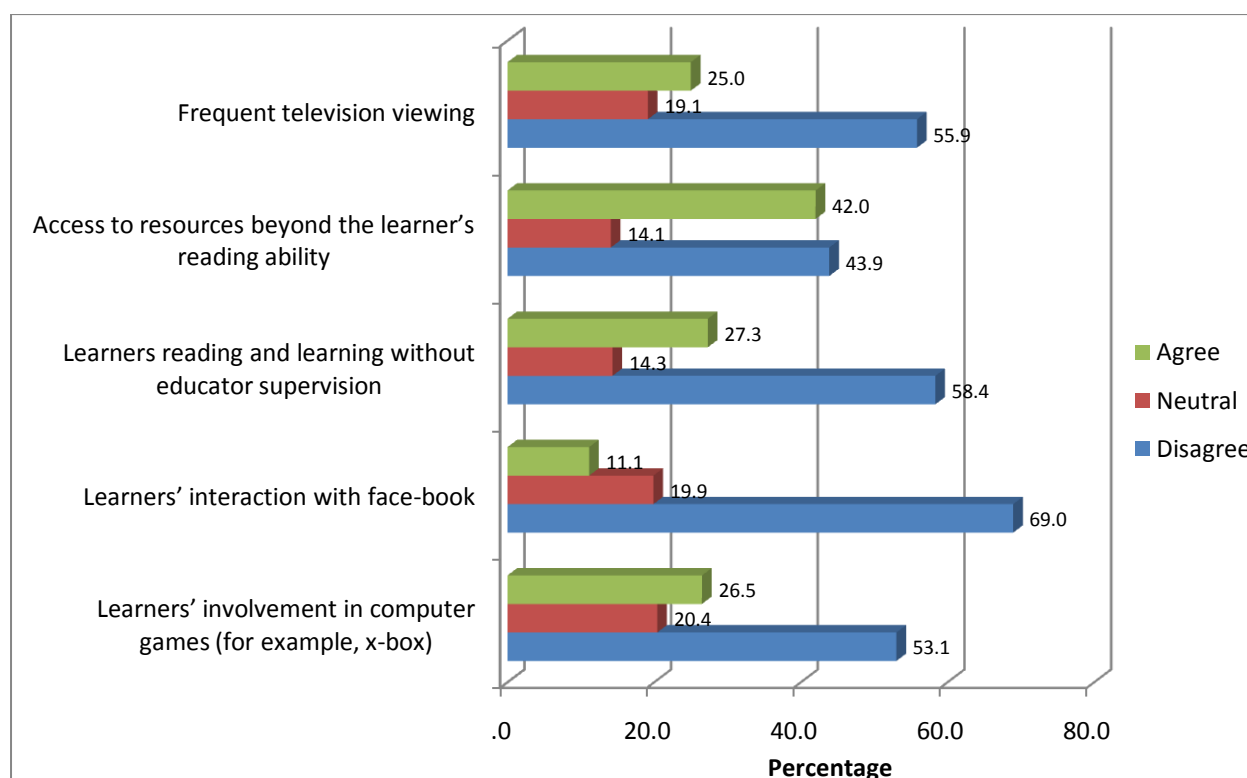
11.1% of the respondents disagreed that the method of scaffolding is important to improve reading and 63.2% agreed, while 25.7% remained neutral. 49.7% disagreed that the method of scaffolding is applied during reading and 25.7% agreed, while 24.6% remained neutral. Nearly 31% of the respondents agreed that the method of scaffolding is important, but it is not being applied during reading. The method of scaffolding is explained in the FFL (Foundations for learning) document (Doe: 2008).

A quarter (24.9%) of the respondents does agree that scaffolding is important and they are employing the technique. 25.7% of respondents remained neutral. According to Culican, as cited in Rose and McCaskey (2004:57), scaffolding is a pedagogy which offers a widespread approach to literacy that confronts the “remediation ethos” and provides mainstream educators with the knowledge required to teach quality reading and writing with an influential set of strategies that deal with the needs of all learners included in the background of standard classroom instruction practice.

#### **4.2.4.5 DEVELOPMENT OF READING AND COMPREHENSION SKILLS**

This section examines the various ways that reading and comprehension skills can be developed. The results are shown in Figure 4.15.

Figure 4.15: Ways in which reading and comprehension skills can be developed (Q.25)



25% of the respondents agreed that frequent television viewing can develop reading and comprehension skills, while 55.9% disagreed and 19.1% remained neutral. 42% of the respondents agreed that access to resources beyond the learners' reading ability can develop reading and comprehension ability and 43.9% disagreed. 27.3% of the respondents agreed that learners' reading and learning without educator supervision enabled the development of reading and comprehension skills and 58.4% disagreed. Only 11.1% of the respondents agreed that interaction with Facebook can develop reading and comprehension skills and a significant 69% disagreed with the statement. 26.5% agreed that learners' involvement in computer games facilitated the development of reading and comprehension skills and 53.1% disagreed, while 20.4% remained neutral. There is some level of agreement in the results for the first, third and last statement. A significant number (69%) of respondents demonstrated that interaction with Facebook did not develop skills necessary for improving reading and comprehension skills.

## SECTION E

### 4.2.5 LIBRARY AND COMPUTER RESOURCES

This section investigated the different resources used during reading instruction.

Figure 4.16 Resources used during reading instruction (Q.26)

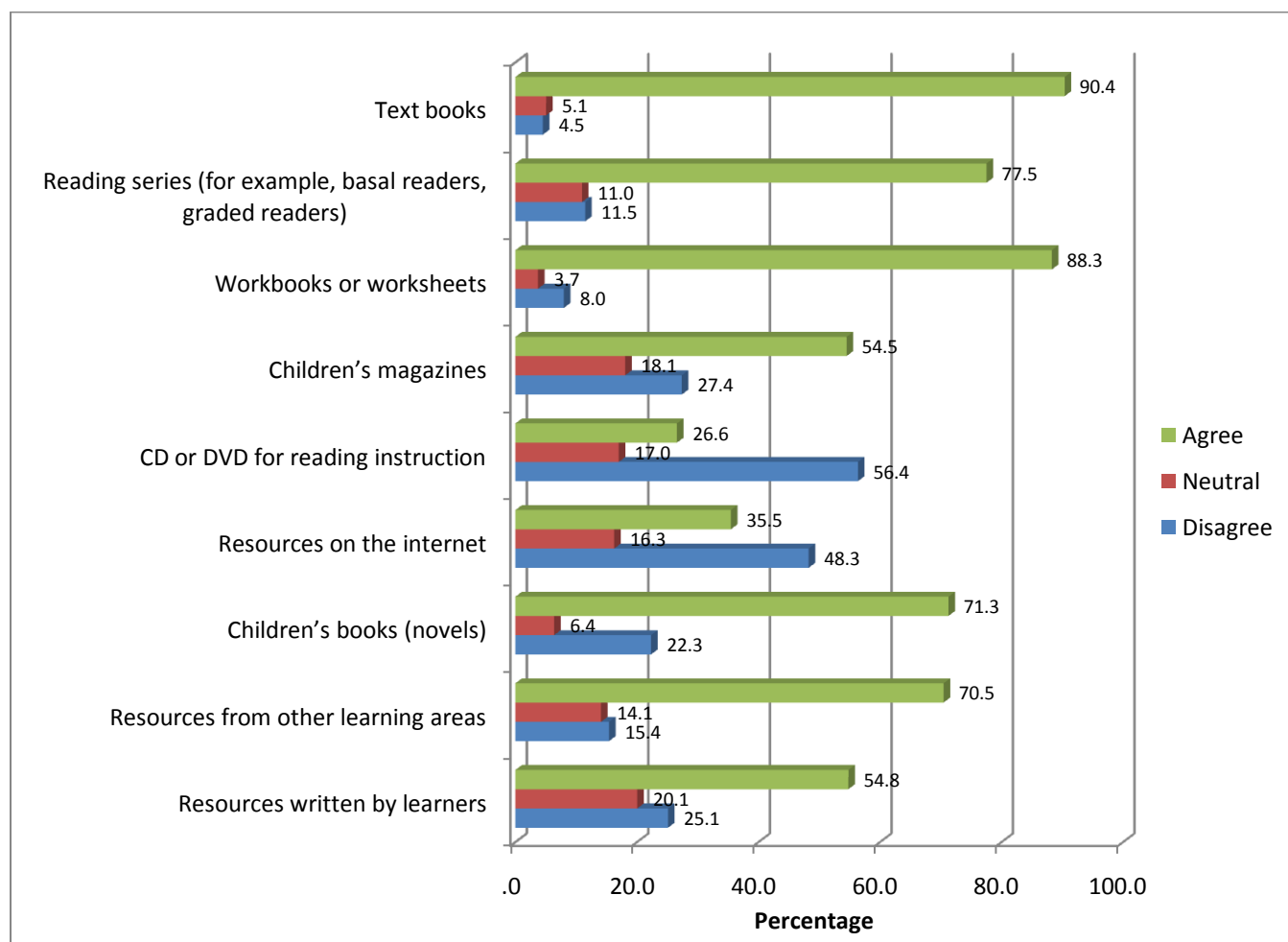


Figure 4.16 shows that 90.4% of the respondents agreed that text books were used during reading instruction. 77.5% agreed that basal and graded readers were used. 88.3% of respondents used workbooks or worksheets, while 54.5% used children's magazines. 26.6% agreed that CD's or DVD's for reading instruction was used for reading, while 56.4% disagreed. 35.5% of the respondents agreed that resources on the internet were used, while 48.3% disagreed. 71.3% used children's books as resources to improve reading and 22.3% disagreed. 70.5% of the respondents used resources from other learning areas and 54.8% used resources written by learners. It

is noted that electronic and web-based media are not used as much as the more tangible material resources.

There is a strong emphasis on using printed resources, such as textbooks (90.4%), reading series (77.5%) and worksheets (88.3%).

Figure 4.17 Outputs of other factors that referred to resources (Q.27)

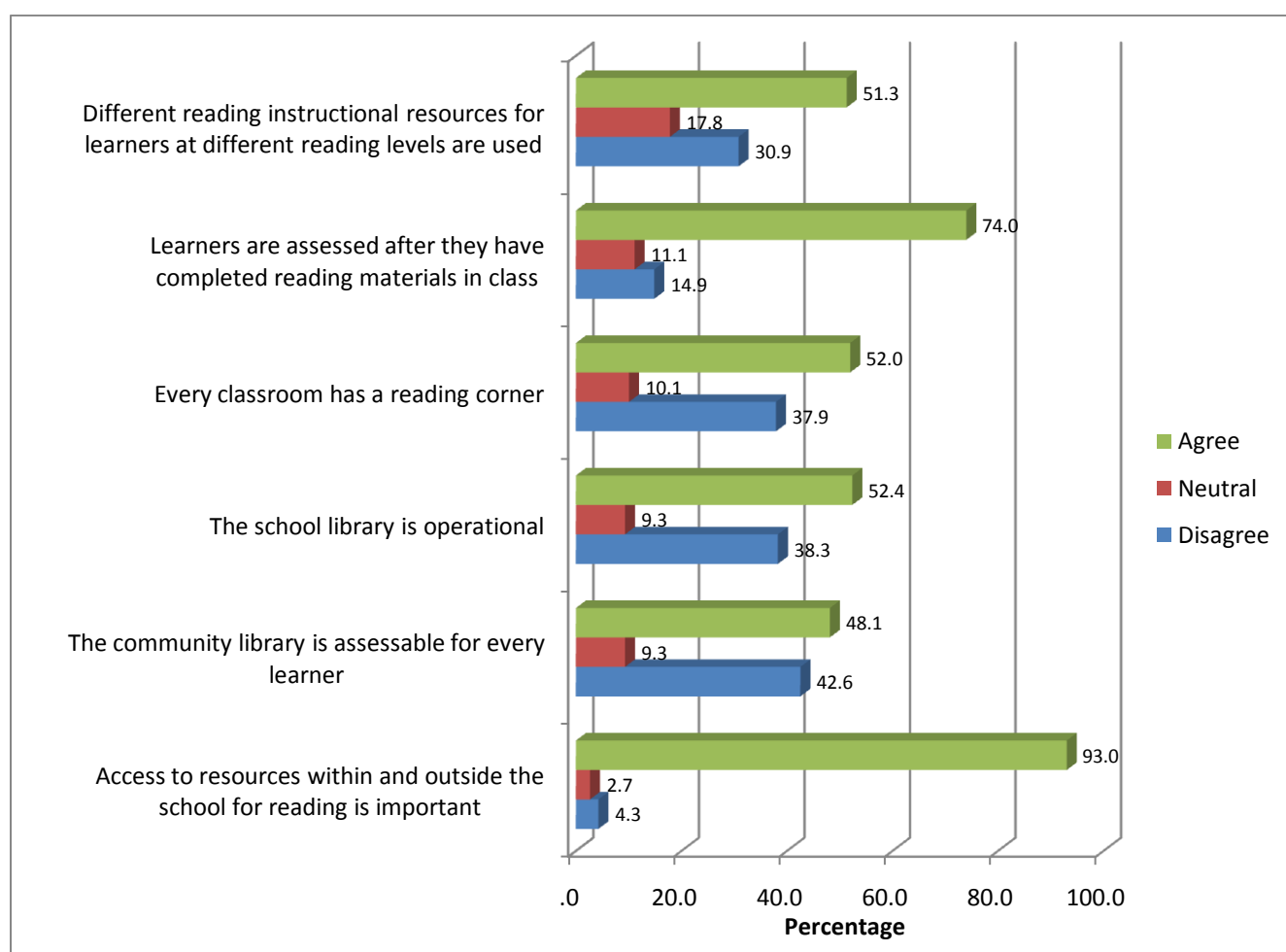


Figure 4.17 indicates the following output of other factors that referred to resources: 51.3% of the respondents agreed that different reading instructional resources for learners at different reading levels are used and 30.9% disagreed. 74% agreed that learners are assessed after they have completed reading materials in class. 52.4% of the respondents agreed that the school library is operational, while 38.3% disagreed. Operational libraries refer to libraries that have sufficient books and personnel to conduct the borrowing and returning of books. 48.1% agreed that the

community library is accessible to every learner and 42.6% disagreed. 93% agreed that access to resources within and outside the school for reading is important. There was a high level of agreement (93.0%) for access to resources outside of the school environment, and a slightly lower level of agreement (74.0%) regarding the assessment of learners. It is anticipated that every school should assess, monitor and capture the learners' progress and achievement in the key areas of reading and writing (DoE, 2008:7).

Most of the other statements had agreement levels at around 50%, with varying levels of disagreement. According to The National Reading Strategy (2008:4), South Africa faces many challenges in promoting literacy. It is uncommon to find schools with fully-fledged libraries. Numerous homes have no books or valuable reading literature. Books in African languages are rare, and learners do not have the opportunity to read in their home language. A number of classrooms have no books, and even those classes which do have sets of readers, often have them at an inadequate level.

## **SECTION F**

### **4.2.6 SYSTEMS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

This section focussed on local and national management systems that monitor the quality of education insofar as they relate to reading, teaching and learning generally.



Figure 4.18: Management systems that control quality in reading (Q.33)

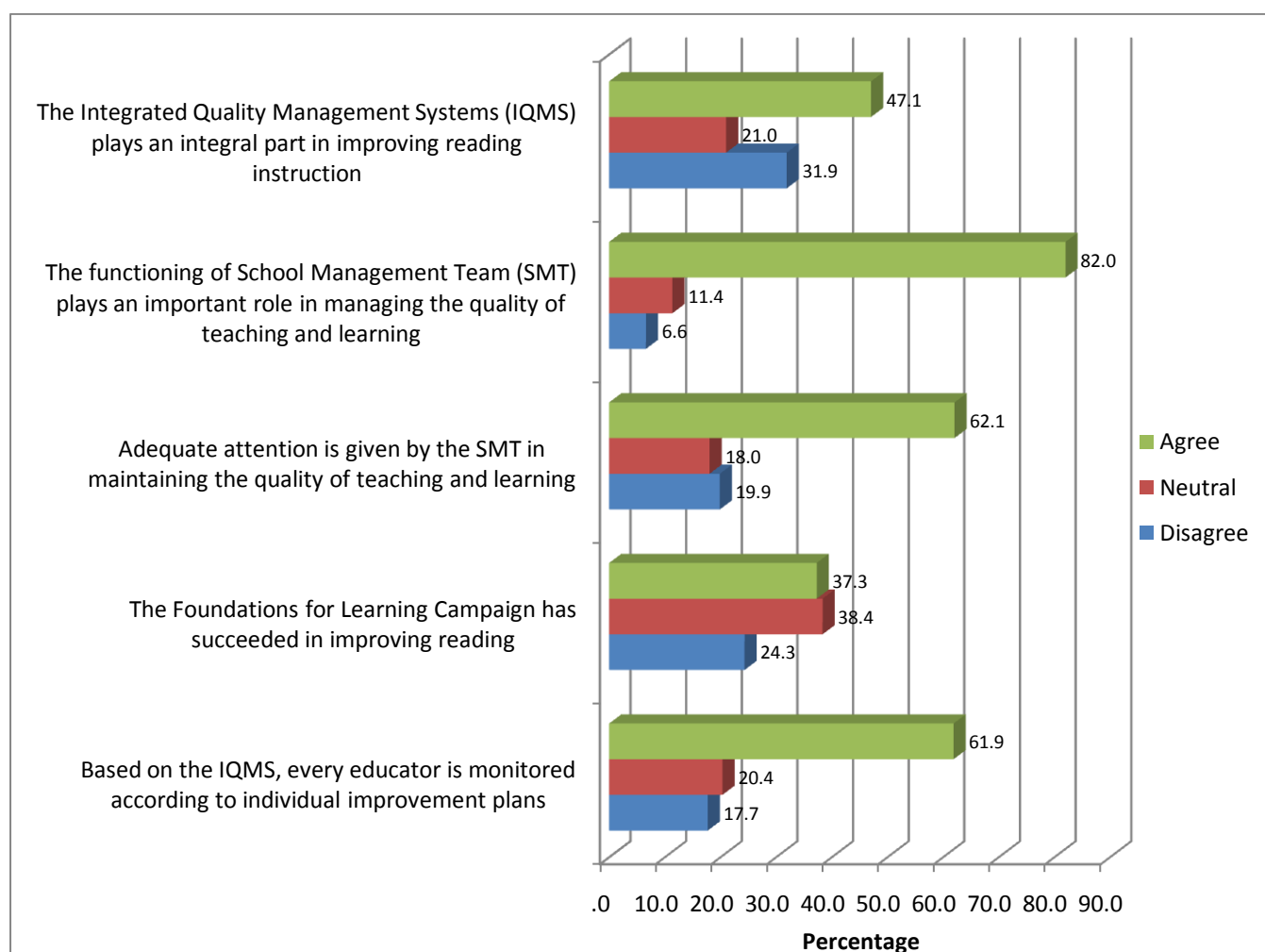


Figure 4.18 shows the responses relating to management systems that control quality in reading. 47.1% of the respondents agreed that IQMS is important in improving reading instruction, while 31.9% disagreed. 82% agreed that school management teams are integral to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. 62.1% agreed that the SMT maintains the quality of teaching and learning in schools and 19.9% disagreed. 18% of the respondents remained neutral. 37.3% of the respondents agreed that the campaign for improving reading in schools has been successful, 24.3% disagreed, while 38.4% remained neutral. According to the results, 61.9% of the respondents agreed that every educator is monitored according to individual improvement plans based on IQMS, 17.7% disagreed and 20.4% remained neutral. There is a high level of agreement to statement two. The middle three statements ranged between 47.1 and 62.1%, with the lowest score of 37.3% being statement four. Although there are many management systems in place, there

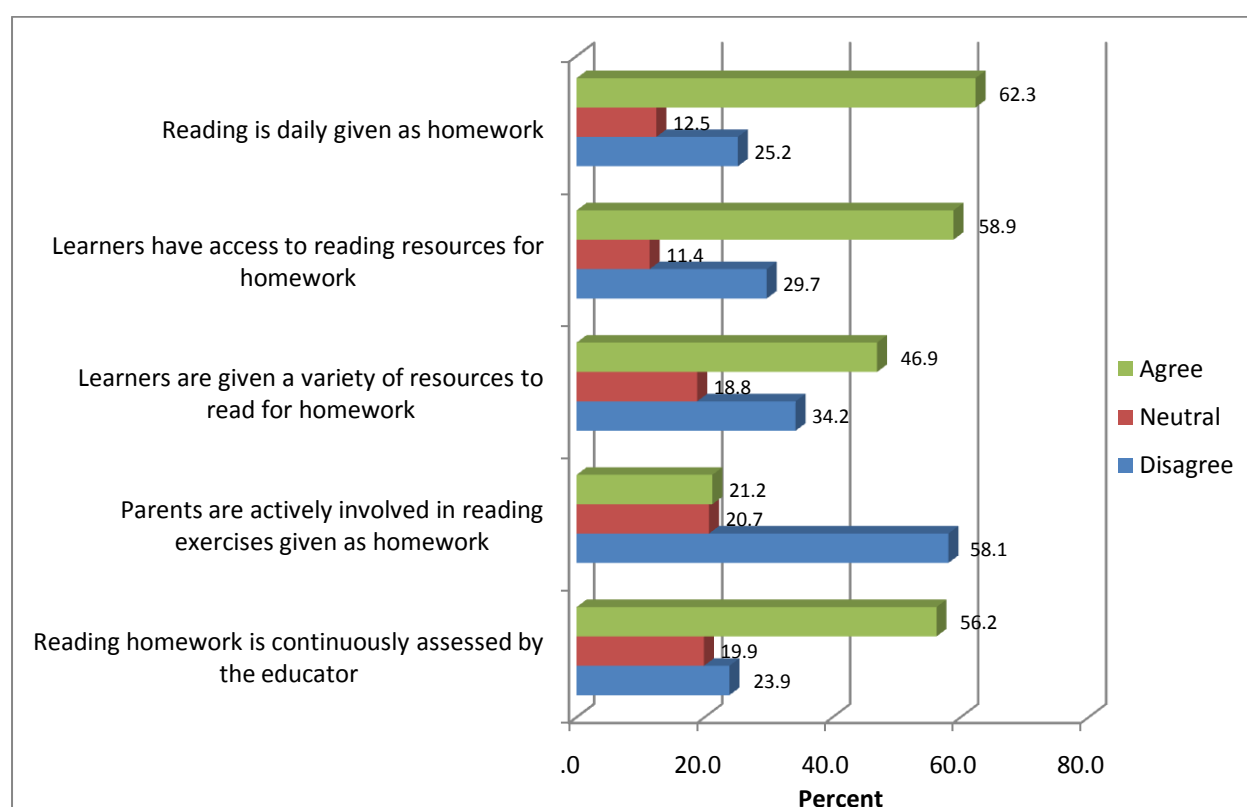
is very little recorded on the improvement of quality in reading in the intermediate phase.

## SECTION G

### 4.2.7 HOMEWORK

This section was concerned with reading as a homework activity and resources related to homework. Figure 4.19 shows the results.

Figure 4.19: Reading as a homework activity (Q.38)



62.3% of the respondents agreed that reading was given as homework daily and 25.2% disagreed. 58.9% agreed that learners have access to reading resources for homework and 29.7% disagreed. The results indicate that 46.9% of the respondents agreed that learners are given a variety of resources to read for homework. However, 34.2% disagreed. 21.2% agreed that parents are actively involved with reading as a homework activity, while 58.1% disagreed and 20.7% remained neutral. 56.2% agreed that reading homework is continuously assessed by the educator, 23.9% disagreed and 19.9% remained neutral. Most respondents gave their learners

reading as homework which was assessed. This was done using some sort of resource.

The majority of respondents indicated that parents were not actively involved with reading homework exercises. A significant number of educators assessed reading homework. It is important to note, however, that 29.7% of learners do not have access to reading resources. According to Linnakyla *et al.* (2004:239), although the learners' socio-economic status could not be changed, parents of low literacy achievers should form a home-school partnership that is positive and in terms of which parents could become more involved in their children's lives.

#### **4.3.1 CRONBACH'S ALPHA (SPSS ver. 17.0 from the help menu)**

Reliability refers to the property of a measurement instrument that causes it to give similar results for similar inputs. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of reliability. More specifically, alpha is a lower boundary limit for the true reliability of the survey. Mathematically, reliability is defined as the proportion of the variability in the responses to the survey that is the result of differences in the respondents. That is, answers to a reliable survey will differ because respondents have different opinions, not because the survey is confusing or has multiple interpretations. The computation of Cronbach's alpha is based on the number of items on the survey ( $k$ ) and the ratio of the average inter-item covariance to the average item variance.

$$\alpha = \frac{k(\text{cov/var})}{1 + (k - 1) (\text{cov/var})}$$

Under the assumption that the item variances are all equal, this ratio simplifies to the average inter-item correlation, and the result is known as the Standardized item alpha (or Spearman-Brown stepped-up reliability coefficient).

$$\alpha = \frac{kr}{1 + (k - 1) r}$$

Notice that the Standardized item alpha is computed only if inter-item statistics are specified. And remember, the coefficient of 0.921 reported for these items is an

estimate of the true alpha, which in turn is a lower boundary limit for the true reliability.

#### 4.3.2 CRONBACH'S ALPHA (Introduction to SAS.UCLA)

Cronbach's alpha measures how well a set of items (or variables) measures a single unidimensional latent construct. When data have a multidimensional structure, Cronbach's alpha will usually be low. Technically speaking, Cronbach's alpha is not a statistical test - it is a coefficient of reliability (or consistency).

Cronbach's alpha can be written as a function of the number of test items and the average inter-correlation among the items. Below, for conceptual purposes, we show the formula for the standardized Cronbach's alpha:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{v + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Here N is equal to the number of items, c-bar is the average inter-item covariance among the items and v-bar equals the average variance.

One can see from this formula that if you increase the number of items, you increase Cronbach's alpha. Additionally, if the average inter-item correlation is low, alpha will be low. As the average inter-item correlation increases, Cronbach's alpha increases as well.

This makes sense intuitively - if the inter-item correlations are high, then there is evidence that the items are measuring the same underlying construct. This is really what is meant when someone says they have "high" or "good" reliability. They are referring to how well their items measure a single uni-dimensional latent construct.

Thus, if you have multi-dimensional data, Cronbach's alpha will generally be low for all items. In this case, run a factor analysis to see which items load highest on which dimensions, and then take the alpha of each subset of items separately.

#### 4.4 RELIABILITY

Reliability is computed by taking several measurements on the same subjects. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered as "acceptable".

The results are presented below. Section A represented the Demographic Data.

Section	Cronbach's Alpha
B. Questions 9-17	.671
C. Questions 18-19	.803
D. Questions 20-25	.831

E. Questions 26-32	.875
F. Questions 33-37	.769
G. Questions 38-42	.854
<b>Overall</b>	<b>.906</b>

The overall reliability score of 0.906 indicates a high degree of acceptable, consistent scoring for the different categories for this research. All of the categories have (high), acceptable reliability values.

#### 4.5 SUMMARY

On conducting an analysis of the data, conclusions are inevitable.

The biographical data revealed that there are mostly female educators in South Africa. The National Teacher Education Audit (1995) indicated many educators in South Africa were under qualified or unqualified. There were a significant number of educators that received no training in teaching reading and 58% of the respondents indicated that they did not attend workshops in teaching reading regularly. Many educators encounter between 41-60 learners in their classes.

The results of a study conducted by the Department of Education (DoE) of South Africa in 2003, to determine the literacy levels among grade 3 learners, indicated that 61% of learners cannot read and write at their appropriate age levels and that up to 18.5% learners in some provinces had to repeat grade three. (Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), University of Pretoria, 2006:8),

The factors that impacted on reading were single parenthood, lack of early childhood development, health care, unemployed and housing. Learners from lower socio-economic backgrounds and big families indicated low literacy achievements.

A significant number of respondents agreed that a few learners experience difficulties comprehending the language of instruction. The results revealed that second language learners experienced reading problems. Certain practices are consistent with the literature review while other results revealed otherwise.

The lack of exposure to reading resources and lack of facilities for early childhood development also effected learners reading ability. Other factors, for example, discrepancies in the supplies for schools, particularly for black learners and inequalities in the accessibility of educational support services and the lack of available teaching support and equipment, affected reading achievements.

The results revealed that many learners required corrective teaching in reading but were unable to receive corrective teaching because of time constraints. Furthermore, professional remedial educators who work with learners away from the classroom and resources available for learners with reading difficulties, does not exist in South African schools. Learners with special needs and severe reading problems are incorporated into the mainstream and educators do not have the assistance of support educators. This is termed inclusive education. The respondents indicated that there was insufficient time to successfully teach the Learning Outcomes that underpin reading and writing.

Despite the poor performance in the Annual National Assessment (ANA), no remedial measures seem to be implemented.

The respondents indicated that the method of scaffolding is important, but it is not being applied during reading.

Results indicate that electronic and web-based media are not used as much as the more tangible material resources. It was noted that prominence was given to printed resources such as textbooks, reading series and worksheets. However, it is also significant to notes that many schools do not have fully fledged libraries and countless homes have no books or valuable reading literature.

The respondents agreed that IQMS is important in improving reading instruction and that school management teams are integral in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The outcome of the questionnaire indicated that parents were not actively involved with reading homework exercises and a significant number of educators assessed reading homework.

The literature review indicates that quality systems are integral to the improvement of reading at schools. There is an emphasis on the importance of personnel and other

resources to improve the reading of learners who experience difficulty with reading. Evidently parents need to play a more supportive role with the school to improve reading literacy. This situation shows the need for strategies that can be implemented to improve the quality of reading at schools.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

A significant number of learners experience deficiencies in reading skills. The government in South Africa has taken significant steps towards making education from grade R available to all learners irrespective of their religion, socio-economic status and political associations

In South Africa, there are 11 different official languages. English, as a first language, is spoken by less than 10% of the population (Howie *et al.* 2008:552) and is one of the most frequently used languages by schools. South African learners have participated in numerous international assessment programmes in the last ten years and have performed poorly. Examples of such programmes include SACMEQ, PIRLS, TIMSS and ANA. The literacy levels in South Africa are declining at a time when they should be rapidly improving.

It is imperative that the reasons for the poor performance of learners (through the literature reviewed) are examined and ways to improve literacy generally in South Africa are determined. Based on the above, the researcher conducted research to investigate the quality of reading in the intermediate phase of schooling. The conclusions from the study are presented below.

#### 5.2 Conclusions drawn from the review of related literature

##### 5.2.1 Factors that contribute to poor reading abilities

The first objective of the study was to examine factors in the education system that contributed to the poor reading abilities of learners. The following are the conclusions that were drawn from the literature that was reviewed:

- The current teacher education programme is not organized to meet the needs of the mainstream. Mainstream schools in South Africa are schools that have mainly second language learners. “*Mainstream schools are black schools in relatively poor socio-economic circumstances*” (Welch, 2008:3);



- According to the White Paper 5 on early childhood education (RSA, DoE, 2001a:1), approximately 40% of young children in South Africa are prone to under-development in poverty stricken areas. These children are neglected in these poor households and are therefore at high risk of infant death, low birth-weight, stunted growth and subsequently do not adjust to school easily. These children are often school dropouts. Such children never reach their full potential. However, with quality early childhood development (ECD), these children will acquire language skills, perception-motor skills that are required for learning to read and write, basic numeracy concepts and skills; problem-solving skills; and a love of learning. According to the ECD (R.S.A., Doe, 2001a) policy, by 2010, all learners that entered grade 1 should have participated in an accredited Reception year programme. The insufficient financial support of ECD services for Black communities (mostly rural), has impacted on learning;
- Many educators are teaching learning areas that they are not trained to teach. Although educators are teaching reading, their knowledge of reading methods is limited and deficient;
- The accessibility of educational support services and the lack of available teaching support and equipment contribute to the poor reading abilities of learners. Generally resources for quality teaching and learning are limited;
- Some of the contextual factors that many second language learners experience as barriers to learning are, socio-economic conditions, parental commitment, parents' educational achievement and the language and culture of the community. These factors may explain the lack of advancement in the areas of reading and writing;
- The literature reviewed indicated that large class sizes were a factor that impacted on reading improvement;
- Many schools do not possess fully fledged libraries. Numerous homes have no books or valuable reading literature. Books in African languages are rare, and learners do not have the opportunity to read in their home language;
- Learners are taught reading skills in the junior primary phase. In the intermediate phase, learners are not explicitly taught reading skills but acquire

them tacitly (Rose, 2006:4). These learners whose reading and writing skills in the foundation phase were not mastered, experience difficulty in reading;

- African learners in South Africa who are Zulu-speaking and are entering grade one; have modest vocabulary and knowledge to function in the foundation phase, because most often they are not exposed to the English language at home; and

Educators in other countries, for example, England, New Zealand and the Netherlands indicated that support educators were available all the time to assist with learners with reading difficulty. In South Africa, educators do not have the assistance of support educators as learners with special needs are incorporated into the mainstream. This is termed 'inclusive education'.

### **5.2.2 Organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa**

The second objective was to examine organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa insofar as they impacted on reading.

Umalusi is a statutory organization which sets and monitors standards for general education and training in South Africa with the purpose of continually enhancing the quality of training (DoE, Umalusi-Council For Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, 2008:1). The quality of teacher education is generally poor, unproductive and cost-ineffective (Teacher Education in South Africa, 2005:3).

The following are the conclusions that were drawn after the review of literature based on management systems monitoring the quality of education:

- School Management Teams (SMT) and the Staff Development Team (SDT) work together to ensure that all staff members are trained on all aspects of IQMS;
- The SDT coordinates staff development programmes and offers guidance when necessary (ELRC, 2003:17);

- The National Policy Framework on Teacher Education and Development (DoE: 2007) linked with the Continuous Professional Teacher Development (September: 2010) monitors the quality of teachers in the system;
- The overall responsibility of IQMS rests with the district/local office;
- The district/local office moderates the evaluation results of schools and captures and processes the results in order to facilitate the successful implementation of salary and grade progression (ELRC, 2003:19); and
- The district/local offices need to ensure that IQMS is conducted on an ongoing basis to ensure quality of teaching and learning in schools.

### **5.2.3 Strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading**

The third objective was to examine strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading. The following are the conclusions that were established after reviewing related literature:

- Specialist educators should be consulted or employed to assist with learners with reading difficulties. These educators have the knowledge and experience to deal with learners with reading complications;
- It is important to continuously integrate the five components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension) into the daily reading instruction programme (Meier and Freck, 2005:1);
- Reading texts should be graded according to the learners' abilities and age levels (Drummond, 2005:1). In this way the reading material is meaningful and appropriate to the learners' acquisition of knowledge;
- Scaffolding, as a methodology for teaching reading, encourages all learners to do similar high level tasks through repeated practice, and the scaffolding support is progressively removed as learners acquire the skills of learning without the assistance of an educator. According to Culican, Rose and McKusker (2004:57), scaffolding is a pedagogy which offers a widespread approach to literacy that confront the 'remediation ethos' and provides mainstream educators with the knowledge required to teach quality reading and writing with an influential set of strategies that deal with the needs of all

learners included in the background of standard classroom instruction practice;

- Learners should be able to recognise categories of language patterns during their reading of texts and apply these language patterns in their writing. In this way language is learnt in meaningful contexts (Martin and Rose, 2007:4);
- Previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning, guessing from context and paraphrasing assist learners to read more speedily and efficiently (NCLRC, 2004);
- Learners develop their oral language skills through story-telling and show and tell activities; and
- Using the keyword as a memorization strategy (mnemonic) is an effective technique where learners select the central idea of a passage and summarize it as a 'keyword' (Wright, 2001:28-29).

### **5.3 Conclusions drawn from the empirical study**

#### **5.3.1 Factors that contributed to poor reading abilities**

- The results of the questionnaire indicated that the respondents that possessed a Bachelor's degree reflect only a small demographic area of the country compared to the national audit which reflects otherwise. Many educators in South Africa are under qualified or unqualified (National Teacher Education Audit, 1995);
- According to the findings from the empirical study, there were a significant number of educators that received no training in teaching reading and a majority of the respondents indicated that they did not regularly attend workshops in teaching reading. According to Rose (2006:3), most educators have received no previous training in teaching reading;
- The findings from the study also indicated that electronic and web-based media are not used as much as the more tangible material resources.
- The findings from the study indicated that the socio-economic factors that impact on reading literacy were early childhood education, healthcare, unemployment and housing. According to Linnakyla *et al.* (2004:239), lower

socio-economic backgrounds, big families, and single-parent families indicated low literacy achievements;

- The findings further confirmed that large class sizes were indications of poor reading ability. Parents of learners in South Africa blame large class sizes as the reason for their children not receiving individual attention and they are forced to seek extra tuition for them (Daily News,13 August, 2009:1);
- A majority of the respondents indicated that most of the learners in their classes were second language learners. A significant number of respondents agreed that a few learners experience difficulties comprehending the language of instruction. The results revealed that second language learners experienced reading problems. Certain practices are consistent with the literature review while other results revealed otherwise; and
- The respondents in the survey indicated that a majority of the learners required corrective teaching in reading and that learners are unable to receive corrective teaching in reading. This was due owing to time constraints and the lack of assistance of support educators.

### **5.3.2 Organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa**

- There has been little or no progress in continuous professional teacher development to ensure qualitative teacher development;
- Despite the poor performance in the Annual National Assessment (ANA), no remedial measures seem to be implemented;
- The respondents agreed that IQMS is important in improving reading instruction;
- The majority of respondents agreed that school management teams are integral in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and that the SMT's are maintaining the quality of teaching and learning in schools;
- A significant number of respondents agreed that the campaign for improving reading in schools has been successful;
- A significant number of the respondents agreed that every educator is monitored according to individual improvement plans based on IQMS. However, although various quality and management mechanisms are

mentioned above, the quality of reading in the intermediate phase is not measured.

### **5.3.3 Strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading**

- The majority of respondents prefer teaching reading as a whole class activity, whilst a significant number of the respondents indicated that learners of the same abilities are grouped together for the teaching of reading. Many respondents agreed that mixed ability groups are also created;
- “Read aloud” as a reading strategy was very popular and a significant number of the respondents allowed learners to read aloud in small groups;
- The majority of respondents allowed learners to read silently. Several of the respondents agreed that they allowed learners to read books of their own choice as a reading strategy;
- A significant number of the respondents applied skimming, scanning and self-monitoring methods, while
- the majority of the respondents taught learning strategies involving decoding sounds and words;
- Most of the respondents taught learners new vocabulary during reading instruction time and it was unanimously agreed that educators assisted learners with learning new vocabulary from the text they were reading;
- It was concluded that “guided reading” constituted a significant segment of the reading process;
- Reading specialists were not available to assist learners with reading difficulty or learners that required remedial reading teaching. On average, there were no specialist personnel or resources available for learners with reading difficulties;
- The respondents agreed that the method of scaffolding is important, but it is not being applied during reading;
- The majority of the respondents agreed that frequent television viewing does not develop reading and comprehension skills, and that access to resources beyond the learners’ reading ability cannot develop reading and comprehension capability. Learners reading and learning without educator

supervision does not contribute to the development of reading and comprehension skills. A significant number of respondents concluded that interaction with facebook did not develop the skills necessary for improving reading and comprehension skills. It is noted that electronic and web-based media (internet, cd's and dvd's) are not used as much as the more tangible material resources (textbooks, worksheets and magazines);

- The respondents agreed that access to resources within and outside the school for reading is important. There was a low level of agreement that each classroom had a reading corner or that the school or municipal library was fully operational;
- The majority of the respondents indicated that learners reading as a homework activity was assessed; and
- A significant number of respondents indicated that parents were not actively involved with reading homework exercises.

#### **5.3.4 Diagrammatic Representation of the results from the field study**

The following diagram represents the finding from the field study. The factors that contributed to poor reading abilities, organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa, and the strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading are examined in Figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1 Results from the Field Study**

**FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTED TO**

**POOR READING ABILITIES**

- Educators are unqualified or under qualified
- IQMS is important for improving the reading abilities of learners
- Educators lack knowledge of teaching reading
- Educators did not attend reading workshops regularly
- Educators use tangible resources more often than innovative new technology (electronic and web-based media)
- ECD, healthcare, unemployment and housing impact on reading quality
- Large class sizes
- The majority of learners are second language learners
- Learners experience difficulties comprehending the language of instruction
- The majority of learners require corrective teaching in reading
- A lack of remedial educators and specialists educators to correct reading difficulties

**ORGANISATIONS AND MANAGEMENT**

**SYSTEMS THAT MONITOR THE QUALITY**

**OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

- Little or no progress regarding continuous professional teacher development
- No progress in remedial measures for poor performance in ANA
- SMT's play an important role in schools for monitoring quality in education
- SMT's are monitoring quality teaching and learning in schools
- Every educator is monitored according to individual improvement plans based on IQMS

**STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF**

**INTERMEDIATE PHASE READING**

- Educators should teach reading as a whole class activity
- Mixed ability groups and same ability groups should also be created
- 'read aloud' among learners should be practised regularly
- Learners should read books of their own choice
- Skimming, scanning, decoding and developing new vocabulary should be applied as reading techniques.
- Reading specialists are not made available to assist learners with reading difficulties
- Scaffolding is an important strategy in reading that should be implemented
- Frequent television viewing does not improve reading and comprehension skills and therefore should be avoided
- Reading and learning without teacher supervision is not successful
- Interaction with face-book does not develop reading
- Electronic and web- based media are not used as compared to more tangible resources (textbooks, worksheets)
- Not every class has a library corner; therefore library corners should be established
- Not all school or municipal libraries are operational
- Reading as a homework activity should be assessed
- Parents should be more actively involved with homework or schools in general

**RESULTS  
FROM THE  
FIELD STUDY**



## **General Conclusions**

### **5.4 Summary of conclusions**

It can be concluded from the findings of the empirical study and the literature reviewed that a significant number of intermediate phase learners experience reading difficulties. These difficulties impact on the quality of reading. The majority of the respondents have no experience in teaching reading, but, engage in teaching reading. Educators have indicated that they are not workshopped in the teaching of reading. Resources for reading are limited. Owing to time constraints and the lack of specialised personnel, remedial teaching is limited. There are common deficiencies in schools and poor quality practices regarding the teaching of reading. These factors impact negatively on the quality of reading in the intermediate phase. Since English is not the most frequently spoken language at home, the acquisition, mastery and learning of a second language is a reality for the majority of learners in South Africa (Howie *et al.* 2008: 553).

### **5.5 Recommendations**

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made in respect of each of the objectives of the study:

#### **5.5.1 Factors that contribute to poor reading abilities**

- It is imperative to ensure that learners in the entry level of school are taught in the mother tongue and gradually introduced to English: English as a first language is spoken by less than 10% of the population (Howie *et al* 2008:552) and is one of the most frequently used language by schools (the other being Afrikaans);
- It is recommended that management and educators at schools elicit the assistance of the corporate world which plays an important role in acquiring teaching resources. These can be made available by means of sponsorships. For example, reading resources, computers, etc. and
- Library books written in isiZulu with English translations are needed at the intermediate phase of schooling to improve learners' ability to read and comprehend.

- There is a need for the training of more grade R and junior primary educators. According to Professor Wally Morrow at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (2007) only 5.3% of educators registered for IPET are Foundation Phase African students;
- More educators need to be trained to close the gap that exists in the education system (HSRC:2012);
- Educators should invest in the use of Dvd's and Cd's to improve their teaching approach. These resources encourage reading for fun. The use of electronic and web-based media is also recommended.
- Educators need to introduce more visual resources to enhance learning and especially reading;
- Reading resources and facilities for early childhood development need to be easily accessible; and
- The socio-economic needs of learners should be met through school/department nutrition programmes and non-fee paying schools to ensure cognitive progress. This will decrease the school drop-out rate and increase social inclusion (peer and school pressure) in schools. School uniforms and stationery should be made available to learners who are poverty stricken.

### **5.5.2 Organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of education in South Africa**

- Recent reports indicate an essential need to reopen colleges of education where significant focus is placed on holistic educator training (Steven Tau, 2012).
- It is also imperative that institutions install quality mechanisms to meet the requirements of educators where the teaching of reading is concerned;
- The majority of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated that most of their learners were second language learners;
- The introduction of educator training in isiZulu for educational purposes is recommended;

- It is recommended that an internal questionnaire to suit the requirements and expectations of educators regarding the improvement of the quality of reading be generated. In this way the school as an organisation will be able to evaluate its performance and support educators with effective monitoring and mentoring programmes. Progress made can be recorded for department inspection;
- Provide incentives for professional development by awarding points associated with career paths or promotion to senior teacher level for further studies and participation in professional meetings, inter-school teamwork and seminars. Performance-related pay has been also introduced in Portugal (Martins, 2009:16);
- Discuss specific issues (needs) or problem areas in schools with learning area managers from the department of education to remedy the challenges that schools face;
- School libraries need to be reinstated in areas where they have collapsed;
- Representatives from the DoE should undertake to workshop educators on the instruments used in measuring learners' progress;
- The DoE needs to re-examine the non-teaching and administration duties that burden educators. The collation of learners' results and the accountability processes take up more time than educators' commitment to the curriculum;
- There is a need to examine the number of learning areas taught in junior primary as learners' experience great difficulty adapting to ten learning areas in the intermediate phase as compared to about three in the junior primary phase; and
- Adult-based literacy programmes are becoming more necessary as many learners who experience reading difficulties come from homes where the parent is unable to assist in reading activities owing to the fact that the parent is illiterate.

### 5.5.3 Strategies to improve the quality of intermediate phase reading

- Parents need to play a more active role in the learners' lives. An amicable relationship between parents and the school is advised;
- Schools, as education based institutions, should evaluate its contribution within the wider community in which it operates and serves, and enhance the quality of learning in that area in an academic programme;
- There is a considerable need to introduce guidance counsellors in schools based on significant observation in the research conducted that learners from single parent homes, lower socio-economic backgrounds and big families indicated low literacy achievements. These guidance counsellors are specialised educators who are able to professionally assist learners with the afore mentioned difficulties and enable them to cope with everyday learning despite their inhibitions;
- Educators who indicated that they engaged in 'read aloud' represent only a small demographic area. According to research done by Condry *et al.*, (2010: 269-270), learners rarely witness educators reading. It is recommended that educators engage in 'read aloud' activities as often as possible;
- South Africa learners with special needs and severe reading problems are engaged with the help of specialists' educators who work with learners away from the usual classroom. This support for at-risk learners should be conducted in a structured programme. This facility will enable educators to measure improvement in learners and reflect on their current practices with a view of improving all learners' reading abilities;
- It is also recommended that extra time be allotted to the teaching of English and related aspects. For example, reading and reviewing, language, writing, listening and speaking;
- More educators need to be trained to close the gap that exists in the education system;
- Educators need to pay attention to developing the critical thinking of learners in reading and not only in their ability to decode words. Learner should be able to present opinions on what they read;

- The half-hour compulsory reading time in schools need to be closely monitored as educators may use this time to 'catch up' with administration work, collection of school fees or other non-literacy work;
- The teaching of language aspects should be in meaningful context. Educators often teach them as structural constituents (verbs, nouns homonyms, homophones, idioms, et cetera);
- There is a need for the intermediate phase educators to work closely with foundation phase educators, especially in phonics, decoding skills and syllabification. Some learners are unable to apply the prior knowledge gained in the foundation phase to the intermediate phase curriculum;
- Educators teaching in the intermediate phase should meet informally every week to discuss common problems with reading and ways to improve reading at their school level;
- In the absence of specialised remedial educators, the school management team could appeal to retired educators to assist the school once or twice a week with learners identified as having severe reading problems;
- There is a need for more support from learning areas advisors in the interpretation and implementation of the curriculum. 'Model reading lessons' and 'scrutiny or observation' of education lessons discouraged educators experiencing problems relating to the curriculum;
- Homework should not be imposed on learners, but, rather have added value. The homework must be monitored as an important part of the curriculum, and
- A bibliography guide to reading resources recommended for grades R to grades 9 should be disseminated to schools. These should include fiction, non-fiction, drama and poetry guidelines.

#### **5.5.4 Diagrammatic Representation of recommendations for the study**

The following is a diagrammatic representation of the recommendations for the study. All stakeholders (home, educators, the department of education and school management teams) involved in improving reading quality have been included in Figure 5.2.

**Figure 5.2 Improving Reading Quality-Accountability of all stakeholders**

## EDUCATORS

## HOME

- Parents to play an active role in education
- Monitor homework of learners seriously
- Engage in adult literacy courses if necessary
- Liaise with educators to discuss learners' progress
- Volunteer at schools

- Develop learners who are critical thinkers
- Use the half-hour compulsory reading time constructively
- Teach aspects of language in context
- Work in close collaboration with foundation phase educators
- Meet informally weekly to discuss common difficulties
- Use visual aids
- Use dvd's and cd's
- Engage learners in meaningful homework exercises
- Develop learners comprehension ability
- Educator to do 'read aloud' often

## IMPROVING READING QUALITY- ACCOUNTABILITY OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Training of more educators
- Re-open colleges of education
- Provide incentives for education
- Re-instate collapsed libraries
- Workshop educators on instruments used for learners progress
- Re-examine administration work load of educators
- Re-examine learning outcomes and assessment standards due to time constraints
- Introduce guidance counsellors
- Introduce remedial educators
- Allot extra time for literacy learning
- More support to schools for curriculum implementation

## SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMT)

- Learners to be taught if possible at entry level in mother tongue
- Reading resources in isiZulu to be available
- Diagnose reading problems of learners
- Liaise with DoE to find solutions to reading problems
- Use retired educators for remedial teaching
- Elicit assistance of corporate world for sponsorships of library book, computers, etc.
- Monitor educators regularly

## 5.6 Further Research

Areas for further research include the following:

- Review the time allocation for reading in the intermediate phase;
- Undertake a study on a larger sample of schools;
- Observe educators and school management teams in ‘action’;
- Conduct research among high-performing schools in low-income/poor social backgrounds to provide solutions for schools that perform poorly; and
- Conduct research relating to effective practices in other countries where schools are experiencing similar reading difficulties.

## 5.7 Conclusion

There is a dire need in South Africa for the nation’s learners to experience success. There is apathy in some schools to reach the most challenged learners and this, coupled with the frustration over the slow pace of change, creates a sense of urgency. Hence, it is inevitable for researchers and organizations to intervene in various ways to overcome obstacles to academic success.

One such response from education is the ‘turnaround’ model. Evidently, it is a dramatic operation to close a school; to release most of the educators and recruit other educators; to resign the school to an external organization hopeful of improved results; to offer financial incentives for elevating the test results; or bring in innovative leadership charged with producing the desired results. For learners experiencing difficulty with poverty and structural racism, there are no immediate solutions. However, while sophisticated solutions may generate a sense of relief that action is under way, they have not fashioned turnarounds that are effective in the long-term.

For educators, the primary means of interacting with learners involves engaging learners in classroom activities by means of questions. A minority of learners are consistently able to achieve success and respond positively in assessment tasks. A group of learners are able to do the aforementioned, but achieve average success. There is a third group of learners who rarely respond, are unable to understand or

answer questions and are more often than not unsuccessful in assessments and any task set. According to Rose (2005:133), this is the result of the moral order of the classroom which identifies learners' ability to read and understand concepts, as successful, average or unsuccessful.

Learners accept this moral order and mould their future experiences around this, creating a small profession elite group and a larger group of unskilled manual workers. As a result of the failure of educational outcomes to keep in line with social and economic changes in South Africa, the focus has been directed to literacy in schools. It is therefore important to teach learners reading skills explicitly at any stage of the curriculum instead of leaving learners to acquire these skills tacitly.

Skilled readers recognise words by visually processing letter patterns, while learners with reading difficulty frequently struggle to sound out words letter-by-letter. Experienced readers read with meaning whereas learners with reading difficulty cannot read with comprehension. Therefore, in order for all learners to be able to react to the environment they live in, reading and understanding what is read is vital to their progress in life in general.

In South Africa there are organizations and management systems that monitor the quality of reading. South Africa has participated internationally in PIRLS and performed badly. The results of learners, who participated in the Annual National Assessments conducted in the junior primary and intermediate phase of teaching, reveal that learners continue to experience difficulty in reading. Monitoring of the quality of reading has to be an ongoing activity. Progress in national and international reading literacy assessments is vital for the morale of learners and of the country.

In conclusion, it is vital to reiterate that the most important constituent of high quality education is literacy. Without the ability to read, people are denied access to significant information that impact on their lives. Illiteracy in South Africa is an entrenched social phenomenon and is intimidating the transformation and development of our country. It is the duty of every literate adult to encourage and motivate learners to read so that the value of reading can be appreciated and more people can become lifelong readers.



## REFERENCES

### PUBLISHED BOOKS

- Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C. and Sorensen, C. 2010. *Introduction to Research in Education*. USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Barr, A. 2006. *A Descriptive Study of Reading Studies for Secondary Education in Minnesota Public Schools*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. American Psychological Association.
- Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Lewis, P.A., Saunders, M. and Thornhill, A. 2008. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Phelps, R., Fisher, K. and Ellis, A. (2007). *Organizing and Managing Your Research: A Practical Guide for Postgraduates*. London: Sage.

### DISSERTATIONS AND THESIS

- Letsoalo, T.J. 2009. *The Implemetation of the Integrated Quality Management as an instrument of performance management in Lebowakgomo Circuit Limpopo Province*. Master of Public Administration Dissertation, University of Limpopo.
- Rabichund, S. 2011. *The contribution of the Integrated Quality Management System to whole school development*. Doctorate in Education. University of South Africa.

### JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS

- Acevedo, C. and Rose, D. 2007. Reading and (writing) to learn in the middle years of schooling. *Primary English Teaching Association (PETA)*. 1(8): 32-45.
- Admiraal, W., Westhoff, G. and de Bot, K. 2006. Evaluation of bilingual secondary education in the Netherlands: Students' language proficiency in English. *Educational Research and Evaluation*. 12 (1): 75-93.

- Colorado, C. 2007. Improving writing skills. ELLs and the joy of writing. Available at <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/14539/>
- Condy, J. 2008. The development of an enabling self-administered questionnaire for enhancing reading teachers' professional pedagogical insights. *South African Journal of Education*. 28: 609-624.
- Condy, J., Chigona, A., Chetty, R. and Thornhill, C. 2010. Final year teacher training students' perception of THRASS. *South African Journal of Education*. 30: 261-275.
- De Clerq, F. 2008. Teacher Quality, Appraisal and Development: The Flaws in the IQMS. *Perspectives in Education*. 26(1) :7-18.
- Fisher, D. 2008. Struggling adolescent readers. *Proquest Educational Journals*. 35(3): 36-37.
- Fisher, D. and Frey, N. (2008). Student and teacher perspectives on the usefulness of content-literacy strategies. *Proquest Educational Journals*. 47(4): 246-264. [On-line] Available at <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=57&sid=5&srchmode=1&vinst=PROD&f mt...> [Accessed 08-04-09].
- Gallagher, G. 2005. An examination of ethical issues pertaining to educational research. *Dublin Institute of Technology*. Issue 3: 1-28.
- Goddard, Y.L. and Sendi, C. (2008). Effects of self-monitoring on the narrative and expository writing of four fourth-grade students with learning disabilities. *Reading and Writing Quarterly*. 24(4):408-433. [On Line] Available at <http://www.informaworld.com./smpp/title-content=t713775334> [Accessed on 02-06-09].
- Golafshani, N. 2003. Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*. 8 (4): 597-607.
- Health Care Reform Survey. 2011. Willis. [http://www.willis.com/Documents/Publications/Services/Employee\\_Benefits/Health\\_Care\\_Reform\\_Survey\\_2011-2012\\_Final.pdf](http://www.willis.com/Documents/Publications/Services/Employee_Benefits/Health_Care_Reform_Survey_2011-2012_Final.pdf)

- Hopkins, D. 2008. Realising the potential of system leadership. *Improving School Leadership*. 10: 211-224.
- Howie, S.J., Venter, E., & Van Staden, S. 2008. The effect of multilingual policies on performance and progression in reading literacy in South African primary schools - Reading Achievement: International Perspectives from IEA's Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS). *Education Research and Evaluation*. 4(6): (551-560).
- Hugo, A.J., Le Roux, S.G., Muller, H. and Nel, N.M. (2005). Phonological awareness and the minimising of reading problems: A South African perspective. *Journal for Language Teaching*. 39(2): 210-225.
- ISO (International Standards Organization). 2001. Quality Management System Requirement. Module 1 :1-123.
- Komolafe, A.T. and Yara, P.O. 2010. Sentence combining strategy and primary school pupils achievement in written English in Ibadan, Nigeria. *European Journal for Scientific Research*. 40(4): 531-539. [On line] Available at [http://www.eurojournals.com/ejsr\\_40\\_4\\_06.pdf](http://www.eurojournals.com/ejsr_40_4_06.pdf)
- Lessing, A. and Mahabeer, S. D. 2007. Barriers to acquiring English reading and writing skills by Zulu-speaking foundation-phase learners. *Journal for Language Teaching*. 41(2): 139-152.
- Liao, G. 2009. *English Language Teaching*. Improvement of Speaking ability through interrelated skills. 2(3): 1-14. Available at [www.ccsenet.org/journal.html](http://www.ccsenet.org/journal.html)
- Linnakyla, P., Malin, A. and Taube, K. 2004. Factors behind low reading literacy achievement. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*. 48(3): 231-249.
- Mahurt, S.F. 2005. Writing is reading. *Indiana Reading Journal*. 37(1): 19-26.
- Martin, J.R. and Rose, D. 2007. Interacting with text: The role of dialogue in learning to read and write. *Foreign Studies Journal, Beijing. Challenges for genre based literacy approaches in EAP programs*. 4 (5): 66-80.
- Meier, C. 2011. The foundations for learning campaign: helping hand or hurdle? *South African Journal of Education*. (31)4: 1-15

- Moore, J.M. and Hart, M. (2007). Access to literacy: Scaffolded reading strategies in the South African context. *Journal for Language Teaching*. 41(1): 15-28.
- Morrow, W. 2007. What is Teachers' work? *Journal of Education*. 41(1):3-20.
- Mullis, I.V.S., Kennedy, A.M., Martin, M.O. and Sainsbury, M. 2006. Progress in reading literacy in national and international context. *International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement*. 13(1): 149-172.
- Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L. and Wynaden, D . 2001. Ethics in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*. 33(1): 93-96.
- Pang, S. Muaka, A., Bernhardt, E. and Kamil, M. 2003. Teaching reading: International Academy of Education. *Educational Practices Series*. 12: 2-23.
- Patil, M., Saraswathi, G. and Padakannaya, P. 2009. Self-esteem and adjustment among children with reading and writing difficulties. *Studies on Home and Community Science*. 3(2): 91-95.
- Pinsonneault, A. 1993. Survey Research Methodology in Management Information Systems: An Assessment. *Journal of Management Information Systems*. 10(2): 75-105.
- Pretorius, E.J . 2005. What do students do when they learn to read? Lessons from five case studies. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 19(4): 790- 812.
- Rose, D. 2005. Democratising the classroom: A literacy pedagogy for the new generation. *Journal of Education*. 37: 131-167. [On-Line] Available at [http://www.ukzn.ac.za/joe/joe issues.Htm](http://www.ukzn.ac.za/joe/joe%20issues.htm).
- Rose, D. and Acevedo, C. 2006. Closing the gap and accelerating learning in the middle years of schooling: Literacy learning in the middle years. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*. 14(2): 73-96.
- Tse, S.K., Lam, J.W.I., Lam, R.Y.H, Chan, Y.M. and Loh, E.K.Y. 2005. Attitude and attainment: A comparison of Hong Kong, Singaporean and English students' reading. *Research in Education*. 76: 74-88.
- Twist, L., Sainsbury, M., Woodthorpe , A. and Whetton, C. 2006. Measuring standards in primary English: Issues of validity and accountability with

respect to PIRLS and National Curriculum test scores. *British Educational Research Journal*. 33(6): 977-986.

Weeks, F.H. 2008. "Caring Schools" - A solution for addressing challenging behaviour in schools? *Koers: Bulletin for Christian Scholarship*. 73(1)121-144.

## REPORTS

Alliance for Excellent Education. 2006. Issue Brief. <http://www.all4ed.org/> Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA). 2006. University of Pretoria (UP).

Culican, S.J., Rose, D. and McKusker, H. 2004. *Learning to Read: Reading to Learn*. A Middle Years Intervention Project. Catholic Education Office Melbourne.

Drummond, K. 2005. *About Reading Disabilities*, Learning Disabilities and Reading Difficulties. The Access Center, the American Institutes for Research, funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs.

EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2005. *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO).

Graham, S. and Herbert, M. 2010. Writing to read. evidence for how writing can improve reading. *A Report from Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Published by the Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE). Available online: [http://carnegie.org/fileadmin/Media/Publications/WritingToRead\\_01.pdf](http://carnegie.org/fileadmin/Media/Publications/WritingToRead_01.pdf)

Human Science Research Council (HSRC). 2012. Are graduates ready for the workplace? Available at

<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/News-1619.phtml>

Luneta, K. 2008. *Centre for Education Policy and Development* (CEPD). Available at [http://www.cepd.org.za/files/CEPD\\_Annual\\_report\\_2008.pdf](http://www.cepd.org.za/files/CEPD_Annual_report_2008.pdf)

Marion, R. 2004. *The Whole Art of Deduction*. Research Skills for New Scientists. The University of Texas Medical Branch.

Meier, J. and Freck K. 2005. *Seeking Help for a Struggling Reader*. Seven Steps for Teachers. Available at

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/c42582/?sort=title&startnum=181&theme=print&summaries=no>

Motshekga, A. 2010. Statement by the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, MP on the *progress of the review of the National Curriculum Statement*, Tuesday 06 July 2010. Available at <http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=7hWWPlhfufQ%3D&tabid=401&mid=1210>

Mullis, I.V.A. and Martin, M. 2007. *International Mathematics Report: Findings from IEA's Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study at the Fourth and Eighth Grades*.

National Capital Language Resource Centre (NCLRC). The Arabic K-12 Teachers' Newsletter. 2004.

National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animal Research. 2006. *Why do a Pilot Study?* Available at <http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=390&page=5&skin=0>

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). 2006. Performance at the PIRLS 2006 *International Benchmarks IEA*. IEA.

Qualitative Research Methods (QRM). 2005. A data collector's field guide module, *Family Health International* (FHI).

Reading A-Z. 2008. *Reading Series Correlations*. Available at: <http://www.readinga-z.com/basalsearch/>

Reading Rockets. 2008. *Helping Struggling Readers*. Available at <http://www.readingrockets.org/helping/>

Robertson, K. 2009. *Reading 101 for English Language Learners*. Available at <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/33830/>

Rose, D. 2006a. *Learning to read: Reading to learn*. Scaffolding the English curriculum for indigenous secondary students.

- Rose, D. 2006b. Literacy and equality in the classroom. *Future Directions in Literacy Conference*. University of Sydney.
- Rose, D. 2007. *A reading based model of schooling*. Available at <http://www.maxwell.lambada.ele.puc-rio.br>
- South Africa. 2011. *Curriculum News*. Recapping the curriculum revision and implementation process. Available at <http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/CurriculumAssessmentPolicyStatements/tabid/419/Default.aspx>
- Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ). 2011. *Report on the Quality of Education*.
- Taking IT Global. 2010. Available at: <http://www.tigweb.org/games/mdg/>
- Teacher Education in South Africa. 2005. *Centre for Education Policy Development*. Available at <http://www.cepd.org.za/files/TESAProposal.pdf>
- University of Texas at Austin. 2007. *Instructional Assessment Resources (IAR) Introduction to SAS*. 2007. UCLA. Academic Technology Services, Statistical Consulting Group. Cronbachs Alpha. Available at: [www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/sas/notes2/](http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/sas/notes2/)
- U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. 2007. International Association for the *Evaluation of Educational Achievement* Student questionnaire - PIRLS.
- Welsh, T. 2008. *Access to Quality Teacher Education*. South African Institute for Distance Learning (SAIDE). Improving the quality of teaching. Making a difference in public schooling. A joint Umalusi and Centre for Education Policy Development Series.
- Zuma, J. 2008. *The Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign*.

## INTERNET

Wright,J. 2001. The savvy's teacher's guide: Reading interventions that work.  
Available at <http://www.jimwrightonline.com/pdfdocs/brouge/rdngManual.PDF>

## CONFERENCE PAPERS

Rose,D. and Acevedo,C. 2006. Designing Literacy inservicing: Learning to Read: Reading to Learn. *National Conference of the Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics Association*. 14(2): 32-45.

## NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Barbeau, N. 2009. *The Daily News*, August 13.

Department of Higher Education and Training. 2009. Closing address of the Teacher Development Summit, Honourable Minister of Higher Education and Training Dr B.E. Nzimande MP. July 2. Source: Available at <http://www.education.gov.za/news?oid=249433&sn=Detail&pid=334&Call-for-teacher-colleges-to-reopen-amid-staff-shortages->

Jones, 2011. S.A. ahead with number of women teachers. ***The Star***, October, 6.

Kgkosana, C. 2010. *The Daily News*, February, 18.

Mangona, C.2010. ***The Star***, January 6

Mkhwanazi, S. 2008. Pandor confirms to reopen colleges. April, 25. Available at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/pandor-confirms-plans-to-reopen-colleges-1.397967>

Motshekga. 2011. South African Government Information. Department of Basic Education. 2011. Statement on the release of the Annual National Assessments Results for 2011 by Mrs Angie Motshekga, Minister of Basic Education, Union Buildings. 28 Jun 2011.

South African Democratic Teachers' Union.2009. (Sadtu) is again calling for teacher colleges to be reopened. Available at <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2009/09071011051001.htm>



Tau, S. 2012. Call for teacher colleges to reopen amid staff shortages. January 4.  
Available at <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2009/09071011051001.htm>

## GOVERNMENT POLICY DOCUMENTS

Department of Education. 2011. A Teacher's Handbook, 2008. *Teaching Reading in the Early Grades: A Teacher's Manual*. Available at <http://www.education.gov.za>

Department of Education (DoE). 2008. *Foundations for Learning (FFL)*. Government Gazette no. 30880 14 March 2008.

Department of Education. 1996. *Interim Policy for Early Childhood Development*. 1-38.

Department of Education. 2005. Strategic Plan. 1-188

Department of Education. 2008. *National Reading Strategy*. 1-20.

Department of Education. 2010. *Report on the Annual National Assessments 2011*. 1-36. Available at <https://www.governmenteducation.com>.

Department of Education. 2007. *National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development (NPFTED)*.

Department of Education. 2002. *Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) Policy*.

Department of Education. 2010. *South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement*. [On-line] Available at  
<http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/CurriculumAssessmentPolicyStatements/tabid/419/Default.aspx>

Department: Education South Africa. (2007/08). Annual Report. [On-line] Available at [www.info.gov.za](http://www.info.gov.za).

Department of Education. 2005. Teacher Education in South Africa. *Centre for Education Policy Development*. Available at  
<http://www.cepd.org.za/files/TESAProposal.pdf>

Department of Education. 2008. Umalusi-Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training. *The General and Further Education and Training Qualifications Framework*. Available at <http://www.umalusi.org.za/Inveloper.asp?iP=145&iVdate=29/03/2012&iS={C928A950-0259-4BC9-A79D-E0B086E89E28}>

Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC). 2003. Available at <http://www.pmg.org.za/minutes/20070604-education-labour-relations-council-sa-council-educators-national-student-financial->

Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2001a. *White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education*. Meeting the Challenge of Early Childhood Development in South Africa. Available at <http://www.education.gov.za>

Republic of South Africa. Department of Education. 2001b. *Education White Paper 6*. Special Needs Education. Building an Inclusive education and training system. Available at: <http://www.education.gov.za>

## GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

Department of Education. South Africa. 2008. Foundations for Learning Campaign. (Notice 306 of 2008). **Government Gazette No. 30880: 14 March.**

# APPENDICES

## **SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1. Age (in years)

20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
-------	-------	-------	-------	-----

2. Gender:

Male	Female
------	--------

3. Education: Qualification

Diploma	Degree	Masters	Doctorate
---------	--------	---------	-----------

4. Class size:

1 - 20	21 - 40	41 - 60	61 - 80	81 - 100
--------	---------	---------	---------	----------

5. How many years have you been teaching in the intermediate phase?

0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 22	22+
-------	--------	---------	---------	-----

6. Have you had any formal training in teaching reading?

Yes	No
-----	----

7. Level

Educator	Head of Department	Deputy Principal	Principal
----------	-----------------------	---------------------	-----------

8. Race

African	Coloured	Indian	White
---------	----------	--------	-------

## **SECTION B: FACTORS IMPACTING ON READING LITERACY**

9. I frequently attend workshops on reading strategies.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

10. The reading level of the learners in my class is above average.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

11. The majority of learners in my class are second language learners.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

12. The following socio-economic factors impact on reading literacy.

a. Single parents

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

b. Early childhood development

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

c. Health care

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

d. Unemployment

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

e. Housing

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

13. A few learners experience difficulties comprehending the language of instruction.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

14. Common reading problems experienced by learners.

a. Poor eyesight

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

b. Second language learners

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

c. Lack of exposure to reading resources

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

d. Lack of facilities for early childhood development (ECD)

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

15. Learners require corrective teaching in reading.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

16. Learners do not receive corrective teaching in reading because of time constraints.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

17. Most of the reading time in class is spent on teaching the entire class.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

### **SECTION C: LANGUAGE AND READING INSTRUCTION**

18. I feel that adequate time is given for each of the areas of instruction.

a. Reading

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

b. Writing

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

c. Speaking

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

d. Literature

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

e. Language Skills

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

19. The performance of learners in the intermediate phase of the Annual National Assessment (ANA) test was poor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

### **SECTION D: STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING READING**

20. Learners are taught reading according to the following learning styles.

a. Reading is taught as a whole-class activity.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

b. Same-ability groups are created.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

c. Mixed ability groups are created.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

d. Individualized instructions for reading are used.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

e. Learners work independently on an assigned piece of work.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

21. The following strategies are used during reading instruction time.

a. Read aloud to the learners.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

b. Allow learners to read aloud to the class.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

c. Allow learners to read aloud in small groups.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

d. Allow learners to read silently.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

e. Allow learners to read books of their own choice.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

f. Revise skimming, scanning, self-monitoring methods.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

g. Teach learning strategies involving decoding sounds and words.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

h. Teach learners new vocabulary.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

i. Assist learners to understand new vocabulary in the text they are reading.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

22. The following resources are available to assist learners who have reading difficulty.

a. A reading specialist is available in my classroom to assist such learners.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

b. A reading specialist is available to conduct remedial reading with such learners.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

c. An educator aide is available in my classroom.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

d. Other professionals (for example, teaching specialist, speech therapists, and etcetera) are available to assist such learners.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

23. The method of scaffolding is applied during reading.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

24. The method of scaffolding is important to improve reading.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

25. Reading and comprehension skills can be developed in the following ways.

a. Frequent television viewing.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

b. Access to resources beyond the learner's reading ability.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

c. Learners reading and learning without educator supervision.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

d. Learners' interaction with face-book.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

e. Learners' involvement in computer games (for example, x-box).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

## **SECTION E: LIBRARY AND COMPUTER RESOURCES**

26. The following resources are used during reading instruction.

a. Text books.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------

b. Reading series (for example, basal readers, graded readers).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
----------------------	----------	---------	-------	-------------------



c. Workbooks or worksheets.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

d. Children's magazines.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

e. CD or DVD for reading instruction.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

f. Resources on the internet.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

g. Children's books (novels).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

h. Resources from other learning areas.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

i. Resources written by learners.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

27. Different reading instructional resources for learners at different reading levels are used.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

28. Learners are assessed after they have completed reading materials in class.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

29. Every classroom has a reading corner.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

30. The school library is operational.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

31. The community library is assessable for every learner.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

32. Access to resources within and outside the school for reading is important.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

## **SECTION F: SYSTEMS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY READING**

33. The Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) plays an integral part in improving reading instruction.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

34. The functioning of School Management Team (SMT) plays an important role in managing the quality of teaching and learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

35. Adequate attention is given by the SMT in maintaining the quality of teaching and learning.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

36. The Foundations for Learning Campaign has succeeded in improving reading.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

37. Based on the IQMS, every educator is monitored according to individual improvement plans.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

## **SECTION G: HOMEWORK**

38. Reading is daily given as homework.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

39. Learners have access to reading resources for homework.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

40. Learners are given a variety of resources to read for homework.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

41. Parents are actively involved in reading exercises given as homework.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

42. Reading homework is continuously assessed by the educator.