



**THE USE OF ADAPTED TEACHING STRATEGIES IN LITERACY BY
GRADE THREE EDUCATORS IN THE NORTHERN KWAZULU-
NATAL REGION**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Master of Technology: Language Practice in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the
Durban University of Technology

VEENA LOOPOO

M. Tech.: Language Practice

November 2011

SUPERVISOR: Prof. P. Singh

PhD (Education)

**THE USE OF ADAPTED TEACHING STRATEGIES IN LITERACY BY
GRADE THREE EDUCATORS IN THE NORTHERN KWAZULU-
NATAL REGION**

by

VEENA LOOPOO

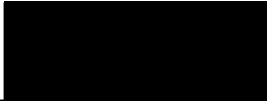
Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
Master of Technology: Language Practice in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the
Durban University of Technology

I, Veena Loopoo, do declare that this dissertation is a representation of my own in
both conception and execution.

Signed: 
V. Loopoo

Date: 28/03/2012

Submission approved for examination

Signed: 

Date: 28/03/2012

Supervisor: Prof. P. Singh

PhD (Education)

ABSTRACT

The literacy levels in South African schools are alarmingly low. Educators are challenged in diverse classrooms with multicultural and multilingual learners as they are faced with the problems that these learners are experiencing in literacy. Educators therefore need to be able to adapt their teaching strategies to suit the needs of their learners to address learners' different learning needs and styles.

This study investigated the use of adapted teaching strategies used by grade 3 educators in literacy in selected schools in northern KwaZulu-Natal. A mixed methods research design was used which included the use of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to gather data.

The findings which were linked to the literature review revealed that educators lacked adequate knowledge and skills to adapt their teaching strategies as they have not been adequately trained to teach literacy within multilingual contexts. Although some educators were using adapted teaching strategies they were not using them effectively in their multilingual classrooms while some educators did not have a well-structured intervention programme at school to deal with learners who were experiencing problems with literacy. Inexperienced educators also had problems identifying learning styles and adapting their teaching strategies. This study found that teachers require continual professional development to enable them to effectively adapt their teaching strategies to suit individual learning needs and styles.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my son Vikash Loopoo

And

My husband Mr. Dhanieshlal Loopoo

For their unwavering support and belief in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my most sincere gratitude to the following people for their resolute support, indispensable help and contribution in the completion of this study.

- Almighty God, who granted me the wisdom to undertake and complete this study.
- Prof. P. Singh for her inspirational guidance, constructive criticism and encouragement she gave during the course of this study.
- My sister, Dr Indira Naidoo for her expert guidance and advice, which was a constant source of encouragement especially during the time when progress was difficult.
- My son, Vikash, for his constant interest and encouragement and especially having remained a persistent source of inspiration and beacon of light throughout this intellectual exercise.
- My husband, Dhanieshlal, for his encouragement and support.
- My mother, Mrs G. Singh, for her continuous support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION.....	2
1.2 LEARNING PROBLEMS AND NEEDS.....	3
1.3 TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES.....	3
1.4 DEMARICATION OF THE PROBLEM.....	4
1.5 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS.....	5
1.5.1 Foundation phase learners.....	5
1.5.2 English second language (ESL)	6
1.5.3 Learning style.....	6
1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY.....	6
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.1 LITERACY.....	7
2.1.1 The autonomous model.....	9
2.1.2 The ideological model.....	10
2.1.3 The new literacy approach.....	13
2.1.4 Academic literacy	14
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	17
2.2.1 Socio-cultural theory.....	17

2.2.2	The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).....	19
2.2.3	Mediation	20
2.2.4	Scaffolding.....	20
2.3	LEARNING AND LEARNING MODALITIES	21
2.3.1	Visual learning	22
2.3.2	Auditory learning.....	22
2.3.3	Kinaesthetic learning	23
2.3.4	Tactile learning	24
2.4	FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING	24
2.4.1	Learner's problems with spoken language	25
2.4.2	Learner's problems with vocabulary	26
2.5	ADAPTED TEACHING STRATEGIES	28
2.5.1	Teaching spelling problems	28
2.5.2	Teaching academic vocabulary and comprehension.....	28
2.6	SUMMARY	29
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY		30
3.1	RESEARCH AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN	30
3.2	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	31
3.2.1	Mixed methods approach	32
3.3	SAMPLING APPROACH.....	33
3.3.1	Target population.....	33
3.3.2	The sampling method	34
3.3.3	Sample size	34
3.4	DATA COLLECTION.....	35
3.4.1	Primary and secondary data.....	35
3.5	THE QUESTIONNAIRE	35
3.5.1	Layout of the Questionnaire.....	36

3.5.2	Closed Questions	37
3.5.3	Open-ended questions	37
3.5.4	Pilot testing of the questionnaire.....	37
3.5.5	Administration of the questionnaire	38
3.6	SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS	38
3.7	VALIDITY	39
3.8	RELIABILITY	39
3.9	ETHICS.....	40
3.10	STATISTICAL ANALYSIS.....	41
3.10.1	Descriptive statistics.....	41
3.10.2	Chi-square.....	41
3.10.3	Pearsons Correlation.....	42
3.10.4	Content analysis.....	42
3.11	SUMMARY	42
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS		43
4.1	BIOGRAPHICAL DATA.....	43
4.2	THEMATIC PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....	48
4.2.1	Theme One: Professional Development.....	49
4.2.2	Theme 2: What teachers say about literacy levels in schools.....	52
4.2.3	Theme 3: Literacy problems in grade 3 at schools	53
4.2.4	Theme 4: Adapted Teaching Strategies used by grade 3 educators ...	55
4.3	SUMMARY.....	62
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		63
5.1	OVERVIEW OF STUDY.....	63
5.2	ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES.....	63
5.2.1	First Objective: To determine whether educators are able to determine their learners' learning needs.....	63

5.2.2	Second Objective: To find out how educators determine the learning needs of their learner's.....	64
5.2.3	Third Objective: To determine how the educators used adapted teaching strategies to enable learning	64
5.2.4	Fourth Objective: The difficulties that educators experience in adapting their teaching strategies to suit their learners' needs	66
5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	68
5.4	SOME LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	69
5.5	IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH	70
	REFERENCES.....	72
	APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY	97
	APPENDIX B: COVERING LETTER: EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE	98
	APPENDIX C: INFORMED LETTER OF CONSENT	99
	APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE.....	100

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Qualification of Educators	44
Figure 2: Age of respondents	44
Figure 3: Teaching experience of educators at the Foundation Phase Level.....	46
Figure 4: Literacy development workshop in the last 5 years.....	47
Figure 5: Literacy knowledge of educators.....	49
Figure 6: Literacy training needs identified by teachers	50
Figure 7: The learning styles of grade three teachers as identified by teachers.....	51
Figure 8: Teachers' intervention programme for learners experiencing difficulties in literacy.....	52
Figure 9: Problem areas in literacy according to teachers.....	54
Figure 10: Teachers identification of spoken language problems	55
Figure 11: Vocabulary problems experienced by learners reported by teachers.....	57
Figure 12: What teachers say about the benefits of story time or reading stories	58
Figure 13: Teachers' identification of learners' reading problems	58
Figure 14: Word recognition teaching approaches used by teachers.....	59
Figure 15: Learner comprehension problems identified by teachers.....	60
Figure 16: How teachers say they assist learners with spelling problems.....	61
Figure 17: What teachers identify as composition writing problems.....	61

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Reliability Statistics.....	40
Table 2: Age and qualification	45
Table 3: Frequency and percentage of educators that assess their learners	52

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

There is no uneducable child- no unteachable child. There are only children that we fail to teach in a way that befits their individual condition (Mwamwenda, 1995:300).

In 1994 the political changes in South Africa resulted in a new constitution grounded in the principles of democracy, equity and non-discrimination and a respect for the rights and dignity for all. The South African schools Act (RSA1996) embodies the principles of the constitution by asserting the rights of all learners regarding equal access to basic and quality education (Engelbrecht, 2001:10).

Public schools in South Africa underwent major changes after the 1994 general election. Schools were open to all children and there was an influx of learners from different race groups, cultures and religions into schools, but teachers were neither trained nor prepared for this. Research on schools in South Africa has shown that the challenge to manage integration has grown more serious because no race relations programme has been developed to provide guidelines on de-racialisation or racial harmony in schools (Khosa, 2001).

Singh (2007:294) explains that the many years of apartheid education has left a bitter trail of injustice which cannot just be wished away and that with the changing student population in all sectors of education, classrooms are becoming more multilingual and multicultural in their make-up. She adds that the educator is faced with learners that come with different levels of language and linguistic ability and cognition, varying cultural, home, school and educational backgrounds. Bolowana (2005) agrees that as classrooms become more integrated racially and culturally in South Africa, teachers are struggling to cope with the challenges posed by this diversity. To add to the above challenges, at most schools in South Africa teachers have received no training to handle classrooms with learners from different backgrounds. Dr Eunice Dlamini, Vice Dean of the University of Zululand said that teachers had largely been left to find their own solutions to the dilemma which often perpetuated stereotypes and hindered learning (Bolowana, 2005).

1.1 MULTILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

The objective of multicultural education is to help our children to live in an ethnically and culturally rich diverse society (Batiste, 2005). To this end the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has repeatedly urged that children be taught to read in their home language where possible as children learn to read most successfully when this happens (Elley 1992:59). Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) (Elley, 1992) and Progress in International Reading Study PIRLS (2006) also found that learners whose home language is different from that of the language of instruction at school achieve lower literacy levels than children learning to read in their home language. Learners in primary school should therefore have the opportunity to use their first language to learn content and develop literacy. As Abazi (2006:55) says, proficiency in a first language predicts success in studying a second.

Despite a growing awareness that mother tongue (MT) education is more effective than bilingual or second language medium of instruction (Heugh, 2002: 171; Rademeyer, 2005:7), English as a second language has become the dominant medium of instruction in Southern Africa (De Klerk, 2002:3; De Wet, 2002:119; Kgosana, 2006:17; Rademeyer, 2006:15). A study done in Africa on mother tongue education found that it is almost impossible for learners to learn enough of the second language in three years to switch to a second language medium of instruction by grade 4 (Heugh, 2005:7).

It is generally accepted that teachers of English play a leading role in providing learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write, speak and listen effectively (Arkoudis, 2003:162). Crandall (1998:18) adds that learners may fail to understand academic concepts through the language they are learning because their subject content teachers are incapable of assisting them to do so. However, Goodwyn and Findlay (2003:27) point out that all teachers have a stake in promoting effective literacy.

In addition to the context of the language of learning, it is important for educators to recognize that not all children are the same, that each has their own individual condition (Mwamwenda, 1995) and therefore their own learning problems and needs.

1.2 LEARNING PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

The adoption of Outcomes Based Education in 1997 as a curriculum approach involved transformation of the dual system of education i.e. special education and ordinary mainstream education into a single inclusive system in accordance with White Paper 6 (Naicker, 1999). White Paper 6 stipulates that schools should provide quality education to all learners through flexibility in order to meet the full range of learners needs in an equitable manner (White Paper 6, 2001:12). Engelbrecht and Green (2007) agree that in the South African classroom it is important to accommodate the substantial number of learners with learning problems. Naicker (1999) explains further that learning problems are classroom situations that do not match the learning needs of the learner.

The Systemic Evaluation Survey conducted by the Department of Education through the Jet Educational Services in 2006 found that the literacy levels of grade 3 learners in South African schools were extremely low. This evaluation of learners in grade 3 across the country showed that most of the learners cannot read or count (Serrao, 2008). The Revised National Curriculum Statement was thus implemented in 2000 (Marrow and King, 1998:96) where all educators were exposed to a week of training to enable them to achieve greater success in managing learners and their learning problems. In spite of this training, educators were not clear about what to teach or how to use different strategies in their classrooms (DoE, 2008) to address the issue of low literacy. The expectations of the dramatic changes have not been fulfilled. The issue of translating curriculum into good classroom practice became a problem.

1.3 TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES

Since the implementation of South Africa's Constitution, foundation phase educators are faced with demands at all grade levels (Cunningham 2001:213). Educators are expected to have knowledge of a repertoire of teaching strategies and differentiate their method accordingly (Viljoen and Molefe, 2001). Landsman (2001:45) points out that teachers need to acknowledge and understand learners' background and to show responsibility in terms of their teaching styles, the curriculum and the experience that should be provided by them in the classroom.

Rief and Heimburge (2006) add that some learners are unsuccessful in school because there is a misfit between how they learn and the way they are taught. The

one-size-fits all approach is not workable. With all these complexities, it is clear that educators do not understand that people learn in different ways (Gates, 2002). He therefore recommends that educators must differentiate their teaching methods. Levis and Doorlay, (1999) explain that when learners have difficulties acquiring skills and information the educator must adapt his instructions or teaching strategy to meet the learner's needs. They add that educators can modify instructional materials and activities, change teaching procedures or alter the requirements of the learning tasks to support learners that are experiencing problems in literacy.

Banks (in Hart, 2002:6-7) mentions that teachers need to match teaching styles with students' learning styles keeping in mind the various cultural and ethnic groups. In doing so teachers must focus on modifying their teaching to allow students from different racial groups to achieve academically. Zhenhui (2001) states that the impact on the learning styles of the learners and mismatches between this and the dominant teaching styles of teachers foreign to the culture can cause learning problems. On the other hand, Larkin-Hein (2000:12) contends that the adoption of a learning style approach by the educator in the classroom improves learner interest and motivation to learn primarily as it allows for alternative teaching strategies designed to accommodate a diverse population of learners.

There are different modalities and preferences through which it may be easier for each of us to learn and process information. Some learners may be visual learners, while others may be auditory learners or tactile kinaesthetic learners (Rief, 2006:12). Visual learners learn by observing people and objects, auditory learners learn by listening and tactile learners learn by touching objects. The awareness of and sensitivity to learning styles helps the educators to teach all kinds of learners, especially learners who struggle academically and behaviourally in the classroom (Rief and Heimburge, 2006:12).

1.4 DEMARCATION OF THE PROBLEM

As a foundation phase educator for the past 20 years, the researcher found the literacy levels of learners rather disturbing. She found that in certain classes over 50% of the learners could not read, write or comprehend at their appropriate age level. This was not solely the situation at the school she taught at, but by associating with other educators from different schools it was established that it was a common

problem at other schools as well. This is due to the fact that learners find it difficult to cope in a class of mixed abilities because educators are unable to balance their teaching strategies to suit all (Ramdeo, 2006:4). Learners with language problems should be identified as early as possible in order to prevent their problems from getting worse and their schoolwork from lagging behind (Engelbrecht and Green, 2001:46).

In order to address the above, educators need to adapt their teaching strategies to suit learner needs. According to Lewis and Doorlay (1991:116), adapted teaching strategies are strategies that are used when learners experience difficulty in acquiring skills and information. In other words, the educator then adapts his/ her instruction or teaching strategy to meet the learner's needs. They add that to do this, educators can modify instructional materials and activities, change teaching procedures or alter the requirements of the learning task to assist learners that are experiencing any difficulties. Prinsloo and Stein (2004:68) concur that teachers in each site should invent their activities around literacy differently while following the same broad curriculum. They state further that there are important consequences for the manner in which different teachers engage with literacy pedagogy as this influences the kinds of readers and writers children will become.

Literacy achievement depends crucially on the nature and quality of instruction that learners receive in the classroom (Donald, Condy and Forrester, 2004:610). She questions why some teachers are able to achieve high literacy rates with their learners while others working in the same school and the same environment, are not. To the best of the researcher's knowledge no research has been done on adapted teaching strategies in literacy by grade 3 educators in South Africa. This study therefore addresses this gap.

1.5 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1.5.1 Foundation phase learners

The term "learner" refers to all learners and replaces the terms pupils and students at schools (South African Department of Education 1997: vii). The term "foundation phase learners" refers to learners from grade R to grade 3 (South African Department of Education 2004:4).

1.5.2 English second language (ESL)

Mahabeer (2003:14) maintains that a second language refers to “another language used by people who are proficient in their mother tongue” (primary/home language). In this study English second language (ESL) refers to English that is spoken as a second language by learners whose primary language is isiZulu.

1.5.3 Learning style

A learning style is the more or less consistent way in which a person perceives, conceptualizes, organises and recalls information (Verster, 2005:1). Dybvig (2004:2) defines a learning style as the way a person processes, internalises and studies new and challenging material.

The following words are used interchangeably in this study:

- Teacher/educator
- Learner/pupil

1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The first chapter outlined the context, rationale and significance of this study and presented a brief overview of the forthcoming chapters.

Chapter two presents a review of the literature pertinent to the study and discusses the theoretical framework underpinning this study.

Chapter three discusses the research methodology employed in this study.

Chapter four presents the findings of this study.

Chapter five discusses the research conclusions and make recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the previous chapter an overview of and the rationale for undertaking the study was given. In this chapter a detailed discussion of the concept of literacy, new modes of literacy and academic literacy are presented. The discussion bears in mind that in recent decades there has been a paradigm shift in literacy pedagogy and theoretical concepts regarding literacy. These concepts provide the basis of the current study and a better understanding of them will be helpful in explaining the factors which led to a reorientation of pedagogy and ideologies being implemented by educators. Discussions in this chapter are further subdivided into six headings such as: literacy; learning and learning modalities; factors affecting learning; adapted teaching strategies; reflections and theoretical framework.

2.1 LITERACY

From the 1950's onwards several pedagogical approaches, theoretical models and research based activities in context of reading and writing have come into vogue. Most of the research that was being done in this field drew inputs and paradigms from the field of psychology. Psychological approaches perceive the process of reading, spelling, writing, and comprehension as behavioural and cognitive process. Majority of research studies focused on the domain of 'reading' and 'writing', and little attention was paid to 'literacy' studies.

However, a few studies did focus on literacy *per se*. For instance, research being done in areas such as education, and educational planning and development studied the social implication as well as significance of literacy (Lankshear, 1999). The World Literacy Program of UNESCO (1945) also voiced a few of these concerns. In countries like USA, Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand there was a surge amongst researchers regarding literacy levels of adults. Such adult literacy programmes primarily focused on literacy as a functionality tool and the main target was migrant populations as well as individuals who were at an educational disadvantage. It was in the latter half of 1970s that the concept of literacy gained importance in the context of class based learning and teacher imparted education (Lankshear, 1999).

Over the last few decades the term literacy has acquired wide connotations and new definitions have added layers of meaning to the word 'literate'. As Crandall (1992) sees it earliest definitions of literacy were simplistic, they either used direct measures to assess literacy, for instance, a person's capability to read as well as write at least a simple sentence or other means such as pursuing formal education for at least four to six years. From around mid-1960s academics started defining literacy using academic terms and laid emphasis on the manner in which literacy helped to attain goals in varying contexts. UNESCO (2006) draws difference between basic level of literacy and functional level of literacy and the definition given by it about literacy is the most widely circulated definition.

As UNESCO (2006) perceives it an individual who is able to read and write a concise and simple statement qualifies to be called literate. They add that to be functionally literate the individual should be able to actively and productively engage in such activities where being literate is mandatory for adequate running of the group or community and which also allows the individual to read, write and calculate for his/her own development as well as that of the community's.

In the last couple of decades, the idea of literacy as being different from merely the ability to read and write has gained ground. The concept of 'literacy studies' has gained currency. This concept is a broad based idea which includes a whole range of activities which pertain to understanding and improving the reception, production and transmission of texts. With the notion of being literate changing corresponding changes have taken place in curriculum theory and practice.

Conventionally speaking, acquiring literacy during English lessons implied teaching language as a set of skills. However, inputs were taken from linguistics to the effect that language literacy now consists of study activities such as composition, textual studies, rhetoric and grammar. An even broader horizon of literacy studies (Green, 1988, 1993; Lemke, 1990; Martin, 1989, 1992) involves subject (specific) literacies, for instance including accounts of different genres related to subject-specific modes of inquiry and production as well as dealing with aspects and issues of subject disciplines as interrelated rather than isolated practices.

Moreover, from 1980s, literacy studies began to view literacy as a socio-cultural practice which is socially contested. Freire (1985) is one of the first theorists who

suggested that literacy should be situated within an ideological framework. It was Friere who challenged the idea that merely becoming literate endows empowerment. Rather, he suggests that it is the socialising functions that education enables that decides the role that literacy plays. As Bloome and Green (1992) see it literacy and education are social and cultural practices which, given the same setting, perform differently in variant communities, cultures, and technologies. Thus it wouldn't be an excess to state that there exist a plethora of literacies rather than a single literacy. As Richardson (1998) says, there is nothing like literacy or illiteracy, rather multitude of literacies which perform in particular social contexts. Two significant approaches to literacy can be drawn on the basis of their theoretical leanings.

As Street (1984) sees it there are two models, an 'autonomous' model is based on the 'traditional' concept of literacy and an 'ideological' model based on the 'socio-cultural' view. Both the models will be discussed in detail as the changing concept of literacy has important and far reaching implications on our understanding of reading and writing.

2.1.1 The autonomous model

The autonomous model proposed by Goody and Watt (1963), Havelock (1963), and Ong (1982) presumes that oral language is inferior to written language. This is so because written language allows greater autonomy while oral language always tends to be context situated. The autonomous model regards literacy as a neutral and value-free function which stands independent of social and cultural practices in any society (Von Gruenewaldt, 1999). This view argues that in societies where literacy level is high, the social, cognitive and economic advancement are also high.

For instance Goody (1977) shows that the factors which make 'advanced' cultures stand apart from 'primitive' cultures most often pertain to changes in the ability to communicate, particularly *via* writing. According to Gee (1996), Goody posits the view that development of writing skill allows for the growth of individualism, strengthens ability for abstract thought, syllogistic reasoning and abstract systems of government. Street (1993) says that an assessment of literacy skills is largely done in lieu of the autonomous model.

However, in the last few years more and more researchers have started challenging these assumptions. They are advocating the adoption of social theory for a better

understanding of literacy and literacy studies. Olsen (1977) as well as Hill and Parry (1990) in their research posit that the autonomous model treats texts as having meaning which is independent of the cultural context in which it is situated and interpreted.

In the context of an autonomous model, researchers argue that the reader too is not considered in context of the literacy practices embedded in his/her society. Similarly, the cognitive skills employed by the reader while he decodes the text and also while writing are regarded as being autonomous, that is exclusive of the context in which it is produced and interpreted. In doing so, the cultural and social contexts are disregarded and literacy is reduced to a mere acquisition of a set of skills that enables an individual to read and write. It is inferred that having acquired these skills a child would become capable of applying these skills in all contexts and situations (Richardson, 1998).

Autonomous model does not enjoy wide acceptability amongst researchers and has been rejected by many (Street, 1984; Levine, 1986; Luke, 1988; Gee, 1989; Cazden, 1998; Barton and Hamilton, 2000) who assert that literacy cannot be considered as being autonomous and neutral, rather it is ideological and embedded in social and cultural contexts (Street, 1993).

2.1.2 The ideological model

As per the ideological model literacy is seen in context of variables such as societies or group's social practices and structure, economic factors, and local ideologies (Gee, 1990). This being so literacy is regarded as a set of social practices, each practice being strongly entrenched in a specific contextual scenario. Seen in this manner, literacy cannot be seen as a separate entity, independent from the people who make use of it. The ideological model then posits that meaning construction is dependent on the knowledge that the creator and interpreter brings with him while studying the text (Gee, 1990). He adds that knowledge herein implies the person's grasp on grammatical structures, vocabulary, personal and contextual knowledge.

Two concepts which are of significance in the ideological model are 'literacy events' and 'literacy practices'. Barton and Hamilton (2000:7) state that literacy practices are cultural means of using written language. Such practices are intrinsic processes exclusive to the individual's domain and cannot be assessed as they involve

attitudes, values, feelings, and social relationships. It also takes into account the individuals' awareness of literacy, constructions of literacy and discourses of literacy, as well as how a person understands literacy and uses it to communicate. Literacy practices are social processes which allow individuals to interact. These practices include shared perceptions which arise from common beliefs and social identities. Literacy events are seen as activities where acquiring literacy plays a major role.

Texts constitute a major segment of literacy events. Literacy events emerge out of and also are shaped by practices. According to Lea (1998:158), literacy can be best understood in lieu of the contextual and ideological framework within which a given set of literacy practices are being enacted. It is also essential to pay attention to social contexts in which a literacy event happens. It is equally important to be attentive to the meanings that are generated for people who are committed to any process of reading and writing. To explain further, one text can be inferred in different ways; this depends upon different individual's experience of practices in which the texts are situated.

Taking a socio-cultural view there should be one definition of literacy which makes sense of reading, writing, and meaning making in lieu of social, cultural, economic, political and historical practices of which they are a part. Gee (1996) has given us such a definition. He defines literacy in context of discourses (Gee, 1990).

According to Gee (1990, 1992, 1996), discourses are socially acceptable methods of interacting, behaving, valuing, believing, thinking, speaking, and, often reading and/or writing (Wenger, 1998). These methods allow us to be a part of a social group and its acquisition involves gradual enculturation into practices observed by that social group by means of interaction with individuals who have already acquired command over that discourse. Taking cue from this view it can be safely stated that activities such as reading, writing, and language are firmly entrenched in other discourses and cannot be treated as isolated skills independent of a specific content and context.

Gee (1990) further draws distinction between discourses. According to him there are primary discourses which relate to the manner in which we learn to behave and be within our family and secondary discourses which pertain to the ways we learn to behave outside our family that is in schools, workplace, etc. Primary discourses can

either be closely related to or disassociated from secondary discourses. However, disassociation between primary discourses and secondary discourses makes it difficult for the individual to perform within secondary discourse. Gee (1990) defines literacy as fluent command over a secondary discourse. In this sense, Gee sees literacy as a plural entity that is there are several literacies as there are several secondary discourses.

In the context of South Africa, to cite an example, one could safely contend that indigenous Africans are historically speaking disadvantaged. This implies that for several students, their primary discourses are disassociated from the discourses they come in contact with in schools which makes their academic performance a bit strained. To this end, Heath (1982a, 1983b) in his studies shows that children of working class parents perform comparably better to children of parents hailing from middle class in lower grades on literacy tasks.

However, these children tended to suffer progressively as they approached higher grades. Heath argues that the manner of talking, acting, believing and living out extend beyond simplistic encoding and decoding of texts and entails different social practices amongst different social groups. Delpit (1988) in concurrence with Heath (1982a, 1982b, 1983) says that children hailing from middle class happen to perform better in school when compared to children from non-middle class homes because generally speaking the school culture is in orientation with the cultural norms of upper and middle classes.

Those students who are excluded from the culture of power can adjust better if they are explicitly told the rules (Luke, 1996). Critical theorist, Apple (1979) refers to the cultural capital with which children hailing from middle class are ingrained and which they bring with them to school. Since these children have already been participating in the culture of power and in the process have internalized its codes, the chances of their succeeding academically are higher. Bernstein (1971) differentiates between elaborate and restricted codes. He posits that children from the middle-class strata have command over elaborate as well as restricted codes, whereas children coming from lower working-class homes have a restricted code. In order to excel in school it is necessary to have an elaborated code.

The ideological model has given impetus to a new approach for study of literacy called the new literacy. This approach is also referred to by other names such as sociolinguistic, socio-cognitive, and socio-constructive approach (Botel, Ripley, and Barnes, 1993). This new approach to literacy studies is learner-centred and places high value on the interdependence and independence of the learner. It stands in contrast to the formal and more traditional teacher-centred approaches where primarily the emphasis is laid on text books, tests and work books (Botel *et al.*, 1993:113).

2.1.3 The new literacy approach

The new literacy (NL) approach came into prominence in 1980s as a response to the rising levels of dissatisfaction in context of classroom teaching. This discontent was particularly dominant in the west where several students felt themselves to be alienated from the teaching or learning process being practiced in the classroom. In spite of committed educators, students were unable to connect to the curriculum, especially the domain of reading and writing to their experience of daily life (Willinsky, 1990: 9). Gee and researchers hailing from the USA, England, and Australia, known as the New Literacy Studies (NLS) Group, in 1995, started adapting social theories of learning for development of literacies. The NLS has come up with a new way of approaching literacy while seeing it as a social practice and recognizing the existence of multiple literacies (Street, 2003:1).

The NLS questions the convention-bound classroom practices and also the accepted definitions of literacy, it doubts that the foremost concern of literacy is purpose and intent (Willinsky 1990:8). In the NLS the focus is on the student rather than being the concern of the educator or the curriculum. The NLS seeks to develop authentic reasons for reading a text and also puts forth a need for effective methods to read (Falk-Ross, 2002:279). It is the students who are seen as authors and meaning generators in this approach. By allowing students more control over the text its meaning is automatically increased. The NLS promotes the relationship between the instructor and learner. In this approach the instructor renounces authority and shifts greater responsibility upon the student through motivating higher student participation, innovative thinking which then enables the student to achieve his/her interpretation of the text. Basic to the NLS is that it sees students as storehouses of experience and meaning. Using this view classroom activities are redesigned around

the different forms of reading and writing (Willinsky, 1990:7). Moreover, new literacy does not see literacy as an isolated set of skills; rather literacy is regarded as a social process which implies interaction with various variables such as culture, society, schooling and history. As Willinsky (1990:8) states a definitive feature of new literacy is as follows: New Literacy involves such methods in the process of acquiring literacy that try to transfer control of imparting literacy from the instructor to the learner.

The NLS approach receives the support of models of other researchers who contend that reading is a skill that has to be meaningful and useful for students. For Rosenblatt (1994:1063) the reading process is a relation between the text and the reader. In perceiving it in this manner Rosenblatt lays more emphasis upon the learner's previous knowledge and goals. She says that the text cannot be seen in isolation; also, overemphasis should not be laid on the author or the reader. The reader and the text should be seen as interlinked units of a dynamic process. Freire and Macedo (1987:29) assert that reading is connected to knowledge of the world. That is, a student's ability to read is dependent on his ability to interpret the world around him. According to Bloome (1993:100-101), reading is a social process; one should take into account not only author-reader interaction, but also the social relationships among people. Before discussing the applicability of NLS it is imperative to understand the concept of academic literacy.

2.1.4 Academic literacy

This dissertation pays attention to the cultural practices of the societies from which the students hail. Besides textual and structural principles, cultural practices determine what qualifies as knowledge, how it is constructed and the manner in which it can be talked or written about (Boughey, 1994). In order to successfully accommodate/merge students coming from diverse socio-cultural strata it is essential that they are given explicit and overt instructions so as to make them capable to develop strategic competence essential to succeed academically (Cazden, 1995).

Academic literacy has been defined from various perspectives. According to Ballard and Clanchy (1988:8) academic literacy is any student's capability to use the skill of writing to perform those functions in accordance with the culture in a manner that is

considered acceptable to the reader. The researchers elaborate further, and state that academic literacy implies the ability to 'read' the university culture and ethos so as to be at terms with its distinctive rituals, values, styles of language and behaviour. That is, the student should understand the rules and conventions that regulate the learning process. Also it is necessary to bear in mind that the rules and conventions are a social construct. Academic literacy requires 'cracking the cultural code' both in context of the discipline and the university (Ballard and Clanchy, 1988:11).

Johns (1997), and Cope and Kalantzis (1993) contend that academic literacy is always contextualized within a genre. Johns (1997:47) posits that academic literacy refers to the strategies of acquiring a particular content and the means for discussing, understanding, organizing, and producing texts. Johns (1997) supports his thesis with an example. He says that to help students one way could be to develop in them research aptitude which would allow them to write texts which cater to the requirements of their discipline.

This would also make students realize the knowledge base and skills essential to gain membership into their particular academic community. Johns (1997) says that though it is impossible to predict the literacy requirements and experiences for every student yet one can be of help to students to ask questions of the relevant texts, as well as the contexts in which these texts occur, thereby helping them to negotiate academic literacies (Zamel and Spack 1998), learn the conversations of their disciplines (Bazerman, 1980; Flowerdew, 2000), and find out what counts in their area of study (Paltridge, 2002:23).

Paxton (1995:189) argues that a drawback in most definitions of academic literacy is that scholars tend to ignore the fact that academic literacy is a very specialized skill thereby implying that students need to grasp not only the relevant knowledge in the discipline, but also learn to use that knowledge and the language of the discipline in a correct manner. Gee (1990) perceives academic literacy as acquisition of ways of using language, but also the beliefs, attitudes and values of the group. Morrow (1993:3) defines academic literacy as 'epistemological access to higher education, thereby relating academic literacy to specific cultural contexts and the inherent power and ideological relationships'.

Currently a lot of research is being done to address the complex nature of academic literacy practices in higher education (Ivanic, 1997; Lea and Street, 1998; Cohen, 1993; Martin and Rose, 2000). From a socio-cultural view, reading and writing can no longer be seen as a set of skills which can be readily taught or transferred from one context to another. Street (2001:20) suggests the 'study skills approach' where focus is laid on efforts to 'fix' problems pertaining to student learning. In study skills approach, emphasis is laid on the 'surface' features of language aspects that is spelling, grammar and punctuation. Also language is no longer seen as a transparent medium of representation and it is no longer believed that particular disciplinary forms are merely reflected *via* language. Instead, it is accepted that they are rather constructed by, written texts (Lea, 1998:157).

According to Street (2001:20), this view falls within the gamut of 'academic socialization approach' wherein focus is laid on student's orientation towards learning and interpretation of learning tasks. While this approach is sensitive to the student's aptitude it has received a lot of criticism on the grounds that it presumes that by acquiring the norms and practices of the institution the student would gain access to the whole institution (Street 2004:14). According to the 'academic literacies approach' acquiring the skills of reading and writing in the academy requires acquisition of a repertoire of linguistic practices based on a complex set of discourses, values and identities rather than aptitude and socialisation (Street 2001:20). Academic literacies approach takes into account several literacy practices which students need to engage in and also acknowledge the variant roles and identities that participants need to adopt as academic readers and writers.

This dissertation draws inputs from and is influenced by the academic socialisation approach as well as the academic literacies approach. This study is an attempt to assist students in developing academic literacy in their disciplines through learning strategies. Particularly, the aim is to implement teaching strategies along with reading/writing activities which enhance students' learning comprehension skills so as to assist students in their understanding of discipline content, and also motivate them to 'engage' with the texts they are required to read. The next section focuses on the skill of learning. It opens with a brief discussion on problems pertaining to learning and teaching strategies used in view of current literature database.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Vygotsky (1978) biological aspects are the necessary criteria for elemental processes to develop whereas social and cultural factors influence the development of elementary natural processes. He argues that it is the unique nature of the socio milieu as well as the social and cultural factors which are the main factors that determine the growth of higher levels of mental activities like voluntary attention, planning, intentional memory, problem solving and logical thought. Vygotsky's premise of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is seen as his most significant help to the area of learning and education process.

2.2.1 Socio-cultural theory

As Lantolf (2000) states, the core concept of socio-cultural theory is that the brain of human beings is mediated. He further suggests that Vygotsky (1978) focuses on the role of tools in how human beings understand their world and themselves. According to Lantolf (2000), Vygotsky says that human beings do not have a direct interaction with their physical world rather it is via the use of tools. According to Vygotsky (1978), tools (symbolic or signs), are artefacts that human beings create under historical and culture specific conditions. This being the case the tools carry in them the aspects of the concerned cultural domain. The tools aid in problem solving and also have an influence on individuals who are using them as they generate activities that were previously unknown and different means of conceptualizing the world. These tools are being constantly modified as they get transferred from generation to generation, with every generation re-orienting them so as to cater to the different needs.

As Vygotsky (Lantolf 2000) sees it the socio-cultural environment puts before the child a varying degree of tasks which the child tackles through the available tools. Vygotsky says that the child in his early stages is totally dependent on others, generally the parents. It is the parents who encourage their children's actions by telling them what has to be done, how it is to be done and also what is not to be done. Parents serve as the means *via* which cultural mores are transmitted to the child, who in turn uses language to actualise them (Lantolf, 2000). Children appropriate cultural and social heritage (Vygotsky in Wertsch, 1985). He adds that by interacting with people (inter-psychological plane), they gradually assimilate and internalize the knowledge adding to it their personal value (intra-psychological

plane). This leads to a change from social to personal property which as Vygotsky sees it; it isn't simply copying but, rather, is a metamorphosis of something which has been acquired via interaction into personal values. Vygotsky says that the same thing happens in schools. Students aren't simply copying their teachers; instead they are transforming what the teachers are teaching.

According to Vygotsky (1978) consciousness allows one to draw a distinction between the behaviour of human beings and other living beings. Vygotsky asserts that consciousness cannot be decoupled from behaviour and that socially meaningful activities form the core explanatory principle for understanding consciousness (Vygotsky, 1978). Lantolf and Apple (1994) posit that understanding of the role of consciousness in context to teaching is related to the idea of metacognition. Metacognition involves activities like voluntary attention, planning, problem solving, logical memory, and evaluation. Williams and Burden (1997) state that socio-cultural theory posits that education should not be confined to just theories of instruction, but with learning to learn, developing skills and strategies to continue to learn, with making learning experiences meaningful and relevant to the individual, with developing and growing as a whole person. They add that according to the theory, education cannot ever be ridden of value. It should be underlined by a corpus of beliefs regarding society which is evolving and the means by which the implicit and explicit messages can best express those beliefs.

Socio-cultural theory adopts a comprehensive view of the process of learning. Williams and Burden (1997) state that the theory is opposed to the concept of discrete imparting of skills and argue that meaning is the core of any study process. The theory lays emphasis on the significance of what the learner has brought to a learning situation working as a potent problem-solver and meaning-maker. The theory accepts the dynamic role of interplay between learners, teachers, and tasks and sees learning as commencing via interaction.

As Ellis (2000) puts it, a socio-cultural theoretical aspect presumes that learning happens in interaction. Learners begin by performing a new task by soliciting help of other persons and thence internalise the task. In this way, social interaction facilitates learning. One main contribution of this theory is the difference that

Vygotsky drew between a child's actual level and potential level of growth or what he refers to as Zone of Proximal Development.

2.2.2 The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Vygotsky (Shayer and Adey, 2002) came up with the notion of ZPD because of his disagreement with two aspects of educational psychology. Firstly, the methods adopted for assessing a child's intellect and secondly the assessment of instructional practices. Vygotsky felt that the conventionally adopted means of testing a child's intellect only judges the actual level of development, and fails to assess the potential capability of the child. According to him psychology should be able to assess a child's potential growth in future, 'what he/she not yet is' (as cited in Lantolf, 2002; Wertsch, 1985; and Shayer and Adey, 2002). Accordingly, Vygotsky formulated the concept of ZPD which he defines as 'the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers' (as cited in Wertsch, 1985:60).

According to Vygotsky (1978), ZPD will help in assessing a child's mental ability which is still to mature and is in the process of development; that is, skills that are in a nascent stage, and will take time to evolve.

Shayer and Adey (2002) state that an important aspect of learning is also that it generates a ZPD which implies learning arouses several internal developmental processes which can develop only if the child interacts with his peers and other people. As these processes become internalized, they form a part of child's independent development. Vygotsky states that ZPD cannot be determined by the level of instruction, but rather biological aspects also play a role. ZPD is determined both by the level of child's development and the level of instruction involved. Instruction and development are two processes that co-exist in an interrelationship which is complex. Vygotsky says that a child can only perform in limits set by the level of the biological and intellectual development of the child.

Vygotsky (as cited in Shayer, 2002) says that adequate instruction is essential to awaken and bring to life a whole gamut of skills that are still to evolve and are in the domain of ZPD. In this way, instruction plays a significant role in growth. This, according to Shayer, implies that the natural or spontaneous thinking is superceded

by the intellectual challenge of schooling, yet this natural thinking equips children with novel tools to face the learning demands in school. Vygotsky says that instruction should aim at functions which are yet to develop.

Shayer (2002) says that though the concept of ZPD appears to be simple, its practical application becomes problematic. He adds that in fact, Vygotsky himself has not offered much advice on how to effectively implement ZPD in classrooms. An issue which most commonly is faced in schools is the strategy which is of help to learners to cover levels and what should be the teacher's role. In this context, two ideas are discussed, one is mediation, drawn from socio-cultural theory, and the second is scaffolding suggested by cognitive psychologists.

2.2.3 Mediation

Mediation is the core concept in Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (as cited in Williams and Burden, 1997). For Vygotsky, mediation pertains to the role played by people in the life of the learner, that is people who add to their learning by moulding and selecting the learning experiences available. Vygotsky (1978 cited in Wertsch, 1985) says that for learning to be effective it is dependent on the kind of social interaction happening amongst people possessing variant levels of knowledge and skills. This allows the learner to move through differing levels of understanding. Vygotsky sees tools as a mediator and language as the most important tool.

Kozulin and Presseisen (1995) state that for Vygotsky the process of learning is not an isolated exploration of the environment by the learner independently, but rather it is a process of the learners' enculturation of the means that pre-exist in a culture. This appropriation process uses tools in a significant manner. Kozulin (2002) divides mediators in two categories: human and symbolic. As he sees it, human mediation attempts to answer queries about what adult involvement in helping to improve the child's performance; whereas symbolic mediation is concerned with the improvement in the child's performance that can happen through introducing the child to the use of symbolic tools.

2.2.4 Scaffolding

Scaffolding is a concept derived from the domain of cognitive psychology (Donato, 1994). It suggests that by means of social interaction, a knowledgeable participant can enhance via speech and suitable conditions his current level of skill to a higher

level of competence. In the context of imparting education scaffolding is an instructional mode wherein the teacher structures a desired learning task which she gradually leaves it to the students to perform. McKenzie (1999) says that scaffolding has many advantages, such as: It gives concise and clear instructions to students; It clears the purpose of the task; It involves the learners; It is a good means of assessment; It directs learners to good sources; It brings down the elements of surprise, uncertainty and disappointment; ensures efficiency; and generates momentum.

Rogoff (Donato, 1994), says that scaffolding should be consistently revised in the context of the developing abilities of the student. Learner's faults and limitations are a sign to evaluate the scaffolding. As the learner starts to bear the task responsibly, the instructor can dismantle the scaffold as it implies that the learner has gained skills by internalizing the problem-solving process learnt by the scaffold task. Wertsch (Donato 1994) states that scaffold assisted activity is a dialogically constructed inter-psychological method which enhances learner's internalization of knowledge generated in shared activity. Donato (1994) states that in a classroom setting work done in collaboration by language learners is similar to the scaffolded form of help.

2.3 LEARNING AND LEARNING MODALITIES

Learning is most acceptably defined as a process which involves emotional, environmental and cognitive experiences and influences essential for acquisition of, changing or upgrading the knowledge base, values, and skills (Illeris, 2007). The human body is constantly processing a huge amount of information even while we are asleep. Ninety per cent of our brains motor activity is engaged in gathering sensory input from our body and our environment. In fact, information from our environment hits our senses at a rate of millions of different stimuli per second. Even though the mind consciously edits and filters around 92–97% of all stimuli, the subconscious brain receives and stores all stimuli (Page and Nester, 2010).

The three basic steps in which all learn are called VAK for short (Page and Nester, 2010):

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinaesthetic

2.3.1 Visual learning

Human beings visual system is indeed remarkable. It systematically operates a wide gamut of visual tasks with great ease and reliability. This spectacular ability rests on two primary levels. Firstly, the human brain directs/invests enormous computational resources to vision: almost half of our brain is directly or indirectly dedicated towards processing visual information (Kandel, Schwartz and Jessell, 1995). Secondly they express that visual skills which are essential are learned in a long drawn process which extends throughout the early years of person's life. However at the lowest level the formation of receptive fields of neurons along the early visual pathway is likely influenced by retinal stimulation. In fact, a few visual functions cannot develop in absence of sufficient percept based stimuli within a sensitive period during maturation, for example, stereo vision (Held, 1985). Higher level visual related functions for instance, capabilities pertaining to pattern discrimination also follow development based schedule (Gibson and Spelke, 1983).

2.3.2 Auditory learning

Auditory learning refers to inculcating information by listening. The auditory learner is dependent on hearing and speaking for learning (Kostelnik, Soderman, and Whiren, 2004). An auditory learner should be able to listen so as to understand and can find it difficult to comprehend written instructions. Such learners also use the skill of repeatedly listening to understand and resolve the information received (Vincent and Ross, 2001).

Auditory learners might find it difficult to comprehend a chapter while reading it but they may gain a better understanding while listening to the lesson. Auditory learners have an aptitude for judging the true meaning by grasping the audible signals like tonal changes (Banks *et al.*, 2002). An auditory learner while memorizing a phone number tends to say it out loud and then recalls it. An auditory learner is proficient at responding in writing to a lesson that he has heard. They also perform better at

exams where oral performance is judged through effective listening to data transferred through oral means via speeches, oral sessions and lectures (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004).

Academics assert that for an auditory/verbal learner it is nearly impossible to comprehend anything by reading in the absence of sound in the background. In such a scenario listening to music or sounds of TV, people talking, etc. in the background helps the learner perform better. Auditory learners are adept at storytelling (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004). They resolve problems by talking them through. Such learners move their lips or talk to themselves to help accomplish tasks (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004).

2.3.3 Kinaesthetic learning

Kinaesthetic learning is a form of learning wherein the student learns by engaging in a physical activity, instead of watching a demonstration or listening to a lecture. This form of learning is also called tactile learning (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004). They add that individuals who have a knack for the kinaesthetic style of learning are known as doers. They state further that students with a predominant kinaesthetic learning style are seen as natural discovery learners: they tend to learn and realize through activities, as against tending to think before taking action. Such learners may find it tough to learn through reading or listening. While revising a lesson such learners find it helpful if they keep moving around as it facilitates their grasping power and concomitantly their performance in exams improve (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004).

Kinaesthetic learners generally perform better in tasks such as chemistry experiments, sporting activities, art and acting. They also benefit by listening to music while they are studying. Kinaesthetic learners commonly tend to concentrate on two distinct tasks simultaneously (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004). They recall things by going back in their minds to what their body was doing. Such learners have a very high quotient of hand-eye coordination and are very fast receptors (Vincent and Ross, 2001).

In an elementary classroom environment, such learners often stand out as their need is to constantly move, their high quota of energy often causes them to appear restless, agitated, and/or impatient (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004). They add that short term as well as long-term memory of kinaesthetic learners are strengthened through the use of their body and that kinaesthetic learning is seen as a process that leads to

acquisition of new knowledge through the involvement of the learner's own body movement. According to Bernstein (1971), kinaesthetic learning is best achieved when the learner is able to use language (their own words) while explaining, resolving the ways in which his/ her body movement reflects the concept learnt and then support his thesis by citing that the motions in space also demonstrate the mathematical process and lead to the right answer (Vincent and Ross, 2001).

2.3.4 Tactile learning

Tactile learners are those who exhibit characteristics which are a mixture of several forms of learning. That is, their behaviour is at times positive towards learning techniques while at times they demonstrate behaviour which is a potential hindrance to learning (Vincent and Ross, 2001). The positive aspect is that tactile learners are capable of learning by doing, than by listening or seeing. Moreover, tactile learners tend to learn by imitating actions. Through group activity and games, it has been seen that they are better at expression of their emotions (Vincent and Ross, 2001). They state further that this aspect is helpful in certain learning scenarios for instance an English class, as understanding literature often demands an emotional quotient.

Tactile learners learn most quickly when involved in hands-on activities like colouring or finger-painting, model building, or designing projects (Vincent and Ross, 2001). What is conversely true is that tactile learners do not retain things via listening and for them things have to be repeated often or they end up as struggling readers (Vincent and Ross, 2001). They also demonstrate an impulsive tendency which is a challenge for effective classroom management and good academic performance (Kostelnik *et al.*, 2004).

2.4 FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING

Researchers have established that there is a plethora of complex factors which are responsible for differences in achievement level in context to acquisition of reading skills. For instance, there are factors which lie outside the domain of school influence, these being the education and income level of the parents which have an influence on academic performance of students. Also there are several factors in the school environment which affect learning of reading skills in students (Goodwyn and Findlay, 2003). Research also reveals that a student's achievement is influenced by

the value that parents attach to educational achievements, the greater the importance attached, the better the performance of students (Balster-Liontos, 1992).

Reading problems are diverse and can be closed down upon through symptoms such as omitting letters, reversing letters or words, not reading fluently, losing one's place, reading inaccurately or inability to remember what one has read (Goodwyn and Findlay, 2003). Many problems can be solved simply by focusing on the problem. A relevant point would be to examine the cause of reading problems.

Good socio-economic conditions are essential for better achievement in reading. One good method is that parents read aloud to their children at home, almost as much as thrice in a week, and they have a positive attitude towards learning (Denton and West, 2002). The more knowledge that a child has when he starts to go to school, the better are his learning achievements in primary school years.

2.4.1 Learner's problems with spoken language

Recently, multilingualism has been seen as a natural skill which has positive correlation to cognitive flexibility and correspondingly better achievement at school (Agnihotri, 1995). However, its potential role within classroom is still to be fully exploited. Ironically while research in the field of language has led to the realization of significance of multilingual competence, classroom teaching in the context of language classes are becoming more monolingual (Alexander, 1995; Young, 1995).

Agnihotri (1995) states that generally the language spoken by children at home is shunned in classrooms. This often works as a hurdle and interferes with acquisition of the target language (English). When different subjects are taught they are predominantly associated with a specific language. In the classrooms use of any language apart from target language is forbidden which implies that schools are in a way reinforcing negative stereotypes in children with respect to their mother tongues and are perpetuating the situation in which the target language leads to exploitation. Thus it becomes very difficult for young English second language learners to bridge the gap between the two cultures.

At a very tender age learners are expected to negotiate the difficult transition from home and school. Ordinarily speaking it is a challenge for a child to accept the school's new environment. The experience becomes more frightening when the

child's language spoken at home is different from the language spoken in the classroom. For a few learners, this results in a psychological trauma which can have debilitating consequences (Sheets, 2002). Moreover, one also needs to pay heed that English second language (ESL) learners generally have a poor self-confidence when they approach an English medium school classroom (Mahabeer, 2003). Moreover, if the learning of English entails a transition from the primary language during childhood, it generates cognitive and cultural disadvantage which in turn produces feelings of guilt and anger during adolescence and/or adulthood (Sheets, 2002).

For any child beginning to go to school is not easy as it involves the fear of the unknown. The problem gets even worse for children who are going into a very different environment. For example, when a isiZulu-speaking child starts attending school in an English medium school, he/she has to bear not only the initial change but other factors also make the situation complex. These factors being: drastically different culture of the school (Sumaryono and Ortiz, 2004), psychological aspects like loneliness, nervousness, isolation, hopelessness, anxiousness and frustration (Washburn 2008; Yoon, 2008; Watts-Traffe and Truscott, 2000).

English is considered in South Africa as a very significant international language. Consequently, parents and learners in South Africa lay undue emphasis on acquisition of the ability to speak, listen to, read and write English (Madileng, 2007). Egan and Farley (2004) also lay emphasis on the significance of English. The article reveals, how in the non-English speaking sections of the world, gaining proficiency in English language equates with great opportunity, better jobs and higher salaries. Edwards and Newcombe (2006) in their study assert that in South Africa and other African countries being fluent in an international language implies 'being educated' and is a necessary requirement to secure upward social mobility. What makes the situation difficult is that studies on the isiZulu-speaking learners' experience of acquiring English as a target language via English medium schools are lacking.

2.4.2 Learner's problems with vocabulary

Attaining success in school depends on academic performance. For a student studying at middle and secondary level, a textbook is the most essential tool for learning. If students are unable to read and understand texts drawn from varying

disciplines they will meet failure. A range of studies has shown that the level of vocabulary a student has strongly affects his comprehension of the text (Anderson and Nagy, 1991; Baker *et al.*, 1998; Beck *et al.*, 1998; Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998; Davis, 1944; Nagy, 1988). They further mention that the reciprocal relation between a students' vocabulary and his understanding of the text implies that a systematic instruction for vocabulary enhancement is crucial for enhancing student's ability to understand and learn from content area texts.

However, logically speaking it does not always seem to be the case (Snow, Griffin and Burns, 2005). The question arises as to why vocabulary is essential to ease comprehension. This is so because though at a primary level a child's vocabulary is growing rapidly and a child having a limited vocabulary may not have problems (Snow *et al.*, 2005) however by Grade 3, poor vocabulary limits start taking its toll on reading comprehension. As students' progress to the higher grades, there is a shift in the emphasis from literacy to mathematics, science and social studies. Students are expected to comprehend textbooks which consist of difficult words. This transition from reading stories with simple vocabulary to reading texts in the intermediate grades which are content based is challenging for many students. As a consequence, their performance suffers which is labelled as the fourth-grade slump. Problems pertaining to reading and learning from content area texts are partly due to the spiralling number of unfamiliar concepts and words they are expected to master regularly.

Graves (2007) in his research lays emphasis on the crucial role that vocabulary plays during schooling. Graves says that for English Language Learners (ELL) learning English vocabulary is very crucial as a poor command of words implies school failure. Performance of ELL students is often determined by their English vocabulary, irrespective of the fact that the student may have command over a large vocabulary in his native language (Garcia, 1991). Obviously those students who have a limited vocabulary will, in most likelihood, experience poor achievement levels.

Nagy and Scott (2000) in their study explain the complexity involved in acquisition of vocabulary. They show that mostly words are learned in different stages. While some words are quickly learned, it takes time to learn others. Some have multiple

implications and are confusing, and some are low-frequency words which are not often used or heard. As students progress they need to learn a huge range of words of different complexity. At middle and secondary level words acquire a greater level of difficulty.

2.5 ADAPTED TEACHING STRATEGIES

Lewis and Doorlay (1999:116) state that 'adapted teaching strategies' are those methods which are implemented when a learner experiences difficulties in acquisition of skills and information. It is then the task of the educator to adapt the instructional strategy to suit the learner's requirements. Teachers can re-orient instructional kits, teaching methods, activities, etc. to help such learners who are finding the task difficult.

2.5.1 Teaching spelling problems

According to Gillet and Temple (2000), progression in spelling has parallels to development in reading. For instance, at the pre-phonemic spelling stage, letters and forms are randomly used by children in their attempts to write. This echoes children's early attempts at reading when they begin to isolate phonemes aurally and also understand that phonemes have correspondences to letters. Students at the derivational stage of spellings begin to use the knowledge of morphemes to generate meaning of any text. It takes nearly three to six years to command this progression of spelling development in this sequence. Teachers can use means such as spelling inventory, examining writing samples, seeing the pattern of misspellings of the same words to assess the performance of the learner and accordingly plan instruction to improve spelling competence (Gillet and Temple, 2000).

2.5.2 Teaching academic vocabulary and comprehension

Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle and Watts-Taffe (2006), believe that research has helped to ascertain the role that vocabulary has in increasing learner's grasp of a text and the requirement for all students to learn academic vocabulary. Although students' word power cannot be enhanced by pursuing just one quick fix method, yet research does help to develop a framework that teachers can use for constructing an effective vocabulary program.

Basic principles of a good vocabulary program based on the current research include the following points:

Providing systematic instruction in all grades and covering the entire curriculum with the intent of enhancing vocabulary (Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle and Watts-Taffe, 2006; Manzo, Manzo and Thomas, 2009). Make sure that vocabulary instructions are inclusive of the following: Varied, repetitive and extensive language experience which offers opportunity for wide reading; individually oriented word instruction; strategies for word-learning; and the development of word consciousness (Graves, 2007).

Instructions for developing vocabulary should be such that they foster an in-depth understanding of words by means of reading selections, instructional activities, and goals that are structured according to the learners' needs (Watts and Graves, 1997).

2.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter strategies pertaining to teaching and the theoretical base which formed the key component of this study were discussed. As contrasted to the product and process approach, this chapter posited that the socio-cultural approach considers reading and writing as learned social practices.

As the participants in this study were educators of grade 3 it became important to discuss factors such as written language, spoken language, sight words, reading comprehension, letter formation, word recognition, sentence construction and spelling literacy problems. It appeared relevant to discuss problems faced by grade three educators in literacy such as phonics, reading, comprehension, word recognition and composition writing. As learning and reading are processes which are complementary in nature, their connection was briefly discussed in context of product, process, and socio-cultural approaches to writing. According to the product approach focus is laid on the final product of writing while attention is placed on form and correctness. According to the process approach focus shifts to the actual process of writing which embraces pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and final drafting.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 2 presented a review of pertinent literature, an outline of the theoretical framework and general strategies adapted in response to literacy problems. Chapter 3 presents this study's research methodology. The chapter begins with the research aims, objectives and an overview of the research design employed in this study. The research methodology, sampling method and the research instruments used for the data collection follow. Reliability and validity measures are discussed. The chapter concludes with discussion on ethics and statistical tests employed.

3.1 RESEARCH AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN

The aim of this study was to examine how educators adapt their teaching strategies to suit the needs of learners experiencing barriers to learning. To fulfil this purpose, it was necessary to review literature on adapted teaching strategies in literacy by grade three educators. In order to achieve the above aim, the following objectives were addressed:

- to find out whether educators are able to determine the learning needs of their learners
- to investigate how educators determine the learning needs of their learners
- to determine how the adapted teaching strategies used by educators enable learning
- to determine the difficulties that educators experience in adapting their teaching strategies to suit learners' needs.

A research design is a plan or structured framework of how one intends conducting the research process in order to solve the research problem and to expand knowledge and understanding (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:55; 2002:647; De Vos, 2002: 137; Leedy, 1997:93). McMillian and Schumacher (2001:599) add that a research design is the plan that describes the conditions and procedures for collecting and analysing data through a clear and well-developed research plan so that the researcher maximizes validity and minimizes errors (Mouton, 2002: 107).

According to White (2000) the approach a researcher uses to conduct the research is called research methodology.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology in a research study is determined by both the nature of the data collected and the problem under investigation, this data can be either verbal, non-verbal or numerical (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). They further explain that when verbal or non-verbal data is collated, the methodology tends to be qualitative, and when it is numerical data, then it is quantitative methodology. In a wider context, methodology refers to a design which the researcher devises for data collection and the analysis procedures to investigate the research problem (McMillan and Schumacher, 2008).

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:38) state that there are advantages and disadvantages of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. They say that a comprehensive study should use both methods, and this study is no exception. Given the weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative approaches when used in isolation, a decision was made to employ both. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) assert that using both qualitative and quantitative methods could contribute to a better understanding of the concepts in this study.

This study utilized both qualitative as well as quantitative methodology as it collected both verbal data and numerical data. Once a study combines both qualitative and quantitative techniques to any degree, the study is no longer considered a mono method design (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2005), it is considered a mixed methods design. Creswell (2002), and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2000) explain mix method design as a procedure for collecting, analysing and 'mixing' both quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research process within a single study to understand a research problem more completely. Creswell (2002) states further that the rationale for mixing is that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient by themselves to capture the trends and details of the situation, such as the use of adapted teaching strategies by grade 3 educators in literacy.

3.2.1 Mixed methods approach

A mixed methods approach uses qualitative and quantitative approaches in combination in order to provide a better understanding of the research problems and complex phenomenon than either approach alone (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007:5; 2010) as usage of more than one method increases the validity of the results according to (Merriam, 1998; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) describe quantitative research as being able to produce data that would be quantifiable and unbiased as they generate public knowledge which de-personalises the data. Matveev (2002) explains qualitative research as research that achieves a more realistic feel of the world that cannot be experienced in numerical data and statistical analysis used in quantitative research and offers a holistic view of the phenomena under investigation. A quantitative approach to research has the following general characteristics: numerical data with tables and graphs are used to explain the trends in a discussion of the findings; the questionnaire is generally the main instrument used for data collection; structured interviews and observation may be employed; and data are analysed statistically (McKay and Marshall, 2001). The quantitative method is predominantly used as a synonym for any data collection technique (questionnaire) or data analysis procedure (such as graphs or statistics) that generates or uses non-numerical data (Creswell, 2003).

Qualitative research commonly uses interviews, focus groups, case studies, or a holistic research method to ascertain the outcomes (Patton, 2002). In addition, says Patton (2002), the data is collected through interviews and observations and are analysed according to themes and patterns. Bryman (1998) states that qualitative research tends to combine participant observation and unstructured, in-depth interviewing (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003). In general, qualitative research enables the generation of theories, while quantitative research enables the testing of theories (Hoy and Hoy, 2009:1).

In this study the researcher used the qualitative findings in the form of responses to open-ended questions and comments on the questionnaire and from the semi-structured interviews to help clarify the quantitative results. Quantitative research was carried out through the administration of questionnaires to the educators.

The data collection instruments are discussed in detail later in this chapter. A very important aspect in research methodology is sampling.

3.3 SAMPLING APPROACH

Nieuwenhuis (2007) notes that sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study. Maree (2007) adds that the reason for using a portion of the population for a study is for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest source of information to answer the research questions. He also states that samples may also result in more accurate information than might have been obtained if one had studied the entire population. With a sample, time, money and effort can be concentrated on the smaller group to produce better results (Schnetler, 1993). According to Neelankavil (2007:234), the sampling process comprises several steps when developing a sample: define the target population; obtain a list of the population; select a sample frame; determine the sample methods; develop a procedure for selecting the sample units; determine the sample size; and draw the sample.

3.3.1 Target population

The target population is the entire group a researcher is interested in or the group about which the researcher wishes to draw conclusions (McMillan and Schumacher, 2008). Neelankavil (2007:234) explains the target population as the total number of elements of a specific population relevant to the research project; hence the target population in this study was all grade 3 educators in the Northern KwaZulu-Natal region. The researcher chose to carry out her study in the northern KwaZulu-Natal region as she is a junior primary educator working in this region and she is aware of the literacy problems the grade 3 learners experience at schools.

After defining the target population, Neelankavil (2007:240) states that the researcher has to compile a list of all the elements from which the sample may be drawn which is called the sampling frame. In this study the sampling frame comprised 100 primary schools in the northern KwaZulu-Natal region. After defining the sampling frame, the researcher proceeded to select a sampling method to draw the sample.

3.3.2 The sampling method

The sample from the population was selected using a random sampling method as this increases the probability of maximizing inclusion of all units of the population (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:175). In simple random sampling every participant has an equal chance to participate in the study (LoBiondo-Wood, 2005). To determine the sample size therefore, simple random sampling was used in this research (Babbie, 2010).

Fowler (2002: 14) clarifies that one of the forms of random sampling is picking names out of a hat, hence, when drawing a sample out of a hat, members of a population are selected one at a time, independent of one another and without replacement; once a unit is selected, it has no further chance to be selected. For the purposes of this study, the researcher wrote the names of the 100 primary schools in the northern KwaZulu-Natal region on a sheet of paper which was then cut into strips, each name was then tightly folded, put into a box and mixed thoroughly. The blindfolded researcher pulled out the names of the first fifteen schools which then formed the sample (Castillo, 2009).

3.3.3 Sample size

Quantitative studies usually use sufficient participants as the aim is mainly to achieve statistical significance and to identify differences between the groups (Polit and Beck, 2008). To determine the sample size, Babbie's (Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 211) sampling table was used where everyone in the population was numbered; thereafter a table of random numbers was used to select a sample from the population. Members whose numbers were chosen made up the sample. According to Babbie, a sampling ratio of 1:15 may be used. The sampling ratio is defined as the proportion of elements in a population that are selected to form a sample and the corresponding formula to calculate sampling ratio is: $\text{Sampling ratio} = \frac{\text{sample size}}{\text{population size}}$ (Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 213). In this research the target population was the 100 primary schools in the KwaZulu-Natal region, using the sampling ratio of 1:15 resulted in a sample size of fifteen schools and 30 educators since each school had an average of two to three grade 3 junior primary educators. When the researcher went to the selected schools she asked the management to select two educators from the grade three to complete the questionnaire.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is the precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to the research purpose (Burns and Grove, 2009:43). The research can be conducted appropriately only if the data collection method: has been established correctly. According to Jackson (1994), two types of data collection methods and they are primary and secondary data collection methods.

3.4.1 Primary and secondary data

Primary data are obtained by the researcher who has conducted the study (Saracho, 2006) and usually takes the form of surveys and interviews. In this study primary data was collected by questionnaires which were administered to educators.

Secondary data is primarily collected through desk-based research. As Creswell (2003) states, secondary data, which is an unobtrusive data collection method, depends on the location of related and provable, previously published academic studies and theories. The researcher should critically evaluate the data in order to make sure that it is valid and reliable. This means that the researcher should only use secondary data which exists in academic research and articles which are verifiable and well-referenced.

In this study, primary data was collected from the questionnaires that were administered to educators in the selected schools. Secondary sources identified and collected information from primary sources (Ferrance, 2000) and were frequently found in journals, literature reviews, internet sites and books.

The data collection methods employed in this study, namely, the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews are now be discussed in greater detail.

3.5 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaires are written instruments that require respondents to write out their answers to a set of questions (Dornyei, 2003). Further, the questionnaire minimizes unfairness on the side of the researcher and the respondents (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). In order to determine whether a questionnaire is well designed the researcher must take certain principles into consideration. Hence it is necessary to draw a distinction between questionnaire, question format, question order, types of

questions, formulation of questions and the validity and reliability of the questions (McMillan and Schumacher, 2008).

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:154), and Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (2002:505) define a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection that consists of a standardized series of questions relating to the research topic that must be answered in writing by participants. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2002:176-7) add that the advantages of using questionnaires are: they are inexpensive and easy to administer; lots of data can be obtained easily; respondents can complete them without divulging their identity; comparison and analysis are simple; they can be administered to many people; there are many sample questionnaires that exist for reference.

3.5.1 Layout of the Questionnaire

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:338), the appearance of the questionnaire is vitally important. It must look easy, attractive and interesting rather than complicated, unclear and boring. In this study the researcher used the following layout as proposed by Balnaves and Caputi (2001: 84):

- a general introduction in the form of a covering letter explained the purpose of the study and assured respondents of confidentiality and anonymity;
- clear instructions informed respondents about how questions were to be answered; and the questions were ordered to begin with the simpler questions and progress to the complex questions.

The questionnaire was sub-divided into the following sections:

Section A consisted of five questions and dealt with the biographical information of the participants, namely age, number of years of teaching in the foundation phase, and gender of the teacher. The demographic information contained four questions while one question was on the number of workshops attended by respondents.

Section B consisted of questions relating to the use of adapted teaching strategies by grade 3 educators. This section was made up of 15 questions and contained both open and closed ended questions and was used to collect data about the educators' experiences in adapting their teaching strategies.

3.5.2 Closed Questions

The main feature of closed or restricted questions is that respondents are expected to choose from a limited number of response alternatives (Ruane, 2004: 131). The researcher provides a list of possible responses and the respondent selects the most appropriate response (Friesen, 2010). Closed questions enabled the researcher to present alternatives for the respondents to choose from according to what was closest to their own positions or views (Breakwell, Harmond and Fife-Schaw, 1995:178). The researcher believes that such questions help to clarify the intent of the question for the respondent and are easily coded to produce meaningful results for analysis. In this study closed questions were used mainly in Section A, which focussed on educators' biographical details and demographics of their schools.

3.5.3 Open-ended questions

Open-ended questions introduce a topic and then allow respondents to answer these questions in their own words, thereby encouraging flexibility and imposing fewer restrictions on the participants (Gravetter and Forzano, 2008: 362). Ruane (2004: 131) recommends the use of open-ended questions when investigating a complex topic and when eliciting respondents' views on this topic. Open-ended questions allow respondents to convey their opinions to their satisfaction, without having to choose one of the several responses usually found in close-ended questions (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister and Zechmeister, 2006:156). The researcher used open-ended questions mostly in Sections B to get educators to describe the different adapted teaching strategies that they are using to overcome challenges in the classroom.

The questionnaire was pilot tested by the researcher before being administered at the selected schools.

3.5.4 Pilot testing of the questionnaire

A pilot study is a mini-version of a full scale study or a trial run done in preparation of the complete study. It is pre-testing of research instruments including questionnaires or interview schedules (Polit and Baker, 2002:33-34; Van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001:1). According to De Vos (2002:410); Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001:121) the main aim of a pilot study is to provide information which can contribute to the success of the research as a whole.

The purpose of pilot testing in this research was to refine the questions on the questionnaire in order to ensure that there was no ambiguity or bias so that the measuring instrument could be fine-tuned for data collection. The researcher had the instruments appraised and amended by experts in the area of study. The pilot testing of the questionnaire was done at the school where the researcher is currently teaching. The researcher used five educators to conduct the pilot study. Through the pilot study, ambiguities in the questions were asked and eliminated before the actual study. After the questionnaires were pilot tested, the researcher went to the selected schools to administer the questionnaires with the respective educators.

3.5.5 Administration of the questionnaire

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007: 344) there are two types of self-administered questionnaires: those that are completed in the presence of the researcher, and those that are completed without the presence of the researcher. In this study the respondents were allowed to fill in the questionnaires at their leisure in the absence of the researcher because according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) the questionnaire allows respondents time to read through the questions and give thought to their answers.

The researcher first sought permission from the principals to hand out the questionnaires to the selected schools. The researcher visited the 15 schools selected and gave out the questionnaires to the two educators per school during the breaks, in the mornings and some after school. The researcher asked the educators to answer the questionnaire honestly and advised that it would be picked up a week later. A covering letter (Appendix B) and Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) were attached to the questionnaire informing educators of the purpose of the research study and assuring them of their anonymity and confidentiality. Educators were asked to complete and sign the Informed Consent Form.

3.6 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

According to Maree (2007), semi-structured interviews are commonly used in research projects to corroborate data emerging from other data sources. They usually require the participants to answer a set of predetermined questions and allow for the probing and clarification of answers. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) add that probes enable the interviewer to ask respondents to extend, elaborate, add to,

provide detail for, clarify or qualify their response, thereby addressing richness, depth of response, comprehensiveness and honesty that are some of the hallmarks of successful interviewing. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study only in cases where responses on the questionnaires were incomplete, unclear or required substantiation.

Appointments were set up with the participants to ask only those questions (from the questionnaire) that required more information or where questions were not adequately completed. No other questions were asked. Only where necessary, follow-up or probing questions were asked (based on the original question) so that the necessary information could be obtained.

An important aspect of any research is the validity and reliability of the research instrument.

3.7 VALIDITY

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2001) an instrument is valid if it measures what it is intended to measure and accurately achieves the purpose for which it was designed. In this study the researcher used a questionnaire as a research instrument. According to Gravetter and Forzano (2008:157), questions regarding the validity of research are traditionally grouped into two categories: external and internal validity. External validity concerns the extent to which the results from a sample can be generalized to a population and internal validity refers to the measures of accuracy of the results. The researcher shadowed the following steps according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:258), Vockell and Usher (1995:242), Wiersma (2000:4-5) in that questionnaires were used anonymously. This measuring tool was constructed in such a way that it measured what it was supposed to measure and also how well and effectively it measured (Leedy, 1997:32,221). As advocated by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:17,100), and Wiersma (2000:6-7) the questionnaire was used under the correct protocol.

3.8 RELIABILITY

Statistical procedures that are acceptable and appropriate were used by the researcher to ensure the consistency with which the measuring instruments were implemented. The research followed ethical measures and testing was conducted by the researcher only (Wiersma, 2000:8-9). Pilot testing assisted in ensuring that a

reliable questionnaire was constructed as the focus was on the clarity of the questions and the general format of the questionnaire during the pilot process in order to ensure reliability (Flink, 2006).

Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were used to assess the reliability of the questionnaires that were developed for this study. An Alpha coefficient of 0.70 and larger is deemed as acceptable (Bhandari and Joensson, 2009).

Table 1 (below) is a summary of Cronbach's Alpha reliability scores for this study. Reliability is computed by taking several measurements on the same subjects.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.840	9

The Cronbach's alpha value exceeded the accepted value. This indicates that the questionnaire achieved what it was set out to measure. It also indicates that there was a high level of consistent scoring by the respondents.

3.9 ETHICS

As stated by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007), ethics is defined as the appropriateness of one's behaviour in relation to the right of those who become the subject of one's work, or affected by it. The main ethical issues as espoused by Babbie and Mouton (2001:522); Polit and Beck (2004:143) were considered by the researcher when conducting this study. When conducting the research, they say, the researcher has an obligation to the participants to protect their rights to informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality by making the questionnaire anonymous.

The researcher ensured that the participants' rights to participate in the study or not was respected. In this study the researcher clearly explained the purpose of the study and the research procedure to the educators before asking them to sign the Informed Consent Form. They were also made aware that they could withdraw from the study if they so wished.

Before commencing with this research study, the researcher obtained permission from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture District office in Pietermaritzburg (*Appendix A*) as well as the principals and educators of the selected schools. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Durban University of Technology for the educator questionnaire.

3.10 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

According to Muijs (2004: 85), the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is a commonly used statistical data analysis software package in educational research. Cormack (2000:413) explains that SPSS is a computer program that can carry out both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, present information in tabular or graphical form, and access information from existing data sources such as databases or spread sheets and create output that is ready for inclusion in final reports.

3.10.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics are used to present quantitative descriptions in a manageable form. In this study there are measures involved with reference to teaching strategies adapted by grade 3 educators. Descriptive statistics were useful to simplify large amounts of data in a sensible way. Descriptive statistics involves the use of percentage/frequency tables, mean, median and percentage presented in bar graphs to represent various factors involved in the present study (Hanke, 2006).

3.10.2 Chi-square

According to Sharp (1999) in order to determine whether there is a significant difference between the expected and the observed frequencies in one or more categories, chi-square tests were used, thereafter to run this test. The following assumptions are made: firstly, the data should be in quantitative, one or more categories, independent observations, adequate sample size (at least 10), simple random sample, data in frequency form and finally all observations must be used. In order to report the significance test, chi-square value, degree of freedom and p values are used. Since the number of the participants was small (30 educators), the chi-square test was applied to identify any existing relationships among the questionnaire variables (Salkind, 2008).

3.10.3 Pearsons Correlation

This is a statistical test used to assess the relationship between two continuous variables. Positive values indicate a directly proportional relationship between the variables and a negative value indicates an inverse relationship, a value greater than 0.8 indicates a positive correlation (Field, 2009).

3.10.4 Content analysis

Content analysis is a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material in order to identify patterns, themes or biases (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:142; Gomm 2004:247; Babbie, 2005:328; Breakwell Hammond and Feife-Schaw, 1995:288; Zechmeister and Zechneister, 2006:211; and Neuman, 2006:322). Payne and Payne (2004:51) assert that content analysis was originally a quantitative way of evaluating written texts. They explain that this was gradually extended to apply to literature, autobiographies and other documents, with the emphasis shifting to qualitative priorities like interpretation and subjective meaning. As it stands, Neuman (2006:323) observes that there are now quantitative and qualitative versions of content analysis.

3.11 SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher explained the research methodology, research design, data collection approach and research instruments that were used in this study. The sample choice as well as ethical considerations, limitations and validity issues were also discussed. The next chapter presents the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

In the previous chapter the research approach, the aims and objectives, the data collection approach, and the instruments used in the research were discussed. This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected by means of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews which were designed to investigate the use of adapted teaching strategies by grade 3 educators in the KwaZulu-Natal region. As stated previously the questionnaire was administered to two educators per school at 15 schools making up a sample of 30 educators. The researcher received 100% returns of completed questionnaires. This was achieved by following up with each participant to complete the questionnaire. The data collected from the responses were categorised into themes and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 17.0. The results are discussed and presented thematically in the form of graphs, cross tabulations and other figures.

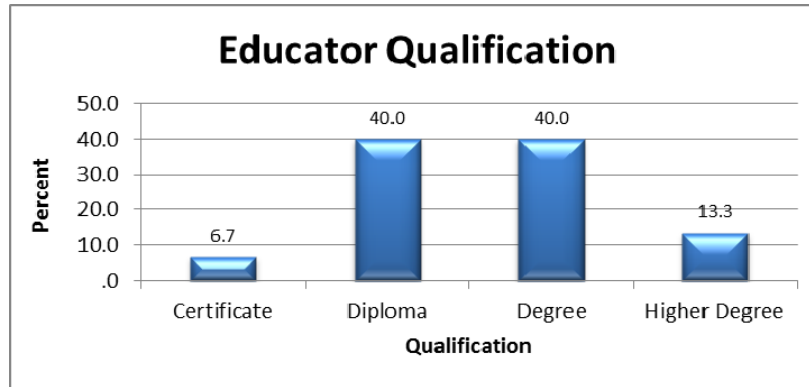
Analyses of the results are presented in two major sections namely: biographical data of educators and discussion of themes that arose from the findings. The following themes were identified from the data collected: professional development; literacy levels in schools; problems in literacy experienced by grade 3 learners and adapted teaching strategies used by grade 3 educators.

4.1 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

This section provides the biographical details of the grade 3 educators used in this study, the sample comprised of 30 foundation phase educators in the northern KwaZulu-Natal region.

Figure 1 (overleaf) illustrates that an equal percentage (40.0%) of respondents had either a diploma or a degree in teaching, however 7% had a certificate and 13.3% had a higher degree in education. It is therefore important to note that most of the respondents were suitably qualified to improve the quality of education and increase literacy levels at their schools.

Figure 1: Qualification of Educators



Rice (2003) agrees that teachers who have an advanced degree in their teaching subjects will have a positive impact on their learner’s achievement. Regarding the 7% of the respondents that have a certificate in teaching, according to the DoE (2011) a high quality professional development is essential to increase educators’ knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs so that they may enable all students to learn at high levels.

Figure 2: Age of respondents

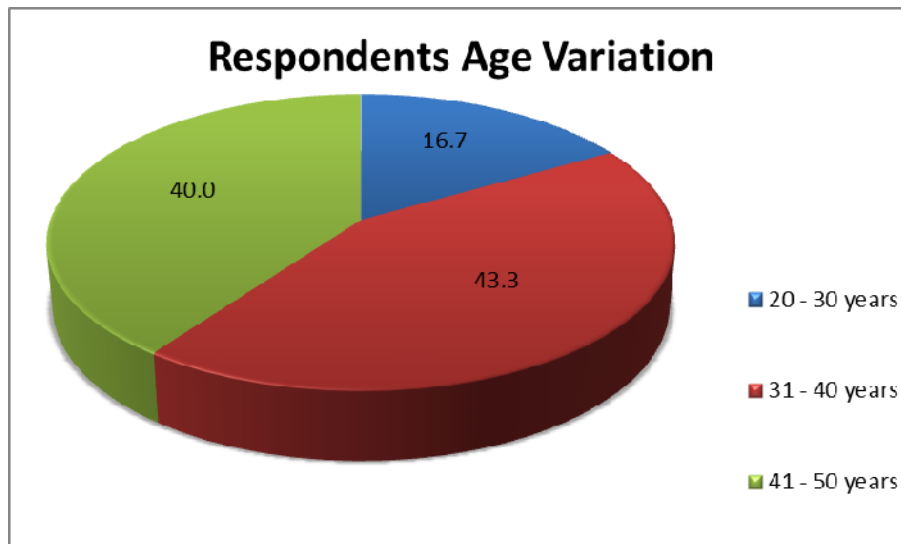


Figure 2 (above) shows that 16.7% of the respondents were between the ages of 20–30 years, while 40% of the respondents were between 41 and 45 years, and 43.3% were between the ages of 31 and 40. The data indicates that the majority of the educators in the sample were older, more experienced educators that would probably ensure effective implementation of teaching strategies. According to Mayer

and Rodriguez (2011), older teachers have more experience than younger teachers and know how to manage a classroom better. She added that too many younger teachers are too friendly with their students and worry too much about being liked.

The ages in Figure 2 (above) implies that there were more experienced and mature educators. All the respondents in this study were female as there are very few male educators in the foundation phase. The male educators approached by the researcher to participate in this study, declined to do so. The researcher did not ask for any reasons but simply proceeded to select female respondents in their place. The researcher believes that female educators have more patience in teaching learners in the foundation phase. According to Sarah Cassidy who is an education correspondent (2008), teaching is becoming an increasingly female dominated profession. Former South African education secretary Alan Johnson (Cassidy, 2008) announced that there is a need for more male educators in primary schools so that they could be seen as male role models.

Table 2: Age and qualification

		Highest Qualification				Total
		Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Higher Degree	
Age	20 - 30 Count	1	1	2	1	5
	years % of Total	3.3%	3.3%	6.7%	3.3%	16.7%
	31 - 40 Count	1	7	5	0	13
	years % of Total	3.3%	23.3%	16.7%	.0%	43.3%
	41 - 50 Count	0	4	5	3	12
	years % of Total	.0%	13.3%	16.7%	10.0%	40.0%
Total	Count	2	12	12	4	30
	% of Total	6.7%	40.0%	40.0%	13.3%	100.0%

Table 2 (above) indicates that the youngest grouping (20 – 30 years) formed 16.7% of the sample. Of the 13.3% that had a higher degree, 3.3% came from this age group. The remaining 10.0% were from the 41 – 50 years age group. According to Table 2 (above) there were no unqualified educators, hence 100% of the educators

were qualified to teach. The respondents in the 20-30 year group were recently qualified educators compared to the 31-40 year group, and the 41-50 year group who were more highly qualified. This means that some educators received their training pre-1994, while others were trained post-1994. This enabled perspectives from educators educated during and after the apartheid era. According Keevy (2005), prior to 1994, South Africa's education and training system was starkly divided according to racial lines. While most white learners were privileged, African, Indian and Coloured learners were disadvantaged by the Nationalist Government. He further states that schools, colleges and universities also reflected the national directive for segregation, hence most black teachers started teaching without even completing their own secondary schooling much less the tertiary education that they needed. A significant component of the teaching work force therefore was either un- or under-qualified. In many cases, teachers had no professional qualifications and limited subject-specific training, as noted by Mays (2004).

After 1994 the South African education and training system underwent significant changes. In order to address this problem, medium-term national programmes such as the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) were developed to allow such teachers accelerated access to further and higher education and training (Welch, 2001). Today South Africa is a vibrant country with a growing economy that continues to place great demands on its education and training system.

Figure 3: Teaching experience of educators at the Foundation Phase Level

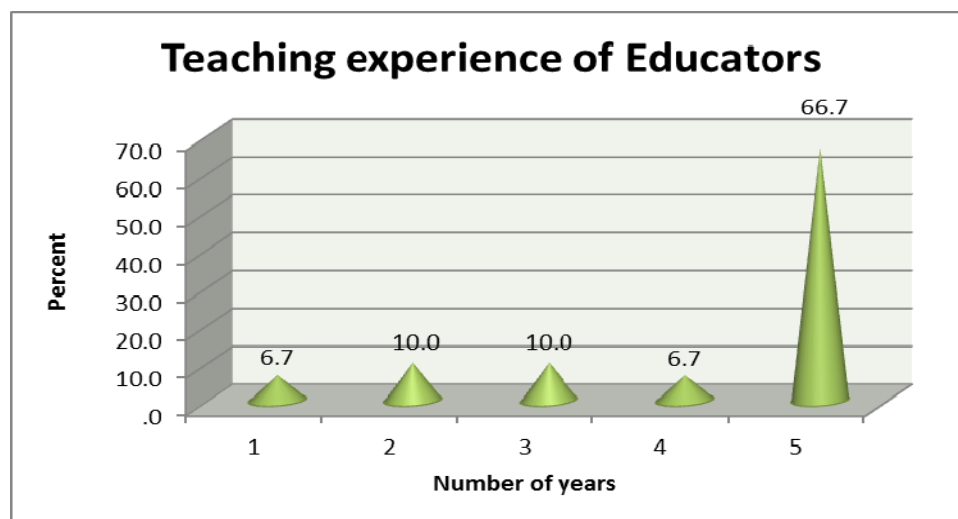


Figure 3 (above) shows that two-thirds (66.7%) of the respondents were teaching at the foundation phase level for more than 5 years, and a little more than a quarter of the respondents (26.7%) had been teaching at this level for under 5 years. As Emory (2011) said, teachers with more teaching experience and practical proven teaching methods are what we need to keep our education running smoothly and under control. They are, therefore, appropriate and are keeping our students captivated and interested in learning. Without them, our education would be in chaos, and it seems like they are what we rely on. On the other hand (Mayer and Rodriguez, 2011) posits that younger teachers are newer and have modern ideas and teaching methods, and that they therefore keep learners interested and entertained during lessons. This study benefitted from both perspectives.

Of major concern for the researcher is that 26.7% of the respondents had taught for less than five years which means that the quality of the teaching as well the experience is low. This implies that understanding of how to adapt teaching strategies accordingly may be difficult for them. According to Zau and Rice (2003), teachers' experience significantly correlates with students' achievement. A report by the Centre for Public Education (cited in Kriek, 2005) showed that there was a positive correlation between teaching experience and higher students' achievement. They found that teachers with more than five years teaching experience were more effective than those without experience. Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005) also found that students of experienced teachers achieved better results than those taught by novice teachers. Darling-Hammond (2000) established that students taught by teachers with less than five years of experience had lower levels of achievement.

Figure 4: Literacy development workshop in the last 5 years



Figure 4 (above) reflects that nearly three-quarters (73.3%) of the respondents indicated that they had been to a literacy development workshop within the last 5 years, whereas (26.7%) had not attended any such workshops. Professional learning has a great impact on improving practice and increasing student learning (DoE, 2011). This implies that some educators (26.7%) did not improve or upgrade their knowledge of academic content and teaching skills in the last five years in order for effective teaching and learning to take place. The researcher is therefore in agreement with Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love and Stiles (1998) who believe that workshops are opportunities offered to practising teachers to develop new knowledge, skills and approaches and dispositions to improve their effectiveness in their classroom. It must be noted though that this 26.7% were unfortunate in that training needed by all foundation phase educators of a school were being reserved for a chosen few to represent all foundation phase educators.

4.2 THEMATIC PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Braun and Clarke (2000:79) define the term thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It includes searching for themes across a data set to find repeated patterns of meaning and a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set. They argue further that thematic analysis is a flexible approach and can be used in a way similar to grounded theory where it is data-driven using an inductive approach, but it can also be driven by the researcher's interests. This study followed the guide developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) who described the following steps of using thematic analysis: familiarizing the researcher with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes and defining and naming themes.

The themes generated were:

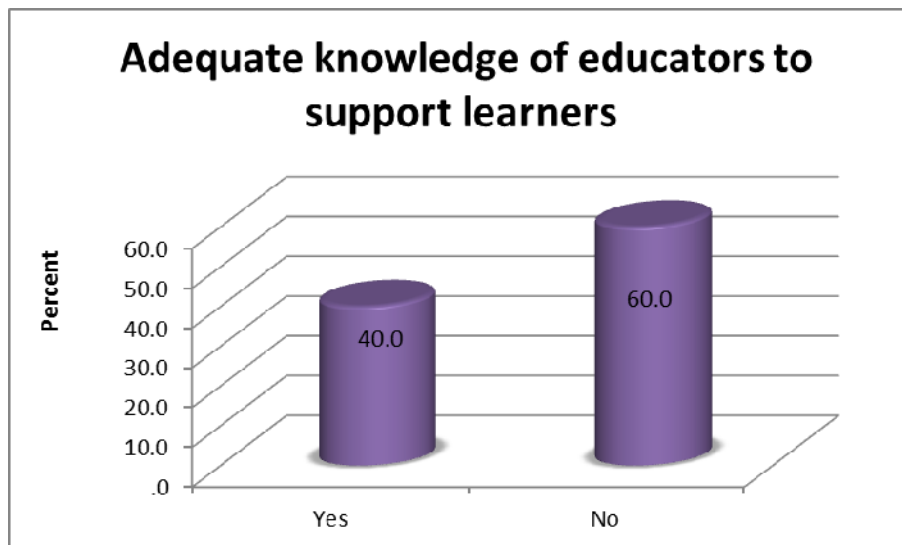
- Professional development: knowledge and skills essential to be able to determine the learner's needs and how they determine the learning needs of learners.
- Literacy levels in schools: the low literacy levels at schools and how to improve literacy levels.
- Literacy problems: literacy problems experienced by the grade 3 learners.

- Adapted teaching strategies used by educators: adapted literacy strategies used by the grade 3 educators.

4.2.1 Theme One: Professional Development

According to the Department of Education (2011) research has shown educator quality to be the most important influence upon student achievement. High quality professional development is essential to increase educators' knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs so that they may enable all students to learn at high levels. Professional development that is most effective in improving educator practice is results-oriented, data driven, constructivist in nature and job embedded. Adhami, Johnson, Shayer and Adey (1998) state that Vygotsky's work offers teachers a powerful vehicle for outlining pedagogical approaches that can be taken up at the individual pupil, the class, the department and the whole school level. Just as importantly, the adoption of Vygotskian approaches to teaching and learning of necessity involves the teachers in a process of developing their own thinking, of improving their own lesson planning skills and in encouraging discussion about classroom activities. Figures 5 to 8 (pages 49 to 52) and Table 3 (on page 52) indicate the vital role that professional development plays in the life of an educator.

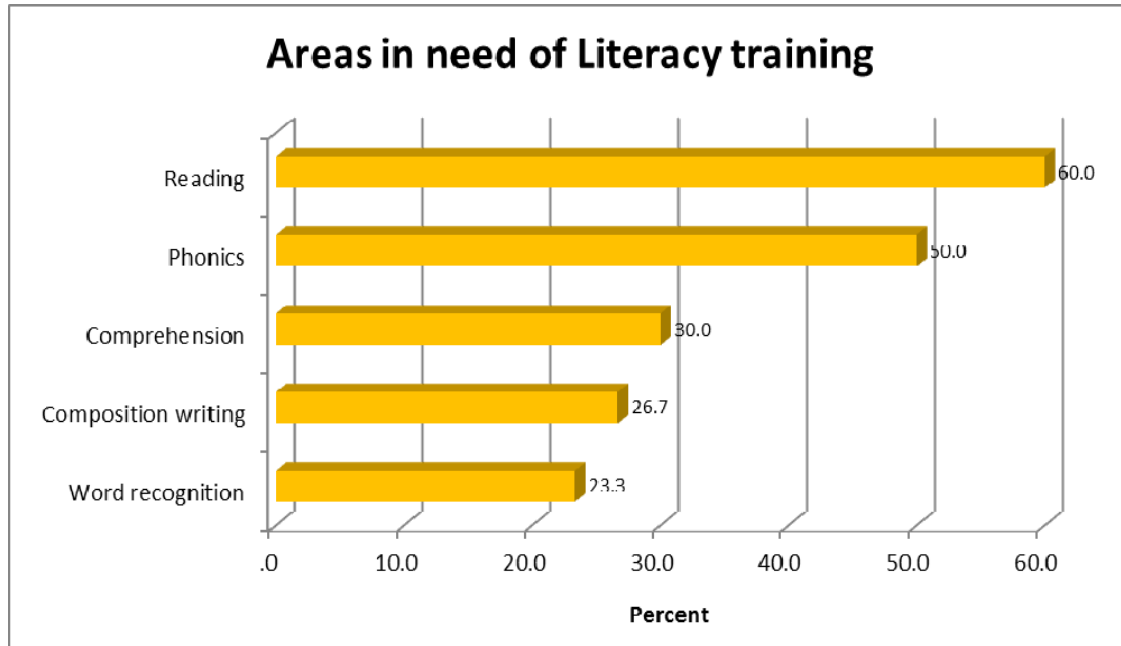
Figure 5: Literacy knowledge of educators



In terms of supporting learners that are experiencing problems with literacy, 40% of the respondents indicated that they have adequate knowledge to support learners, whereas 60% of respondents indicated that they do not have adequate knowledge to

do so. This 60% stated that they need training in certain areas in literacy as indicated in Figure 6 (below).

Figure 6: Literacy training needs identified by teachers

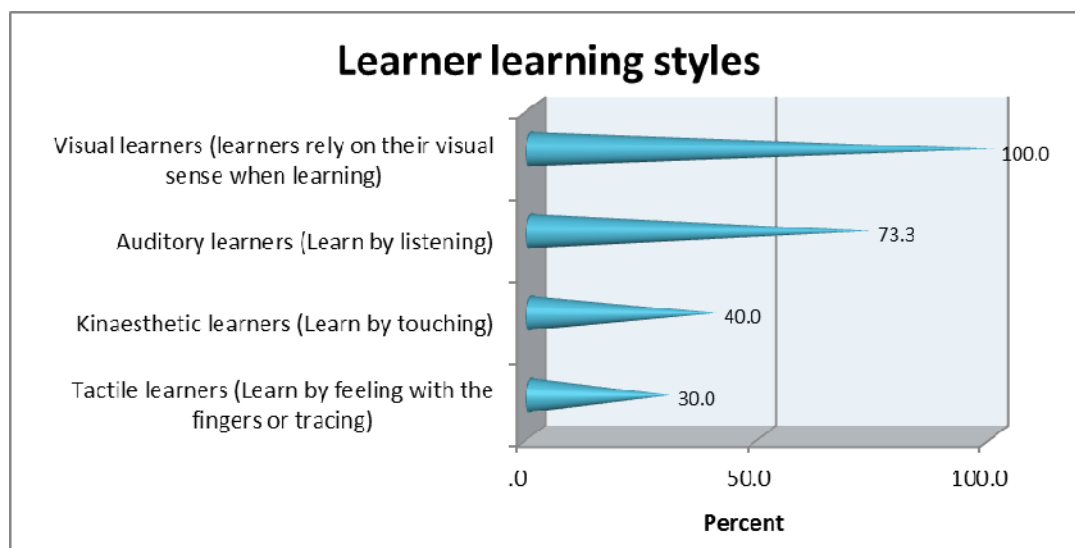


The two most highly ranked training requirements needed by respondents were for reading (60.0%) and phonics (50.0%). The least required training need was for word recognition (23.3%). All these training requirement needs are directly linked to the teaching of reading. Teachers are the key to the successful teaching of reading. The two main elements involved in reading are phonics and word recognition; it is an important building block in the teaching of reading (DoE, 2007). The Department of Education (DoE, 2008).Therefore wants teachers to raise their standards of teaching, with this in mind the National Reading Strategy was implemented as an attempt to promote reading in South Africa. The Department of Education (DoE, 2008) developed the National Reading Strategy with the vision that every South African learner will be a fluent reader, who reads to learn, and reads for enjoyment and achievement.

According to the Department of Education this strategy aimed to promote a nation of life-long readers and life-long learners. In order to do this reading skills need to be developed at an early stage to help learners throughout their academic studies. As

mentioned earlier, teachers play an important role in developing a learner's good reading skills. Teacher training development and support is therefore a key pillar of the National Reading Strategy. It takes as its focus that reading failure begins in early grades (DoE, 2008). In view of the above, the researcher believes that the 60% of the respondents that need training in the areas indicated above in Figure 6 are not implementing the National Reading Strategy efficiently and effectively or have not been adequately trained to do so.

Figure 7: The learning styles of grade three teachers as identified by teachers



All of the respondents indicated that their learners were visual learners. In addition 73.3% indicated that their learners were also auditory. No more than 40% indicated that learners were kinaesthetic and a maximum of 30% indicated that their learners were also tactile. This means that the respondents are aware of their learners' learning styles and should therefore be able to adapt their teaching strategies to suit the needs of their learners. According to Kelly (2011), learners are most effective when they are taught in their personal learning style, while most learners can learn using any one of these styles they have one style for which they show a stronger affinity. The learning styles of learners may be the single most important key to improving their grades. Flemming (2011) agrees that learners can perform better in tests if the way of learning is changed to fit their own personal learning styles. He adds that kinaesthetic and tactile learners can benefit more from role play, using memory games, taking field trips and using flash cards to memorize.

4.2.2 Theme 2: What teachers say about literacy levels in schools

Gains (2010) states that South African school children are lacking in literacy at the early stages of their education, potentially limiting their ability for future academic success and subsequent performance in the workplace. Teachers need to be able to assess their learners' literacy performance in order to target the specific needs of the learner. Table 3 (below) indicates that all but one respondent (96.7%) assessed their learners formally or informally to determine literacy needs. They indicated that they assessed continuously.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage of educators that assess their learners

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	29	96.7
	No	1	3.3
	Total	30	100.0

Figure 8: Teachers' intervention programme for learners experiencing difficulties in literacy

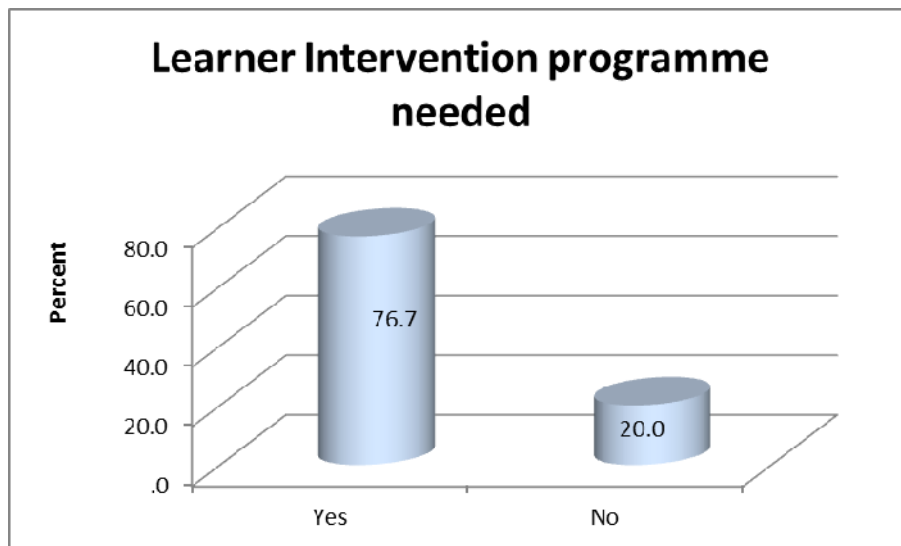


Figure 8 (above) indicates that more than three quarters of the respondents (76.7%) specified that there was a literacy intervention programme at their school, whereas 20% of the respondents have no such programme. The former stated that they assist their learners individually or get a peer to assist and that they keep learners in during

lunch breaks and after school when necessary. In view of the above the researcher believes that the respondents that are keeping their learners during breaks and after school are actually punishing their learners because these learners that need intervention are firstly not satisfying their primary needs by eating their meals. According to Huitt (2007), Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory states that each learner's basic need must be met before moving to the next higher level and secondly they are exhausted after school and will mentally switch off.

Assisting learners individually or getting peers to assist is in keeping with Vygotsky's (1978,1981) zone of proximal development as he regarded the role of 'peer interaction' (Tudge, 1993:159) and the 'adult' (Tudge, 1993:155) as important in that they can 'aid children's development' (Vygotsky, 1978:86). The respondents that indicated they do not have an intervention programme at school said that their learners get additional assistance at home from their parents. Gains (2010) is adamant that intervention at the earliest points of a child's education can provide a lasting boost to his or her academic and life performance, 'what we know is that these programmes work'. He states further that we have to ask if we can afford to allow another generation to pass through the schools when we have the answers to improve education in hand.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Literacy problems in grade 3 at schools

The responses of the grade 3 educators indicated that the grade 3 literacy levels were low. Only 6.7% of the respondents rated the grade 3 literacy level as high, while 23.3% indicated that the literacy rates were low. This is in keeping with the findings of the DoE which conducted literacy and numeracy assessments across all schools in South Africa earlier this year. According to Ms. Angie Motshekga, Minister of Basic Education in South Africa, significant numbers of Grade 3 and Grade 6 learners did not attain the required literacy and numeracy levels in the examinations conducted countrywide in February 2011 (Rooyen, 2011). Of the Grade 3 learners, only 35% were on a proficient literacy level, and only 28% were on a proficient numeracy level.

Table 3 (above) attests to the fact that there are either some or major problems in all areas in literacy. This is explained further in Figure 9 (overleaf).

Figure 9: Problem areas in literacy according to teachers

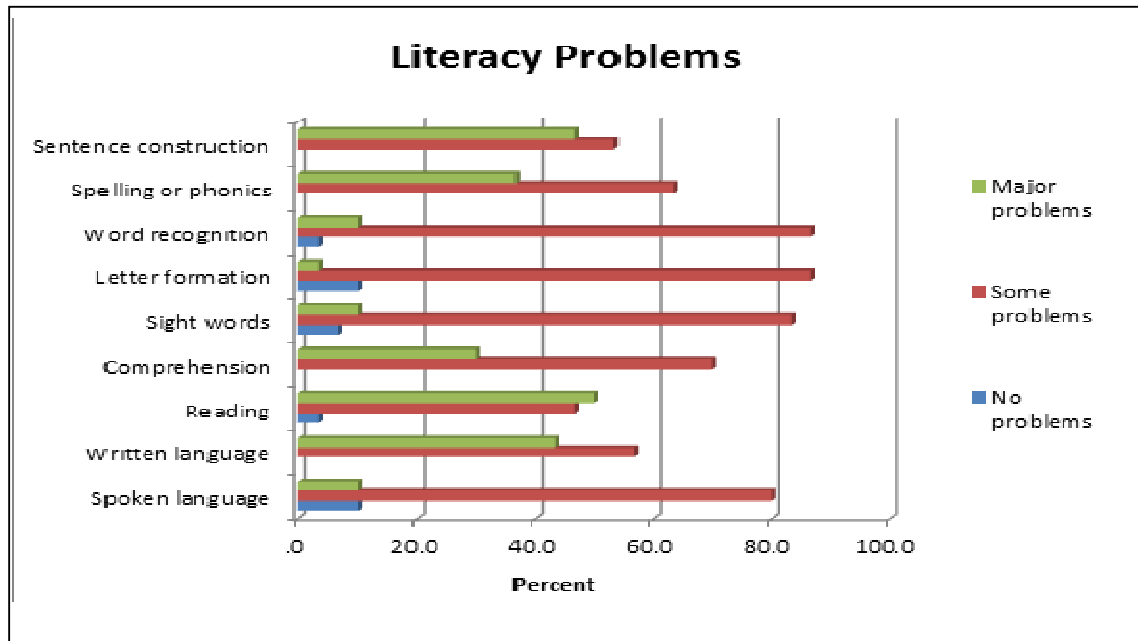


Figure 9 (above) illustrates that respondents indicated that learners had no problems or a maximum of 10% in some areas, for example, for spoken language and letter formation and in some areas 0% values were indicated. The implication is that there are problems in each area, ranging from 90% to 100%. The results imply that the grade 3 learners are experiencing some or major problems in literacy in the following aspects: spoken language, spelling, word recognition, letter formation, sight words, comprehension, and reading and written language.

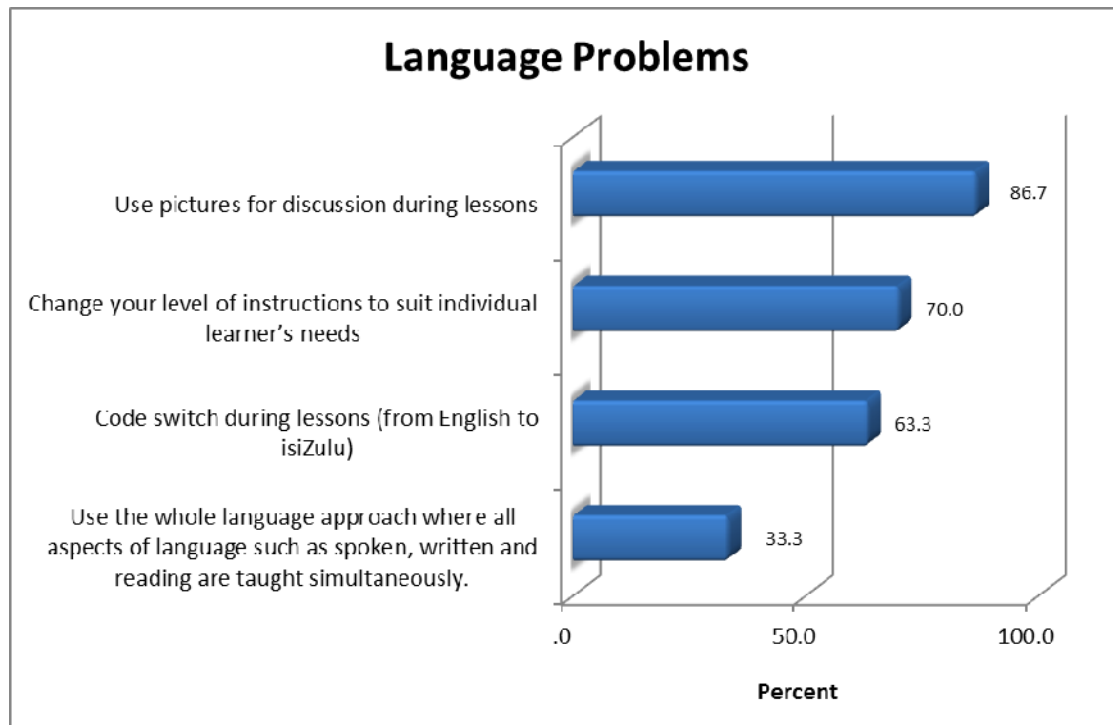
This means that majority of the grade 3 learners are having difficulties in all aspects of literacy at schools. According to Vygotsky, not anything can be taught to any child, only instruction and activity that falls within the zone of proximal development can promote development (Pearson, 2010). It is evident therefore that the learners have no 'real development' and that these functions have 'not yet matured' and are perhaps in 'an embryonic state' (Vygotsky, 1978: 85-86). The literacy problems mentioned above stem from the fact that majority of these learners are English second language learners and their skills in English are not yet developed. Hence, as Agnihotri (1995:3) affirms, the languages at these children speak at home and in the community are not the same as at school so these young age learners are required to negotiate difficult transitions between home and school. While it is challenging for any young child to

enter a new environment, this experience can be terrifying for young children whose home language differs from that of the classroom (Sheets 2002:46).

isiZulu-speaking learners beginning schooling in an English medium school will not only have to contend with the initial transition, but problems may be compounded by other factors which include the culture of the school (Sumaryono and Ortiz 2004:16-1998:38-40); the medium of instruction (Washburn 2008:250), this could result in poor academic achievement.

4.2.4 Theme 4: Adapted Teaching Strategies used by grade 3 educators

Figure 10: Teachers identification of spoken language problems



Most respondents (86.7%) use visual aids such as pictures to assist with discussions during lessons. More than two-thirds (63.3%) also use code switching during lessons, and 70% of the respondents change level of their instructions to suit learners needs. Only 33.3% of the respondents used the whole language approach. The whole language approach as defined by Richard and Schmidt (2002:587) is an approach to first language reading and instruction that has its roots in the elementary school level and refers to the teaching of English as a second language (ESL). This approach sees language as a whole entity. They add that the whole language

stresses learning to read and write naturally, focusing on real communication, and not to follow a piecemeal approach where grammar, vocabularies and word recognition are separated. Furthermore, they mentioned that in this approach language is taught in a holistic manner rather than in an atomistic way. They explain that this method uses all four modes of language and lessons that include four language skills for example, listening, speaking, reading and writing, not only a single skill.

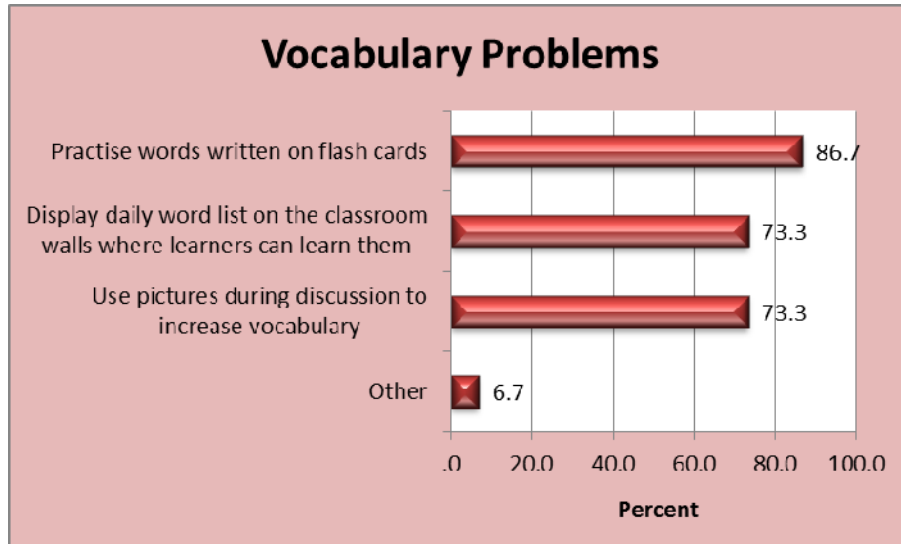
In the whole language approach, language is learned through social interaction. Learners work in pairs or groups, not singly or individually. The collaboration or interaction that occurs between the educator and student, and between student and peers in this approach, can aid the student's development (Vygotsky 1978: 86) when the student learns from this interaction. For Vygotsky, (Shayer and Adey, 2002) development and learning are not the same; they are dynamic processes that result in these gaps of development level that must be addressed through social cooperation and interaction with more capable peers or adults. Provided with appropriate support at the right moments, thus will students in our classrooms be able to achieve tasks that would otherwise be too difficult for them.

Code-switching can be seen as a useful tool for communication and understanding with one's students. Some researchers see code-switching as a means to student comprehension. Martin-Jones (1995) states that it is impossible to compile a comprehensive inventory of the functions of code-switching. Cook (1991) also implies that code-switching can be used within the classroom in order to help emerging bilingual students understand the course material. He continues by saying that there are important differences among children learning a second language at school. Second-language learners have already mastered one language that they bring along to the language classroom (Moon, 2004:1).

The working definition of differentiated instruction to suit the needs of the learners reflects Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, the main tenet of which lies in the social, interactional relationship between teacher and student. Tomlinson (2004) points out that the teacher is the professional in the classroom, an individual who has been

suitably trained to mentor and lead his or her students, using appropriate techniques, assisting each learner to reach his or her potential within the learning context.

Figure 11: Vocabulary problems experienced by learners reported by teachers



To teach vocabulary, respondents frequently used the three common methods illustrated in figure 11 (above). 86.7% ask learners to practise words written on flash cards, 73.3% display daily word lists on the classroom walls where learners can learn them and 73.3% use pictures during discussion to increase vocabulary. The other 6.7% of the respondents use magazines, newspapers and posters. Learners need to have knowledge and understanding of a wide range of words. Moore, Moore, Cunningham and Cunningham (2003) argue that words are used to communicate ideas. Engaging learners in a good deal of reading materials increases their vocabulary. Similarly, the Department of Education (DoE, 2007) mentions that teachers can teach vocabulary through allowing their learners to read regularly or listening to texts that interest them. Teachers need to explain or demonstrate the meaning of the words using charts. They ought to display new words. Høien and Lundberg (2000:188-189) discovered that the vocabulary of many poor readers is poorly developed. If all these methods are used daily during lessons then teaching and learning will improve.

Figure 12: What teachers say about the benefits of story time or reading stories

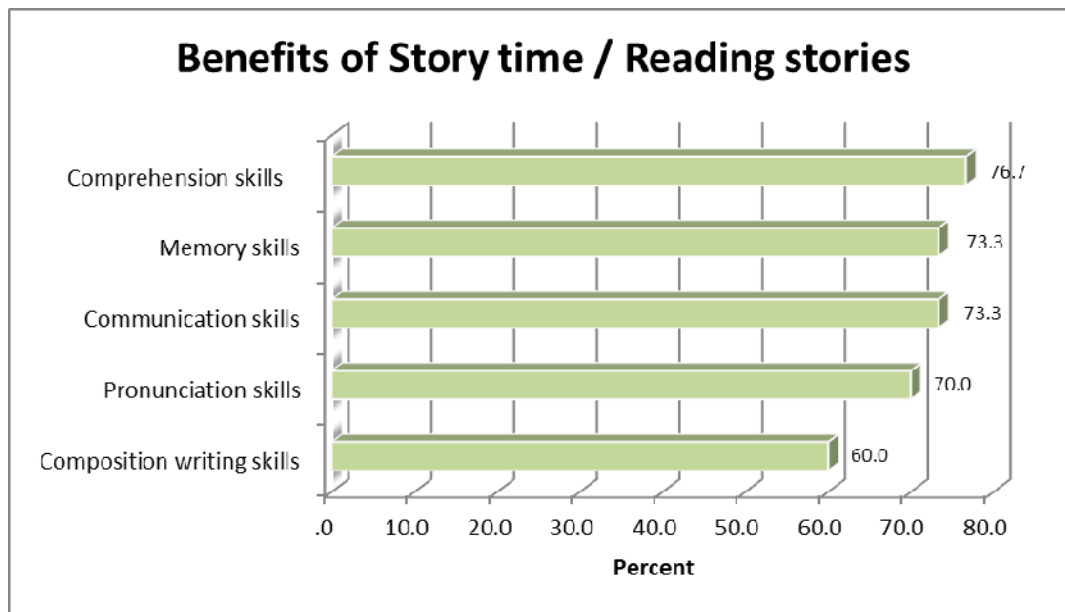
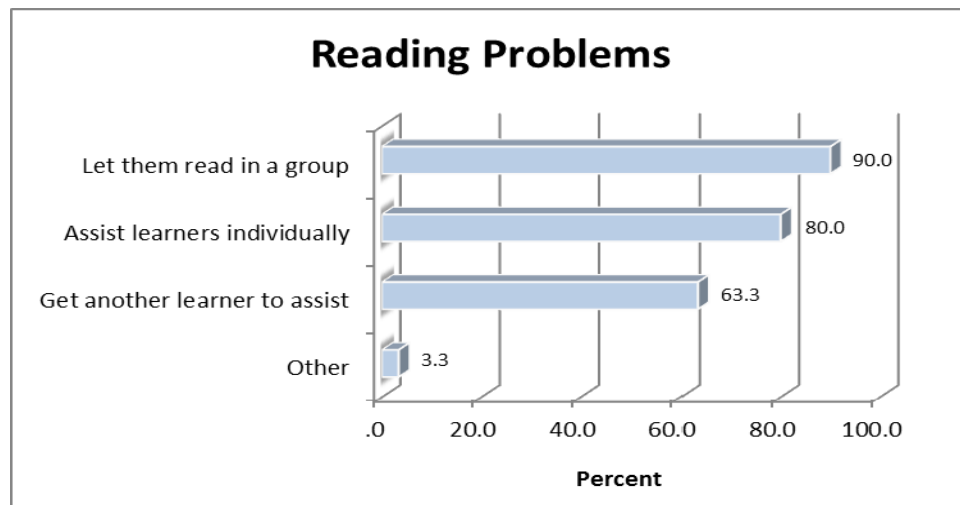


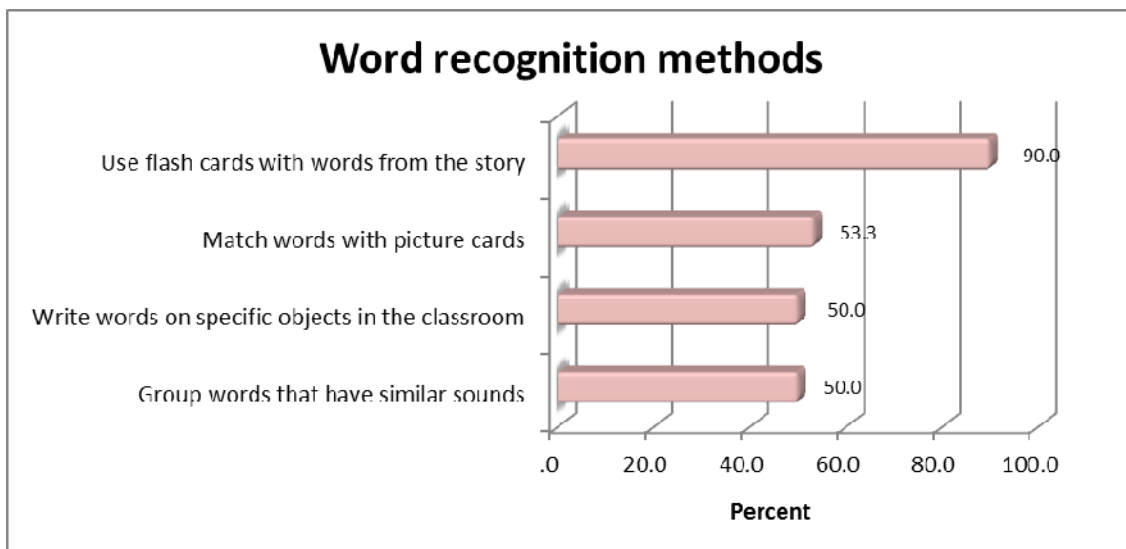
Figure 12 (above) indicates that all of the skills mentioned had high percentage responses ranging from 60% to 76.7% which means that all the respondents were in agreement that story time develops all the skills mentioned. If these skills are not adequately developed then learners will have poor reading skills, poor writing competence and poor comprehension (understanding) which will affect their performance in all learning areas at all grades. According to Sengupta (2011), the importance and benefits of reading to children develops the above mentioned skills.

Figure 13: Teachers' identification of learners' reading problems



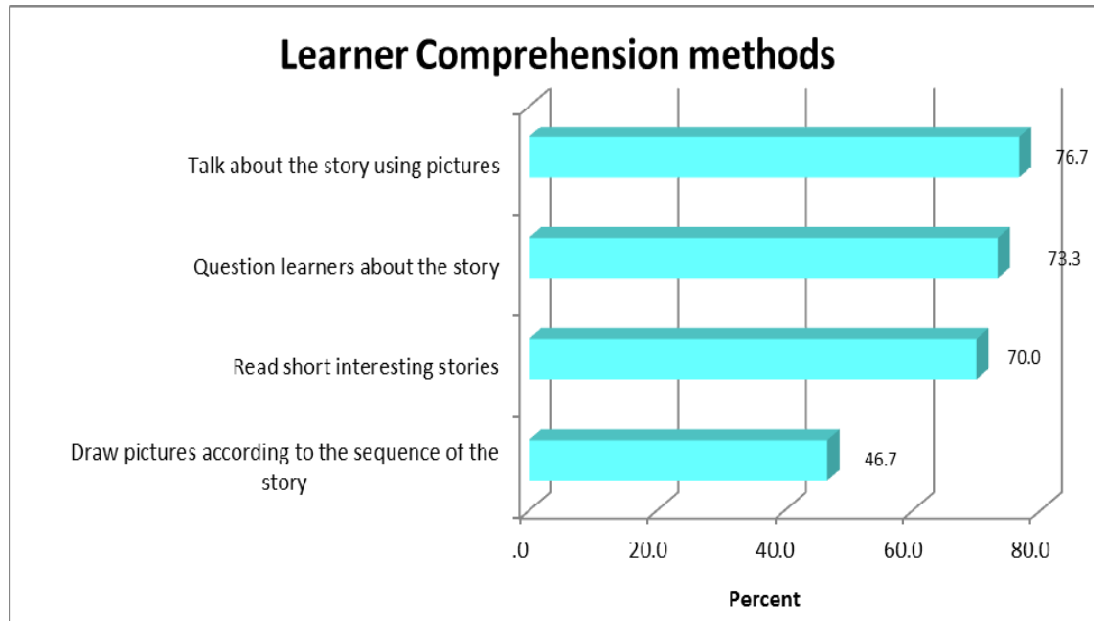
The most commonly used techniques for reading by respondents to assist learners were group reading (90.0%) whereby learners reading with the same ability are grouped together. This was followed by individual help (80%) and lastly peers/ buddy reading (63.3%). According to Vygotsky, working with a buddy/ peer is a scaffolding process through which a teacher or more competent peer helps the student in his or her ZPD as necessary, and tapers off this aid as it becomes unnecessary, much as a scaffold is removed from a building during construction (Balaban, 1995; Shayer and Adey, 2002).

Figure 14: Word recognition teaching approaches used by teachers



The most commonly used method to teach word recognition used by respondents is the use of flash cards with words from the story (90.0%). The other three techniques achieved similar percentages, that is match words with picture cards (53.3%), write words on specific objects in the classroom (50%), and group words that have similar sounds (50%). According to the Department of Education (2007) all these techniques are relevant and within the four stages of reading development namely: the pre-reader stage, the emergent reader stage, the early reader stage, and the developing reader stage. The values above indicate that the educators were trying to use all the techniques to make teaching and learning effective during the lessons.

Figure 15: Learner comprehension problems identified by teachers



At least 70.0% to 76.7% of the respondents used the first three techniques in Figure 15 (above) to improve learner comprehension skills that is talking about the story using pictures (76.7%), question learners about the story (73.3%), and read short interesting stories (70%).

46.7% used pictures drawn according to the sequence of the story to enable comprehension. According to Strickland (2006), teaching sequencing to early learners is important because logical order of thinking is fundamental to reading and everyday life. He adds that some learners cannot comprehend what has been read to them because they may be visual learners which mean that they learn by seeing or drawing. Teachers must adapt their teaching strategies to suit the learners' needs.

Figure 16: How teachers say they assist learners with spelling problems

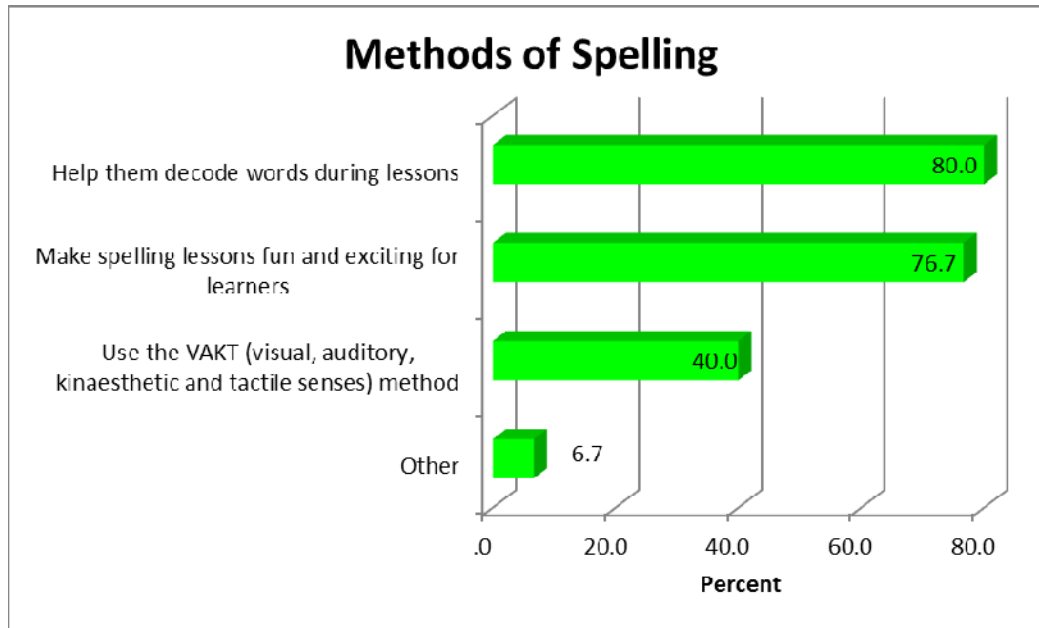
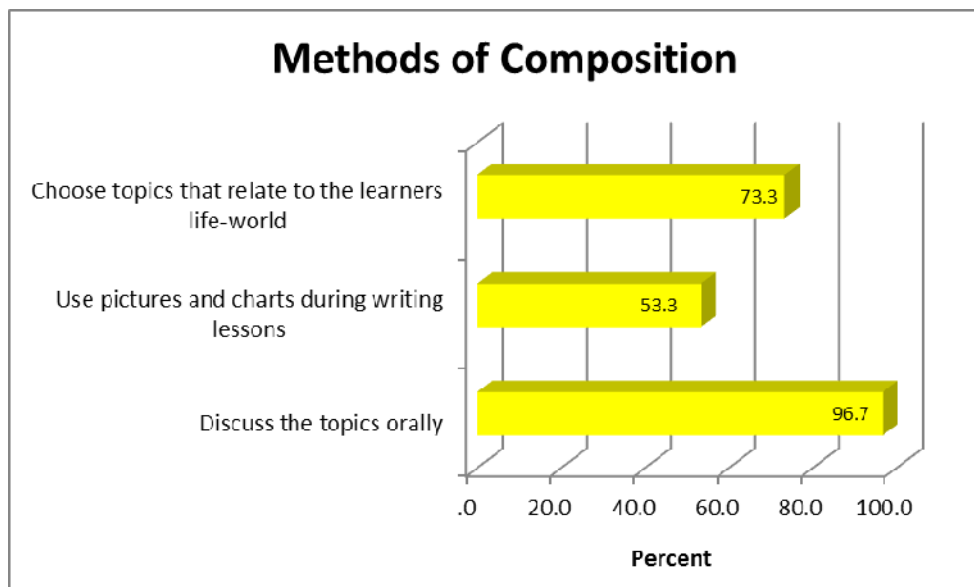


Figure 16 (above) indicates that 80% of the educators help their learners to decode words during lessons, 76.7% make spelling lessons fun and exciting for learners, and only 40% of the respondents use the VAKT method. The VAKT spelling intervention method is an excellent way to help students who struggle to spell, this method does not only improve learners spelling but also their word accuracy, reading as well as their behaviour in the classroom (Riggs, 2008:14).

Figure 17: What teachers identify as composition writing problems



To facilitate composition writing, 96.7% of respondents indicated Figure 17 (above) that they discuss topics orally, 73.3% choose topics that relate to the learners life world, and 53.3% uses pictures and charts during writing lessons.

Charts and pictures are excellent in practice for oral composition and question and answer drill. Pictures have great importance in the sense that what cannot be described by words can be described pictorially. Charts are very useful for presenting and practicing structures, vocabulary items and composition. The use of visual aids during writing lessons follows the principles of Vygotsky (1978) who states that students greatly benefit from the type of scaffolding that makes extensive use of visual aids, hence the term visual scaffolding. When students can see an image of what the teacher is describing or can see the key words that the teacher is explaining, it not only serves to make the input considerably more comprehensible, but serves to remove the affective filter which results from the fear or boredom that comes of understanding very little in class (Bruner, 1975).

Vygotsky (1978) believes that when a student is at the ZPD for a particular task, providing the appropriate assistance (scaffolding) will give the student enough of a "boost" to achieve the task. Once the student, with the benefit of scaffolding, masters the task, the scaffolding can then be removed and the student will then be able to complete the task again on his own (Shayer and Adey, 2002).

4.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter data generated from the four themes were analysed. It became clear that all the participants agreed that by adapting their teaching strategies to suit the needs of their learners, effective learning takes place. It also became clear, however, that there were some challenges that educators faced in the classroom situations. Conclusions are not presented here as the next chapter presents the research conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 OVERVIEW OF STUDY

This study investigated the use of adapted teaching strategies by grade three educators in literacy to suit the needs of the learners. Chapter 2 reviewed theories and literature relevant to defining and understanding of the use of adapted teaching strategies in literacy. Chapter 3 described the methodology employed in this study. Chapter 4 focused on the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews. The findings were presented in themes. This chapter discusses the achievement of the objectives, limitations of the study, and the conclusions and recommendations arising from the findings of this study.

5.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES

The research findings are discussed according to the four research objectives.

5.2.1 First Objective: To determine whether educators are able to determine their learners' learning needs

The findings indicated that the majority of the educators were able to determine the learning needs of their learners. They were also aware of the different styles of learning as they acknowledged the diversity of the learners in their classrooms. The educators indicated that the learners' home background and proficiency in English also contributed to their learning styles. The majority of the educators mentioned that their learners were largely visual learners which mean that they learn by viewing charts, pictures and books. For a visual learner, visual tools improve the ability to recall information more completely. However, if the visual learner uses a visual aid when studying, like a colourful outline of test materials, he or she may retain more information.

Others indicated that their learners were auditory learners, they learn by listening, and the rest of the learners were kinaesthetic learners, these learners learn by touching, feeling and moving.

5.2.2 Second Objective: To find out how educators determine the learning needs of their learner's

The findings revealed that the majority of the educators were able to determine their learners' learning needs by assessing them formally and informally. The learners were assessed formally by writing tests which was done twice a month, and informally they were tested orally which was done every week. 'The oral method' of assessing was most successful because it was done weekly. As the OECD (2003) found, teachers using formative assessment approaches and techniques are better prepared to meet diverse students' needs through differentiation and adaptation of teaching strategies to raise levels of student achievement and to achieve a greater equity of student outcomes.

5.2.3 Third Objective: To determine how the educators used adapted teaching strategies to enable learning

Respondents used most of the teaching strategies stipulated on the questionnaire in order to enable learning, namely: strategies to improve spoken language problems, strategies to improve reading, strategies to improve word recognition, strategies to improve phonics. The findings revealed that learners experienced some or major problems in all areas in literacy. This was due to the fact that the majority of them were English second language speakers. These strategies will now be explained in detail.

In terms of adapting their teaching strategies to improve spoken language, educators reported that they were using: pictures to explain concepts during lessons; and changing the level of their instruction to suit learners. However, they were unsuccessful.

The majority of the educators stated that their learners were experiencing spoken language problems because of their proficiency in English. Educators stated that they were unable to code switch during lessons in order to enable learning because they were unable to speak their learner's home language. Language was therefore cited as a major barrier in literacy. Educators were keen to learn how they could adapt their teaching to overcome this barrier. Dyers (2003:61) contends that educators are struggling to respond adequately to the increased linguistic diversity found amongst learners in their classrooms. He explains that if you have many

teachers who are in the system for a long time, it means that they were qualified pre-1994 which in turn means that they received teacher training under the old apartheid dispensation and therefore may not be equipped to deal with the diversity in their classrooms.

With regard to reading methods, educators stated that they were using the following methods: reading in groups; assisting learners individually; and peer assistance, but more than 50% of the educators said that their learners were still experiencing reading problems, indicating that their methods were unsuccessful.

Word recognition methods that were used included: using flash cards; matching words with pictures; grouping words with similar sounds; and writing words or labelling specific objects in the classroom, but more than 80% of the educators stressed that their learners were still having problems with word recognition.

In terms of phonics methods, educators helped learners decode and also make phonics more exciting. Only a few educators reported using the VAKT method (visual, auditory and kinaesthetic). These educators incorporated the VAKT method when planning their phonic lessons which means that they are taught phonics using charts (visually), sounding the words to their learners (auditory) and build words with blocks e.g. Dominos (kinaesthetic). Those that were using this method reported great success as it helped learners with their phonics. This actually means that the majority of the educators who did not use this method were also unable to identify the learning styles of their learners.

This study found that most educators were unaware of the whole language approach and therefore did not use it. Richard and Schmidt (2002:587) explain that this approach is also called a word method or sight method. It is a method for teaching children to read, commonly used in teaching reading in mother tongue, in which children are taught to recognize whole words rather than letter names (as in phonics). It usually leads to the sentence method, where whole sentences are used. Those teachers who did use this approach attested to the fact that this is a very effective approach especially for second language learners.

The findings of this study also suggest that second language learners' academic performance may improve if they were taught in their mother tongue. According to

Sampa (2003), when teachers teach reading, writing and literacy in the learners' mother tongue, they can develop adequate literacy skills that they can use in learning the official language. He states further that the Breakthrough Literacy Project implemented in South Africa illustrates what can be done, how to improve the quality of learning, and how to achieve better results. Its main goal is to facilitate the development of reading ability and literacy skills in both mother tongue and English among school children. Evaluations by the Breakthrough Literacy Project indicate that there is a correlation between student literacy skills and their academic achievements.

The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshegka (DoE, 2010) announced changes for implementation in 2012, allowing teaching to take place in the mother tongue or home language in the early years of schooling so that the learners will become confident in the latter grades. The researcher believes that this change will benefit second language learners tremendously.

5.2.4 Fourth Objective: The difficulties that educators experience in adapting their teaching strategies to suit their learners' needs

Resources

The educators complained of a lack of resources e.g. reading and activity books at their schools which hampered effective teaching. Without resources, it is very difficult to teach word or sentence recognition.

Time

The educators also complained about having to spend more time with learners experiencing literacy problems. They said that their breaks were occupied with teaching the learners that experience reading or other problems in literacy which meant that they could not devote sufficient time to their first language speakers of English. This also impacted on the amount of work that they were able to complete in class. As a result, they struggled to complete their syllabus. They asked that more time be allocated for literacy so that they could accomplish the above.

Inadequate knowledge

The majority of the educators stated that they had inadequate knowledge to support learners that were experiencing problems in literacy. They indicated that they required training in reading, phonics, comprehension, word recognition and composition writing. Onwu and Mogari (2004) agrees that educators need relevant education and training to adequately prepare them to aptly handle and manage the teaching-learning tasks they are expected to carry out in class.

The educators are the ones who interact daily with learners in the class. They have to prepare and plan lessons, know their subject matter, organise the necessary teaching-learning resources, and select and identify appropriate teaching strategies for their lessons. In addition teachers have to be confident in their ability and skills to guide and facilitate meaningful learning (Onwu and Mogari, 2004: 162). Although all the educators in this study were qualified educators, some of them did not attend any workshops in the past five years, and were therefore not updated with new knowledge in terms of content and classroom practice.

Inexperienced educators

More than a quarter of the respondents had less than five years of teaching experience. These respondents that lacked experience were largely unable to determine their learners' learning styles and therefore unable to adapt their teaching strategies.

Low literacy levels at schools

Literacy is considered to be a learner's key to the mastery of the education curriculum overall (Hannon in Bloch, 1999:41) and a factor pivotal to the development of learners' literacy proficiency appears to be the strategies that teachers initiate to assist in the growth of learners (Bloch, 1999:41). Respondents in this study rated the literacy levels at their schools as average to low, indicating a major crisis at schools in our country. More than 90% of the learners were experiencing some or major problems in literacy. The factors that contributed to this low level of literacy were: the language of instruction at schools was different from the home language of the second language learners; inexperienced educators who had inadequate knowledge of the learning content to successfully adapt their

teaching strategies; and educators who were unable to identify the learning styles of the learners.

The findings of this study suggest that teacher development programmes are essentially required to make teachers learning mediators; interpreters and designers of learning programmes and materials; leaders, administrators and managers; scholars, researchers and life-long learners; role models and moral beings; assessors; and subject specialists (Department of Education, 2000:13-14). It is hoped that if teachers can display all the seven competencies above, they will be in a position to teach effectively and thus facilitate meaningful learning. The success of learners is at the core of the goals of any education system. For this reason teachers are expected to continually upgrade and update both their content and classroom practice knowledge.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Borne out of the findings and review of literature, this study recommends that educators must receive continuous professional development to ensure that effective teaching takes place in the classroom. Given the role of the educator in the learner's zone of proximal development, it is essential that educators are adequately qualified or trained, and that they are continually exposed to the latest trends and developments in education so that they can offer optimal service to their learners.

Educators must be trained to: teach in a multilingual classroom; adapt their teaching strategies to suit learner needs and learning styles; assess and understand their learners' learning styles; and to improve literacy levels. Educators must receive regular training so that they can keep abreast of developments in education thereby advantaging their learners. The Department of Education should ensure that continuous professional development is part of a teacher's job description. If workshops, training and seminars are organised and funded on a regular basis and made compulsory for educators, it could go a long way in addressing the needs of educators and learners, and improving literacy levels.

More and varied teaching approaches should be applied to teach English reading skills such as: whole word approach; sentence approach (look and say approach); phonics approach; language experience approach; and eclectic (combined) approach as findings in this study revealed that most of the educators were

concentrating more on word decoding and questioning. By so doing, educators will be able to determine which of the approaches work best in teaching literacy in their contexts.

These are also other issues that need to be addressed:

- The DoE should restructure syllabus content to suit the life-world of the learner. Given the diversity in our classrooms, syllabus content needs to be relevant in order to capture learners' interest. Interest in a subject will motivate learners to work hard.
- Schools must have a structured intervention programme where a specialist educator is appointed to assist learners who experience learning difficulties. This must be a permanent post so that there is continuity for the learner, and motivation for the educator to monitor progress of the learners.
- Schools should form partnerships with parents so that they are also skilled in dealing with their children's learning problems. Regular meetings with parents would allow educators to share knowledge with parents so that they are empowered to assist their children with their homework or, if they cannot, they can seek guidance and advice from the school.
- Tests, assessments and examinations must be set in simple English. Continuous assessment must be favoured over one examination at the end of the year, so that remedial tasks may be given to learners to improve their marks and to assist them to learn. New teaching methods and strategies in the handling of learners need to be introduced. Teachers need to be tolerant with learners experiencing learning difficulties.

5.4 SOME LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study could be expanded to include an in-depth study of learners' home language, demographic background, family history, education level of parents and their siblings, socio-economic background to determine their impact on the learner's ability to achieve at school. Unfortunately inclusion of the above was not possible within the ambit of this study.

The research sample was limited in terms of the population and the geographical location for the purpose of accessibility and because the researcher was also interested in seeking solutions to problems that she experiences with her learners.

Some of the factors that impacted on this study were as follows:

The nationwide strike by the South African Democratic Teachers Union in 2010 resulted in mass stayaways by teachers across the country. Most of the educators at the schools which formed the sample for this study were therefore also involved in the mass action which led to delays in collecting data for this study. The researcher handed out the questionnaires one month before the public servants' strike began. While some educators returned the questionnaires within the timeframe, others needed more time to complete it. Those educators were allocated more time to do so and the researcher made arrangements to collect them at a later date.

Delay in return of questionnaires. In some schools educators behaved in a very irresponsible manner because they indicated that they had left the questionnaire at home and some of them even mislaid the questionnaire. The researcher had to hand out new questionnaires to them and collect at a later date.

The questionnaire has its limitations, for the reason that the researcher can never be sure that individuals are conveying their true interest, values or personality (Airasian, Gay and Mills, 2006:132). The semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face thus enabled the researcher to gather more candid data from the respondents.

Another limitation this study was in terms of the geographical location and population (grade 3 educators) within the Northern KwaZulu-Natal region. Any significant results emerging from this study therefore, may not reflect the situation at all schools but would undoubtedly prove useful in beginning to understand and address the educator's needs in adapting teaching strategies in literacy to enable learning.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Several aspects emerged during the course of this study but were not discussed in detail as they were beyond the scope of this study but are certainly important for further study.

While this study found that learners' ability in English does affect their performance in literacy, it also acknowledged that language proficiency is not the only requirement for success in literacy. Many more questions remain to be answered in order to fully address teachers' use of adapted teaching strategies in literacy. Research into junior primary teachers: training in education; proficiency in English; attitude towards the subject; skills in teaching aspects in literacy; knowledge of the learning content and ability to adapt their teaching strategies, would certainly contribute to a better understanding of adapted teaching strategies.

To enhance the findings of this research, it would be useful to investigate the effectiveness of educators' adapted teaching strategies on learners' performance. This could assist in identifying teaching strategies that are suitable for the different learning styles. It would also be useful to investigate the effect of grouping children in terms of their learning styles so that teaching can be geared to suit each group.

Research into the impact of educator development workshops on the effectiveness of literacy educators in the classroom would inform training programmes for educators. Studies into the influence of learners' home background on their level of literacy would assist educators to adapt their teaching strategies.

5.6 A FINAL WORD

The accepted assumption in South Africa is that after the foundation phase of schooling, a phase in which to master basic literacy, numeracy and life skills, learners will be prepared to make the change from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' during the intermediate phase of schooling using the language of instruction which is English (Lessing and de Witt, 2005). Sadly, this has not been the case for many learners. The reasons for the low literacy levels are varied but our diverse classrooms make it abundantly clear that educators must adapt their teaching strategies to suit learners' learning styles and in the words of Mwamwenda (1995), the individual condition of each child.

REFERENCES

- Abadzi, H. 2006. *Efficient learning for the poor: Insights from the frontier of cognitive neuroscience*. Washington: The World Bank.
- Adhami, M., Johnson, D.C. and Shayer, M. 1998. *Thinking maths: The programme for accelerated learning in mathematics*. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Airasian, P., Gay, L.R. and Mills, G.E. 2006. *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Agnihotri, R.K. 1995. Multilingualism as a classroom resource. In Heugh, K., Seigrühn, A. and Plüddemann, P. (Eds). *Multilingual Education for South Africa*, pp. 63-69. Isando: Heinemann Publishers Pty Ltd.
- Alexander, N. 1995. Multilingualism for empowerment. In Heugh, K., Siegrühn, A. and Plüddemann, P. (Eds). 1995. *Multilingual Education for South Africa*, pp. 37-41. Isando: Heinemann Publishers Pty Ltd.
- Anderson, R.C. and Nagy, W.E. 1991. Word meanings. In Barr, R, Kamil, M.L, Mosenthal, P.B and Pearson, P.D. (Eds). *Handbook of Reading Research*, vol 2, pp. 690–724. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Apple, M.W. 1979. *Ideology and curriculum*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Arkoudis, S. 2003. Teaching English as a second language in Science classes: Incommensurate epistemologies? *Language and Education*, 17:161-174.
- Babbie, E. 1990. *Survey research methods*. 2nd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Babbie E.R. 2004. *The practice of social research*. 10th ed. USA: Wadsworth.
- Babbie E.R. 2005. *The practice of social research*. USA: Wadsworth.
- Babbie, E.R. and Mouton, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Baek, S-G. and Choi, H-J. 2002. The relationship between students' perceptions of classroom environment and their academic achievement in Korea. *Asia Pacific Education*, 3 (1): 125-135.

Baker, S.K., Simmons, D.C. and Kame'enui, E.J. 1998. Vocabulary acquisition: Research bases. In Simmons D.C and Kame'enui, E.J. (Eds). *What Reading Research Tells Us about Children with Diverse Learning Needs*. pp. 183–218. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Balaban, N. 1995. Seeing the child, knowing the person. In Ayers, W. (Ed). *To Become a Teacher*, p. 52. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ballard, B. and Clanchy, J. 1988. Literacy in the university: An anthropological approach. In Taylor, G., Ballard, B., Bock, V., Clanchy, V. and Nightingale, P. (Eds). *Literacy by Degrees*, pp. 7-23. Milton Keynes: SRHE and Open University Press.

Ballard, D.H., Hayhoe, M.M., Pook, P.K. and Rao, R.P.N. 1995. Deictic codes for the embodiment of cognition, behavioural and brain sciences. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, 20 (4): 723–767.

Balnaves, M. and Caputi, P. 2001. *Introduction to quantitative research methods: An investigative approach*. California. Sage Publications Ltd.

Balster-Liontos, L. 1992. *At-risk families and schools: Becoming partners*. USA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.

Banks, J.A. 2002. Diversity within unity: Essential principles for teaching and learning in a multicultural society. New Horizon for Learning. [Online]. Available: <http://www.newhorizons.org> (accessed: 3 October 2011).

Barton, D. and Hamilton, M. 2000. Literacy practices. In Barton, D., Hamilton, M. and Ivanic, R. (Eds). *Situated Literacies, Reading and Writing in Context*, pp. 1-18. London: Routledge.

Batiste, G. 2005. Assessment of inclusivity and multiculturalism: National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). Paper presentation at the Near East South Asia (NESA) Teachers Conference, 4 July, Istanbul, Turkey.

- Bazerman, C. 1980. A relationship between reading and writing: The conversational model. *College English*, 41: 656-661.
- Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G and Kucan, L. 2008. *Creating robust vocabulary: Frequently asked questions and extended examples*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Beck, I.L., Perfetti, C.A. and McKeown, M.G. 1982. The effects of long-term vocabulary instruction on lexical access and reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 74 (4): 506–521.
- Bernstein, B. 1971. *Class, codes and control. Theoretical studies towards a sociology of language*. Vol 1. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Betts, J.R., Zau, A.C. and Rice, L.A. 2003. *Determinants of student achievement: New evidence from San Diego*. San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California.
- Bhandari, M. and Joensson, A. 2009. *Clinical search for surgeons*. New York: APPL.
- Blachowicz, C.L.Z., Fisher, P.J.L., Ogle, D. and Watts-Taffe, S.M. 2006. Vocabulary: Questions from the classroom. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41: 524–539.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. 2001. *How to research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bless, C. and Higson-Smith, C. 2000. *Fundamentals of social research methods: An African perspective*. Cape Town: Juta.
- Bloch, C. 1999. Literacy in the early years: Teaching and learning in multilingual early childhood classrooms. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 7(1): 39-59.
- Bloome, D. and Green, J.L. 1992. Educational contexts of Literacy. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 12: 49-70. .
- Bloome, D. 1993. Necessary indeterminacy and the micro ethnographic study of reading as a social process. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 16: 98-111.
- Bolowana, A. 2005. The challenge of diversity in schools. *The Mercury*, 17 June, p. 7.

Borg, R. W. and Gall, P. J. 1996. *Educational research: An introduction*. 6th ed. New York: Longman Publishers.

Botel, M., Ripley, P.M. and Barnes, L.A. 1993. Case study of an implementation of the 'new literacy' paradigm. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 16 (2): 112-127.

Boughey, C. 1994. New meanings for old words: Defining and developing academic literacy at South African universities. Proceedings of the 9th Annual Conference of the South African Association for Academic Development, 2: 22-29. University of Natal, Durban.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3: 77-101.

Breakwell, G.M. Hammond, S. and Fife-Schaw, C. 1995. *Research methods in psychology*. London: Sage.

Bruner, J. 1975. The importance of visual scaffolding for ESL students. [Online]. Available: <http://www.esl.fis.edu/teachers/fis/scaffold/page1.html> (accessed: 3 November 2011).

Bryman, A. 1998. *Quantity and quality in social research*. London: Routledge.

Burns, N., and Grove, S. K. 2009. Strategies for promoting evidence-based nursing practice. In *The practice of nursing research: Appraisal, synthesis, and generation of evidence*. 6th ed. pp. 616-640. St. Louis, MO: Saunders/ Elsevier.

Cassidy, S. 2008. Gender gap in teaching grows: Only 24% of new recruits are men. [Online]. Available: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/gender/gender-gap-in-teaching-grows-only-24-of-new-recruits-are-men> (accessed: 2 October 2011).

Castillo, J.J. 2009. Simple random sampling. [Online]. Available: <http://www.experiment-resources.com/simple-random-sampling.html> (accessed: 20 October 2011).

Cazden, C. 1995. Revealing and telling: A continuum from implicit to explicit teaching. *Education Australia*, 30: 25-26.

- Cazden, C. 1998. *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. 2007. *Research methods in education*. 6th ed. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, M. 1993. Listening to students voices: What university students tell us about how they can learn, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Condy, J. 2004. The reading association and the big five. Opening address at the inaugural RASA Conference November. [online]. Available: <http://www.rasa.uct.ac.za/about1.html> (accessed: 2 November 2009).
- Cook, V. 1991. *Second language learning and language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Cope, B. and Kalantzis, M. 1993. Introduction: How genre approach to literacy can transform the way writing is taught. In Cope, B. and Kalantzis, M. (Eds). *The Powers of Literacy*, pp. 1-21. London: Falmer Press.
- Crandall, J. 1992. Adult literacy development. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 12: 86-104.
- Crandall, J. 1998. Collaborate and cooperate: Educator education for integrating language and content instruction. *Forum*, 36:2.
- Creswell, J. W. 2002. *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative approaches to research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J.W. 2003. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches*. California: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. and Plano Clark, V. 2007. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Creswell, J. and Plano Clark, V. 2010. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Cormack, D. 2000. *The research process in nursing*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Crotty, M. 1998. *Foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Australia: Allen and Unwin Pty Ltd.
- Cunningham, A.E. and Stanovich, K.E. 1998. What reading does for the mind. *American Educator*, 22 (1): 8–15.
- Cunningham, D. 2001. Languages, Technology and teaching: Challenges and solutions for the 21st century. *SAALT- Journal for Language Teaching*, 35: 201-222.
- Darling-Hammond, L. 2000. Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 8 (1): 1-44.
- Davis, F.B. 1944. Fundamental factors in reading comprehension, *Psychometrika*, 9: 185–197.
- De Vos, A.S. 2002. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B., and Delpoit, C.S.L. 2002. *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human services professions*. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Delpit, L. 1988. The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*, 54 (3): 280-298.
- Denton, K. and West, J. 2002. *Children's reading and mathematics achievement in kindergarten and first grade*. Washington DC, USA: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Department of Education (DoE). 2000. *Norm and standards for educators. National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Education (DoE). 2001. *Education White Paper 6: Special needs education: Building an inclusive education and training system*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Department of Education (DoE). 2003. *Systemic Evaluation Foundation Phase Mainstream National Report*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (DoE). 2004. *National Curriculum Statement. Grades R to 9. Parent's guide*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (DoE). 2008. *National Reading Strategy*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (DoE). 2007. *Teaching reading in the early grades. A teacher's handbook*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (DoE). 2010. *Professional development*. [Online]. Available: <http://vermond.gov/departmentofeducation/professionaldevelopment> (accessed: 3 November 2011).

Donald, D. Condy, J. and Forrester, J. 2003. Literacy development: Lessons learned from a pilot project in South Africa. *The Reading Teacher*, 56 (5):484-492.

Donato, R. 1994. Collective scaffolding in second language learning. In Lantolf, J. P. (Ed). *Vygotskian approaches to second language research*, pp. 33-56. London: Ablex Publishing.

Dornyei, Z. 2003. *Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research and applications. The best of language learning series*. London: Blackwell.

Dybvig, T. 2004. Learning styles. [Online]. Available: <http://www.teresadybvig.com/learnsty.html> (accessed: 30 October 2011).

Dyers, C, 2003. Intervention and language attitudes: the effects of one development programme on the language attitudes of primary school educators. *Journal for Language Teaching*, 37(1): 60- 73.

Edwards, V. and Newcombe, L.P. 2006. Back to basics: Benefits of bilingualism to parents. In: Garcia, O., Skutnabb-Kangas, T. and Torres-Guzmán, M.E. (Eds). *Imagining Multilingual Schools, Languages in Education and Globalisation*, pp. 137-149. Great Britain: Cromwell Press Ltd.

- Egan, D. and Farley, S. 2004. The many opportunities of EFL training. *TESOL*, 58 (1): 54-61. [Online]. Available: www.tesolonline.com/articles/complete_articles.php?index=373 (accessed 9 January 2011).
- Elley, W. B. 1992. *How in the world do students read?* Hamburg, The Hague: IEA
- Ellis, R. 2000. *Second language acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Engelbrecht, P. and Green, L. 2001. *Promoting learner development: Preventing and working with barriers to learning*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Engelbrecht, P. and Green, L. 2007. *Responding to the challenges of inclusive education in Southern Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Falk-Ross, F. 2002. Toward the new literacy: Changes in college students' reading comprehension strategies following reading/writing projects. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 45 (4): 278-289.
- Feldman, C.F. 1991. *Oral metalanguage in literacy and orality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferrance, E. 2000. Action research, themes in education. [Online]. Available: www.infed.org/research/b-actreshtml (accessed: 20 November 2011).
- Fetterman, D.M. 1989. *Ethnography step by step*. USA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Flemming, G. 2011. Understanding your learning style. [Online]. Available: <http://www.studyskills.soton.ac.uk/studyguides/Learning%20Styles>. (accessed: 5 November 2011).
- Field, A. 2005. *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications.
- Flink, A. 2006. *How to conduct surveys: Basic step-by-step guide*. 3rd ed. London: Sage Publications.
- Flowerdew, J. 2000. Discourse community, legitimate peripheral participation, and a non-native-English-speaker scholar. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34: 127-150.

- Fowler, F.L. 2002. *Survey research methods*. United Kingdom: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Fraenkel, J.R. and Wallen, N.E. 2000. *How to design and evaluate research in education*. London: McGraw Hill.
- Fraser, B.J. and Chion, Y.N. 2000. Classroom environment, self-esteem, achievement and attitude in geography and mathematics in Singapore, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, Los Angeles.
- Freire, P. 1985. *The politics of education*. South Hadley: Bergin and Garvey.
- Freire, P. and Macedo, D. 1987. *Literacy: Reading the word of the world*. London: Bergin and Garvey.
- Friesen, B.K. 2010. *Designing and conducting your first interview project. Research methods for the social science*. Vol. 17. Canada: John Wiley and Sons.
- Gains, P. 2010. Children at school: Why early grade reader assessment is essential for future performance. [Online]. Available: <http://www.teacher.org.za/page1.html> (accessed: 12 November 2010).
- Garcia, G.E. 1991. Factors influencing the English reading test performance of Spanish-speaking Hispanic children. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 26: 371–392.
- Gates, B. 2002. *Learning disabilities towards inclusion*. United Kingdom: Churchill Livingstone.
- Gauthier, I. and Tarr, M.J. 1997. Becoming a 'Greeble' expert: Exploring mechanisms for face recognition. *Vision Research*, 37 (12): 1673–1682.
- Gee, J. 1989. Literacy, discourse and linguistics: Essay by James Paul Gee. *Special issue of the Journal of Education*, 17 (1): 5-17.
- Gee, J. 1990. *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology and discourse*. London: Falmer Press.
- Gee, J. 1992. *The social mind: Language, ideology and social practice*. New York: Pantheon.

Gee, J. 1996. *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. 2nd ed. London: Taylor and Francis.

Gee, J. 1997. Foreword: A Discourse approach to language and literacy, In Lankshear, C. (Ed). *Changing Literacies*, pp. 1-3. Philadelphia: Open University Press.

General Teaching Council of England (GTC). Jerome Bruner's Constructivist model and the spiral curriculum for teaching and learning. [Online]. Available: www.gtce.org.uk/tla/rft/bruner0506/ (accessed: 6 November 2011).

Gibson, E.J. and Spelke, E.S. 1983. The development of perception. In Flavell, J.H. and Markman, E.M. (Eds). *Handbook of Child Psychology. Vol. III: Cognitive Development*, 4th ed, pp. 2–76. Chichester: Wiley.

Gillet, J.W. and Temple, C. 2000. *Understanding reading problems: Assessment and instruction*. 5th ed. New York: Longman.

Glesne, C. and Peshkin, A. 1992. *Becoming qualitative researchers*. London: Longman.

Gomm, R. 2004. *Social research methodology: A critical introduction*. London: Palgrave.

Goody, J. 1977. *The domestication of the savage mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goody, J. and Watt, I. 1963. The consequences of literacy. *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 5: 304-345.

Goodwyn, A. and Findlay, K. 2003. Shaping literacy in the secondary school: Practice and agency in the age of the national literacy strategy. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 51:20-35.

Graves, M. F. 2007. Instruction on individual words: One size does not fit all. *Vocabulary instruction in the middle grades*, 15 (1): 13–19.

Gravetter, F.J and Forzano, L. B. 2008. *Research methods for the behavioural sciences. language learning*. London: Cengage Learning.

- Green, B. 1988. Subject-specific literacy and school learning: A focus on writing. *Australian Journal of Education*, 32 (2): 156-179.
- Green, B. 1993. *The insistence of the letter: Literacy studies and curriculum theorizing*. London: Falmer Press.
- Grinnel, M. and Richard, J.R. 1993. *Social work research and evaluation*, 4th ed. Illinois: Peacock Publishers, Inc.
- Hanke, W. 2006. How to get parents involved with school activities. [Online]. Available: <http://ezinearticles.com/?How-to-Get-Parents-Involved-With-School-Activities&id=137426>./ (assessed: 8 November 2011).
- Hart, P. 2002. *Multicultural education: An overview*. Seattle: University of Washington.
- Havelock, E. 1963. *Preface to Plato*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Heath, S.B. 1982a. What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school. *Language and Society*, 2: 49-76.
- Heath, S.B. 1982b. Questioning at home and at school: A comparative study. In Spindler, G. (Ed). *Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. Educational Anthropology in Action*, pp. 86-90. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Heath, S.B. 1983. *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Held, R. 1985. Binocular vision – behavioural and neuronal development. In Mehler, J. and Fox, R. (Eds). *Neonate Cognition: Beyond the Blooming Buzzing Confusion*, pp. 37-44. Place: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Heugh, K. 2002. The case against bilingual and multilingual education in South Africa: Laying bare the myths. *Perspectives in Education*, 20:171-198.
- Heugh, K. 2005. Mother-tongue education is best. *HSRC Review*, 3 (3): 6-7.
- Hill, C. and Parry, K. 1990. *From testing to assessment: English as an international language*. London: Longman.

- Hoiem, T. and Lundberg, I. 2000. *Dyslexia from theory to intervention*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publisher.
- Hoy, W. and Hoy, W.K. 2009. *Instructional leadership: A research-based guide to learning in schools*. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon/ Longman.
- Huitt, W. 2007. *Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Educational psychology interactive*. Valdosta, GA: Valdosta State University. [Online]. Available: <http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/topics/regsys/maslow.html> (accessed: 20 September 2011).
- Illeris, K. 2007. *How we learn: Learning and non-learning in school and beyond*. London: Routledge.
- Ivanic, R. 1997. *Writing and identity: The discourse construction of identity in academic writing*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Jackson, P. 1994. Desk research. In Brown, G.A. and Yule, G. (Eds). *Teaching the Spoken Language*, pp. 3-14. London: Kegan-Paul.
- Johns, A.M. 1997. *Text, role and context: Developing academic literacies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J. and Turner, L. A. 2007. Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1: 112-133.
- Kandel, E.R., Schwartz, J.H. and Jessell, T.M. (Eds). 1995. *Essentials of neural science and behaviour*. Stamford, Connecticut: Appleton and Lange.
- Keevy, J.A. 2005. A Foucauldian critique of the development and implementation of the South African NQF. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Department of Education, University of South Africa.
- Kelly, M. 2011. Understanding and using learning styles. [Online]. Available: <http://www.about.com/education/homework/studytip> (accessed: 20 October 2011).
- Kerlinger, F.N. 1986. *Foundations of behavioural research*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

- Kgosana, C. 2006. Moedertaal eerste: Liewer Engels. Die grootste weerstand kom van swart ouers. *Rapport*, 19 February, p.8.
- Khosa, R.N. 2001. De-racialisation and intergration in South African schools: Challenges, initiatives and opportunities. *The Teacher*, p.21.
- Kombo, D.K and Tromp, A. 2006. *Proposal and thesis writing*. Makuyu: Don Bosco Printing Press.
- Kostelnik, M.J., Soderman, A.K. and Whiren, A.P. 2004. *Developmentally appropriate curriculum: Best practices in early childhood education*. 3rd ed. Columbus: Pearson, Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Kozulin, A. 2002. *Sociocultural theory and the mediated learning experience*. School Psychology International: Sage Publications.
- Kozulin, A. and Presseisen, B. Z. 1995. Mediated learning experience and psychological tools: Vygotsky's and Feuerstein's perspectives in a study of student learning. *Educational Psychologist*, 30 (2): 67-75.
- Kriek, J. 2005. Construction and evaluation of a holistic model for the professional development of physics teachers via distance education. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Landsman, J. 2001. *A white teacher talks about race*. USA: Lanham Scarecrow Education.
- Lankshear, C. 1999. Literacy studies in education: Disciplined developments in a post-disciplinary age. In Peters, M. (Ed). *After the Disciplines*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.geocities.com/c.lankshear/literacystudies.html> (accessed: 2 June 2011).
- Lantolf, J.P. 2000. Introducing sociocultural theory. In: Lantolf, J.P. (Ed). *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning*, pp. 1-26. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lantolf, J.P. and Appel, G. 1994. Theoretical framework: An introduction to Vygotskian approaches in second language research. In Lantolf, J P. (Ed). *Vygotskian Approaches to Second Language Research*, pp. 1-32. London: Ablex Publishing.

Larkin-Hein, T. 2000. Learning styles in introductory physics: Enhancing student motivation, interest and learning. Paper presented at the International Conference on Engineering and Computer Education, Sao Paulo, Brazil. [Online]. Available: http://www.nw08.american.edu/~tlarkin/pdf_files/HEIN- (accessed: 20 October 2011).

Lea, M. 1998. Academic literacies and learning in higher education: Constructing knowledge through texts and experience. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 30 (2): 156-172.

Lea, M.R. and Street, B. 1998. Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, 23 (2): 157-174.

Leech, N.L. and Onwuegbuzie, A.J. 2009. A Typology of mixed methods research designs. *Quality and Quantity*, 43 (2): 265-275.

Leedy, P.D. 1997. *Practical research: Planning and design*. 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

Leedy, P.D. and Ormond, J.E 2005. *Practical research. planning and design*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Lemke, J. 1990, *Talking science: Language, learning and values*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Lessing, A.C. and de Witt, M.W. 2005. An investigation into the early literacy skills of grade R second language (L2) learners in South Africa. *Africa Education Review*, 2 (2): 242-257.

Levine, K. 1986. *The social context of literacy*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Lewis, R.B. and Doorlay, H.D. 1999. *Teaching special students in general education classrooms*. USA: Merrill.

Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, E.G. 1985. *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Loucks-Horsley, S., Hewson, P. W., Love, N., and Stiles, K. E. 1998. *Designing professional development for teachers of science and mathematics*. California: Crownin Press Inc.

- LoBiondo-Wood, G. 2005. *Nursing research-text and workshop package*. Houston: Elsevier.
- Luke, A. 1988. *Literacy, textbooks and ideology*. London: Falmer Press.
- Luke, A. 1996. Text and discourse in education: An introduction to critical discourse analysis, review of research in education. *American Educational Research Association*, 21: 3-48.
- Madileng, M.M. 2007. *English as a medium of instruction: The relationship between motivation and second language proficiency*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Mahabeer, S.D. 2003. *Barriers in acquiring basic English reading and spelling skills for zulu-speaking foundation phase learners*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Manzo, A.V., Manzo, U.C and Thomas, M.M. 2009. *Content area literacy: A framework for reading based instruction*. 5th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Marcoulides, G.A. 1998. *Modern methods for business research*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Maree, K. 2007. *First steps in research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Marrow, W. and King, K. 1998. *Vision and reality*. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Martin, J.R. and Rose, D. 2000. Designing literacy pedagogy: Scaffolding democracy in the classroom. In Webster, J., Matthiessen, C. and Hasan, R. (Eds). *Continuing Discourse on Language*, pp. 251-280. London: Continuum.
- Martin, J.R. 1989. *Language development: Learning language, learning culture*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Martin, J.R. 1992. *English text*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Martin-Jones, M. 1995. Code-switching in the classroom: Two decades of research. In Milroy, L. and Muysken, P. (Eds). *One Speaker, Two Languages: Cross Disciplinary Perspectives on Code-Switching*, pp. 90-111. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Matveev, A.V. 2002. The advantages of employing quantitative and qualitative methods in intercultural research: Practical implications from the study of the perceptions of intercultural communication competence by American and Russian Managers. [Online]. Available: http://www.russcomm.ru/eng/rca_biblio/m/matveev01_eng.s (accessed: 11 October 2011).

Mayer, C.P. and Rodriguez, C.E. 2011. Pro/con: Older vs younger teachers. Which is better. [Online]. Available: www.chsarrow.com/opinion/.../procon-older-vs-younger-teachers/ (accessed: 1 November 2011).

Mays, T. 2004. Developing communities of practice amongst educators: A case study of the NPDE in South and Southern Africa. Paper presented at the 3rd Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, 4 July, Dunedin, New Zealand.

McKay, J. and Marshall, P. 2001. The dual imperatives of action research. *Information Technology and People*, 14 (1): 46-59.

McKenzie, J. 1999. Scaffolding for success. [Online]. Available: <http://fno.org/dec99/scaffold.html> (accessed 15 August 2011).

McMillan, J.H. and Schumacher, S. 2001. *Research in education*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

McMillian, J. and Schumacher, S. 2008. *Research in education: Evidence-based inquiry*. Sixth edition. Boston: Pearson.

McRobbie, C.J., Roth, W.M. and Lucus, K.B. 1997. Multiple learning environments in a physics classroom. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 27: 333-342.

Merriam, S.B. 1998. *Qualitative research and case study applications in education: A conceptual introduction*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass.

Moon, J. 2004. *Children learning English*. Zhengzhou: Macmillan Heinemann English language teaching.

Moore, D.W., Moore, S.A., Cunningham, P.M. and Cunningham, J.W. 2003. *Developing readers and writers in content areas K-12*. 4th ed. Boston: Pearson.

- Morrow, W. 1993. Epistemological access in the university. *Academic Development Issues*, 1 (1): 3-5.
- Mouton, J. 2002. *Understanding social research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Mugenda, O.M. and Mugenda, A.G. 1999. *Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative styles*. Nairobi: Act Press.
- Muijs, D. 2004. *Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS*. London. Sage.
- Mwamwenda, T.S. 1995. *Educational psychology: An African perspective*. 2nd ed. Durban: Butterworths Publishers (Pty) Ltd.
- Nachmias, D. W. and Nachmias C.F. 1996. *Research methods in social sciences*. 5th ed. London: Edward Arnold.
- Naicker, S. 1999. Inclusive education in South Africa. In Engelbrecht P., Green. L., Naicker, S. and Engelbrecht, L. (Eds). *Inclusive Education in South Africa*, pp. 12-23 Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Nagy, W.E. 1988, *Teaching vocabulary to improve comprehension*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Nagy, W.E and Scott, J.A. 2000. Vocabulary processes. In Kamil, M., Mosenthal, P.B., Pearson, P.D. and Barr, R. (Eds). *Handbook of Reading Research*, Vol. 3, pp. 269–284. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Neelankavil, J.P. 2007. *International business research*. New York: Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. 2007. Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques. In Maree, K. (ed). *First Steps in Research*, pp. 70-97. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Olsen, D.R. 1977. From utterance to text: The bias of language in speech and writing. *Harvard Educational Review*, 47: 254-279.
- Ong, W.J 1982. *Orality and literacy: The technologizing of the word*. London: Methuen.

Onwu, G.O.M. and Mogari, D. 2004. Professional development for outcomes-based education curriculum implementation: the case of Univemalashi, South Africa. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 30 (2): 161-177.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J. and Leech, N. L. 2005. On becoming a pragmatic researcher: Importance of combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(5): 375-387.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2003. The sources of Economic Growth in OECD countries, Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Page, K. and Nester, N.A. 2010. *In quest of why? A manual for applying the philosophies of heart and soul healing in everyday life*. 5th edition. USA: Clear Light Arts.

Paltridge, B. 2002. *Academic literacies and changing university communities*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/committees/ArtsTLCtee/Projects/CIWE/paltridge.html>. (accessed: 1 November 2011).

Patton, M.Q. 2002. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Paxton, M. 1995. Tutor responses to student writing. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 9 (1): 189-198.

Pearson Education. 2010. Classroom applications of Vygotsky's theory. [Online]. Available: http://wps.ablongman.com/ab_edpsych_8/38/9951/2547615.cw (accessed: 3 November 2011).

PIRLS, 2001. *Assessment framework and specification. Progress in International Reading Literacy Study*. Boston College, USA: TIMSS and PIRLS International Study Center, Lynch School of Education.

Polit, D.F. and Beck, C.T. 2004. *Nursing research: Principles and methods*. 7th ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

- Polit, D.F. and Beck, C.T. 2008. *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice*. Philadelphia: Donnelley.
- Prinsloo, M. and Stein, P. 2004. What's inside the box? Children's early encounters with literacy in South African classrooms. *Perspectives in Education*, 22 (2): 67-84.
- Rademeyer, A. 2005. 3 jaar te min om 2de taal te leer. *Beeld*, 5 October, p. 7.
- Rademeyer A. 2006. Meeste in S. A. verkies Engels as skooltaal. *Beeld*, 1 May, p.15.
- Ramdeo, R. 2006. The attitudes of primary school educators towards the South African Policy of inclusive education. Unpublished Masters of Education dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.
- Rice, J. K. 2003. Teacher quality: Understanding the effectiveness of teacher attributes. The Economic Policy Institute. [Online]. Available: <http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/id=1500> (accessed: 25 October).
- Richard, C. and Schmidt, R. 2002. *Longman dictionary of language: Teaching and applied linguistics*. 3rd ed. England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Richardson, P. 1998. Literacy, learning and teaching. *Educational Review*, 50 (2): 115-135.
- Rief, S. and Heimburge, J. A. 2006. *How to reach and teach all children in the inclusive classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Riggs, E.R. 2008. Multi-sensory approaches to spelling and reading instructions for students with hearing disabilities. Unpublished Masters of Education dissertation, College of Education, Ohio University.
- Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A. and Kain, J. F. 2005. Teachers, schools and academic achievement. *Econometrica*, 73 (2): 417-458.
- Rodriguez, C.D and Higgens K. 2005. Preschool children with developmental delays and limited English proficiency. *Intervention in school and clinic*, 40(4):236-242.
- Rogoff, B. 1990. *Apprenticeship in thinking. Cognitive development in social context*. USA: Oxford University Press.

- Rooyen, V. J. 2011. Basic education in South Africa. [Online]. Available: www.psychologyafrica.com/2011/07/basic-education-in-south-africa/ (accessed: 2 November 2011).
- Rosenblatt, L.M. 1994. The transactional theory of reading and writing, In Ruddell, R.B., Ruddell, M.R. and Singer, H. (Eds). *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading*, 4th ed., pp.45-46. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Ruå, H.A. 1978. Infant recognition of the invariant form of objects. *Child Development*, 49: 293–306.
- Ruane, J.M. 2004. *Essentials of research methods: A guide to social research*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Salapatek, P. and Banks, M.S. 1978. *Infant sensory assessment. Vision in communicative and cognitive abilities – early behavioural assessment*. Baltimore: University Press.
- Salkind, N.J. 2008. *Exploring research*. Harlow: Pearson/Prentice Publisher Hall.
- Sampa, F. 2003. Country case study: Primary reading programme. Improving access and quality education in basic schools. Paper commissioned by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) for its Biennial Meeting, 3-6 December 2003.
- Saracho, O.N. 2006. *Handbook of research on the education of young children*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. 2003. *Research methods for business students*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Sengupta, S. 2011. Benefits of reading. [Online]. Available: www.buzzle.com/articles/benefits-of-reading-to-children.html (accessed: 30 October).
- Serrao, A. 2008. Only 36% of grade 3 pupils can read. *The Star*, 7 November. p. 6.
- Schnetler, J. 1993. *Survey methods and practice*. Pretoria: HSRC.

- Schyns, P.G., Goldstone, R.L. and Thibaut, J.P. 1998. The development of features in object concepts. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 21 (1): 1–54.
- Schyns, P.G. and Murphy, G.L 1994. The ontogeny of part representation in object concepts, in the psychology of learning and motivation. *The Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, 31: 305–354.
- Schyns, P.G. and Rodet, L. 1997. Categorization creates functional features. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory and Cognition*, 23 (3): 681–696.
- Sharp, V.F. 1999. *Instructors' manual to accompany statistics for the social science*. Michigan: Little Brown.
- Shaugnessy, J.J., Zechmeister, E.B. and Zechmeister, J.S. 2006. *Research methods in psychology*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Shayer, M. and Adey, P.S. 2002 (Eds.). *Learning intelligence: Cognitive acceleration across the curriculum from 5 to 15 years*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Sheets, R.H. 2002. Maintaining and sustaining second language learning. *Multicultural Education*, 9 (4): 46-47.
- Singh, P. 2007. Using action research to improve communication and facilitate group work in a multicultural classroom. A South African case study. *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, 20 (4): 293-304.
- Smith, K.M. 2004. Language as we know it, literacy as we know it and content area instructions. *Conscious Strategies for Teachers*, 11 (4):46-50.
- Smith, L. 2011. Children at school. Why early grade reader assessment is essential for future performance. [Online]. Available: <http://www.teacher.org.za/newsineducation> (accessed: 1 November 2011).
- Snow, C., Griffin, P. and Burns, M.B. 2005. *Knowledge to support the teaching of reading: Preparing teachers for a changing world*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- South African Department of Education. 1997. *Report on the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and National Committee on Education*

- Support Services. Quality education for all. Overcoming barriers to learning and development* . Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Sumaryono, O. and Ortiz, F.W. 2004. Preserving the cultural identity of the English language learner. *Reading Improvement*, 11 (4): 16-19.
- Street, B. 2002. Academic literacies and the new orders: Implications for research and practice in student writing in higher education. *Learning and Teaching in the Social Sciences*, 1 (1): 9-20.
- Street, B.V. 1984. *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Street, B.V. 1993. The new literacy studies. Guest editorial, *Journal of Research in Reading*, 16 (2): 81-97.
- Street, B.V. 2001. Academic literacies: A critical perspective. *Ways of Knowing Journal*, 1 (1): 19-22.
- Street, B.V. 2003. The implications of the 'New Literacy Studies' for literacy education. In Goodman, S., Lissis, T. Maybin, J. and Mercer, N. (Eds), *Language, Literacy and Education: A Reader*, pp. 77-88. London: Trentham Books.
- Strickland, B. S. 2006. *Year round preschool reading*. United Kingdom: Teacher Created Resources.
- Tanaka, J.W. and Taylor, M. 1991. Object categories and expertise: Is the basic level in the eye of the beholder? *Cognitive Psychology*, 23: 457-482.
- Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. 2000. *Handbook on mixed methods in the behavioral and social sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Thibaut, J.P. 1995. The development of features in children and adults: The case of visual stimuli. *Proceedings of the 17th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, pp. 194-199. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Tomlinson, C. A. 2004. Sharing responsibility for differentiating instruction. *Differentiated Education: A Research Basis*, 26 (4), 188-200.

Tudge, J. 1993. Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development and peer collaboration: Implications for classroom practice. In Moll, L.C. (Ed). *Vygotsky and Education, Instructional Implications and Applications of Sociohistorical Psychology*, pp. 155-174. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. 2006. Education for all global monitoring report. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.UNESCO.org>. (accessed: 2 June 2011).

Van Rensburg, C.J.J., Landman, W.A. and Bodenstein, H.C.A. 2002. *Basic concepts in education*. Orion: Halfway House.

van Teijlingen, E.R. and Hundley, V. 2001. The importance of pilot studies. *Social Research Update*, Issue 35. [Online]. Available: <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU35.html> (accessed: 2 November 2011).

Verster, C. 2005. Learning styles and teaching. [Online]. Available: www.teachingenglish.org.uk/yhink/methodology/learning-atyle.shtml (accessed: 18 October 2011).

Viljoen, C.F. and Molefe R.M.L. 2001. Language related problems of limited proficiency learners in grade 1. *South African Journal of Education* (21), 21-127.

Vincent, A. and Ross, D. 2001. Learning style awareness. *Journal of Research on Computing in Education*, 33: 1-10.

Vockel, E.L. and Usher, J.W. 1995. *Educational research*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Von Gruenewaldt, J.T. 1999. Achieving academic literacy in a second language: South Africa's educational predicament. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 13 (1): 205-211.

Vygotsky, L.S. 1978. *Mind in society*. London: Harvard University Press.

Wallis, G. and Bulthoa, H. 1999. Learning to recognize objects. *Trends in Cognitive Science*, 3 (1): 22-31.

Washburn, G.N. 2008. Alone, confused, and frustrated: Developing empathy and strategies for working with English language learners. *Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 81 (6): 247-250.

Watts, S. and Graves, M.F. 1997. Fostering students understanding of challenging texts. *Middle School Journal*, 29: 45–51.

Watts-Trafte, S. and Truscott, D.M. 2000. Focus on research: Using what we know about language and literacy development for ESL students in the mainstream classroom. *Language Arts*, 77 (3): 258-26.

Welch, T. 2001. *The implications of educators in schooling qualifications for teacher education at a distance*. Paper presented at the NADEOSA Conference, 28 August, Houghton, South Africa.

Wenger, E. 1998. *Learning, meaning and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wertsch, J. 1985. *Vygotsky and the social formation of mind*. UK: Harvard University Press.

White, H. 2002. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches in poverty analysis. *World Development*, 30 (3): 511-522.

Wiersma, W. 2000. *Research methods in education*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Williams, M. and Burden, R.1997. *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

Willinsky, J. 1990. *The New Literacy. Redefining reading and writing in the schools*, New York: Routledge.

Yoon, B. 2008. Uninvited guests: The influence of teachers' roles and pedagogies of English language learners in the regular classroom. *American Educational Journal*, 45 (2): 495-518.

Young, D. 1995. The role and status of the first language in education in a multilingual society. In Heugh, K, Siegrühn, A. and Plüddemann, P. (Eds),

Multilingual Education for South Africa, pp. 63-69. Isando: Heinemann Publishers Pty Ltd.

Zamel, V. and Spack, R. 1998. *Preface negotiating academic literacies*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Zhenhui, R. 2001. Matching teaching styles with learning styles in East Asian context. *TESL Journal*, 2 (7). [Online]. Available: <http://iteslj.org/> (accessed: 3 November 2011).

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

23. Feb. 2010 11:44

Education

No. 2129 P. 3/4



kzn education

Department:
Education
KWAZULU-NATAL

MRS V LOOPOO
PO BOX 46
TONGAAT
4400

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

Date: 15/02/2010

Reference: 0020/2010

PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS

The above matter refers.

Permission is hereby granted to interview Departmental Officials, learners and educators in selected schools of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal subject to the following conditions:

1. You make all the arrangements concerning your interviews.
2. Educators' programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, educators and schools are not identifiable in any way from the results of the interviews.
5. Your interviews are limited only to targeted schools.
6. A brief summary of the interview content, findings and recommendations is provided to my office.
7. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers and principals of schools where the intended interviews are to be conducted.

The KZN Department of education fully supports your commitment to research: **The use of adapted teaching strategies in literacy by grade three educators in the northern Kwa-Zulu Natal region**

It is hoped that you will find the above in order.

Best Wishes



R Cassius Lubisi, (PhD)
Superintendent-General

...dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty.

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa

PHYSICAL: Office G25, 168 Pietermaritzburg Street, Metropolitan Building, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3201

TEL: Tel: +27 33 341 8610/8611 | Fax: +27 33 341 8612 | E-mail

APPENDIX B: COVERING LETTER: EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE



18 June 2010

Dear Participant

I am studying towards an MTech Degree in Language Practice at the Durban University of Technology. The title of my research is: The use of adapted teaching strategies in literacy by grade three educators in the Northern KwaZulu - Natal region.

Please complete the attached questionnaire to enable me to gather data for my research. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Only my research supervisor and I will have access to the completed questionnaires. Please be assured that you will remain completely anonymous throughout the research process and in any reporting or write-ups related to my research.

Please read and sign the attached Consent Form. Please return the Consent Form and completed questionnaire to Mrs V. Loopoo at the address below.

Thank you very much.



Mrs Veena Loopoo
Student number: 20930186
P.O.Box 46
Tongaat
4400
Tel: (032) 944 7431 (H)
Cell: 0826621037
Email: vloopoo@yahoo.com



Prof. P Singh
Research Supervisor



APPENDIX C: INFORMED LETTER OF CONSENT



LETTER OF CONSENT

Dear Participant

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study entitled: *The use of adapted teaching strategies in literacy by grade three educators in the Northern KwaZulu-Natal Region.*

The DoE through the Jet Educational Services, conducted two National Systemic Evaluation Surveys to establish literacy and numeracy levels in primary schools in South Africa in 2001 and 2004. These surveys showed alarmingly low levels of literacy and numeracy abilities across the country. This study will investigate the use of adapted teaching strategies in literacy by grade 3 educators in the northern KZN region. This study will provide a framework for educators to implement in the teaching of literacy at grade 3 level. It is hoped that the findings of this research will make recommendations to the DoE with regards to the teaching of reading and comprehension, writing spelling and improving literacy levels.

The researcher undertakes to assure you of the following:

- to maintain your confidentiality
- to protect your rights and welfare, i.e to ensure that no harm comes to you as a result of your participation in this research;
- to present information and transcripts used in this research in such a way as to maintain your dignity, and if in doubt to first consult with you; and
- to make available to you the final copy of this research publication
- you are free to withdraw from this research at any time, if the need should arise
- no manipulation or withholding of information is involved in this study

Thank you for volunteering to add to a body of academic knowledge in teaching literacy.

Yours sincerely

V. Loopoo
MTech: Language Practice
Student No: 20930186

I, _____ (participant's name), agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature

Date



APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

RESPONDENT NUMBER

Please answer the questions by placing a cross (x) in the appropriate block.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Age group:

20- 30

31-40

41-50

2. Gender:

Male

Female

3. Highest qualification:

Certificate

Diploma

Degree

Higher Degree

4. Number of years of experience in teaching at Foundation Phase Level

5. Have you attended a literacy or literacy development workshop in the last 5 years?

Yes

No

If you answered yes, please complete the table below:

Title of workshop	Year attended

SECTION B: THE USE OF ADAPTED TEACHING STRATEGIES IN LITERACY BY GRADE 3 EDUCATORS.

6. How would you rate the level of literacy in grade 3 at your school?

- Low
- Average
- High

Please explain your answer

7. Rate the following areas with regard to literacy problems (of grade three learners) at your school.

1= No problems 2= Some problems 3= Major problems.

Please place a cross (X) in the appropriate box:

	1	2	3
Spoken language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sight words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter formation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Word recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spelling or phonics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sentence construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>		

8. Do you feel that you have adequate knowledge to support those learners that are experiencing problems in literacy?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If no, please indicate which areas you would like to be trained in?

Teaching of:

Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phonics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>
Composition writing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Word recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please elaborate below:	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Do you have an intervention programme for learners experiencing difficulties in literacy?

Yes

No

If you answered yes, please describe the intervention programme.

If you answered no, please explain how these learners are coping. _____

10. Please indicate the learning styles of the grade three learners in your school. (You may choose more than one answer).

Visual learners (learners rely on their visual sense when learning)

Auditory learners (Learn by listening)

Kinaesthetic learners (Learn by touching)

Tactile learners (Learn by feeling with the fingers or tracing)

Other, please explain

11. Do you assess the learners in order to determine their literacy needs?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain how you assess the learners.

12. How do you create a learning environment/ classroom that is:

Comfortable _____

Safe and secure _____

Attractive _____

Other, please explain _____

13. How do you assist learners experiencing problems with spoken language? (You may choose more than one answer).

Code switch during lessons (from English to isiZulu)

Change your level of instructions to suit individual learner's needs

Use pictures for discussion during lessons

Use the whole language approach where all aspects of language such as

spoken, written and reading are taught simultaneously.

Other, please explain

14. How do you assist learners experiencing problems with vocabulary? (You may select more than one answer).

Use pictures during discussion to increase vocabulary

Display daily word list on the classroom walls where learners can learn them

Practise words written on flash cards

Other, please explain

15. What skills does story time or reading stories to learners in a grade three class develop? (You may select more than one answer).

Communication skills

Comprehension skills

Memory skills

Pronunciation skills

Composition writing skills

Other, please explain

16. How do you assist learners experiencing problems with reading? (You may choose more than one answer).

Assist learners individually

Get another learner to assist

Let them read in a group

Other, please explain

17. How do you teach word recognition during your reading lessons? (You may choose more than one answer).

Use flash cards with words from the story

Match words with picture cards

Group words that have similar sounds

Write words on specific objects in the classroom

Other, please explain

18. How do you assist learners experiencing problems with reading comprehension? (You may choose more than one answer).

Talk about the story using pictures

Draw pictures according to the sequence of the story

Read short interesting stories

Question learners about the story

Other, please explain

19. How do you teach learners experiencing problems with spelling? (You may choose more than one answer).

Help them decode words during lessons

Use the VAKT (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile senses) method

Make spelling lessons fun and exciting for learners

Other, please explain.

20. How do you help learners experiencing problems with composition writing?

Discuss the topics orally

Use pictures and charts during writing lessons

Choose topics that relate to the learners life-world

Other, please explain

Please feel free to make any other comment/s relating to literacy development in grade three at your school.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE