

THE ROLE OF INCLUSIVE INTERMEDIATE PHASE TEACHERS IN
IMPARTING READING SKILLS TO LEARNERS IN KWADUKUZA
CIRCUIT

by

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

at the

University of South Africa

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NOVEMBER 2015

DECLARATION

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I declare that: "THE ROLE OF INCLUSIVE INTERMEDIATE PHASE TEACHERS IN IMPARTING READING SKILLS TO LEARNERS IN KWADUKUZA CIRCUIT" is my own work and all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

G.O. MTHETHWA

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God, the omnipotent father, for giving me wisdom and strength never to give up on my dreams.

The completion of the study would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of the following people:

- I thank God for his guidance and strength to see me through this journey.
- Professor M.O. Maguvhe, my supervisor and mentor, thank you for believing in my abilities, for encouraging and supporting me and for being patient with me. The amicable working relationship that we had will always be remembered and respected.
- Dr Andrew Graham, for editing my work
- My husband, Thokozani L. Mthethwa, for your support and understanding. Without you I would not be where I am today, thank you so much Dingiswayo
- My parents Mr and Mrs Nkosi, you always encouraged me in the best possible way.
- My brothers, Thabani, Nhlanhla and Siphesihle for always believing in me. My sisters-in-law, Nonkululeko, Thobile, Khulekile, Thanda and Nonhlanhla.
- To my colleagues, Sphesihle Mafuleka and Babongile Makhanya, thank you for always being willing to help and encouraging.

ABSTRACT

The role of teachers has been defined as that of providing knowledge and skills to learners, so it is imperative for them to understand their roles and responsibilities in. This extends to language teachers' enhancing their performance in teaching reading, particularly because of the large and increasing number of learners who are having reading difficulties. Their inclusion in mainstream classrooms necessitates that teachers optimise reading to *all* learners who are experiencing reading difficulties. In some schools teachers are underqualified or not qualified to teach language, hence there are inadequate strategies for teaching reading skills. The study will shed light on how to help teachers in imparting reading skills to learners in KwaDukuza circuit, South Africa. It analyses the role of inclusive intermediate phase teachers in imparting reading skills, with 80% of schools in the circuit requiring training for teachers, to empower them to assist learners with reading difficulties. The qualitative method as mode of inquiry used in the study was suitable for gaining more information on and understanding of the role of inclusive teachers in teaching reading skills to learners. Qualitative data elucidated the role of teachers in imparting reading skills and the study was carried out with 20 participants, comprising 10 learners, five School Management Team (SMT) members chosen because they had final accountability in teaching and learning, and five teachers selected by purposive sampling because they were either language teachers or inclusive teachers of reading in schools. Observation of actions they embarked on were made to illuminate teachers' roles. The findings of the study determined that there was a major consensus that the ability of teachers to deliver good reading instruction was the most powerful factor in determining how well learners learn to read. Appropriate resources, adequate human resources, and material resources are an integral part of teaching of reading. The study makes recommendations and suggests further areas of research.

Key terms: Reading; teachers; inclusion; skills; role; intermediate.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Education
HOD	Head of Department
IP	Intermediate Phase
ILST	Institute Level Support Team
SMT	School Management Team
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
WP6	White Paper 6 on special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Research persistently reports an alarming inability to read amongst learners in primary schools, especially in the Intermediate Phase and generally in rural schools. Thirteen per cent of Grade 5 students, aged 11, who learnt by rote, simply to reiterate instructional material, having attended school for a full five years cannot achieve over 20 per cent for a reading study test (National Education Evaluation and Development Unit, Mercury, October 2013). Teachers should acquire skills which enable them to assist learners to gain reading skills.

According to Reis and Housand (2009), unless one is literate, it is difficult to achieve either academically or job-wise. In addition, when reading is a bugbear, the enthusiasm which should accompany the learning process, experienced by most entry-level pupils, is severely curtailed.

The first year in the life of learners is of paramount importance in that those who cannot read by the end of it tend to fall further behind their peers, not only in reading but also in general academic achievement (Good, Harm & Kame'enui, 2005). It is noted from teachers' experience that it is not helpful when a learner is promoted because of binding policies, such as considering the age of a learner, without checking whether or not he or she is capable or has repeated the grade. As a result, most such learners tend to experience more reading difficulties than those who have been promoted because of their capabilities. One can conclude that promoting learners to the next grade does not solve any problems.

Reading skills are essential from the development of the whole community, so reading problems are not only problematic for students as individuals but also impact on society as a whole (Caldwell, Lerner & Jennings, 2006). Learners who are experiencing difficulties in reading tend to be unsuccessful in their learning, and perform poorly in other learning areas because they cannot understand the instructions. There is therefore a need for research and intervention, taking into cognisance that if the issue of reading difficulties is not resolved before learners reach the intermediate stage it may result in many learners being deprived of the opportunity to excel in their education.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Because such a large percentage of scholars struggle to read and understand simple sentences, this research investigates the reason for the problem. This is because some teachers do not understand their roles in imparting reading skills. This research discusses ways in which reading skills can be imparted to learners and support system that learners need in order to acquire reading skills successfully.

In Grade 3 and 4, high level words and concepts are introduced to school reading, so children who have a rich language background generally cope well with this new challenge. However, those learners who do not have a good language background struggle and if parents are illiterate they cannot assist them with their homework. Research has indicated that many pre-school learners have been exposed to a range of literacy activities and experiences in their homes which are conducive to learning reading (Caldwell et al., 2006). Even those who have these facilities are generally not well equipped.

Learners with reading problems may be given an adequate number of textbooks but if they cannot read they will not enjoy doing their homework. In response, they may turn to misbehaviour or simply give up, displaying what is called 'learner helplessness' (Seifert, 2004:109), hence the need for this study to help keep learners in school and off streets. If the issue of reading difficulties is not resolved before learners reach the

Intermediate stage it may result in many learners being deprived of the opportunity to excel in their education. Therefore, this research will also help teachers to impart reading skills to learners, through investigating the depth of this problem and how it can be solved.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many teachers has no proper training to teach in an inclusive classroom and also to teach reading (language), hence most of them find it difficult to impart reading skills to learners. Reading difficulties is the matter of concern in most schools in KwaDukuza circuit. This problem could be attributed to the way in which teachers conduct reading in class, due to lack of knowledge in teaching of reading or lack of support from expert educators.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In accordance with the passing on of reading skills to learners, imparted by their teachers, the proposed study will be guided by the following primary question:

- What role do inclusive education teachers play when imparting reading skills to intermediate learners?

Sub-questions arising from it are as follows:

- What specific methods do teachers consider important to use in order to teach reading successfully?
- What are the best practices of inclusive teachers regarding reading?
- What kind of support can teachers give to learners with reading difficulties?

1.5. THE STUDY OBJECTIVES

This research seeks to analyse the role of inclusive intermediate phase teachers in imparting reading skills to learners. The objectives are:

- To analyse support provided by teachers
- To improve the teacher's task of fostering the development of literacy in learners.
- To ascertain from the study the barriers to progress in reading.
- To determine the role of teachers in promoting reading skills
- To offer suggestions for the improvement in teaching to read

1.6. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This research will add value to Inclusive as well as language teachers in imparting reading skills to their learners. It will also contribute to the knowledge of reading difficulties and bring suggestions and recommendations on imparting reading skills to learners. When educators believe in the ability of the learner to gain ground in literacy, such teachers enhance the achieving of success for learners. They also understand their role in imparting reading skills to their learners.

1.7. RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

The following aspects apropos of literacy instruction were assumed by the researcher:

- Not all educators who teach reading are inclusive teachers.
- Teachers are not receiving support from the school and parents.
- Teachers become frustrated as they lack appropriate instruction on methods of overcoming learning impediments vis-à-vis their struggling learners.
- Second language (English) is the barrier to learners because of their background.
- Socio-economic factors play a significant role in creating this gap.

1.8. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Delimitations of the study was restricted to manageable proportions, only Intermediate Phase inclusive and language teachers, and School Management Team members who were asked to participate. Five SMT members were participants, one SMT member for each school including my school. From five schools with a sample of two learner participants per school and a total number of ten learners.

1.9. STUDY LIMITATIONS

A lack of cooperation by both learners and teachers posed one limitation to the research. The topic of inclusive educators, especially those dealing with scientific research is severely circumscribed; information had to be sought far afield. It seemed difficult initially for the researcher to locate sufficient participants within the KwaDukuza circuit, although this concern proved unfounded.

1.10. LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE ROLE OF INCLUSIVE INTERMEDIATE TEACHER

“The literacy level of South African grade 5 pupils is a national catastrophe”(The Mercury, 2013). Educational experts suggest that rote learning, as a substitute for learning with understanding, has resulted in egregious levels of literacy. Having had five years of schooling, only 13 per cent of learners in Grade 5 could read. The majority of pupils could achieve no more than 20 percent for a reading study test. These facts are presented by the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (2013).

Head of the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit, 2013 (which answers to Angie Motshekga, Basic Education Minister), Nick Taylor, at a meeting in Durban, stated that, according to research conducted in classrooms within both rural and urban environments, it was “quite clear that our teachers can’t teach reading”, in spite of many years of teacher training costing billions of rand.

In early 2013, a national assessment was conducted on teaching methods for urban learners from Grade 1 to Grade 3 found that results of the report indicated that learners were unable to read unassisted, nor to master problems of numeracy, the majority of teachers being unable to impart such skills (The Mercury, 2013).

Reading difficulties have caused many learners to fall behind in terms of reading requirements within the classroom situation, and literacy is central to learning. Reading has been identified as a priority by then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor (Joubert, 2004) and the Department of Education (DoE, 2003a) expresses:

“Reading is more than the mere decoding of signs and symbols into sounds and words. It ...is a message – getting, problem-solving activity, which increases in power and flexibility the more it is practised”.

Patton, Polloway, Serna and Edward (2013:18) states that, “The importance of reading for all students is universally accepted, and must be a significant part of the school day. Teachers should seek ways to integrate reading instructions into other areas of the curriculum.” Many learners have disabilities therefore they require extra practice in retaining and perfecting their skills Added to this, learners are given space to generalise their reading skills. The textbook offers not only job-based competence, but skills of comprehension for adolescents. Scientific expertise may be gained concomitantly with vocabulary extension.

It was noted in research by Presley and Fingeret (2005), that decoding skills are more easily mastered by younger learners in the lower grades who struggle with disabilities. Such pupils need a more profound level of instruction than is normally dispensed in a classroom centred primarily on language.

Historically, teachers have often worked independently, reflecting on what did and did not work for the learners in their classroom. Expert teachers may have made the highly complex processes of teaching and learning seem easy, but the knowledge and skills that they had developed were not made available for their colleagues to examine. This professional knowledge is often described as tacit, because it is embedded in teachers' practice without being articulated clearly (Deppeler, Harvey & Loreman, 2010:95).

One may argue that the role of the inclusive educator must take cognisance of the imparting of literacy skills and also that they need to share the knowledge and skills that they have with classroom teachers who do not have specialised training. Teachers must trust one another so that they open their classrooms, observe each other and share their practices. Observation is not meant to judge or to evaluate teachers.

Key to the creation of avid, competent readers, at the same time ameliorating learning problems, is effective teaching of reading in the initial grades. The moment the child attends his first grade, the teacher must offer such instruction. Albeit the educator is not alone in steering the pupil through the first stages of reading, the teacher, nevertheless, has the foremost responsibility to enthuse the pupil with love for reading, giving the student instruction to that end. Ultimately, the child develops a lifelong love of reading.

A great deal of research has been conducted over the past 30 years on the correct instructional method for developing reading skills. Of recent times, research has corroborated evidence on the skills, support, and knowledge required by learners to achieve proficiency of reading, and delivery of such aspects in the classroom. Today's educators can therefore deliver more advanced reading instruction, which includes the entire school population, community, and home dwellers, aiming for every child to become proficient at reading by the time he or she completes Grade 3.

Competent reading rests on the pillars of basic skills in comprehension and fluency. This goes for every pupil notwithstanding specific learning difficulties, gender, or

background. Similar procedures are used by all novice readers. Some need less help than do others; some are weaker at one skill than at others. Basic skills incorporating fluency and comprehension must, however, eventually be mastered by all learners.

Inclusive teachers should play a significant role inside the class in assisting learners with reading and learning difficulties by introducing learners to individualised programmes differing in important ways. As such, these ways can also assist teachers to progress at a measurable rate at school. Sometimes legislation, policy and/or contextual requirements are such that using differentiated instructional techniques is not the only strategy that a teacher must employ to assist students with differing learning needs, so individualised programme is mandated (Deeper; Harvey & Loreman, 2010:115). According to Edward (2010:7), the purposes of an individualized programme is to establish learning goals for individual learners. The development of an Individual Education Programme (IEP), requires the crucial efforts of educators. This includes taking notice of the learner's performance standard, achievements which may be assessed, supplementary education, special aids, and services related to reading programmes. Supportive staff members should be at hand to provide help and encouragement.

Several decades ago, when "remediation" (support for learning problems) embraced a medical model, exercises for the "improvement" of skills related to perception, sight, hearing, and feeling were the start of the learning process. This exercise at first seemed unaligned with the act of reading per se. by degrees teachers embarked on reading studies of a more formal nature, comprising words and phenomes. Research has proven that this was a waste of learners' time as learners had already fallen behind reading-wise. The situation was made worse by spending time on these perceptual exercises, even if only for a few weeks. Landsberg, Kruger and Swart (2005:139), from the aforementioned literature study, found that learners were disadvantaged in their reading, hence the collaboration with general educators is suggested.

Every special educator needs to cooperate in most areas of work as a team member, participating in screening programmes, the assessment process, fostering placement options, and monitoring achievement while offering support, both direct and indirect. Educators must link up with many others to set in motion all necessary segments of changes or initiatives found in the teaching programme. A continuous

effort by teachers operating together in a collaborative enquiry will help them achieve better results with students they serve (as cited by Bailey, Patton, Polloway, Serna & Edward, 2013:2).

1.11. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to gain further information on the study's line of enquiry, the qualitative method has been selected in analysing the role of inclusive teachers in imparting reading skills to learners. At school visits, data was collected by means of observation in the classroom, interviews, and the analysing of key documents, teachers' note-taking, lesson preparations, work schedules and learners' books. In this way, the researcher was able to initiate research reports of a consistent and detailed nature on the teacher's role in reading.

The research was conducted within a qualitative research paradigm, because qualitative researchers look to the person of the social actor in order to observe and research human activities. "The primary aim is in-depth (thick) descriptions and understanding of actions and events" (Babbie & Mouton, 2004:270).

1.11.1. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Creswell (2001:185) stated that the data-collection process must include limits of the research. A protocol must be adhered to; data may be gathered either informally (unstructured) or by semi-formal means, such as by observing the subjects or by interviews given. All information gleaned should be noted and recorded. In this case, the researcher observed the protocol in observing the subjects, holding interviews and thereafter recording all information garnered. The researcher also examined certain documents held by the schools. As noted by the researchers McMillan and Schumacher (2006:41), in order to gain the full weight of behaviour found in the natural context of the participants, the qualitative method, which relies on words rather than figures, is best used for this type of research. Accordingly, this method was applied in checking the soundness and worth of data gleaned from participants by diverse methods. The most obvious line to take was to study the interaction of teacher and learner during reading lessons while imparting reading skills to their learners. The researchers Engelbrecht, Eloff, Lomosky, Masipa, Oswald, and Swart (2003:17) state that observing the subjects is considered first-hand research, a prime contributor of data in a qualitative study. The main thrust of this research was to

analyse the role of inclusive teachers in imparting reading skills to learners. Observation was the most pertinent method to apply in this study in eliciting answers which could be relied on and validated.

The researchers McMillan and Schumacher (2006:273) maintain that, by means of observation (auditory and visual) and record making, better results are gained than simply by capturing the answers a participant gives to questions asked. In observing, the researcher was enabled to glean information of a first-hand nature apropos of the role of inclusive teachers.

In the opinion of McMillan and Schumacher (2006:439), certain cues, for instance facial expressions, body language, gesticulations, and tone of voice ought to be observed, together with any interaction of a social nature which could make a difference either positively or negatively to the language range of the participant. The prescriptions of the researchers Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, (2004: 82) motivated this researcher to examine the phenomenon under question by observation, combining the analysis of documents with that of the interviews, allowing the researcher to view the teachers' practices, and learners' behaviour in response to the way that they are taught.

Rubin and Rubin (cited by Mouton, 2001) described qualitative interviews as a model in which emphasis is placed on the significance of allowing interviewees to vocalise their feelings, together with assessing the relativity of the culture of participants.. According to Gurium (cited by Greeff, 2003:292), "Interviewers are deeply and unavoidably implicated in creating meanings that ostensibly reside within participants". They are a purposeful interaction in which one person obtains information from another. Language teachers were asked to participate because of their experience and expertise in the teaching of language, especially reading.

The qualitative researcher may also interview research participants formally, as in the structured interviews employed in this study, comprising a specified set of questions designed to elicit similar information from the participant. During interviews, audio tapes were made as they were convenient and reliable and allowed for the making of transcripts. Of significance is the usefulness of data-collection as an instrument when applying the qualitative method of research. As defined by Berger (2011:135), the interview comprises a discourse between participant (interviewee) and the researcher (interviewer). The researcher had a conversation with educators, both inclusive and language, in five schools so as to gain the

required information for the research study. Interviews were made before and after lesson observation. When the qualitative approach is applied to research, one normally selects a sample of the entire population on which the study is focused. This process is called sampling, which takes the form of purposive or non-probability research (Nieuwenhuis, cited by Maree, 2010:79). Purposeful sampling was used because it comprised the choice of those subjects having the most apposite information or knowledge applicable to the research (Denzin & Lincoln, cited by Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010:34), in this study comprising two learners and one language teacher, one SMT from each school.

The researcher reached out to those teachers as the key informants so that they could share their experiences of reading. They were selected with the help of other language teachers and School Management Teams (SMT). Four neighbouring primary schools in the KwaDukuza Circuit were selected, including the school in which the researcher is working. Researchers using the qualitative method usually apply a non-random selection model when choosing the source of the required data, selecting items or participants likely to deliver the fullest information apropos the research study (Creswell, cited by Leedy et al., 2002:145). Participants were teachers who had been teaching English in Grade Four or five years or more.

1.11.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

In following up the role of inclusive teachers in imparting reading skills to learners, the researcher has selected the qualitative research design. Madau (2004:102) maintains that qualitative enquiry allows entry into the participant's experience by the researcher in order to gain different responses regarding particular aspects of concern in the research. The researcher has therefore opted for a design incorporating the qualitative approach in analysing the way in which inclusive teachers impart reading skills to learners. Teachers will be observed teaching reading to learners. Documents will also be analysed, documents like learners exercise books, assessment tools, work schedule etc. Teachers will also be given an opportunity to express themselves in interviews, explaining their strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of reading .That is how the empirical data will be gathered.

1.11.3. DATA ANALYSIS

According to (Cohen, Mannion & Morrison, 2011), when employing qualitative data analysis, the researcher must organise, explain, and account for the data presented, offering sensible interpretations of the way in which participants define situations. Patterns must be observed and noted, as must regularities, categories and themes. Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Huberman and Miles (1983), Marriam (1998), Stake (1994), Yin (2003) outline that every research employing the qualitative method gathers large amounts of raw data. It therefore becomes imperative for data to be organised and timeously presented. Qualitative data was transcribed and analysed by the researcher to be able to identify themes relevant to the questions posed by the study and which served as a guide. Different themes were identified and coded, analysed line by line as relayed by transcripts of the interviews (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). The researcher played and replayed audio recordings in order to become familiar with data, paying attention to words and sentences expressed in participants' words so as to deliver the essence of their speech and actions (De Vos Strydom, Fouche &Deport, 2011).

The data was examined in this order: first the views of the educators on challenges they face; the perceptions of the teachers on causes relating to challenges faced by learners when reading; together with perceptions of educators regarding their role in imparting reading skills in the Intermediate Phase. In identifying the origins of reading problems, data was classified and combined under themes. The interpretation and analysis of the data was tackled in three phases. Data relating to reading problems in phase 1, were placed in separate categories, being consolidated into themes under phase 2. During the third phase (phase 3) an interpretation of the data was offered (Meier & Marais, 2010).

1.11.4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher was sensitive to ethical issues by ensuring confidentiality throughout the interviews. Only pseudonyms were used and participants were treated with dignity, respect and fairness. Those being studied understood the workings of the tape recorder and were free to reject its use if they wished. If they accepted them, the results obtained were to be in harmony with their right to welfare, dignity and privacy

1.12 DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to avert ambiguity or misinterpretation, these concepts are defined below:

Inclusion indicates developing inclusive community and education systems. Thomas & Loxley (2001:118) maintain that "inclusion" refers more to comprehensive education than simply to special needs or disabilities of the learners.

Role applies to the way in which Intermediate Phase teachers function.

To **impart** is to pass information or knowledge to learners.

To **read** is to look at a word or words and understand it or them clearly so as to be able to use it or them in many different texts, without support from the teacher.

The **Intermediate Phase** is the primary school's middle phase, the level at which the research took place.

A **learner** is a person who is learning and for the study also a participant.

A **teacher** is a person who seeks to help learners to become equipped for life and to realise and assist them on their way to self-actualisation and adulthood.

(Vogel, 2011:3) states that, when all learners, no matter their cultural origins or background, their socio-economic status, their disabilities or talents, are included in mainstream schools and classes which provide support for the needs and requirements of all who attend. This is the above-mentioned researcher's definition of inclusive education

1.13. OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

In Chapter 1 the research study offers an overview in general terms, outlining both the rationale for the study and setting out an introduction

In Chapter 2 the background literature is explored which deals with the study's conceptual framework. The study focuses on the role of inclusive teachers in imparting reading skills.

Chapter 3 will describe in depth the details of the procedures adopted by the. This will include both methodology and design underpinning the research.

In Chapter 4 raw data will be described, together with the research findings.

In Chapter 5, a summary of the research will be presented, drawing conclusions based on such research. In addition, conclusions will be drawn from the research, and recommendations given for further research which may be tackled.

1.14. CONCLUSION

Most learners are eager to read, but the core of their problem lies in the difference between the language used at home and at school in the course of transferring of learning. A deprived home background and limited experience are also factors which prevent them from learning to read satisfactorily, hence this study aimed to check whether educators had the necessary skills to impart to their learners or whether they needed certain strategies to assist them. This is intended to help not only primary schools of KwaZulu-Natal but also can contribute to better education for all learners, regardless of their culture, race and gender. The next chapter consists of a review of the literature in support of this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE ROLE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS IN THE TEACHING OF READING

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The researcher Neuman (2006:446) states that any worthwhile literature review sets the project in the correct context offering details of research conducted previously and detailing the way in which the present study is linked to tally with such prior research. Gaps in the research are filled by the new study, providing an obvious response to a need. A research framework is provided, delineating the boundaries of knowledge which the new study will amplify. In the previous chapter, an outline of this study has been presented. A review of the literature examined for this study is given in order to clarify aspects related to teachers' role in reading.

Thompson (cited by Hay, Smith & Paulsen, 2001:214), in his article on teacher preparedness for inclusive education, stresses that unless teachers are trained to the highest level the profession can allow, inclusive education will not successfully be implemented. Teachers must be trained both to pre-service and in-service standards. They must be furnished with knowledge that may easily be updated, thus supplying the needs of their charges. An inclusive teacher must therefore be someone who clearly understands his/her role and should also be knowledgeable person.

2.2. THE ROLE OF INCLUSIVE TEACHERS

Inclusive teachers have several roles to fulfil in the classroom, namely:

- As an inclusion teacher, you must be collaborative with other educators in preparing and presenting of lessons (and lesson plans), meeting the needs of every learner while assessing his or her progress.
- A teacher applying the inclusion method must be able to perform at a high level which incorporates multitasking.
- Individuality of learners must be identified by the inclusive teacher and used to the learners' advantage when implementing learning strategies.
- The teacher must understand learners' skills, interests and abilities as they indicate learners' knowledge on various subject areas.

- The teacher should understand learners' interests and motivation in a specific content.
- Teachers should be able to adjust instructions according to learners' abilities and also motivate them to learn. The teacher must become au fait with individual learners' particular needs, employing suitable strategies from a wide spread of teaching tactics.

According to Ainscow (1995:16), the support teacher may be seen in the following three roles:

- Maintenance role: they respond to those learners with existing performance plans, in so doing, perhaps inadvertently helping to maintain the present status.
- Modifying role: teachers modify the current performance plans, so as to assist learners who find current arrangements an impediment to learning.
- Development role: whereby learners struggling to overcome current arrangements are aided by their teachers, in the process affording help to all learners.

The support teacher must be endowed with superlative skills when assisting learners either individually or in a group (Hay, 2003:137). The support teacher must be able to motivate and assist adults who are already attending to the learning needs of the students. The support teacher should have a very good educational background, as he/she will have to recommend workable strategies to teachers to support the learner in the classroom.

According to Farrell(2000:8), many pupils with educational needs have particular problems in learning that require them to receive one-on one attention for certain periods of the day Work programmes should thus synthesise instruction given individually whether in the classroom or whether while gradually weaning the pupil off a programme. Since this balance is not easy to achieve, the support teacher can help with it.

Having discussed the roles of inclusive teachers, the following needs to be considered as vital on ascertaining that effective teaching and learning will take place.

2.2.1. EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Identification refers to recognising certain attributes which might indicate the presence of a problem (ETH 306-2006). When teachers make early identification they play their role in assisting learners with barriers to learning, specifically reading.

2.2.2. ASSESSMENT, PREVENTION AND REMEDIATION

Assessment plays two roles in education,

That is, in assessing both learning and teaching but also in supporting learners having difficulties. Assessment therefore plays a significant role in the business of learning and teaching, becoming also a first step towards solving the existing problem. Unless teachers understand what evaluation is, there may be huddles in alleviating the reading problem of struggling readers. According to Woolfolk, Hughes and Walk-up (2008:320), evaluation has to do with '...making judgements about the process and outcomes of thinking and learning'. Teachers need to consciously ask themselves whether their practice on reading is making any positive impact on their learners, right from the planning up to the realisation of the learning outcome.

2.2.3. INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

According to Camphor (2000:1) the classroom environment should be sufficiently adaptable to change and to the demands of the environment. It is important to conduct planning for the whole class, promoting and stressing activities which include all learners. Also, teachers must be motivated to spot and take hold of natural resources which foster the learning of the pupils. Teachers should also be encouraged to modify plans and activities, responding to the behaviour of individual learners in the classroom. Flavell (2002:17) maintains that in an inclusive classroom learning programmes should be adjusted and adapted to enable learners of differing needs and abilities to work together. For the inclusive classroom to be effective the inclusive teachers or support team needs to be knowledgeable, educationally trained and preferably has classroom experience.

Laying more emphasis on the importance of inclusive classrooms, Van Zyl (2002:96) argued the impracticality of training all teachers to become specialists; however,

learners should benefit from inclusive classes by having empowered and well trained educators in basic skills in order to become effective inclusive teachers.

2.3. READING STRATEGIES

An inclusive teacher requires excellent teaching strategies in order to assist learners to tap into their potential. Educators are expected to apply flexible thinking and to take the creative, innovative approach to both learning and teaching. Nghipondoka (2001:27) maintains that such flexibility aids teachers in continuous development and in adopting approaches to education which bring the greatest benefit to all. The following strategies for the teaching of reading should be considered.

2.3.1. WHOLE SCHOOL READING AS SUPPORT STRATEGY

Whole school reading strategy implies everybody's responsibility across the school and not just the responsibility of those teachers that teaches English (Scott, 2003:13) to address obstacles to reading which the majority of learner's experience, a whole-reading strategy should be adopted. A clear vision and mission to address reading difficulties should be created. A common whole –school reading vision used in schools is "Catch poor readers before they fail and become disillusioned" (Frater, 2000:108). Teachers, together with the headmaster or mistress and department heads should develop a school culture that values reading and diversity and provides time, resources and opportunities in which teaching practices may be reflected upon before being made more effective (Fitzgerald et al., 2010:280).

Through whole-school reading, teaching can improved and standards can be raised if reading skills are developed and enhanced across all learning areas. Learners should be assisted to articulate lucently, both verbally and in written exercises. This support procedure will enrich and enhance learning areas (Priory School, 2007:2).

2.3.2. EXTENSIVE READING

Reading well depends on how well learners acquire both appreciation and skills in literacy, such as understanding what the written words means, realising that language involve the use of words, acquiring an awareness of letters and sounds and how they fit together, and understanding the connection between letters, words and print. These basic skills are fundamental to learning how to read.

According to Van der Walt, Evans and Kilfoil (2009) intensive reading must be reinforced by an extensive reading programme that is highly individualised. Where the notion of extensive reading is presented, this is seen as an activity based on fluency, centred on meaning rather than on form. The reader is encouraged to pace himself; and the individual reads as much as she or he can and at an appropriate level. In this way reading is individualised and each learner progresses at his or her own pace. Learners acquire reading fluency by reading .As they read in their own time, they are kept in contact with English outside the school. It is the skill they will retain for the rest of their lives, it goes without saying that extensive reading should increase vocabulary, comprehension and reading speed. Van der Walt, Evans & Kilfoil (2009) points out that by concentrating on reading for pleasure and following the story, learners acquire discourse competence and understand the meaning behind the Language. Here are two important conditions for the success of an extensive reading programme. Firstly, it must be supported by the school as a whole. Individual teachers will have an uphill struggle if the principal or other language teachers do not support them. Secondly, the programme should be integrated into the Language syllabus. Green (2001) argues that unless teachers integrate the extensive reading programme into the day-to day classroom activities, the advantages of the programme may not be reflected in learners' language proficiency.

2.3.3. PHRASE DRILL

(Daly et al. 2006) propose that an error-correction procedure be deployed when reading is repeated. The procedure is termed phrase drill and fosters the generalization of reading words in the relevant text correctly. Begency, Daly, & Valleley (2006) feel that the teacher, while listening to learners read a passage aloud, should be marking those words pronounced inaccurately, Subsequently, feedback is presented in the form of miscues, offering the correct pronunciation and allowing the reader to repeat the phrase containing the mispronounced word three times. All learners should thereafter repeat the full reading passage once they have practised the words that proved difficult. When having to repeat oral instructions for reading, this technique has proved highly effective.

2.3.4. REINFORCEMENT

Students may need to be given reinforcements in the form of steps to the correct vocalization of the required response when applying strategies for reading with accuracy and comprehension (Carnine et al., 2004). Offering reinforcements in the

form of successive approximations, or steps to improvement moulds the reading behaviour of learners to the making of more accurate responses. Learners must be apprised of the correct response aspect in order for them to focus on those aspects about which they are as yet uncertain, i.e., which they still need to master.

2.3.5. READING COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension involves many processes that readers use to understand a text. Good readers use a wide range of reading strategies and they learn how to use them deliberately. So, logically, in order to increase their comprehension skills when reading, teachers should put forward different reading strategies for the learners.

The teaching of reading has as its objective to expose learners to sufficient instruction (Reis & Housand 2009:51), whilst for McGuinness (2004:211) “comprehension means more than a good vocabulary”. Comprehension includes basic skills of language, for instance, the correct employing of syntax in anticipating words set in the context of a sentence. Unfamiliar words must be assigned an appropriate part of speech. Context should be monitored effectively. Teachers should display an aptitude for such monitoring, being able to infer background knowledge together with the genres, both in written and oral form. McGuinness (2004:211) continues to say that:

...children with good oral comprehension who read the phrase ‘the bunnies huddled in the dense green grass’ may not know the meaning of the words *huddles* and *dense*, but they will know that huddle is something the bunnies are doing (verb) and dense is a property of the grass (adjective). They know this implicitly because of where these words occur in the phrase.

Reis (2009:51) points out two ways of understanding the words ‘verbal’ and ‘situated’ Situated refers to the fluency of word usage in explicating a concept, tailoring it to explicit situations. In the case of general comprehension of a concept or a single word as relating to general principles or other words, a learner must be able to articulate such words or general principles, applying knowledge to specific situations. What is implied is that a fairly general understanding of words may only suffice for the learner to pass specific tests requiring information; such understanding may not allow for actual solving of problems.

2.3.6. LEARNING TO READ WITH THE HELP OF PHONICS, PICTURES AND CONTEXT

A strategy teachers may use to help learners involves a selection of illustrations to introduce words and sentences, thus helping them to decide on a title for an illustration, which could be the picture on the front cover of the book. The teacher writes the title on the board, overhead projector or flip chart, and learners get to know the words of the title when they use word cards as labels and pin them to the relevant picture. Learners construct sentences when they use cards to build the title, later building the sentences used in the story, and they arrange sentences according to the sequence of events in a story.

2.3.7 ENCOURAGING LEARNERS TO READ BOOKS

To encourage children to read books, the classroom in which reading is encouraged could be an environment containing word pictures. On all walls there are pictures related to the theme of the story being read, also in the beginner reader's own language. Teachers can read books translated into the children's own language, before they hear them in their second or third language, an approach that acknowledges the child's language and culture and is therefore valuable for self-esteem. Once learners realise the importance of their own language they can usually read more easily in other languages.

2.3.8. SHARED READING

In an environment of caring adults at home in which children are read to, learners are able to appreciate the strong bond which accompanies the reader and the one read to, in this case, the child. During shared reading they both look at a book together. The adult (teacher) will read while the child hears the story and looks at the accompanying pictures, thus learning to enjoy reading stories in books. The print becomes alive for the learner who loves the stories read aloud while he views the text and illustrations (Wessels, 2007:133).

Wessels (2007) recommends that school reading lessons be made interesting and exciting, awakening the enthusiasm of the pupil and supplying rewards for close attention and progress made as a result. One technique is for teachers to read from

a large story book which may be held up to all pupils whether on the floor, or at the back of the room, displaying the concomitant illustrations floor.

According to Archer and Hughes (2011:11) teachers share a common objective, that of assisting learners to achieve the most substantial gains academically, while in a positive environment offering the maximum respect in which to foster success, and promoting a desire to learn. An invaluable aid to teachers is the type of instruction which is explicit, direct, systematic, and oriented to success. Explicit instruction has been lauded repeatedly in research on education, both special and general..

2.3.9. PAIRED READING

Koskinene and Blum created paired reading in 1986(Shanker & Ekwall, 2003:8) learners read with a friend (who is a more accomplished reader), they talk about their book, and they take turns. Each pair of learners chooses or selects easy, interesting material. They examine their book and predict what it is likely to be about. According to Grainger & Tod (2003:64) in a method employing reading in pairs, confidence is bolstered by the context of support shown, promoting fluency in reading together.(McEwan 2002:61) points out that buddies and readers can first read text aloud together, when learners feel confident about reading on their own, they can then read the passage orally several times.

2.4. PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

Effective instruction requires numerous important principles. These principles include:

2.4.1. ENGAGE TIME

There are two aspects to the time variable in instruction which are interrelated: length of time spent teaching and length of time spent on learning. While interrelated and interactive as these aspects are, it is true that an extended teaching time alone will not always mean that learners will spend a similar amount of time learning. Therefore, although important, the amount of instruction is not sufficient as an independent learning component; quantity and quality of teaching must combine if success is to be achieved.

2.4.2. HIGH LEVEL OF SUCCESS

Length of time spent on instruction and effort by the learner combined impacts positively on learners' learning. It is, however, when learners are involved and making progress that they gain the most learning. Should the number of errors be unacceptably high, simply being involved in a task or using a skill does not suffice. Learners then spend time repeating their mistakes, practising these rather than the correct words and pronunciations. Usually errors in the form of incorrect responses take place during the early phase of instruction. In order expediently to correct and minimise such errors, learning must be made more efficient. Certain factors of design and delivery must be examined. In short, teaching material must comprise clearly presented, dynamic modelling of strategies and abilities which support practising, effective participation, efficient monitoring of responses from learners, giving instant feedback to correct errors.

2.4.3. CONTENT COVERAGE

This term applies to content taught to learners, whether a small or large amount. In other words, the greater the amount of content which is effectively presented, the greater the likelihood for success. One could say that the more teaching, the more learning. Several factors go into the amount and quality of teaching offered, for instance, what and how to teach and the method of practising what is being learned..

Also, when teachers apply concepts, skills, rules, or strategies which may be applied to other situations, content coverage is maximised. For instance, letter-sound associations can replace the separate teaching of individual words, in like vein, when about to take learners through a passage of reading, the teacher can first focus on words and phrases which will occur during the reading, preparing the learners for their first encounter with the words.

2.4.4. GROUP INSTRUCTION

According to Archer & Hughes (2011:13), the most effective method of teaching basic skills is to do so in a group setting. The teacher leads the instruction to the group, offering clear explanations and modelling, together with feedback, repeated responses and practising of new material.

As claimed by Archer & Hughes (2011:10), it seems generally to work better if classes are divided into small groups, enabling more repetition and practice; it also

allows closer monitoring of progress. Instruction given to groups numbering six to eight seems, according to the latest research, to have a better result than when either smaller or larger units are taught by this method.

2.4.5. FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH READING DIFFICULTY

There are a number of factors associated with reading difficulty:

2.5.1. NEUROLOGICAL AND COGNITIVE FACTORS

According to Jennings, Caldwell and Lerner (2010:23), reading problems can be rooted in neurological, cognitive and physical factors, associated with the environment or emotions, each of which may contribute to an individual learner's reading difficulty. Teaching techniques can retrain the brain, especially when the instruction happens early (Shaywitz *et al.*, 2008; May, 2006). Depending on whether an alphabet-based writing system such as English is used, research indicates that dyslexia can affect different areas in the brain. English teaching includes awareness of the sounds, known as 'phonic awareness' (Hotz, 2008; Niu, Jin, Perfetti & Tan, 2008; McGough, 2004).

2.5.2. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Different learners grow and live in different environments which has strong impact on their abilities and desires to learn. Below are different examples:

2.5.3. HOME ENVIRONMENT

According to Caldwell (2006:22), the home is a child's first environment, thus the foundation for tremendous cognitive growth and development. The experiences that occur during the critical first five or six years of life have powerful influences on the child's intelligence and language. Youngsters who experience difficulty learning to read are in special need of satisfying family relationships. Parents can play a very meaningful role in ameliorating reading failure outcomes from the emotional and psychological point of view, by the way in which they interact with the child at home (Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank & Smith, 2004).

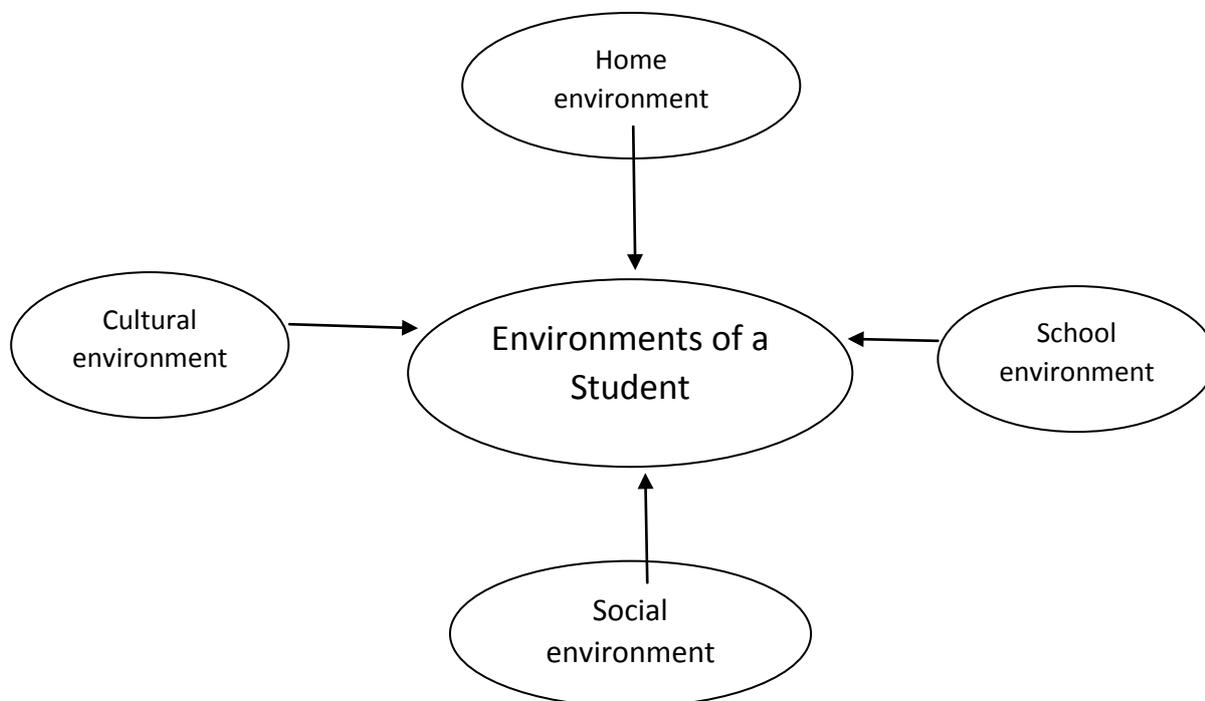


Figure 2. Dynamics of environment as they contribute to a child's teaching Caldwell (2006:23)

2.5.4. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

School problems are multiplied in less fortunate settings. As family instability increases so teachers in all schools are instructing at-risk children (Lerner & Johns, 2009). Some school practices can contribute to a child's reading problems, for example, teachers might give up trying to teach a child to read, and instead simply read everything to them. During this time, little help is provided for the child with significant reading problems.

Hufton, Elliott and Illushin (2003) also found that some school practices can contribute to reading problems. It is possible that teachers, whose job is to help, can actually be doing something that is harmful to learners by entirely giving up teaching them to read and instead reading to them. When other children have reading time these children might be expected to sit quietly and do nothing. Thus, the school often does little to help the child with significant reading problems.

2.5.5. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Successful interactions with friends provide learners with much satisfaction and many opportunities to gain self-confidence. Many learners with reading problems, however, also have social difficulties, particularly making friends, interacting with

others, and not understanding the nuances of social situations. Poor achievers often are rejected or ignored by classmates and are uninvolved in extracurricular activities (Lavoie, 2007; Tur-Kaspa, 2002; Wong & Donahue, 2002).

2.5.6. CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

According to Jennings et al 'one of the greatest challenges schools face is providing an excellent education to students of all cultures, whatever their geographical origin, socioeconomic status, or language.' Teachers must be taught the likely outcomes of poverty on students' academic performance. Although individuals with incomes below the poverty level come from diverse backgrounds, they tend to have certain similarities. Because they are necessarily concerned with basic survival needs, parents are likely to have less energy to devote to their children's development.

2.5.7. EFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION

Successful students emerge from schools at which, despite the socio-economic background of the learner, excellent teachers are employed, who, whether or not they have the latest aids to teaching, au fait with their subject, presenting themselves articulately, are setting a good example to the learners (Mosenthal, Lipson, Torncello, Russ, & Mekkelsen, 2004).

2.5.7.1. THE SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE READING TEACHERS

- Teachers who are outstanding at teaching reading are knowledgeable about the way in which children pick up the language orally as well as when they see the written word;
- Outstanding teachers of reading are very good classroom managers;
- Outstanding teachers of reading assess the level of the group and its deficiencies before proceeding with a lesson;
- Outstanding teachers of reading can adapt the material and instruction with ease to accommodate learners with special needs;
- Outstanding teachers of reading base their instruction on evidence when teaching the basics of reading to learners;
- Outstanding teachers of reading apply reading and writing models throughout the day to all work presented; and

- Outstanding teachers of reading engage with other staff members, parents, and others in their community, thus reinforcing the reading of their learners.

Presley (2003) pointed out five pillars of effective reading instructions. The five pillars are illustrated in figure 2:

THE FIVE PILLARS OF EFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION (**Presley, 2003**)

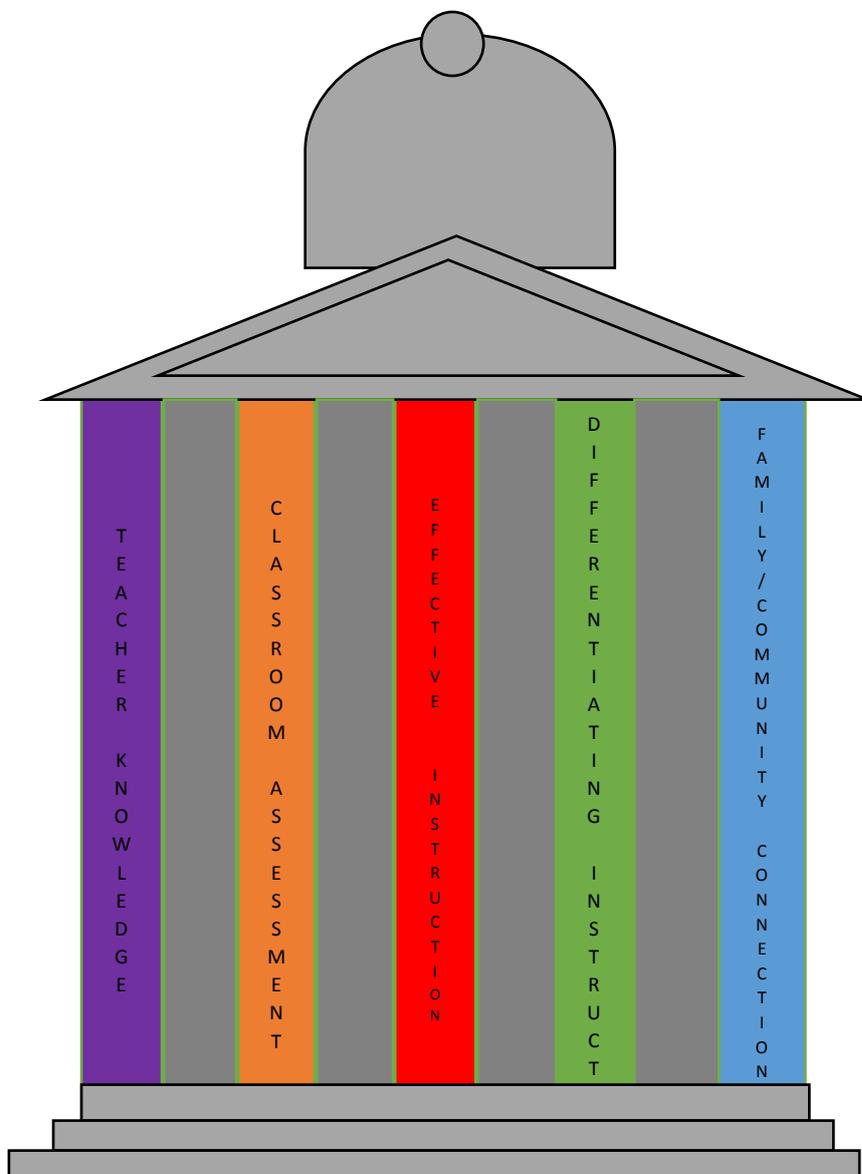


Figure 2:

2.6.1. TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

Over the past few decades, it has been verified by research that there is an optimal order in which reading strategies and basic reading skills should be taught. Teachers who are good at teaching reading skills are aware of such a sequence and take the most effective approach to transferring this valuable knowledge.

2.6.2. CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

It is imperative that teachers have assessed the reading skills of individual learners. Outstanding teachers are quick to determine the level of knowledge of each pupil, depicting this information in the form of roadmaps on the instructional pathway, supplying the learners with material which best fosters their individual needs.

2.6.3. EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

A huge number of teaching strategies for promoting reading skills prevails, according to the evidence provided by research. Every effective teacher has a large range of helpful tools at his or her disposal, which may be used on individuals to achieve their full reading potential.

2.6.4. DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

When children attend school, they bring with them a wide variety of learning needs. For instance, the fact remains that English is very often not the first language of the learner. Teachers must therefore be skilful in bridging any gaps in the knowledge of English, found varyingly in all the learners.

2.6.5. FAMILY/COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Eighty per cent of learning that takes place by any learner, it is said, occurs off the school premises. It is apparent that both family and community members are more than willing to assist learners with their schoolwork, but only if they have access to the correct method and knowledge.

2.7. FORMS OF SUPPORT GIVEN TO INCLUSIVE TEACHERS IN CANADA

Teacher expectations must be met by a variety of supportive endeavours and from the full range of stakeholders. Forms of support comprise the following.

2.7.1. HOW GOVERNMENT CAN SUPPORT TEACHERS

Governments, both provincial and territorial should establish a legislative education framework, focusing on including all learners in all normal schools and classrooms. Funding should be made available, sufficient to assure the success of such a venture for learners, their teachers, and their parents.

2.7. HOW MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION CAN SUPPORT TEACHERS

It has been suggested that ministries of education set up funds which could provide dedicated support for inclusive classrooms without mention being made in the form of labels and stigma for students, not adding to the teacher's workload by demanding additional administration work. The relevant ministries could help motivate teachers by providing recognition for effort and achievement while offering them professional development.

2.7.3. HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT TEACHERS

This may be achieved by partnering of parents with the teachers in their effort to enhance children's reading experience. Parents should temper their high expectations of their children's learning and development with a measure of realism. They can offer teachers a glimpse into their home situation, displaying its strengths and weaknesses, thereby reinforcing the effort made by the teacher, while providing activities in the community which could aid the development of the learner.

2.7.4 HOW UNIVERSITY- BASED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES CAN SUPPORT TEACHERS

This type of education for teachers, based on the university curriculum may be used as a model for inclusion and diversity in the classroom. All applicants should have skills relating to basic competency on inclusion procedures for both school and district administrators. Ongoing professional development in the form of e-learning or in-service studying may be offered to accepted candidates. Classroom practice at inclusive schools can be the subject of research studies which deploy evidence-

based methods. Incentives could be offered for researchers to tackle the topic of inclusion in education as the field of research.

2.7.5. HOW OTHER PROFESSIONALS CAN SUPPORT TEACHERS

Related professionals, for instance psychologists, social workers, and specialists in speech and language, personal support workers, and public health professionals have their role to play where support is required for teachers. Such related professionals should be willing to work in conjunction with administrators and teachers and other people in the lives of the young learners, who seem increasingly to face great challenges. The knowledge of these professionals may be brought to bear on classroom difficulties and complexities, offering solutions which promote inclusion, and centre on limiting segregation.

2.8. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Reading has powerful implications for teaching and learning in schools. If one cannot read one cannot learn, and this can hinder the processes of teaching. Therefore, there is a need for teachers to be aware of difficulties in reading, especially in the Intermediate Phase, if they are to enhance learner performance.

This chapter has focused on reading in detail, highlighting the roles of inclusive teachers, and reading strategies such as comprehension, shared reading and paired reading. Furthermore principles of effective instruction, factors associated with reading difficulty and effective reading instructions were delineated. The following chapter presents an outline of the research methodology used when gathering and analysing data.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the role of teachers who adopt inclusive teaching when imparting skills of reading, has been outlined. The research will be based on information gleaned from literature. The role of such teachers will come under scrutiny. The researcher, in this chapter, offers the methodological paradigm, the design of the research, the sampling procedure, the data collection, together with the methods used in analysing and interpreting the data. Validity and reliability of the qualitative research will be dealt with.

Ethical considerations of the study are discussed.

3.2. THE RESEARCH DESIGN (QUALITATIVE RESEARCH)

In investigating the inclusive teacher's role, the researcher will apply qualitative design regarding the imparting of reading skills to pupils. According to Madau (2004:102), a researcher is given the opportunity under qualitative enquiry, to participate in the experience of another person or persons. In this way the researcher gains a different response apropos of specific aspects of interest to the study. For this reason, the researcher selected the qualitative research design. The study aims to analyse the role of inclusive teachers in imparting reading skills to learners. Teachers will be observed teaching reading to learners. Documents will also be analysed, such as learners' exercise books, assessment tools, work schedule etc. Teachers will also be given an opportunity to express themselves in interviews, explaining their strengths and weaknesses in teaching of reading .That is how the empirical data will be gathered.

3.3. QUALITATIVE APPROACH

In order to understand the perceptions teachers have about their role in imparting reading skills to their learners in schools, the qualitative approach is used in the study. Leedy and Ormod (2011) emphasise that the researcher, in a case study, gathers large amounts of data on events and individuals on which the study is centred. Such data usually includes interviews, observations, records, and documents and audio-visual material. The researcher often spends a long time on site interacting with the subjects under study.

Mouton (2001) regards the qualitative method research as 'naturalistic' as it describes and evaluates the performance of programmes in their natural settings. Likewise, Leedy and Ormrod (2001) argue that, crucial to the full understanding of the social phenomenon, is the ability of the researcher to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees and hears. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), phenomena are studied by the qualitative researcher in their natural context so as to allow for sense-making and thorough interpretation of phenomena, offering the meanings brought to them by the participants.

As the Head of Department (HOD) and School Management Team (SMT) member at Nyakana primary school in KwaDukuza Circuit, ILembe District, the qualitative research approach was considered most suitable for the study. Since qualitative research stresses the international reality, and focuses on unearthing the many outlooks of the participants in a natural environment, it was considered well suited for giving voice to the educators as professional role-players within the school. It allowed the researcher to comprehend the views and outlooks, concerns and actions played out by participants.

3.4. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM PARADIGM

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), one definition of a paradigm is a worldview attained by means of a core belief system. In order to explore the role of educators in imparting reading skills to learners, the study utilised a social constructivism paradigm, a term appearing in the literature whose meaning is moulded by users' intent. Adherents to this view have a common goal of making sense of the lived experiences within a complex world, seeing it from the same reference point as those living it. (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). In this paradigm the perspectives and lived experiences of both teachers and learners in the classroom context head up the teaching and learning experience (Vacca, Gove, Burkery, Lenhart & McKeon, 2002). Denzil and Lincoln also suggest that, for constructivists, knowing is not a passive activity, the mind being actively engaged in constructing knowledge. The mind creates truth and knowledge; these features are not simply discovered. The researchers stress that reality is both plastic and pluralistic. Symbolic and language systems express reality, which is pluralistic, and malleable, so allowing for it to be shaped to fit acts of international human agency which is purposeful.

Henning, van Rensburg & Smit (2004) argue that observable phenomena are not the only constructs of knowledge. Knowledge is created by people's written intentions,

values, reasons, beliefs, self-understanding, and meaning-making. It is left to the researcher therefore to view various phenomena in the same light as viewed by different participants, such as teachers and learners, to understand them. It has been assumed by researchers dealing with such a paradigm that one should take seriously the subjective experiences of others (ontology), understanding the lived lives of others by engaging with them and hearing their stories (epistemology). Also, when a researcher asks the kinds of activities conducted by the subjects, the way in which the activities are conducted, and their personal meaning, this kind of epistemology is being deployed. Researchers take note of all meanings, beliefs, symbols, and emotions aligned with events or objects and relating to research subjects in the study environment (Bailey et al., 2007), thus the methodology of choice becomes qualitative research. Because they analyse the context to find and make sense of ways in which subjects make meaning of their lives, qualitative researchers are also given to interpretation. Such researchers wish also to know the kind of meanings the subjects make.

Crotty (2003), on the topic of constructivism, pointed out several assumptions:

- People construct meanings as they relate to the phenomena they wish to interpret. Open-ended questions are favoured by qualitative researchers, allowing the study subjects to articulate their opinions.
- Qualitative research, being inductive, allows the enquirer to probe for meaning from data gathered in the field. The researcher must then interpret the meanings apropos of the world, held by others. By means of constructivism, the researcher may investigate wider meanings about the experiences of learners with reading challenges and the role of educators in imparting reading skills. In this case the researcher hoped to become immersed in the school (social-context) environment, while observing the actions and experiences of the teachers.

Additionally, according to constructivists, people do try to comprehend their world, in which they live and work and relax. People grasp the meaning of their experiences subjectively, directing such meaning to given objects or situations. Researchers depend on the perspectives of the subjects under study. Participants' opinions of the situation under study are expressed; meanings may then be constructed, further shaped by interactions or discussions with others (Creswell, 2003). Henning *et al.* (2004) believe that descriptions of the intentions, beliefs, reasons, and values of people all go into the construction of knowledge. Meaning-making relates to

understanding of oneself. If this is so, the responsible researcher must peruse many different factors and places so as to get to grips with the phenomena.

3.5 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEM THEORY OF BRONFERNBRENNER

Bronfenbrenner offered a tentative ecological model which explained both direct and indirect effects and influences in the life of child, mentioning the following contexts:

3.5.1. THE MICRO SYSTEM

A micro system comprises interpersonal roles, relations, and activities which form a pattern in the way they interact, such as within the family, the school or with peers. Such a system provides for the sense of belonging felt by the child; the love and support given to him, which should subsequently serve as a protective factor.

3.5.2. THE MESOSYSTEM

The mesosystem is the term given to developing relationships between two or more such microsystems at any given point in the life of an individual. Peer groups, school and family interact, which serves to modify the various systems. Interactions in one microsystem, such as teacher-child interaction when in class have an effect on other systems, influencing their interactions. .

3.5.3 THE EXOSYSTEM

When one or more environments directly influence the pupil, although he may not be directly involved as an active participant, but which may either be influenced by or influence what takes place in the settings and in the relationships affecting the learner, this system is known as the exosystem. . For example, there are the media, the health services, the education system, and there is the community and the place of work of the parents.

3.5.4 THE MACROSYSTEM

These systems have embedded into them all ideological, cultural, and institutional settings

(Swart and Pettipher, in Landsberg et al.2005:11).

A macrosystem represents the least intimate degree of environmental influence. Our macrosystem affects the way in which interactions on all other levels occur, thus affording the inner systems with content and structure; they are at a given point of time, specific to a particular culture. The ideologies of the macrosystem embrace the principles of inclusion. Such changes have had a reciprocal effect throughout society, not only in government, but in schools, professional services, classroom systems, cultures, and families, not to mention on the child himself.

3.5.5 THE CHRONOSYSTEM

The chronosystem comprises time as a dimension, and the way in which it relates particularly to influences on individual development as a result of interactions between the systems. The Outcomes Based Education (OBE) Curriculum was phased out at a time when teachers displayed insecurities: the many changes provided both opportunities for teachers and learners, but also some obstacles.

3.6. SAMPLING

A sample is an example or small amount of something that shows what all of it is like. A sample comprises elements containing the highest number of traits which typify or represent common characteristics of the study population, based on the knowledge the researcher has of the population, assisting in the success of the research (White, 2005). The sample normally comprises a select group of people of similar traits. Sampling involves selecting certain elements from within a population (a list of the elements) after which people or issues may be included in the research (McMillan, 2000). According to De Vos *et al.* (2011), one must study the sample so as to gain understanding of the population under study. The procedure most often used in qualitative research is purposive sampling, the goal of which is to choose places, people or objects yielding the fullest and most intricately detailed information in answer to the research questions (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler, 2010). According to Maree (2010), participants are selected by the purposive sampling method in which their defining traits make them the holders of the sought-after data required for the study. Qualitative research usually involves smaller sample sizes than quantitative research studies. Frankael and Wallen (2003) suggest that, in educational research, a group of people having specific characteristics become the population of interest to the researcher.

In this study, purposive sampling was used. This decision was at the discretion of the researcher. The sample was selected based on their ability to furnish information germane to the problem, namely a purposive sample of five educators, ten learners and five SMT members. The SMT were selected because it was assumed that they were knowledgeable about the issue of reading challenges at school. Educators were selected because they interacted with learners on daily basis and were also language teachers who sometimes experienced challenges in imparting reading skills to their learners. Learners were selected because they were the ones who experienced difficulties in reading and they knew if they were active readers or not. Duke and Pearson (2000) state that readers, from the initial stages, have clear objectives towards which they strive, frequently evaluating the results of their learning and deciding whether their goals are being achieved.

3.7. MULTIPLE METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Data was gathered for this study by numerous means, in line with Yin (2009:139). This had an advantage of the methods complementing one another thereby strengthening the findings. The following three methods were used: observation, document analysis, interviews.

Qualitative data is derived from many sources, for example, interviews, observation, reports and field notes (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). For this research study, the principal source was the in-depth interview with ten educators, including the SMT. Individual interviews and document review were the most suitable instruments to be used to obtain in-depth information about the way in which teachers impart reading skills to learners in the Intermediate Phase. Open-ended questions were used, with the interviews conducted in English and voice-recorded (Maree, 2010).

In-depth interviewing has the effect not of testing hypotheses, nor of providing answers to questions, nor to make assessments. The interview exists solely to gain inside information and thereby some comprehension of the lived experiences of others, together with the meaning attached to such experiences (Seidman, 2006). Interviews enable the researcher to communicate in a natural way with the study subjects allowing the subjects to articulate their emotions freely. Researchers take note of body language, and they scrutinise the remarks made by the participants. Data was analysed and categorised into classes and themes, as arrived at through the data-assessment procedures, making comparisons with appropriate literature so as to confirm the congruency (Creswell, 2007).

3.7.1. OBSERVATION

So as to arrive at answers to the study questions, observations were conducted of teachers actively teaching their pupils. Engelbrecht et al. (2003:17) maintained that observation provided the principal data-collection means, as it allows for a first-hand description of the study environment. The study has as one objective the determining of the role played by teachers when imparting reading ability to their pupils. Observation is therefore apposite in obtaining trustworthy and valid answers, the researcher being one with the participants at the site of the study, noting the participants' behaviour while in their own environment.

Leedy and Omrod (2005:145) aver that, where qualitative studies are concerned, flexibility on the part of the researcher is called for, observation being deliberately free-flowing and unstructured. The researcher may then shift focus from one situation or event to the other, as new situations or objects appear in the environment. In this study, the researcher observed five inclusive and language teachers and learners in class during reading time. Teachers were observed during their language (English) periods since they are not class based teachers. The duration of the period is one hour a day and five periods per week.

3.7.2. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Documents providing information on previous events, either written or printed, are delineated by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:42). Merriam (in: Engelbrecht et al., 2003:17) applies the term "umbrella" to documents of a wide-ranging nature, including physical, visual, and written material relating to the study research. The goal of the research is to elicit information on support provided by teachers. The researcher therefore needs to understand which strategies are they using in teaching reading and whether those strategies are adequate or inadequate. The facts are examined and interpreted by the researcher, who must peruse documentary evidence such as work schedules, assessment tools and tasks, lesson preparations, learners workbooks and exercise books, the whole school composite time table to see whether the school promotes reading across all phases that is from the foundation to intermediate and senior phase.

3.7.3 INTERVIEWS

In any qualitative research study, or case study, observations and interviews are the norm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Fontana & Frey, 1994; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994,

1995; Yin, 2003). In eliciting insider information, gaining pertinent or emic perspectives on the case under study, the interview is commonly deployed. By means of the interview, the interaction between the study subject and the researcher has been seen as "...the establishment of human-to human relation with the respondent and the desire to understand rather than to explain" (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

According to Maree (2010), the interview is a means of data gathering in which two-way communication allows the researcher to pose questions to the participant. Answers provide the data, informing the interviewer on the subjects' opinions, ideas, beliefs, views, and behaviour. In addition, the qualitative interview seeks to view the world of the subject through his or her own eyes. Participants, when they provide pertinent information, are seen as valuable information sources.

Interviewing the participants through semi-structured interviews yielded rich insight for the researcher into the role played by teachers when imparting reading skills to Intermediate Phase learners. Semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to apply undeviating exploration of specific topics, asking basic introductory questions of the participant. This afforded the researcher the opportunity of conversing in natural language, maintaining flexibility, providing more profound insight. The interview was thus accepted as open and honest, more reliable and morally sound in that participants were treated as of the same status as the researcher. This situation allowed participants to articulate their inner and private emotions. A more reliable and realistic perspective is thus unearthed than would be the case using conventional interviewing techniques (Fontana & Frey, 1994). According to McMillan and Shumacher (2010), the researcher should talk less than the responded, and the cues the respondent needs can usually be reduced to a few words during interviews.

De Vos *et al.* (2011) also mention two interview methods as data-collection methods, namely one-on-one interviews, and focus groups, whilst McMillan and Schumacher state that often qualitative interviews will be semi-structured, beginning with general questions then probing with more specific questions. They also mentioned some interview logistics which they say researchers choose for interview topics and questions while planning the general logistics that influence an interview session. Five contingencies that affect an interview session are (i) the length or duration of the interview; (ii) the style or mode of communication of the participant; (iii) the

number of interviews required to yield all the data; (iv) the number of participants at each interview, and their identities; and (v) the environment or site of the interview.

The months of February and March, the first school term of the year, was the period set aside for the research. Semi-structured interviews, of a one-on-one nature were used by his study, the aim of which was to gain insight into how individual participants feel about or perceive their own role in imparting reading skills. The individual interviews were conducted with educators and the SMT members, at a time specified by the school. The interviews allowed the interviewees to speak from their own experiences whilst the use of an interview guide ensured that the information shared during the interview remained focused on relevant issues pertaining to the study. The researcher tried as far as possible to create an atmosphere which allowed participants to feel at ease and for the researcher to be attentive to their views and to listen with empathy. Before starting the interview the researcher gained consent from the interviewees for the recording of the session. All the interviewees were reminded of the ethical issues, notably confidentiality, the right to stop the interview and the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the process was not compromising in any way.

Cohen *et al.* (2011) assert that the definition of a document is a note of either a process or an event, taking many forms, and provided either by groups or by an individual. For this study, it was necessary to undertake a document analysis in the various schools selected. Documents, such as work schedules, lesson plan, assessment programme, class tests and assessment tasks were extensively studied. De Vos *et al.* (2011) state that non-personal or official documents are those garnered and preserved on an ongoing basis by institutions which are large-size, for instance, government organisations. Documents of a personal nature are not as structured and formal as those found in large enterprises, therefore official documents were used to corroborate the interviews and so improve the trustworthiness of the findings. The documents may reveal aspects that were not found through the interviews, affirming the view of Cohen *et al.* (2011). These researchers state that the phenomena under investigation afford greater visibility in document form.

3.8. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE FINDINGS

According to Cohen *et al.* (2011), by choosing tools which are best suited to the data collection, validity may be better assured at design stage. It is the task of the researcher to ensure that individual participants understand the research questions.

Silverman (2000, cited in Cohen *et al.*, 2011) stresses the importance of the uniform comprehension of research questions by all participants so that the reliability of the interviews may be enhanced. Every participant received in advance of the interview, a guide to the interview format, suggesting that interviewees offer any pertinent information at the interview; thus participants were encouraged to speak unrestrainedly.

Creswell (2010) states that a study should employ methods set out in detail, providing a painstaking style of data gathering, analysis and documentation. In the case of large amounts of data being collected, rigour is necessary; as when multiple levels of analysis of data take place; moving from the narrower themes or codes to those interrelated but more abstract.

De Vos *et al.* (2011) list four criteria that should be followed if a researcher wishes to ensure trustworthiness, as follows.

3.8.1. CREDIBILITY

The researcher's confidence in the findings is measured by the credibility accompanying the data. This was achieved in the study by triangulation, which according to Babbie and Mouton (2010) is seen as the most appropriate way of achieving and enhancing, in qualitative research, reliability and validity. Richard (2005) notes that it involves different forms of data or data-handling methods. Individual participant interviews have been selected for this study, together with document reviews and observations. Triangulation is regarded as an approved way of ensuring credibility in qualitative research, and referred by Creswell (2005) as a primary form used by qualitative researchers to validate findings, whilst De Vos *et al.* (2011) describe triangulation in terms of a method whereby various kinds of sources are sought which will offer insight into relationships or events of the same type. In this study, triangulation was employed by means of the different methods of collecting data, namely, individual interviews and documents review.

3.8.2. TRANSFERABILITY

The extent to which findings may be applied with other participants or in similar but other situations is known as transferability (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). For this research study, descriptions of the research methodology both detailed and comprehensive were given, and interviews voice-recorded.

3.8.3. DEPENDABILITY

Whether the research findings are likely to be consistent when the study is repeated in a similar setting, speaks to the findings' dependability, according to Bisschoff and Koebe (2005). This research ensured consistency by using rich, detailed descriptions of the research methodology, as well as the availability of audio-recordings, and triangulation of different methods of data gathering. Babbie and Mouton (2005) also suggest that evidence must be presented to the audience by an enquiry illustrating the likelihood of similar contexts to produce similar findings. For Creswell (2003:220), the extent to which research instruments of the same nature may be simulated under similar conditions with similar participants goes to its dependability as a source of data. Overlapping methods constitute a more direct method. For this study the researcher deployed observations, interviews, and document analysis to understand reading challenges in the intermediate phase, in an attempt to achieve dependability.

3.8.4 CONFORMABILITY

(Guba & Lincoln, 1994:318) state that conformability applies to the extent to which findings are bias-free. While processing the data gathered, a field journal must be kept in which the researcher must note any issues of concern apropos of himself or herself, as a person. This includes personal emotions and attitudes, together with those of the study subjects. By applying serious reflection and introspection the researcher scrutinised such perspectives, deciding their influence on the subject under study. The researcher's reactions, feelings and attitudes were documented, in an effort to reduce any preconceived ideas and bias towards the subject of reading, especially in Grade 4 of the intermediate phase.

This study made allowances for conformability by keeping records of the raw data collected through individual interviews and documents review, as well as records of data analysis. The researcher took pains to participate in planning and debriefing meetings with the supervisor. Having vast experience in the field of research, the supervisor helped to validate the research findings.

3.9. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in a qualitative study comprises the sorting, accounting for, and explication of the data, making sense of definitions given by study subjects; recognising and recording regularities, patterns, themes, and categories (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Huberman and Miles (1983), Marriam (1998), Stake (1994), Yin (2003) outline that large quantities of raw data are gathered in any qualitative case study research. It is therefore imperative to organise it and maintain it in orderly form. . Qualitative data was transcribed and analysed by the researcher to be able to identify relevant themes compiled from the questions asked by the study, and guiding it. Different themes were identified and coded, as they cropped up in meticulous analysis of each transcription, line by line (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). In order to pay attention to words and phrases articulated by participants, the researcher played and replayed audio recordings. This assisted in becoming familiar with the data, making sense and meaning of conversations and actions of the participants (De Vos *et al.*, 2011).

The gathered data was deliberated in this order: the perspectives of educators apropos of the challenges they face; the perceptions of educators regarding the causes of learner challenges in reading, the perception of educators regarding their role in imparting reading skills in the Intermediate Phase. In identifying the causes of reading problems, the data were classified into themes. Analysis and interpretation of the data was tackled in three phases. Phase 1: data reflecting reasons for reading problems were categorised. Phase 2: themes within these categories were amalgamated; and Phase 3: interpretation of data occurred (Meier & Marais, 2010).

3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) state that, in research, the majority of ethical issues are covered by either one of the following aspects: informed consent; protection from harm; honesty towards professional colleagues; and right to privacy; confidentiality and anonymity; and the right to equality, justice and withdrawing or terminating participation at any time. A statement of the interview objective was submitted to the study subjects in advance of the interview. It was explained that answers would be viewed as neutral, in that there was neither a correct nor an incorrect answer. Confidentiality was similarly assured. The participants also received a clear

explanation of why they were asked to be part of the study but they had the freedom to withdraw at any time. To hide the identity of participants, pseudonyms were adopted. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality of the data provided, which was solely dedicated to this specific study.

The research Ethics Committee at the university and, the DoE were applied to for sanction to conduct a research study at specific schools in the Ilembe District. While waiting for the responses the researcher made an appointment with the principals of five schools in kwa Dukuza circuit, during which she submitted letters seeking permission to interact the educators of schools as participants in her study. The researcher gave each principal a short outline of the study content on receiving letters of approval from the DoE and contacted the principals concerned for responses to the researcher's request for permission to use their schools in the researcher's study (Oosthuizen, 2009).

Finally, the researcher requested permission from each research participant and encouraged them to participate, setting out the research objectives and providing credentials. Cohen *et al.* (2011) state that when individuals are given the choice of taking part in research, once they have been apprised of the facts that could affect their decision, this comprises informed consent. Study candidates were told that they would have to sign a consent form before participating in the study.

3.11. CHAPTER SUMMARY

A description of the methodology and the research design is offered in this chapter, followed by a short summing-up of both paradigm and approach. Emphasis was laid on the qualitative method employed as the most suitable; a discussion followed of the reasons behind selection of the participants. The logical method deployed in arriving at answers to research questions when analysing data was described by the researcher. The ethical procedures given due consideration for research purposes were also outlined.

A discussion of the analysis of the research data will be found in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Methodology and design were delineated in the previous chapter. This chapter presents and discusses data from the field and presents interpretation of findings that emanated from semi-structured interviews and document reviews on the role of educators in teaching intermediate phase pupils to read. This research sought to answer the research questions.

4.2. OBSERVATION

According to Engelbrecht, Eloff, Lomofsky, Masipa, Oswald and Swart (2003:17) a first-hand perspective of the phenomenon under scrutiny is known as observation. Examining and analysing the part played by teachers who are using the inclusive method in teaching the skills of reading to their learners is focused on by this research. The researcher must adopt an observation approach so as to gain answers which are reliable and valid. The researcher, by means of observation was able to gain first-hand information on best practices of inclusive teachers regarding the imparting of reading skills. The observation also made the researcher to understand how inclusive teachers were playing their roles.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:439) advised that what should be observed by researchers is to note any non-verbal cues that may enhance or detract from any subtleties in the language register of the participants. Cues such as these could come in the form of tone of voice, facial expression, body language, or any other social interaction. The above-mentioned helped the researcher to observe teachers' strategies in teaching reading. Observation entail a systematic noting and recording of events, behaviour, and objects in a social setting chosen for the study. According to Marshall and Rossman 1994:26) observation rely mostly on seeing and hearing, that is what the researcher did during classroom observations.

4.3. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

According to Henning *et al.* (2004:99) analysis of documents involves the study of documents which may prove relevant and therefore a worthwhile source of information. In this study the researcher gained the information regarding teachers' practices in teaching reading skills. (Best & Kahn, 2006:201) reiterate the valuable nature of analysis of documents in support of findings of other methods of research, for instance observation and interviews.

Document analysis had been done. Work schedule, lesson plans, assessment tools, learners' exercise books and intervention plans were scrutinized. All those documents provided information about teachers as to how are they playing their roles and learners as to how do they respond to the assistance given by teachers if there is any.

The validity of the collected data was confirmed after gathering the data and subjecting it to analysis. So as to describe the methods adopted by inclusive teachers when teaching reading, the data was interpreted by the researcher.

4.4 INTERVIEW

Semi-structured interviews with the SMT, educators and learners, as well as document review in each of the selected schools, were the most suitable instruments used to obtain in-depth details of reading challenges both teachers and pupils have to confront in the teaching of reading. Themes arising from research questions, as they served to guide the study, were used in analysing the collected qualitative data. Thick descriptions, together with direct quotes were used in data reporting to ensure that participants' voices were not lost.

In Table 4.1 (below) the main study participants (SMT and Teachers) are introduced, using data taken from the interviews. Participants were requested within ten minutes of beginning the interview to talk freely to the researcher about themselves, their training and their teaching experience. Responses to questions were documented before being analysed, field notes being referred to. Participants were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality.

The participants are named in the research study as Participants 1 to 10. The researcher alone is privy to their true identity.

Table 4.1: Profile of the participants

No	Qualification	Work profile
1.	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma Higher Diploma in Education Advanced Certificate in Technology	❖ 14 years' experience ❖ Taught in the Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase
2.	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma Higher Diploma in Education	❖ 17 years' experience. ❖ Taught in Intermediate Phase
3.	Junior Primary Teachers' Diploma Further Diploma in Education BEd(Hons)	❖ 25 years' experience ❖ Taught in Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase
4.	J.C-One year teaching certificate B.A degree	❖ Taught in primary school ❖ 27 years' teaching experience ❖ School principal
5.	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma Higher Diploma in Education Certificate in Special Needs	❖ Taught in primary school ❖ 17 years' teaching experience ❖ ILST Chairperson
6.	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma Adult Basic Education Diploma in Inclusive Education	❖ 18 years' teaching experience ❖ Learning support Teacher ❖ Chairperson of the OVC (Orphans Vulnerable Committee) Committee
7.	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma. Higher Diploma in Education BEd(Hons) MEd in Education Psychology	❖ 19 Years teaching experience ❖ Head of Department. ❖ Taught language in the Intermediate Phase
8.	Junior Primary Teachers Diploma ABET Certificate BEd(Hons) Current study: Master's in political leadership.	❖ 10 years' Teaching experience ❖ Taught Foundation Phase ❖ Member of the ILST Committee
9.	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma Advanced Certificate	❖ 13 years' Teaching experience ❖ Teaching English AFL
10.	BEd Degree	❖ 3 years' teaching Experience ❖ Teaching English First Additional Language

Participant 1, at the time the data was gathered, was a 37 year old teacher of English. When first she began training she did not specialise in English, nevertheless she was teaching it. She was upgrading her qualification and working for a certificate in special needs, leading the management to believe she could assist learners with barriers to learning, especially reading. She had 10 years' teaching experience in the intermediate phase. Most of her pupils failed because of reading difficulties, at which time she decided to take a certificate in special needs.

Participant 2 was a 40 year old female and HOD in the Intermediate Phase in a primary school. Her qualifications were Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD), B.Ed. (Hons) and a Certificate in Special Needs and she was currently studying towards a master's degree in Inclusive Education. Participant 2 was teaching English. She is the HOD for Languages. The reading challenges in her school also motivated her to further her studies and to keep abreast with the latest trends in education so that she could help her learners.

Participant 3 was a 47 year deputy principal with 25 years' experience. She taught most of the phases, i.e. Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase. Participant 3 had no training in English, but she taught it while she was class educator. She was trained as a junior primary teacher.

Participant 4 was a school principal at primary school. He taught at primary school and had received one year of teacher training before upgrading his qualification and to a B.A Degree.

Participant 5 had trained to teach English but not to pupils who struggled in general to learn. Participant 3 was chairperson of the Institute Level Support Team (ILST) and had developed interest in working with learners experiencing difficulties in learning, so she registered for the certificate in Inclusive Education before continuing with the B.Ed in Inclusive Education.

Analysis of data yielded the following themes:

4.5. EMERGING THEMES

4.5 .1 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN TEACHING READING

Researchers agree that the standard of excellence in reading is fostered by teachers who really understand how to put across to the pupils the correct method of learning to read. Such researchers recognise that teachers play a crucial role in overcoming obstacles to reading. They are able to motivate and inspire pupils of every grade, providing them with knowledge and skills which promote literacy. Good literary comprehension obviates a state in which people become mere consumers of packaged goods or programmes. Rather well-spoken, literate people become critical and informed thinkers. They are enabled to make decisions and choices that take into account learners' needs, achieving the objective of the teaching of reading (Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario, 2003).

Asked if they understood their role in imparting reading skills to learners it became evident from the data that teachers faced major challenges in teaching reading. Most agreed that it was the role of educators to assist learners with reading difficulties, however, they identified some of the challenging areas, such as reading instructions, early reading, resources, teacher training and management of the teaching reading.

When asked how well can learners read...Participant 1 commented that reading was a serious problem in the school?

Most of the learners in the Intermediate Phase can't read.

Participant 2 also suggested that teachers should be given more training on teaching practice and methodology.

In one of the schools it was clearly stated that the school was engaged in many projects with different NGOs, in attempt to strengthen or supplement reading in schools. NGOs, such as the Joint Education Trust (JET) and African Bank were part of a programme to assist teachers with teaching practice and methodology, and together with the Red Cap, JET also donated mobile libraries to schools to help instil love of reading in learners.

The above findings corroborated the Department of Basic Education's view that continuous support and development during teacher training should be a key pillar of the National Reading Strategy. To this end, DoE has composed a handbook on

reading, in a concerted effort to enhance the capacity of all teachers in the sphere of didactics and pedagogics: *Teaching Reading in the Early Grades* (2008) as well as a DVD, *Getting Literacy and Numeracy Teaching Right in the Foundation Phase* (*What's up Teach?* Magazine, 2013).

The following underpinning principles of the National Reading Strategy are evidence that the educator's role is very important in teaching reading:

- The teacher is a crucial element of the reading achievement of learners;
- Research consensus indicates the invaluable nature of excellent instruction in reading to the attainment of success in reading for pupils;
- Sound research, verified by classroom practice and experience, must be the evidence on which the teaching of reading is based;
- Crucial to success in reading is early achievement of reading skills;
- Success in reading rests on the progress made through the years at school. During the years 4 to 7 there is a significant opportunity for the gaining of reading skills; therefore, so as to obviate problems in later years, reading must be successfully transmitted at an early age; and
- It is imperative for instructional leaders to offer full support and assistance in developing transferral skills in teachers of reading, maintaining professional development on an ongoing basis.
- Reading success is the foundation for achievement through the school years. There is a window of opportunity from the ages of four to seven for children to learn.

4.5.2. INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

Teachers were asked: *How can inclusive teachers compensate for reading skills that learners did not acquire in lower grades?*

Flavell (2002:8, 12) stated that if one makes the learning environment suitable for all learners it will help develop a positive attitude and ethos of the educational establishment. Educators need to understand the importance of their role as caregivers, overseeing development in a sensitive way, extending the scope of the lesson to meet diverse needs in the classroom, and empathising with others while

assisting learning. Such supportive conditions can assist in understanding their own skills and abilities. In elaborating on the importance of special care and attention in an inclusive class it is recognised that different needs require different approaches.

Participant 3 said:

...teaching of reading is a chaotic state in schools.

Learners were being taught for six periods per week but they did not know most of the words by the time they joined high school. They therefore had not been learning even a single word in the English language at each reading class. Participant 4 suggested that:

It would be better to have inclusive classrooms so that we can be able to assist learners as individuals. It is also important that individualised education plans be put in place.

Learner Participant 1 commented:

Language educators teach more than one grade and in some extreme cases they teach more than one subject. We need to have inclusive classrooms in order to help our learners, to support them and also to encourage them.

The latter scenario is prevalent in small and rural schools, in which educators are not keen to offer their service. Flavell (2002:7) argued that in an inclusive classroom, learning programmes are adjusted and adapted to enable learners of different needs and abilities to work together.

The participants who experienced positive experiences of being in the inclusive class attributed these mainly to attention they received from their educators, especially during reading lessons. Some of the learners mentioned that they received individual attention during reading periods.

Learner Participant 1 commented: *Inclusive and language educators take care of us more than any other educators in school. She says I know you can read this word, and when I do she say “you can also read this sentence”, and when I am finished he would say “that’s my Boy!”*

Similarly, Learner Participant 2 commented:

My teacher loves me even if I fail to read properly. She helps me a lot and spend a lot of time with me and my friends when it comes to reading.

The findings on reading difficulties in the Intermediate Phase are supported in the study guide for ETH306W (2006):

- Intermediate learners misread words and phrases.
- Their comprehension of the sections they have read is poor; in particular they do not understand the deeper meaning of the text.
- They read slowly and haltingly.
- They hesitate at longer words, read them incorrectly or cannot make them at all.
- They have poor understanding of punctuations.

According to Kirk et al. (2006:136), there is no reason for learners who experience learning impairments not to achieve to the same standard in inclusive classrooms, particularly if teachers' classroom management is well established, the teaching strategies well prepared, and the teaching and learning material relevant. This includes the application of fair classroom rules and discipline.

Participant 5 stated that:

The presence of inclusive classroom is of utmost importance to educators, it can enable us to support our learners and also to identify their individual strengths and needs.

4.5.3. MANAGEABILITY OF THE CLASS SIZE

The question was: *What specific methods do teachers consider important to use in order to teach reading successfully?*

Learners with reading problems need a lesson that is well structured and they know what the expectations are from the minute they enter the classroom, whilst their teachers need to be proactive, guiding them in their reading. Contextual factors such as large class sizes demotivate teachers.

Participant 6 said that sometimes they were not sure if their instruction was effective in minimising learners' problems with reading, whilst Participant 7 was unsure if they

were giving the necessary support because classrooms were congested and monitoring learner's progress in terms of reading was difficult.

Teachers with the best classroom management typically circulate and move around the room frequently. They create a floor plan of furniture/desk arrangements that enable easy access and pathways to all learners in the room (Reif, 2005).

In a case when the teacher was able to circulate around the class the challenge would be multi-grade teaching, which is prevalent in primary / farm schools. It was also discovered that the size of the class is important in that if it is smaller the teacher is more understanding, flexible and patient to all his/her learners.

The majority of Intermediate teachers seemed to identify compensation of reading skills as one of the tools that could assist learners to catch up with the work they did not acquire in the lower levels. For instance, Participant 2 believed that learners need to be given the foundation or the basics for reading before they could carry on with more work.

Some of the activities that Intermediate Phase educators should do to compensate for reading skills that learners did not receive were mentioned:

- ❖ Meaningful reading and learning activities
- ❖ Engaging learners in reading
- ❖ Best practice, clear instructions and explanation in teaching of reading.
- ❖ Careful planning and instructing of learners work
- ❖ Observation of learners while reading in order to give more assistance to the most challenged ones
- ❖ Constant feedback to encourage learners.

It was necessary to check teachers' documents, daily preparations and learning progress in order to check whether proper planning was being carried out, and also to check if they gave constructive feedback to their learners. When the researcher checked the abovementioned documents it was revealed that most of the teachers did have learning progress and lesson plans but most of them had not marked learners' work or were not giving feedback to learners about their work. This was revealed by work without corrections and the teacher continuing to teach the next

lesson. This finding emphasised the need for having manageable class sizes, as one of the methods or tools of teaching reading successfully.

Pearson and Duke (2000) stated that good readers are active readers, so teachers and schools have to make sure that their learners are good readers by close monitoring, observation and proper planning. Of concern is that in most of the rural schools there is very little or no follow up on reading, such as early identification of learners with reading difficulties. In some cases of early identification the teachers are ignorant of the support that should be given to those learners.

In the USA, the James Madison University's special Education Programme developed a website with a Department of Education grant on 'Steppingstones in Technology Innovation' for learners with disabilities. The website was developed to be responsive to the specific needs of learners with learning disabilities, features of which responded to the needs includes reduced amounts of text for reading (Reif, 2005).

4.5.4. READING RESOURCES

The question posed was: *What makes learners in the Intermediate Phase poor readers?*

Although factors that affect teaching of reading vary from school to school they are nevertheless still there, providing barriers to the teaching of reading. Most schools have less-than-acceptable classroom environments. Pupils often come from a low socio-economic background and have been poorly motivated. With more than one language to be studied at the same time the standard of teaching is poor, and teachers are blaming the SMT for not giving them the necessary support. Their classrooms were not conducive to learning and they complained that they did not have adequate Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM).

Participant 8 complained that they were not part of the requisition process:

SMT always decide which books they need to order for the school, which sometimes are irrelevant in terms of reading and what learners need to know.

Important for resource development is continuous training of teachers, service-providers and human resources of various kinds. There is a marked absence of such training and it is often fragmented and unsustainable (Hay *et al.*, 2001:214), which leads to insecurity, poor self-image and esteem and uncertainty for the educator. There is a lack of innovative practices in the classroom and adequate design of learning programmes to meet learners' needs that lead to resistance and attitudes which are harmful to the pupils who have obstacles to learning (DoE,1997b:19).

Contrary to teachers' complaints, one SMT members stated that teachers were incompetent in teaching the language and unclear about the aim of teaching reading:

Teachers always keep learners busy rather than teaching properly how to read or learning to read.

Very little time is allocated for reading as the teaching of language is divided into reading, writing and language.

The above findings supported claims in the DoE magazine (*What's Up Teach?*) that "There is no doubt that a good learning and text-rich environment in schools encourages children to perform better. Teachers need adequate resources for the teaching of reading."

Rei2f (2005:238) suggested that pupils susceptible to failure in reading have minimal awareness of sound structure and language pattern, phonemic sensitivity, letter knowledge, and the purpose of reading on arriving at kindergarten. Significantly, they have had little exposure to books and print.

Participant 9 said:

The schools need to supervise the acquisition and development of resources to support learners' achievement in reading, and also to allocate financial resources according to priorities that have been identified by educators.

4.5.5. CONTINUOUS TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

The question was put to language and inclusive educators: *In your opinion what will make you to play your role of teaching reading effectively?*

They indicated a need to be well trained in how to deal with learners experiencing barriers to learning, especially reading, and it became evident from the data that continuous teacher training as a necessity, as Participant 10 from one of the primary schools explained:

As teachers we have tremendous responsibility of teaching all learners to read, but we need adequate training. Without training it is impossible to yield good results.

Educators must have at their fingertips sound knowledge of many approaches to the teaching of reading in order to achieve the equilibrium which learners need when learning to read (What's Up Teach? Magazine, 2013).

Continuing the National Reading Strategy is principally identified by continuous training, development, and support of teachers. The DoE, however, is responsible for setting up the programmes which furnish teacher development. Teachers must accept that, for the most part, they must maintain their development on their own initiative (What's up Teach? Magazine, 2013).

An SMT member from one of the primary schools, Participant 5 also raised his concern regarding teacher development and training.

There is a tendency of taking the focus to Grade Twelve at the expense of lower grades. The competent and well trained educators are reserved for teaching higher grades, i.e. Grade Eleven and Twelve.

The majority of teachers who were teaching Language/Reading had either not specialised in languages or they were not good in it. These Educators found themselves compelled to teach language simply because they had to teach all subjects in primary school.

Primary school teachers should be well qualified before taking up their posts; thereafter professional development must be seen as a necessary, ongoing process. The teaching of reading to young pupils must be seen as a highly specialised procedure, backed by apposite knowledge and expertise (Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario, 2013). Most participants singled out lack of professional development as a major problem faced by schools.

Participant 7 identified lack of knowledge and expertise as one of the problems to affect or hinder the reading process in her school:

In order for us to help our learners to progress well in reading we need to have sound knowledge which we can only gain by ongoing professional development i.e. attending workshops, seminars etcetera, to stay abreast of new and emerging literacy developments.

Participant 8 also pointed out that teachers need to upgrade their qualifications:

Most of the teachers scoreless in IQMS [Integrated Quality Management System] because they are not doing enough on professional development, some only rely on workshops by the Department of Education. They need to further their studies in order to be well equipped and support learners with reading challenges.

The DoE (2002e:12-30) has identified seven roles of teacher competency in South Africa:

1. Scholar, researcher, and lifelong learner. This teacher will always pursue competence occupationally, academically, and professionally, taking up research and reflexive study not only in his or her specific field, but in other spheres of broader educational and professional interest.
2. Learning mediator. This refers to a teacher who takes into account pupils who suffer from learning impediments, maintaining sensitivity to learners' many different needs.
3. Leader, administrator, and manager. This teacher is a competent classroom manager, expert at decision-making that will enhance the learning environment. Democracy must be demonstrated, also support for both colleagues and charges, responding sensitively and sensibly to any environmental or other changes.
4. Designer and interpreter of material relating to learning programmes. The teacher will be competent to choose the optimal sequence, pacing the learning in such a way as to accommodate the diverse needs of learners in the teaching and learning arenas.
5. Assessor. The teacher will accept that assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The competent teacher will know how to integrate assessment into the daily curriculum.

6. Pastoral, community, and citizenship role. The teacher will apply and uphold a committed, ethical, and critical stance in putting across the importance of showing responsibility towards, and respect for others.

7. Phase specialist/discipline/subject/learning area. The teacher will have a thorough grounding in and knowledge of principles, methods, skills, and values apropos of discipline, learning areas, subject, professional, and occupational practices.

According to Giangreco (2010:251), it is imperative to offer teachers support in their classrooms. Teachers, while not having all the answers, must be flexible in applying basic principles either more systematically, or in a different way.

(Borman& Rose in Rose 2010:11) state that teachers need to acquire wider skills and knowledge. Most interviewees suggested that with more intensive training they would be able better to support their learners in the classroom. It is also evident from the research that teachers are aware of their role of imparting reading skills to learners, but they are frustrated by an inability to perform properly due to lack of knowledge.

Participant 1 said:

Sometimes you see as the teacher that the learner is struggling but you run out of ideas of helping him or her and you as an educator become frustrated with your learner instead of you, helping out the learner.

Participant 2 said:

Sometimes we do have training, but it is only done once. We need ongoing training so that we can implement those methods correctly and not use the outdated ones, we need to know the latest trends in education.

The above affirm an urgent need for proper training and new knowledge so that teachers can gain confidence in supporting learners with reading difficulties.

4.5.6. EXPECTATIONS ON BOTH FOUNDATION AND INTERMEDIATE PHASE TEACHERS

Grades R-3 are described as Foundation Phase, which comprises learners between the ages of 6 and 9 (DoE White Paper 5, Document Grades R-3, 1997:9). Beginning at reception, the first year, this four-year phase is the phase during which basics in learning are established. It is a crucial time for influencing learners to take an interest in their education. Such interest must be fostered: positive attitudes to the school environment and to learning in general must be developed, as must the self-concept. According to Joshua (2006:10), children who fail at this phase are negatively affected. They are at risk of dropping out of school before any learning potential may be developed and promoted.

As the role of the teacher alters or is added to, his or her professional life changes, sometimes very quickly. As educational reforms have entered the system, so learners with greater obstacles to learning have increasingly been absorbed into inclusive teaching programmes. Teaching is a complex profession, ranking in the highest quartile of all complex occupations; it is not an elementary and routine enterprise. Such complexity means that the teaching profession is difficult to master (Snowman & Bihler, in Engelbrecht, Oswald, Swart & Eloff, 2003:1).

Intermediate Phase educators have their expectations from learners who passed from the Foundation Phase, but most reported a knowledge gap in learners:

Unfinished work schedules result in learners continuing to the next class with insufficient knowledge.

This creates problems to the educator of the next class because he or she is then expected to bridge the gap before starting the work of the current year.

The process continues and the effect is observed in Grade Twelve.

Reif (2005:238) estimated that almost half of reading problems could be averted were learners offered language development at kindergarten and pre-school that was effective, together with a high standard of instruction in reading at primary school. This was confirmed by the findings made by the researcher.

In the Intermediate Phase, learners are supposed to be familiar with basic reading skills and are able to read with insight and intonation. However, they still have to use

basic word identification skills for some words, as most of their reading skills are not yet at the level where they can read any kind of material that they come across.

The researcher checked the Grade 4 learners' exercise books and observed the learners while reading, leading to a conclusion that there was a wide gap that needed to be bridged for learners who are currently in the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4), and that could be a waste of other learners' time, as this work should have done in the Foundation Phase or primary grades. A class teacher commented that those learners experiencing learning difficulties still found the reading activities taught in the Foundation Phase overwhelming, and they gave up, supporting the view that early identification and intervention is needed in this phase.

4.5.7 EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

Identification refers to recognising certain attributes which might indicate the presence of a problem or problems (ETH306-2006). When teachers make early identification they play their role in assisting learners with barriers to learning specifically reading. Failure in early identification and intervention in schools is of great concern to many teachers in the Intermediate Phase, with some participants agreeing that lack of early identification makes it difficult for teachers in higher grades to catch up with the work that learners missed in the lower grades.

Participant 7 said:

I think Reading difficulties can be prevented or substantially reduced in Grade One. In my school we ended up having a meeting with the Foundation Phase educators because of the reading problem that is prevalent in our school, and we were trying to be proactive.

One of the incident that had caught teachers' attention was the Annual National Assessment (ANA) failure rate. When the educators analysed the results they found that most of the failed questions were those which needed learners' understanding. Learners failed to read instructions so teachers need to develop the basic foundation for reading.

A study by reading experts in Ontario (2003) found that "Effective intervention requires that teachers recognize as early as possible those children who are

experiencing reading difficulties, tailor instruction to address their needs, and provide for supplementary instruction when necessary.”

That itself is the role that intermediate teachers should play to assist learners with reading difficulties. Interventions that begin in Grade 3 or 4 do not succeed to the same extent as earlier interventions. The Canadian report regarded some of the intervention strategies as successful. There are certain common factors found in successful interventions for many learners:

- Assessments that accommodate consistent monitoring of pupils' responses, in which modifications must be sensitively applied;
- Research yields ideas and techniques on the teaching and learning of reading;
- Materials deployed (for instance easy to more difficult text; patterned; or predictable) should focus on texts at an appropriate level, which are enjoyable and interesting to read; and
- A wide range of activities: reading, re-reading, writing, and word study.

Participant 3 made the following comment:

... If only the educators can be able to identify learners' problems at an earlier stage, it can make teaching of reading very easy for everyone concerned.

These findings confirm those of Reif (2003:238), that phonemic awareness, while children are still at kindergarten is a major predictor of achievement in spelling and reading in later years, a better predictor than IQ of progress in reading.

That there are it was evidenced by the teachers that some schools have good results in the teaching of early literacy... Participant 4 said:

In my school we make sure that we identify specific needs to individual learners or gaps very early. The school ensure that interventions are based on learner needs and is aligned with the classroom reading instructional practices, the identification and intervention is done by an expert.

Participant five said that:

We monitor the progress of learners who are at risk of not learning to read.

The researcher assessed one boy in grade four, asking him a few questions before assessing him to get his attention. This learner was in the early stage of the Intermediate Phase, and reading difficulties had already existed in the Foundation Phase. Therefore, the assessment was based on the Foundation Phase (FP).

Learner Participant 4 indicated having reading difficulties:

- Ignored punctuation marks
- Read words incorrectly
- Word-by-word reading: he sounded out difficult and unfamiliar words without voicing all of them aloud.
- Omitted words in sentences.

4.5.8. FACTORS AFFECTING READING

The research question was: *What role do inclusive teachers play when imparting reading skills to Intermediate Phase learners? When teachers are conversant with the root cause of the reading problem, they can assist their learners. It is imperative for teachers to be acutely tuned in to the prevailing needs of their learners, addressing them immediately.*

It emerged from the research findings that in order for teachers to play their roles in reading and devise solutions they must first know the factors that hinder progress in reading. According to Dednam (2005:364), the risk factors of learning impairment may be internal or external. It is not always possible to determine what the main factors may be as, in many learners, they are interrelated and the continuum of interrelation is difficult to determine.

4.5.9. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

It is important for teachers to significantly increase communication with parents as the means of assisting the learners, as in the case of parents not communicating with the school or teacher it becomes very difficult for them to succeed. As Reif (2005) stated, "...the success of the learner is very much tied up to the degree of mutual support, communication and cooperation between home and school."

When teachers were asked why parental involvement in reading was so important they responded:

Parents need to be informed about their children's progress and problems they are experiencing.

Parents also need to provide teachers with the information that might be valuable to teachers, information like learners language development.

From the above responses it is clear that learners make succeed when community workers or their parents (or all concerned) collaborate their efforts and cooperate with the school in motivating children to make progress at reading. Teachers can also provide parents with materials for use at home, or they can form a committee of parents to assist those learners who are heading their families and have no one to assist with reading or homework.

4.5.10. SOCIO ECONOMIC FACTORS ON LEARNERS

The HODs maintained that learners' progress in reading was negatively affected by their socio-economic background. They mentioned some of the things that they thought could impact learners' reading abilities, believing that if learners' basic needs were not met their performance would suffer.

Participant 1:

Most of the parents in our community are illiterate, they fail to assist their learners with homework.

Participant 2:

Most of our learners are from child-headed families, there is no one at home to encourage and motivate them to practice reading.

Participant 6:

Half of my class have single parents or both of them had died or no one is employed, so learners are from poverty-stricken community. When one is hungry or emotionally abused she/he has no urge for learning.

Socio-economic background is a serious issue, and one about which the educators express strong sentiments.

From the above-mentioned remarks, it may be inferred that various social factors affect learners and these can form barriers to learning. The problems may be solved by opening the lines of communication in schools so that educators can execute their duties of imparting reading skills to learners effectively.

According to White Paper 6 (2001a:16), in order for their full potential to be developed, certain learners may need more specialised and intensive types of support. As Participant 4 said:

Learners who are not exposed to TV, radio or has any access to any newspaper needs the special support from their educators, but only when their educators know their challenges than they can assist.

When teachers are aware of learners' problems they will simply apply the intervention strategies.

From the statements above one can conclude that inclusive teachers can solve and handle the learner's problems, given more information on learners and training in dealing with learners who confront obstacles to learning.

4.5.11. SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

According to Archer, Charles and Hughes (2011:1), the common goal of educators is assisting their learners to achieve the maximum gains academically while nurturing them in an environment which is respectful and positive, fostering their progress, and motivating them to learn. Explicit instruction, in other words, a success-orientated, direct and systematic approach is the ultimate tool available. Explicit instruction has been repeatedly lauded in research on both general and special-education learners.

The statement was supported by Participant 9:

...as teachers we need to support our learners in their reading problem by giving explicit or clear instructions.

4.6. EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

Effective instruction is founded on a number of principles, as follows:

A. ENGAGING TIME

Time spent on instruction is two-pronged: time spent on learning, and time spent on teaching. Despite their connection, the increase in instructional time alone does not necessarily translate to an increase in the time students spend on learning, nor does it guarantee the amount of learning absorbed.

Participant 2 suggested that schools should increase instructional time for these learners who are experiencing reading difficulties, with which a level one educator agreed:

I think we also need the combination of quantity of time and quality of instruction for us to achieve our goal. Because one can teach for a long time only to find that what he/she is teaching is not a quality that can help yield good results.

B. HIGH LEVEL OF SUCCESS

. When learners are properly engaged in and occupied with the learning process itself, time as a factor may be said to have a positive impact. This is evident in the low number of schools that are practicing that.

Participant 6 said:

In order of high rate success to occur during instruction, we consider things like, clear presentation of lesson, active participation of learners, careful monitoring of learners responses and we also give feedback immediately. That is how we gain high rate of success.

“It is the teacher’s role to involve all his/her learners in the lesson and when they are not all actively involved that is when the teacher begins to search for a problem and try to assist them to succeed like the other learners in the classroom.

C. LEARNING PROGRAMME COVERAGE

One of the participants, a school principal, stated that:

...it is very important that teachers should cover the content so that they know that learners are learning. If most of the work is not covered then, teaching is not effective and something need to be done.

The study findings confirmed Archer’s (2011) view of content coverage, that is, the total content provided to the learners. The fact is that, the more the content has been successfully presented, the more likelihood there is of students' learning it well. In distilling this principle, one could say ‘the more you teach, the more they learn’. Certain decisions affect quantity and quality of coverage of content. This includes choice of teaching material, method of teaching it, and method of putting it into practise.

Content coverage can be maximised when teachers present concepts, strategies, skills, or rules that may be applicable to many other situations. For instance, letter-

sound associations may replace the teaching of single words as specific entities. Strategies may be decoded and generalised to many other words. In the same vein, while preparing pupils for a reading lesson, the teacher may note the words and phrases that will be encountered during the reading, introducing the remaining words very briefly.

D.GROUP INSTRUCTION

Participant 8 Commented:

Generally, group instruction has been found to be the most effective approach to teaching basic. Teacher-led group instruction most likely has this positive impact on achievement because skills it increases such effective teaching elements as clear explanations, modelling, practice, primary school feedback, and frequent responding. Breaking a large class into smaller groups allows for more practice and repetition, as well as for closer monitoring. Later research on learners with special learning needs According to (Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, Moody & Schumn, 2000), group instruction when 6-8 learners are involved was deemed overall more effective than when groups were either larger or smaller in size, even in a one-on-one situation.

E.SCAFFOLDING IINSTRUCTION

The question was posed: *What kind of support can teachers give to learners who have reading difficulties?*

There is a parallel to be drawn between instruction and construction in that in both instances scaffolding is an essential element. Where instruction is concerned scaffolding gives access to learners so they may better perform tasks. Both basic and complex new skills may be acquired by means of careful, temporary, and well-placed scaffolding. Complex skills include complex mathematical procedures and other learning strategies, advancing towards their independent usage while keeping a high rate of success. Learning difficulties, especially those of disabled learners are addressed by such scaffolding. Disabled learners may exhibit poorly organised knowledge, attention or memory deficit or both (Swanson, 1999; Swanson & Siegel, 2001). Depending on the specific needs of the learner, the rate at which it is removed will vary.

“Inclusive and language teachers thus agreed with Swanson’s view that when scaffolding, teachers typically provide high levels of initial guidance and then systematically reduce support as students respond with greater accuracy”. Learners are motivated towards greater independence so that ultimately they are able to read without aid. In such a way reading is individualised and each learner progresses at his or her own pace. Learners acquire reading fluency by reading. As they read in their own time they are kept in contact with English outside the school. It is the skill they will retain for the rest of their lives.

“Extensive reading should increase vocabulary, comprehension and reading speed, however, it also helps to overcome a tendency not to advance beyond a minimally adequate level of competence”. By concentrating on reading for pleasure and following a story, for instance, learners acquire discourse competence and understand the meaning behind the Language.

The National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) summarised existing research and identified various approaches to reading instruction, such as those methods which enhance fluency and comprehension, such as systematic instruction in phonics, and explicit teaching of phonemic awareness. Children read better when they have specific instruction in phonic awareness, hence educators need to take a leading role in teaching reading skills. Other findings from the NRP (2000) involve the need to foster reading fluency, accuracy (word recognition and knowledge), and expression (articulating succinctly the correct emphasis or emotion).

“Teaching fluency includes guided oral reading, in which learners read out loud to someone who corrects their mistakes and provides them with feedback, and independent silent reading, in which they read silently”. Meanwhile, Landsberg et al. (2005:114) argues that “fluent reading does not necessarily mean reading with understanding”. Skills of a bottom-up nature are imperative in swift and accurate decoding of a message; however, this does not ensure that the message will be correctly comprehended. Lack of comprehension may be the inability of the writer to express thoughts lucently, or the text in full or in part may not be clearly expressed.

4.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Findings of interviews conducted with SMT, and level one teachers were discussed. Emerging themes were also highlighted. Documents from educators, such as lesson preparations and learners’ workbooks were reviewed. From the interview specific teachers roles were revealed. Principals and teachers agreed on the roles that should be played by teachers in imparting reading skills to Intermediate Phase

learners. However, there were issues that required attention, notably parental involvement in learners' learning and socio-economic factors.

The next chapter offers a study summary drawing conclusions of the questions posed by the research, based on the data gathered. The chapter will conclude by making recommendations based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Presentation, analysis and a discussion of the findings taken from the document review, interviews, and observations, were dealt with in the previous chapter. Certain specific conclusions were noted after the data had been thoroughly examined, relating to crucial questions formulated in the introduction to this work.. Based on the findings outlined in Chapter 4, this chapter draws conclusions and makes pertinent recommendations. The role of this research study was to explore roles of teachers in imparting reading skills to learners in the intermediate phase.

5.2. CONCLUSIONS

After careful consideration of the findings of this study a number of conclusions were reached. Reading is a problem in schools, and most of the learners have reading difficulties in the Intermediate phase. There is a wide gap that needs to be bridged by Intermediate Phase educators because most of the learners from the Foundation Phase enter with reading difficulties that were not identified early in the lower grades. Unfinished work schedules result in learners continuing to the next grade with insufficient knowledge. Educators felt that the process continues and the effect is largely observed in Grade 12.

5.2.1. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Teachers regarded their ability to deliver good teaching and reading instructions as a crucial element governing the level of reading learners can attain. Some said that reading is in a 'chaotic state' in schools because other educators lack knowledge, and did not have specialised training in dealing with learners who are experiencing reading difficulties. Teachers must have recourse to a multiplicity of teaching methods and knowledge apropos of reading instruction. About 80% of the participants suggested that teachers should be given more training on teaching practice and methodology. The teacher must be able to design and interpret programmes dealing with the teaching and learning of reading; material is not properly understood by most of the educators because they simply follow everything that is set by DoE, even if it is not set out as sensitively as necessary to meet the

learners' many differing needs. Generally, the view amongst teachers and SMT members was that reading plays a crucial part in a child's academic success, hence it is the role of educators to impart reading skills. The review of literature revealed the importance of teachers in learners' lives and success at school, especially inclusive classrooms and ones that were manageable, with early identification and intervention, and adequate material and human resources as essential components.

Other participants (principals) also complained that good teachers were being reserved for teaching higher grades, i.e., Grades 11 and 12, at the expense of lower grades. It became evident from the data that the teacher plays the most important role in a learner's reading success. The participants commented that early success in reading is critical for learners, and to eliminate any reading difficulties there should be early identification and intervention.

5.3. INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

Inclusive classrooms were amongst the factors participants suggested that schools should have in order for teachers to play their role of teaching reading effectively. Though the schools in which the research was conducted were not full-service, the teachers explained their role as caregivers and as those who met learners' diverse needs in supportive conditions of inclusive classrooms. Educators commented that inclusive classrooms were better because they made it possible for them to assist learners as individuals. In some cases where the schools had inclusive classrooms, learners were enjoying the attention from educators.

In schools in which there are no inclusive classrooms, classes may be congested and overcrowded, in which teachers fail to communicate with learners on a one-on-one basis, thus making it difficult for them to teach reading effectively. Most of the learners misread words and phrases, and sometimes read slowly and haltingly. Inclusive classrooms must accept all learners no matter their needs, reflecting a good value system, and offering an accepting environment rather than one which passes judgement. A duty of care should be shown towards every learner in terms of the role of educators in the inclusive classrooms, teachers being required to act *in loco parentis*, assuming the position of a responsible parent. In order to ensure that learners are well cared for in their reading, teachers offer the correct control, instructions, and supervision.

The teacher should provide a setting which fosters the learning experience, as a duty of care to the learner.

5.3.1. MANAGEABILITY OF CLASS SIZE

Manageability of the class size is one of the issues that teachers highlighted as important for imparting reading skills to learners. They indicated that learners with reading problems need a class that is well structured, meaning they know what the expectations are from the minute they enter the classroom. Contextual factors such as large classrooms demotivate teachers. In a manageable and small size class it is easy for teacher to circulate and move around freely to assist needy learners. Learners need to be observed while reading in order for the teacher to give assistance.

The role of the teacher is significant in planning lessons, organising resources, delivering the matter to learners and also giving feedback to them. It is their role to assist learners who find progress difficult, by developing individual programmes for them. Teachers also need to be innovative and assist learners in the best way possible, changing their thinking and having a passion for helping learners to learn to read. The influence of other factors in the reading process was acknowledged, notably, teacher development, parental involvement and socio-economic background.

All teachers of lower primary grades, in terms of teacher development, ought to be sufficiently qualified, being subject to ongoing professional development. Young pupils need teachers who are knowledgeable and highly specialised in the field of reading education. Teachers require a diversity manner to mediate learning to learners that is sensitive to different needs of the learners. This was evident when the researcher found that some of the teachers did not even specialise in teaching language to able or disabled learners, hence adding to the reading problem for schools.

5.3.2. READING RESOURCES

Most schools do not have sufficient resources for effective reading to take place and there is a communication breakdown between teachers who are teaching language and the SMT. Some participants complained that they were not involved in the process of buying books, hence a number were not properly utilised by educators and money was being wasted. Learners with reading difficulties had little exposure to good books, and print and in most schools reading was not a top priority. Learners need to be able to read in order for them to understand instructions and to learn. They can borrow books from libraries or use books from their library corners in classrooms.

If sufficient and appropriate resources are dedicated to the reading programme, learning is likely to take place. Participants maintained that human resources offering reading skills were imperative to the supporting of learners who have difficulty in learning. Chapter 4 intimates that only a few teachers reported having experience and expertise of teaching learners with barriers to learning, especially reading.

The study also found out that there was little or no coherence in work in the Foundation Phase or Intermediate Phase, but rather a wide gap that needed to be bridged. Intermediate Phase teachers expect to continue or to teach learners at their grade level but they find themselves teaching the lower levels, without continuity. It was also noticed that language development was not occurring in pre-school or in lower grades because most of the basic skills that intermediate learners were supposed to know were unfamiliar to them.

5.3.3. EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Early identification is a very important strategy in supporting learners with reading difficulties, as it recognises certain attributes which might indicate the presence of reading problems. If this is performed correctly in the Foundation Phase reading difficulties in the intermediate learners might be eliminated. It was evident that when Grade 4 learners fail to read fluently there is a need for early identification and intervention in lower grades, thus contributing to smooth teaching of reading in schools.

5.3.4. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

If learning is to remain of utmost importance in teaching and learning, parents of pupils need to become and remain fully involved. Parental involvement was mentioned as an important aspect impacting on the success of learners' reading ability. It was clear that the involvement of parents helps progress in learners. Teachers can invite parents to school and discuss their children's work as a strategy that can assist with reading difficulties. If parents are illiterate or learners are from child-headed households their involvement is of even greater importance to learners, because from the researcher's experience they seem to struggle more.

According to the ACE learning support study guide, literature has shown that socio-economic factors have played a role in reading behaviour. It must therefore, be acknowledged that they could have contributed to the results of the investigation. Reading difficulties may be encountered at home, in the community and in the classroom, and so reinforce the learners' reading problems. In turn, these may well have served to encourage the child to read and in so doing contribute to improving learner ability. Again, this possible improvement in reading could have had less of a negative effect on academic achievement than expected.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations, based on the findings of the research, are made.

5.4.1. EMPHASIS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

Reading must be taught in close meaningful connection with the spectrum of language abilities, including talking, listening, writing and thinking. Therefore learners have to be taught to read through a balanced language approach. (Wallace et al., 2000:3)

It is important that, at the beginning of the year, the SMT and teachers should emphasise to all learners the importance of reading, and orientate them in the use of school library or library corners in classrooms. Learners can borrow books from the library and sign the register so that the teacher knows how many books or she borrowed, thus helping to monitor reading progress and keep track of the books. Reading time should be visible in the school's composite timetable, as well as class timetables. The importance of language and reading should be a priority in schools. It is recommended that learners enter reading competitions and language festivals.

5.3.2. LOVE OF READING

It was also noted that very little time is allocated for reading in most schools, hence it is recommended that reading should be engaged in every day to help learners perform better in reading. In order for learners to develop love for reading, teachers should encourage them to read for fun and enjoyment and also to read material that is interesting to learners.

Learners should develop love of reading from an early age. This should be demonstrated by the number of activities in which the school is engaged. Schools should encourage and acknowledge the effort of learners as well teachers by, for example, giving awards to a class which is involved in many reading or language activities, to learners who borrowed many books than others, and to learners who have made remarkable improvements in reading. Teachers need to “love their learners”, that is, develop a strong professional bond and affinity with them, motivate them and constantly tell them that they can achieve. The school should also award learners with reading certificates and trophies.

According to the study guide ETH306W, learners are most encouraged to read when they can enjoy the process. Reading should therefore take place in a relaxed atmosphere and parents should be encouraged to help with reading instruction by creating circumstances at home that are conducive to reading. They can achieve this by taking the initiative and reading on their own account and by providing a steady supply of reading matter in the home. Regular visits to the local library are valuable. Discussions about reading matter can be held in the home, or the family can undertake a project which requires the learners to read. Learners' eyesight should be tested because some may have problems reading a small font, in which case they could be provided with reading glasses or large-print books.

5.4.3. INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

Alban-Metcafe(2001:20) suggests that an inclusive classroom is "...one in which continuing emphasis on valuing individual differences lead all pupils, irrespective of social or cultural background, disability or difficulty in learning, and in the development of positive attitudes to self and others".

Putting more emphasis on the importance of inclusive classes Van Zyl (2002:96) argued that it would not work out in practise to create specialists out of every teacher; however, learners should benefit from inclusive classes by having teachers that are empowered and trained in basic skills in order to become effective inclusive teachers.

It is recommended that in schools in which learners do not have inclusive classes ILST members should assist class teachers by mentoring them and helping them in understanding learner differences, as well as ways of giving support to those learners. Swart et al. (2002:177) state that evidence proves overwhelmingly that teachers are key in assessing inclusion as a quality. The schools can also introduce or craft reading catch up programmes for learners. All schools should have inclusive classrooms so that educators can assist learners on a one-on one basis. The learning programme can be easily adjusted to help learners who are at risk in terms of reading. According to *Kirk et al.* (2006), there is no reason learners who experience learning difficulties should not achieve at the same level in inclusive classroom. Similar findings by ACE (school-based support study guide) confirmed that inclusive education can help learners to learn new skills through imitation. Learners are also able to benefit by other learners who have overcome the barriers to learning. Inclusive classes can equally benefit learners of all levels of ability, from the challenged to the gifted. Instead of being sent to special schools out of their areas, in an inclusive setting, learners can become educated within their own communities, on their home turf. Slow readers may also be paired with good readers to act as their mentors.

The challenge for South African schools is to become inclusive, establishing and growing a culture of teaching and learning that offers quality education

(Naicker, 2005). It has been proven by research that the decisive element in motivating schools to become inclusive stems from teachers' attitudes (Engelbrecht et al., 2010). Hay, Smit and Paulsen (2001), in their study, maintained that teachers

did not feel either equipped or prepared for teaching in an inclusive environment. Engelbrecht et al. (2001; 2003) also presided over two studies on teachers of pupils with Down syndrome in inclusive settings, assessing their coping skills. Findings indicated that teachers were stressed owing to their lack of proper training and support apropos of inclusive teaching programmes.

5.4.4. MANAGEABLE CLASSES

It is recommended that schools make sure that learners learn in manageable classes so that they can catch their teachers' attention as individuals. Should there be too many pupils per classroom, teaching and learning will be seriously hampered. Teachers who have to work in overcrowded conditions are forced to neglect some pupils, giving attention to few at the expense of others.

Teachers need to move around the class to see individual learners and to identify those who are having reading problems. It is strongly recommended that teachers have classes that they can manage in order for learning to take place effectively. Learners must be taught in an effective manner to read in a class that is conducive to learning. Manageable class size will benefit learners because educators will pay more attention than when it is overcrowded. Overcrowded classes do not get individual support and learners easily get lost in a group. Extra reading classes for slow readers during and after classes is also recommended.

5.4.5. ADEQUATE MATERIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

It is important to have a variety of material available to learners. Where reading material is not currently available, the community will need support and guidance in identifying ways to develop reading material (Santcors,2004:3).According to McEwan,2002:46)Teachers should not use predictable book to build fluency as they encourage memorization in learners.

The importance of appropriate resources, adequate human resources, and material resources is an integral part in teaching of reading. All schools are responsible for providing resources that help minimise problems regarding reading in schools. Without proper resources it is difficult to have effective teaching in class, which can benefit all learners regardless of their abilities. Teachers should consider resources

that are interesting and enjoyable to learners at their appropriate reading level. It is recommended that communities and NGOs who have interest in schools and reading should be asked to donate books.

According to the *ACE Learning Support Study Guide*, the aids that are used should be such that they attract the learners' attention, simple and void of extra stimuli, as they may attract the learners' attention to unnecessary detail, instead of the topic that the material is supposed to illustrate. All teachers should be given resources that match their responsibilities. According to *what's up Teach? Magazine* (2013) pupils perform better in a text-rich and well-established learning environment. Resources will benefit educators in embarking on their task of reading with learners.

5.4.6. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Continuous teacher development and training is very important to teaching and learning, and it is recommended that all teachers should further their studies, enhancing and adding to their store of knowledge on the subject. A workshop run by the DoE should not be a one-day event because educators have much to learn and one day is not enough for them to grasp everything without a follow up. Teachers with broad knowledge will help learners who are struggling to read. Continuous teacher development can help teachers to keep abreast with the latest trends in education. It is also recommended that in-service and focused workshops on new topics or themes should be conducted with the help of subject advisors or any knowledgeable persons to present content to educators. It is also recommended that teachers should hold internal workshop to assist newly appointed teachers and those who need support. Retired teachers can also be asked to assist in their local schools with reading.

When the educator is well trained in his/her field of specialisation, s/he can assist learners by identifying them and be able to tell when a learner's work is below standard. According to the *Learner Support Study Guide*, well-equipped teachers work with age groups of learners being similar, and thus in the same phase of development.

5.4.7. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is very important in making a child a good and successful reader. When parents immerse themselves in their children's school activities,

learners succeed. Teachers can help parents by describing the appropriate activities. Teachers should prescribe the type of activity best suited to the learner's needs. Parents can also volunteer to join the classroom and give valuable support during classroom reading programmes. When parents are involved teachers are expected to be welcoming and supportive. It is recommended that parents should take full responsibility for their children's education. Parental involvement could be of great importance to learners, especially if the parent is illiterate. She/he can encourage the child to attend classes in the community that help learners with homework and make sure that he or she attends regularly and communicates with teachers to check progress. In the case of those learners who are from child-headed households and those whose parents are migrant workers, a committee from the community to assist learners with homework could be formed.

According to Landsberg (2005), continuity between home and early childhood education programmes is most important in increasing consistency in the child's life. Parents and educators who share a joint focus can enrich each other's understanding of the child's development and work towards achieving common goals. It is vital that sustained contact is maintained, in order to allow the child to grow up in a context of ecological harmony between settings.

The *Learner Support Study Guide* further stated that, for parents, a greater role is played in the learning activities of their children than they may be aware of. Parents know their children better than do the teachers; parents can therefore inform the teachers to understand their child better. They can give advice about individual behaviour, adding to the creation and implementation of strategies to support joint learning. Parents should assist with homework exercises and other activities. Parents are not supposed to do their children's homework or assignments but their interest and encouragement will give their children confidence to ask for help when they need it.

It is recommended that learners should have reading clubs as an encouragement and stimulation of the love of reading.

Socio-economic backgrounds has been blamed for having a negative impact on learners' school achievement, but the school as a public facility does not work in isolation. Rather, it has to work with the community so that it can address some of the issues that are affecting both learning and teaching at school. School is the

integral part of the community that it serves, so the community can help by working in partnership with the school and know what is going on in the children's education. Teachers should acquaint themselves with and learn to know learners' domestic backgrounds in order to understand who they are dealing with. They should approach socio-economic background of learners with empathy and come up with solutions where necessary.

Each school should draw up an explicit school partnership policy and a system of communication rules. This is to ensure that a reading programme is a success and that learners' rights are not violated. It also has to make sure that expectations and procedures are clearly communicated. Each school should have volunteer teachers, especially inclusive teachers or an Institute Level Support Team (ILST) of members of the community. The team should receive training on school and community partnership.

5.4.8. EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION

It is recommended that early identification and intervention should take place as early as possible in order to avoid future academic failure and a negative attitude to reading. *The Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading (2003)* suggests that intervention of an effective nature demands that children by Grade One, be assessed for reading difficulties. Interventions of a supplementary nature should be made with immediate effect. Reading problems may then be dealt with before they become a set pattern for failure, with several failures compounding learning difficulties in reading and writing, negatively affecting the motivation of pupils.

Research has found that learners who started reading in pre-school have traditionally had higher scores than those who started their reading at a later stage. Early identification and intervention can assist teachers in creating strong, competent readers and prevent reading difficulties. When it has been discovered by the teacher that the child is finding reading difficult it is important that both teacher and learner are able to access a diagnostic assessment service, specialised intervention, and teaching of an appropriate nature. It is important that intervention should be measured with certain criteria so that it could be helpful or effective to learners.

White Paper 6 (2001a:16) confirmed the necessity of some learners, in developing their full potential, to obtain specialised, more intensive types of support. The support given to learners will be of great benefit to learners learning and success. The study

guide (ETH306W) also confirmed a robust link between the community's socio-economic position and learners' achievements at school.

Early intervention programmes could function as separate in the Foundation Phase within the school, as the Intermediate Phase teachers are in the process of bridging the gap left unattended to in the Foundation Phase. However, it will serve to enhance learners' ability from foundation to intermediate phase or even senior phase. More reading opportunities will be served in this programme, with more people involved, such as school nurse, clinical psychologist or educational psychologist. Given that reading difficulties were depicted in the Intermediate Phase it may be advisable that reading intervention should take place in this phase.

5.5. SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A study similar to this one but on a larger scale, for example with a larger sample of Intermediate Phase learners, teachers, SMT, other departmental officials and members of the community could be undertaken. Further studies will be useful in areas where most of the learners are from child headed families, where there is no one to assist them with their reading challenges. This would interrogate the research question further and so provide more generalised insight into the role that other stakeholders can play in assisting learners with reading difficulties. Results and conclusions from such a study could be applied and interpreted more widely, as was the case with this investigation. Therefore, the research questions that could be further researched are:

- How could teachers be empowered to teach learners with reading difficulties?
- What are the strategies that can be used to empower teachers who instruct learners with learning challenges?
- What are the challenges that are faced with teachers in teaching reading?
- How can mainstream schools be assisted in having inclusive classrooms?

5.5.1 CHAPTER SUMMARY

A summary of this chapter has been presented, and conclusions have been drawn. Based on relevant findings and conclusions drawn, recommendations were suggested which the researcher believes could assist educators in imparting reading skills to learners. Having reviewed the literature, this study aligned itself with the constructive approach to reading. The study assumptions were verified at the time

the data was gathered, namely that not all educators who teach reading are inclusive teachers. This was evident as most of the participants commented that they require proper training and teacher development so as to assist pupils with reading difficulties. The other assumption was that teachers needed support from parents, with participants stressing the need for parental involvement in learners' education.

Appendix A

To: CIRCUIT OF KWADUKUZA

I am a student at the University of South Africa doing my Master's Degree and currently employed at Nyakana C.P. School. The title of my thesis is called The Role of Inclusive Intermediate Phase Teachers in Imparting Reading Skills to Learners in KwaDukuza Circuit.

I would like to conduct my research in the following schools under the KwaDukuza Circuit:

- Nyakana C.P. School
- Tshelabantu C.P. School
- Umgqwabagqwaba Primary School
- Hullsag
- Ramlakan Primary

From each school I will use 2 Intermediate Phase learners, 1 Intermediate Phase Educator as well as 1 SMT Member.

The participants will answer questions in a form of questionnaires as well as be involved in a short interview. The researcher will not use the names of the participants, however it will be kept anonymity and confidential.

The participation of the participant will be voluntary and withdrawal without reprisal is accepted at any time. The research will be conducted during the school hours.

I will appreciate it if my request can be accepted.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs G.O. Mthethwa

Persal Number : 61461962

Appendix B

You are being asked to allow your child to be in a research project to gather information about reading difficulties in KwaDukuza circuit, because he/she has been chosen randomly by the researcher. This study is being conducted by Mrs G.O. Mthethwa from University of South Africa at Nyakana Cmbined Primary School. The estimated number of study participants to be enrolled for this project will be 20 participants including your child. It will be about 10 learners, 5 educators as well as 5 SMT Members. This research project will include the schools in the KwaDukuza Circuit as well as school near Nyakana Combined Primary School. The research project will take place during the school hours.

In this research project the researcher will use the learners from the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4 –Grade 6). The participant will be asked to answer the yes or no questions as well as answer the question asked by the researcher in a form of an interview.

In this research the researcher want to analysis the Role of teachers in teaching reading skills, also to see whether the instruction that they are using are adequate.

If you/ your child agree to take part in this research project, he/she will be asked to come to Nyakana in order to do the questions as well as the interview concerning reading.

There will be no direct benefit for your child; however, information from this study may benefit other learners now or in the future.

There are no known risks at this time to participation in this study.

- Participation in this study will be of no cost to you.

You or your child will not be paid for taking part in this study.

All information collected about your child during the course of this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Your child will be identified in the research records by a code name or number. Information that identifies your child

personally will not be released without your written permission. When the results of this research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your child's identity.

Taking part in this project is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to allow your child to take part in this project. If you decide to allow your child to take part in the study you can later change your mind and withdraw from the study. You and/or your child are free to only answer questions that you want to answer. You are free to withdraw your child from participation in this project at any time.

If you have any questions about this project now or in the future, you may contact Mrs G.O. Mthethwa at 083 430 9639.

Consent to Participate in a Research Project:

To voluntarily agree to have your child take part in this project, you must sign on the line below. If you choose to have your child take part in this project, you may withdraw them at any time. You are not giving up any of your or your child's legal rights by signing this form. Your signature below indicates that you have read, or had read to you, this entire consent form, including the risks and benefits, and have had all of your questions answered. You will be given a copy of this consent form.

_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date of Birth
_____	_____
Signature of Parent/ Legally Authorized Guardian	Date
_____	_____
Printed Name of Parent Authorized Guardian	Time

Appendix C

Questionnaires for the SMT Members

Tick the relevant answers to you in the questions below:

Questions	Yes	no
Do you think educators are motivated when it comes to teaching reading?		
Do educators have necessary skills to impart to their learners?		
Do you allow your educators to pick the books that they want to use?		
Do you place Language teachers to teach a language?		

Appendix D

Interview questions for the Educators

How would you describe your experience regarding teaching of reading?

How would you describe the training you have regarding language teaching or inclusive teaching?

Explain how you give support to your learners.

Appendix E

Interviews questions for the Learners

What is so interesting about reading?

Can you read independently?

How do you feel if you have to read aloud in front/ in class?

Which / what kind of books do you think are interesting? Why do you say so?

Appendix F

Lesson observation

Name of teacher (pseudo name): T.T. Dlamini

School:

Subject:

Grade:

Date:

Strategies used by the teacher to impart reading skills to learners.

Guidelines to the observer:

Comment and take notes on what you have observed.

Planning

The teacher creates a positive learning environment that enables learners to participate actively and to achieve success in the learning process, learning space, learning environment, diversity, learning material.

Comment and Highlights of the lesson: _____

Implementation

Introduction linked to previous lesson, learners' motivation, and logical development of the lesson.

Comment and Highlights: _____

Attentiveness to aspects of the general lesson implementation activities, differentiation of instruction according to learner's needs and abilities. Does the teacher scaffold learners?

Learner involvement

What strategies is the teacher using to involve learners? Paired reading, using pillars of teaching instruction. Does he/she encourage and motivate learners to read.

Comments and Highlights: _____

Lesson Conclusion

Were the learners given feedback throughout the lesson? Were the instruction given to learners clear and concise was the lesson brought to a sequential conclusion for the educational benefits of learners?

Lesson Evaluation

In the opinion of the observer, were the activities of the lesson adequate/inadequate? In this sense, what is your overall rating of the lesson: Excellent, good?

Comment and Highlights: _____

Name of Observer: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix G

P.O.BOX 567
Darnall
4480
13 February 2014

Nyakana C.P.School
P.O.Box 3434
Stanger
4450

Dear Sir/Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

At present I am engaged in a research project towards my M.Ed. (Masters in Inclusive Education) at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Prof. M.O. Maguvhe. The title for my research is: The Role of Inclusive Intermediate Phase Teachers in Imparting Reading Skills to Learners in Kwadukuza Circuit.

I humbly request your permission to conduct research in your school. The interviews that will be conducted by the researcher will not interfere with the normal functioning of the school as it will be conducted after school hours and it will involve one language teacher, one SMT member and two grade 4 learners. The confidentiality of the participants will be highly respected.

A letter of approval from the department is attached.

Your co-operation is highly appreciated

Yours Faithfully

G.O.Mthethwa (Mrs)

APPENDIX I

Acknowledgment of Language Editing

Date: Friday, 27 June 2014

This is to certify that Language Editing has been carried out on the following:

*The Role of Inclusive Intermediate Teachers in Imparting Skills to Learners in KwaDukuza
Circuit*

By
Gugu Mthethwa



Andrew Graham (BA, MA dist., PhD, University of Keele, UK)*



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*Former Tutor in Postgraduate Writing Centre and Managing Editor of ISI Accredited Journal

APPENDIX J

TRANSCRIPTION OF FOCUSED GROUP INTERVIEW WITH EDUCATOR

NUMBER 1 TO 5.

R : Researcher

E1 to 5: Educator number 1 to 5

1. What is your understanding of inclusive education?

E1: Inclusive education simple means education for all

R: Thank you. Educator number two could you please tell us your opinion?

E2: It has to do with accommodating those learners with barriers to learning whether they are physically or intellectual.

R: educator number three

E3: It is about making space for all learners regardless of their backgrounds, gender or disabilities

R: Thank you, educator number four.

E4: Err... I will say it is an education whereby learners are accommodated in the mainstream education without being labelled or marginalised

R: thank you. Let's get your view educator number five.

E5: Inclusive education is the system that is responsive to the diverse needs of all learners

1. What challenges do language/inclusive teachers encounter in teaching reading to learners?

E1: Our classes are overcrowded, that makes it difficult for teachers to teach effectively.

R: Thank you. Teacher number two can you please say something.

E2 :The challenges that we face is that we are not all trained to teach in an inclusive class, when the learner is having a problem with reading you, as an educator also struggle to help that particular learner or learners.

R: ok,I get you. Teacher number three

E3: There are few inclusive teachers in our schools, to help class educators.

R: Thank you. What is your view number four?

E4: The challenge we are having is that we don't have enough and resourceful books to teach reading.

R: thank you. Teacher number five

E5: We are having a lot of challenges, but the most important one is that we are struggling to come up with the most effective method of teaching reading effectively.

3. Do you think, teachers are having enough skills to teach reading?

R: Teacher number one

E1: It's not easy to say whether teachers have enough skills or not because learners are different and they learn at different pace. What I can say is that teachers need to be more knowledgeable to be able to teach effectively.

R: thank you, teacher two

E2 : I Don't think we, as teachers are having enough skills, simple because the number of learner performance speak for itself, there is more that need to be done in terms of imparting reading skills to learners.

R: Ok, Thank you. Teacher number three...let's hear from you.

E3: Yes, teachers who are well trained have enough skills and knowledge.

R: Thank you. Teacher four.

E4: Yes, I think teachers have enough skills the only problem is imparting those reading skills to their learners in a way that they will understand it .More training is needed to equip teachers.

R: Thank you, Teacher number five, what is your view on that one.

E5: Some teachers are skilled some are not, some need more training and support from the school and the department of education.

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