

**PROBLEMS IN WORD RECOGNITION FOR GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN AN
INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM IN EKURHULENI SOUTH, GAUTENG**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that: **“PROBLEMS IN WORD RECOGNITION FOR GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM IN EKURHULENI SOUTH, GAUTENG”** is my own work and all the sources used have been acknowledged.

T A L P H A L A

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late grand-mother, father and brother

Martha SeboleloMogase, Johannes Sipho and Stanley ThuliTholo

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ABSTRACT

PROBLEMS IN WORD RECOGNITION FOR GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM IN EKURHULENI SOUTH, GAUTENG.

Reading is currently a great concern in South Africa with most learners reading below their grade level. In order to remedy this problem the Department of Education (DoE) has launched a number of campaigns to ensure learners are continuously monitored and evaluated. The purpose of this study is to explore how Grade 4 teachers support learners with word recognition problems in an inclusive classroom.

Grade 4 is a transitional grade from mother tongue to English as the medium of instruction in most of Gauteng schools. This shift creates a challenging factor when teaching reading. Although the teachers' in this investigation were professionally trained not all were trained on how to teach reading and such components as word recognition and lack of strategies raised a major concern. The DoE (2005:67) also stressed that in applying teaching methods teachers should bear in mind that there is no single classroom in which all learners will be exactly the same or learn in the same way and same pace. Hence, teachers need to be creative when dealing with word recognition problems in order to be able to accommodate different learners in an inclusive classroom.

In addressing the challenges faced this study uses Bronfenbrenners ecological system theory and qualitative research design to examine how teachers support learners with word recognition problem. The interview questions were firstly piloted with one of the neighbouring Grade 4 teacher. After the pilot study six Grade 4 teachers from four different primary schools were interviewed and observed and their documents were also analysed. The analysis used Creswell's method and the finding highlighted factors which affect Grade 4 teachers when supporting learners with word recognition. The factors include the following: understanding the Grade 4 learner, curriculum changes in Grade 4, teacher training in the teaching of reading, teaching reading in Grade 4, addressing word recognition in Grade 4, insufficient district support, lack of parental involvement, lack of enough resources and time allocation and lesson plans. Based on the findings, recommendations were made on how to support Grade 4 learners with word recognition problems.

Key concepts: Grade 4 learners, Inclusive classroom, Reading, Reading approaches, Word Recognition, Grade 4 teachers.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAC Alternative Argumentative Communication

ANA Annual National Assessment

BA Bachelor of Arts

Bed Bachelor in Education

BSC Bachelor of Science

CAPS Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

DBE Department of Basic Education

DBST District Based Support Team

DoE Department of Education

ES Ekurhuleni South

FED Further Education Diploma

FET Further Education Training

FFL Foundation for Learning Campaign

FP Foundation Phase

FSS Full service school

GDE Gauteng Department of Education

GET General Education and Training Band

GPLSGauteng Primary Literacy Strategy

HOD Head of Department

HED Higher Education Diploma

IEA International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement

ILST Institutional Based Support Team

IP Intermediate Phase

ISS Inclusion and Special School

JPTD Junior Primary Teachers' Diploma

LOLT Language of Learning and Teaching

LST Learning Support Teacher

NCS National Curriculum Statement

NDoE National Department of Education

NGO Non Governmental Organisation

OLSAT8 Otis-Linnon School Ability Test

PGCE Post Graduate Certificate in Education

PIRLS Progress in International Reading Literacy Strategy

QUIDS-UP Quality Improvement Support and Upliftment programme

SACMEQ Southern and Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality

SASA South African Schools Act

SBST School Based Support Team

SES Senior Education Specialist

SPTD Senior Primary Diploma

THRASS Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skill

THED Transvaal Higher Education Diploma

TIMSS Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies

VS Versus

WISC-III Wechsler Intelligence Scale

WP6 White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education
and Training System

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEMS IN WORD RECOGNITION FOR GRADE 4 LEARNERS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The reading ability of learners in South African schools is a cause for concern. According to Jennings, Caldwell and Lerner (2006:3), reading difficulties are not only problematic for learners as individuals but also impact on nation and society as a whole. Low reading levels result in poor performance, high rates of school dropouts, unemployment and increased crime. Since 2001, the Department of Education (DoE) has measured performance in Literacy and Numeracy at Grades 3 and 6, resulting in an evaluation that revealed poor performance in those areas. A systemic evaluation, conducted in 2004 for Grade 6, confirmed poor language skills (DoE 2005(b):2), and a similar survey by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) for Grade 6 learners found that the majority of those learners performed poorly when tested for the ability to read at an age-appropriate level (DoE2008:5). The Minister of Education stated that the performance of learners in South Africa was significantly worse than that of learners in other countries (*Government Gazette*2008:4).

Reading problems may be rooted in both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, the former being within the learner, such as attitude, auditory and visual perceptual problems, and language development, the latter within the home and school environment (Jennings, Caldwell & Lerner 2006:7). When considering extrinsic factors, the National Reading Strategy Campaign document revealed the most challenging lack of effective reading support strategies (DoE 2008:8). Teachers only know one method of teaching reading, and this does not suit the learning style of all learners in an inclusive environment.

Another challenge was the use of English as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT), exacerbated by the lack in teacher training of preparation for helping English second language speakers to understand the phonological, morphological, and syntactic and semantic system of the English language (Birsh 2000:xix). As a result, teachers require a broad base of conceptual knowledge that informs them as to what and how to teach in ways that motivate and help children to learn.

1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF READING AND WORD RECOGNITION

Teaching children to read is the school's single most important work (Stanovich, as cited in Gillet, Temple & Crawford 2004:2), because reading can open up an imaginative world to learners, offering them concepts for naming and understanding experiences, helping them to learn many subjects and boosting their power of reflection. As well as academic results, such as appreciation of a language and future scholastic success, reading may also promote the learner's self image and understanding of the self (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:129). According to Pretorius and Ribbens (2005:140), learners move from learning to read during the Foundation Phase to reading to learn in the Intermediate Phase, when they are able to read expository (informative) text and critically analyse a variety of texts. As a result, learners learn to read in order to opens the doors to a wide range of information, fulfilment and enjoyment (Gunning 2008:3).

Reading is the most cognitively demanding language task (Prater2007:319), utilising attention, perception, memory and retrieval process so that the reader automatically identifies or decodes words. Such skills depend on the approaches of teaching reading, and the main components that would help lay the basics. Wessels and Van Den Berg (2004:230-233) highlight the following approaches or methods for teaching reading: The *alphabet method*, the *phonic method*, the *look and say method*, and the *language experience approach*, whilst for Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005:124) the two main components of reading are *recognition and analysis of words*, and *understanding of words and ideas*.

The ability to recognise words is critical for mastery of printed words (Fourie 2008:75) and also for fluent reading. This is best developed when the recognition is instant and drains no energy (Pikulski& Chard 2005:515). Without this lower level skill learners cannot function on a higher level of comprehension. The ability to recognise word in print consists of both routine skills and meta-cognitivestrategies. The former may involve matching written representations of words with their sounds and spellings in memory, whereasthe latter are basic, one of which is word recognition, on which this study will concentrate (Walpole &Mckenna 2007:48).

Word recognition is the foundation of the reading process (Gough 1984:225), and according to Stanovich (1991:418) a by-product of any successful approach to

develop reading ability that is strongly related to the speed of initial reading acquisition. The process of recognising words is complex; hence learners need to use a variety of strategies to complete it successfully. According to Jennings, Caldwell and Lerner (2006:185), word recognition strategies can be divided into those that foster reading fluency (sight words) and those that foster reading accuracy (phonics, structural analysis and context). Reading fluency refers to the ability to read text accurately, quickly and with expression and comprehension (DoE2007(b):17), whereas reading accurately means reading words correctly without any error.

Learners entering Grade 4 should be early fluent and independent readers (Rault-Smith 2009:35), and the DoE (2007(b):10) requires them to access information, become critical readers, analyse information from texts, generalise information, construct new knowledge and understand abstract concepts. As a result of their reading level they are expected to read 158 words per minute (DoE 2007(b):25).

A factor influencing reading that is often not considered is the cultural background of the learners, such as the role of culture in the literacy planning that relates to their lives. Experience and culture of learning empowers teachers to create a context for learning that results in purposeful engaged participation (Spafford & Grosser 2005:199). South Africa is a heterogeneous country with many cultural groups that differ in terms of their personal characteristics, cognitive style and learning styles (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel 2005:37). There are 11 official languages but English is the main LOLT for most learners. As a result, teachers need to take into account the school's culture and the learners' cultural milieu when addressing reading problems.

Teachers need to obtain different methods to teach reading in order to accommodate a diverse class, for example knowledge of teaching word recognition through phonics, sight words, context clues and structural analysis, and using board games to consolidate knowledge gained. This will help teachers to support learners who experience barriers related to word recognition. According to Goodman (as cited in Davenport 2002:185), they should be like artists when constructing their activities so as to give learners an opportunity to be creative in their learning.

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The researcher holds the position of a Senior Education Specialist (SES) at the Ekurhuleni South (ES) District under the unit Inclusion and Special Schools (ISS), the core function of which is to support teachers with early identification of, and designing intervention programmes for learners who experience barriers to learning. Another function is verification of assessment conducted by teachers and an Institutional-Level Support Team (ILST) when referring learners to the District Based Support Team (DBST). I find it difficult to perform to my best ability due to insufficient knowledge about different strategies. These shortcomings correspond with methods of teaching reading at school. When visiting schools, teachers raised similar concerns about their insufficient knowledge when addressing reading problems. They were trained as Intermediate Phase teachers but not explicitly on how to use different strategies when addressing reading problems at schools.

The above-mentioned barriers correspond to the experiences of teachers when they are to support learners with different aspects of reading in the district, as revealed in the Ekurhuleni South baseline report that learners performed below others in the province in basic literacy skills (GDE 2008:16). Among the recommendations made to support learners appropriately, a number were highlighted, namely that all district curriculum facilitators must ensure that:

- teachers be re-skilled to teach reading
- perceptual skills should be included in a planned reading programme
- emphasis be placed on word recognition to enable learners to relate to what was read (GDE 2008:16).

The researcher thus embarked on studying the problem of word recognition in Grade 4 learners to help Grade 4 teachers to address word recognition problems in their classrooms.

The research took place in four primary schools within the Ekurhuleni South district, selected on the basis of their school performance, geographical setting, and composition of learners. Three schools were selected from the suburban area comprising a combination of racial groups (Black and White), and one school from the township in which all learners were black. Each school has a Learner Support

Teacher (LST) who assisted other teachers in terms of different strategies to use to address problems related to reading, especially word recognition. In the four schools identified, READ, a nongovernmental organisation (NGO), trained all English teachers in terms of their approach towards teaching reading and teachers implementing the READ programme.

Since one of the most pressing needs is to provide teachers with the skills, attitude and knowledge to support learners experiencing problems with reading, especially word recognition, the proposed study will focus on addressing these, and determining effective strategies that teachers can use to improve their teaching in this field. It is intended that the findings, if applied, would benefit teachers in the Ekurhuleni South district, improve learner performance in literacy, and give support to achieving the Minister's target of raising learner performance in Literacy to 50% by 2011 (*Government Gazette* 2008:4).

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem to be investigated is the inability of most Grade 4 learners to read because they lack word recognition when reading and teachers do not have the necessary range of skills to teach it. Therefore, the research question is posed as follows:

Which strategies can be used to support Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when they read?

1.5 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this study is to determine effective strategies for teachers to use in supporting Grade 4 learners with word recognition problems. The primary aim is formulated as follows:

To determine guidelines for supporting Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when reading.

The sub-aims that guide the research are the following:

- To clarify the concept of word recognition.

- To determine the level and problems of word recognition in Grade 4 learners in relation to their reading ability.
- To determine different types of sight word and reading strategies that teachers can use to address word recognition by Grade 4 learners.
- To understand the Grade 4 learner.
- To describe the word recognition problems encountered by Grade 4 learners when they read.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

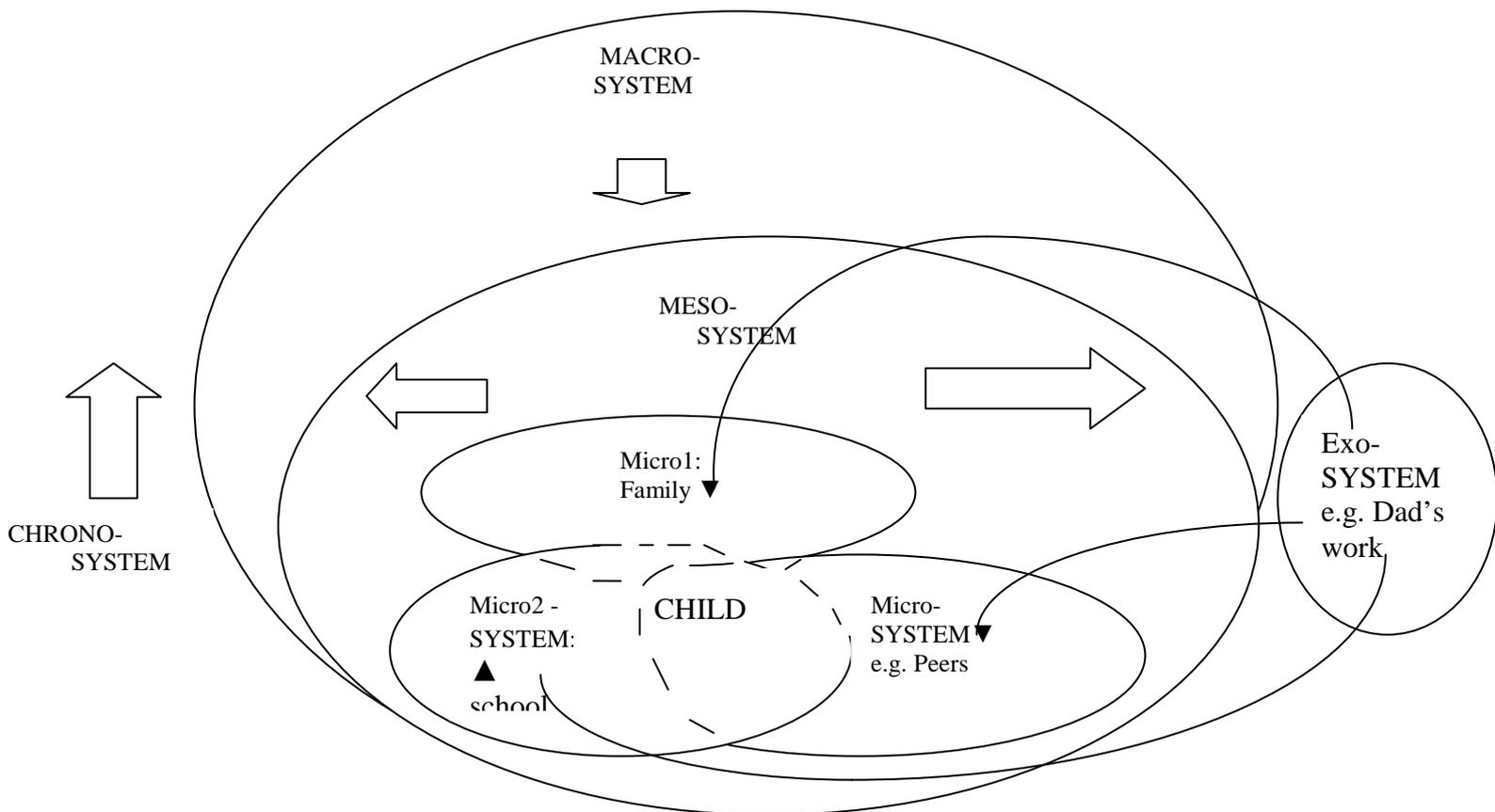
When conducting a study the researcher uses his or her knowledge and experience in order to structure the inquiry, hence it is important to note that research cannot be conducted in a theoretical vacuum. The term ‘theoretical framework’ is defined by Radhakrishna, Yoder and Ewing (2007:692) as a conceptual model of how one theorises or makes logical sense of the relationships between several factors that have been identified as the problem. It positions the research in the discipline or subject in which the researcher is working (Henning, Van Rensburg&Smit 2004:25). For Merriam (1998:2), a theoretical framework forms the “scaffolding” or the underlying structure of the study.

Theories are statements about how things are connected and derived from information that people collect by seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and feeling(Henning, Van Rensburg&Smit 2004:14). According to Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005:9), a theory can be defined as a set of ideas, assumptions and concepts ordered in such a way that they tell us about the world, ourselves, or an aspect of reality. In this study the researcher will adopt Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory in order to gather information related to problems in word recognition for Grade 4 learners in an inclusive classroom.

According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2006:40), Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory has a significant influence on shaping how different levels of a system in the social context interact in the process of child development. Swart and Pettipher (2005:13) also regard Bronfenbrenner’s theory as useful in spelling out the complexity of the interaction between and independence of multiple systems that

impact on learners, their development and learning. For Bronfenbrenner (cited in Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 2006: 41-42) child development happens within four nested systems, the micro-systems, meso-systems, exo-systems and macro-systems, which all interact with the chrono-system. Figure 1.1 below illustrates Bronfenbrenner's nested system.

Figure 1.1: Bronfenbrenner's nested systems



Source: Adapted from Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana 2006:41

In the context of this research, Bronfenbrenner's nested systems may be interpreted as follows:

- *Micro-systems*: These are systems in which children are closely involved in proximal interactions with other familiar people (such as the family, school or peer group with whom the learners are interacting in face-to-face situations on a daily basis). They involve roles, relationships, and patterns of daily activities that shape many aspects of cognitive, social, emotional, moral and spiritual experiences that have a direct influence on the learners' development. For the purpose of this study, the micro-system refers to the direct relationships or settings that the

learner finds him or herself in on a daily basis. This includes the school, home, classroom teachers and peers.

- *Meso-system*: A meso-system is a set of micro-systems that continuously interact with one another. Interaction between the school, teachers, peer group, and family takes place on this level. What happens in the family or peer group can influence how children respond at school, and vice versa. The meso-system is also referred to as the 'neighbourhood' or 'local community'. In the South African context this refers to the district level on which district officials from different units make sure that schools implement policies. It is therefore the responsibility of the language facilitator to make sure that teachers are implementing the learning area (English) policy correctly and are also using correct strategies to assist learners with word recognition problems.
- *Exo-systems*: This level includes other systems in which a child is not directly involved, but which may influence the people who have proximal relationships with him or her in the micro-systems. For the purpose of this study, exo-system will relate to the provincial level on which different policies (such as Learning Area policies) provided by the DoE need to be carried out and implemented. During the time of the study it was clear that the DoE had good Learning Area policies in place, and ones which indicated what needed to be taught in Grade 4 with regard to English. However, when and how to teach each aspect, such as word recognition, was problematic for most teachers.
- *Macro-systems*: The macro-system involves dominant social and economic structures, as well as values, beliefs, and practices that influence all other social systems. It is equivalent to the social system as a whole and refers to the broader system. For the study it refers to the National Department of Education (NDoE), where policy decisions about education are made. Its main purpose is to provide provinces with guidelines to implement a particular policy according to their needs. At this stage the DoE had good policies and ideas about the curriculum to be taught in different grades.
- *Chrono-system*: Developmental time affects the interactions between these systems, as well as their influences on individual development. At this level the

focus is on the learner and whether he/she is able to meet the required standard set by the DoE. (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 2006: 41-42).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological system is relevant for my study because it is both useful and important to look at the topic as a set of interrelated and interconnected systems. The study took place in schools; therefore the micro-level was particularly relevant, albeit acknowledging that what happened on one level directly or indirectly affected the functioning of another.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The procedure followed for the collection of the necessary data will now be discussed.

1.7.1 Research design

A research design is defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:22) as the procedure for conducting a study which includes when, from whom and under which conditions the data will be collected. It is therefore a plan that helps the researcher in deciding how the research will be carried out (Mouton 2003:55). The topic in this study was best suited to a *qualitative* approach, because the researcher aimed at gaining a firsthand, holistic understanding of word recognition in the Ekurhuleni South District by means of a literature study. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:5), qualitative research denotes the type of inquiry in which the qualities, characteristics or properties of a phenomenon are examined for better understanding and explanation. Qualitative design is further classified into *interactive design*, which uses face-to-face techniques to collect data from people in their natural setting, and *non-interactive design*, which investigates concepts and events through an analysis of documents (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:26-27). The former was used because the researcher wished to gather firsthand information regarding word recognition problems at specified schools.

Against the background outlined above, the research employed an *ethnographic search*, because the researcher required extensive time in a site to systematically observe learners reading and responding to questions, to interview teachers regarding their teaching approaches towards word recognition problems, and to capture naturally events in specific schools. De Vos (2005:275) defines

ethnography as “the study of an interact (sic) cultural or social group characterised by participant observation, description and interpretive data analysis.”

Qualitative methodology rests on the assumption that valid understanding can be gained through accumulated knowledge acquired firsthand by a single researcher (Foucher&Delport 2005:74). It departs from a constructivist point of view, which according to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2006:83) does not see knowledge as given, but as actively and continuously constructed by individuals, groups and society. Knowledge gained is not passive but rather is actively constructed. This viewpoint was appropriate for the study because the researcher was observing learners actively involved in the learning process, and when word recognition was being taught in its natural setting.

1.7.2 Sample

A sample is viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested (De Vos 2005:199). *Purposive sampling* is used to select respondents, guided by a process that provides rich and detailed data on the problem of study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen 1993:33). Sampling depends on the researcher’s judgement on who can provide information. In this study, Grade 4 English teachers were selected from four different primary schools in the Ekurhuleni South district. In total, seven teachers were involved, of whom one took part in a pilot study. The participants, all teaching Grade 4, were selected based on their knowledge and the way they addressed the identified problem. The researcher varied the participants by their years of teaching experience, different approaches used to address word recognition problems and their school settings. Grade 4 was chosen because of the knowledge, experience and understanding of the context and because it is regarded as a transitional stage in which the learners move from learning to read in the Foundation Phase to reading to learn in the Intermediate Phase (Pretorius & Ribbens 2005:140).

1.7.3 Data collection instruments

Data collection is the vehicle through which researchers collect information to answer the research question and defend conclusions and recommendations based on the findings for the research (Mertens 1997:285). For the purpose of this research, two research methods were combined, namely a literature study and an empirical

study. The aim of the literature study is to contribute towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of word recognition. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:10), *empirical* research involves being guided by evidence obtained from systematic research rather than by opinion or authorities. The following methods were employed to gain empirical data:

- Interview: For the purpose of affirmation of the literature study interviews were used. Collin (in De Vos 2002:298) defines 'interview' as a social interaction in which meaning is negotiated between a numbers of selves. According to De Vos (2002:298-303), the following types of interviews can be distinguished:
 - *Semi-structured interview*, which seeks to gain a detailed picture of a participant's belief about or perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic and allows researcher and participants much more flexibility
 - *Unstructured interview*, also referred to as 'in-depth interview', which is conducted without utilising any of the researcher prior information, experience or opinions of a particular area
 - *Ethnographic interview*, described as a particular kind of speech events and used to gather cultural data.

For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews were appropriate because the researcher was interested in understanding the experiences of Grade 4 teachers with regard to problems related to word recognition and their implications for reading ability for Grade 4 learners.

- Observation: Observation implies seeing as well as observing with the other senses (Henning et al. 2004:82). It involved observing phenomenon in naturally occurring situations over an extended time and writing extensive field notes to describe what happened (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:43). Participatory observation was used, described by De Vos (2002:280) as a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural and everyday set-up in a particular community and situation. The researcher spent two days a week, for four weeks, in each identified school, observing learners reading a passage and responding. Of particular interest was word recognition and the reading methodologies used by the teachers. This was carried out to help the

researcher gain firsthand experience of the phenomenon, captured by field notes throughout the period.

1.7.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is an inductive way of organising data into categories, and identifying patterns (i.e., relationships) among those categories (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:364). The process began while interviews were still taken place and the analysis was conducted qualitatively. This analysis helped the researcher design the questions so that they would focus on the research problem. After completing data collection, the researcher began a more detailed and refined analysis of it.¹ The information was then categorised into themes or concepts. The aim of analysing the information was to look for common methods used by teachers and categories of approaching researchers to solve similar problems in different ways.

1.7.5 Trustworthiness and Transferability

Several methods were employed to increase the trustworthiness of the study, namely the use of several methods of data collection, spread over four weeks. The researcher also presented the outcomes to the participants to determine their accuracy in terms of the strategies they used to address word recognition problems in Grade 4. In terms of transferability, it is intended that the researcher's findings will be useful for all Grade 4 teachers who teach word recognition in an inclusive classroom and to everyone concerned with the question raised by the researcher. The researcher will ensure that all the findings are shared with all Grade 4 English teachers and district facilitators.

1.7.6 Ethical consideration

Strict ethical guidelines of the research were and shall be adhered to throughout the process of this study. As the research was conducted in schools, the researcher first obtained permission from the GDE, then identified suitable schools and participants.

¹Although 'data' is the Latin plural of datum it is generally treated as an uncountable 'mass' noun and so takes a singular verb (*Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 2011, Eds. Stevenson & Waite).

The participants were required to provide written consent to their being observed and interviewed. The researcher explained the entire process and reassured them that their privacy and sensitivity would be and shall be protected. Pseudonyms are used to preserve anonymity.

1.8 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

It is necessary to clarify the key concepts as they are understood and used in this study.

1.8.1 Word recognition

‘Word recognition’ is a process by which readers match written representation of words with their sound and spelling by memory (Walpole & McKenna 2007:48). The reader needs to read the words instantly without discernible effort. It is necessary for comprehension.

1.8.2 Grade 4 learner

A ‘learner’ is defined by the South African School Act (SASA) as any person, whether a child or adult, who receives education (DoE 1996:7). In this study a Grade 4 learner is a child who receives education on a full-time basis, usually aged nine to 10 years. Grade 4 is an entry level to a standard that falls within the Intermediate Phase of the General Education and Training (GET) Band. For the purpose of this study, Grade 4 learners represent any person who has completed formal education in the Foundation Phase and has progressed to the entry grade in the Intermediate Phase at any specific institution.

1.8.3 Reading

‘Reading’ is a skilled and strategic process of which learning to decode and read words accurately and rapidly in an essential feature (Vaughn, Bos&Schumm 2007:333). It is not a natural process but is learned (Jennings, Caldwell & Lerner 2006:3), hence teachers should be aware that the potential for reading is innate but the skill requires development.

1.8.4 Reading approach

'Reading approach' is a way to start teaching beginning readers (Lingualinks 2011:1). According to Vacca, Vacca and Gove (2000:28), these approaches were developed in order to describe the way readers use language information to construct meaning from print.

1.8.5 Systemic evaluation

Systematic evaluation or assessment is an external way of monitoring the education system by comparing learners' performing to national indicators of learner achievement. It involves monitoring of learner attainment at regular intervals, using nationally or provincially defined measuring instruments. This form of evaluation compares and aggregates information about learner achievement so that it can be used to assist in curriculum development and evaluation of teaching and learning (DoE 2004(a):2).

1.8.6 Inclusive classroom

Inclusion is about recognising and respecting the difference among all learners and building on the similarities (White Paper 62001:17) whereas a classroom is a subset of the school and it is also influenced by the society as a whole (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 2006:140). An inclusive classroom will represent an environment that will cater all learners with different abilities.

1.8.7 Grade 4 teacher

The word teacher and educator are used interchangeably in schools. According to section one of Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998, "educator" refers to any person who teaches, educates or train other person or who provides professional education services including professional therapy and educational psychological service, at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental offices or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post on any educator establish under this Act. For the purpose of this study, the Grade 4 teacher represents any teacher who teaches in a Grade 4 class at a particular institution.

1.9 CHAPTER DIVISION

The chapters are broken down as follows:

Chapter 1 presents a brief background to the study.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on different types of reading approaches, and also on approaches to or solutions for word recognition problems. Causes and implications of word recognition problems will be discussed.

Chapter 3 discusses Grade 4 learners and their expectation level in terms of the reading ability.

Chapter 4 details the research methodology employed when conducting the study. It also describes the qualitative research instruments used for gathering data.

Chapter 5 is an analysis of the data collected and presentation of the findings.

Chapter 6 concludes the study and makes recommendations for improvement. Limitations of the study and areas for further research are identified.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented an overview of the study and the background to the problems of word recognition for Grade 4 learners in an inclusive classroom in Ekurhuleni South, Gauteng. The theoretical framework adopted for the study was outlined. The research problem and aims of the research were described. The chapter gave a brief description of the research design and methodology to be employed in carrying out the study. Key concepts were defined.

In the next chapter relevant literature on reading, word recognition and the implication of word recognition problems is reviewed.

CHAPTER TWO

LEARNING TO READ

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the most complex tasks that humans are expected to perform (Rault-Smith 2009:15), and is complex both to learn and to teach. According to Smith and Read (2005:12), it is a process in which information from the text and the reader's background knowledge act together to produce meaning. Teaching reading usually revolves around two components, namely recognising and analysing words (identification of words), and understanding words and ideas (comprehension) (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel 2005:124).

Learning to read is not a natural process and it requires systematic and well informed instruction (DoE 2007(b):8). It enables learners to gather information throughout their lives and promote their self-image and understanding of the self, as well as developing in them an appreciation of language (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:129). Reading is also important for learning and studying because it gives readers access to knowledge in an information-driven society. It is therefore the teachers' responsibility to instil well-developed reading skills and abilities in learners so that they can read and progress in school and their careers.

2.2 A brief history of reading

South African literacy has been strongly influenced by European and American trends, and in tracing the history of reading from the 1980s to the year 2000, Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008:82-83) have found that at the start of these decades reading instruction was based on the sound or phonic method, which emphasised the relationship between the sound and the symbols. By the mid-eighties the phonic method changed to the 'look-and-say' method which was used to teach learners to read by memorising strings of words as a whole, without analysing the words according to their sound and meaning. During the mid- and late eighties, educationists were emphasising reading with comprehension over just memorising words.

Prior to this, between 1960 and 1980, Piaget's psycho-linguistic view and Vygotsky's socialistic view had influenced the reading approach, with emphasis on decoding words and mastering vocabulary in order to identify the main idea of a text. By 1980, reading was regarded as a constructive process that gave meaning. During the 1990s phonics was regarded as a critical reading strategy by educationists and by 2000 the emphasis was on a balanced approach, integrating comprehension, phonics and writing activities in the teaching of literacy.

2.3 ADDRESSING READING IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Manifesto on Value, Education and Democracy (DoE 2001:30) aimed at ensuring that every South African would be able to read, write, count and think. In line with this, the DoE has pressed for learners to be taught to read from an earlier stage. For instance, the Language Learning Outcome 3: Reading and Viewing states that: "The learner will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional, values in texts" (DoE 2004(a):5), an outcome that addresses the reading needs of learners at different levels. The DoE has also called for learners' reading competencies at different levels to be continually monitored and evaluated, through the following projects:

- *Progress in International Reading Literacy Strategy (PIRLS)* - this strategy was conducted in 2001 and 2006. An international comparative evaluation of reading literacy of Grade 4 learners, it is a systemised vehicle designed to derive nationwide empirical data for employable in informing decisions on curriculum and language policy. PIRLS for South Africa provide a comparative basis to benchmark progress in reading literacy (University of Pretoria 2006:3-8).
- *Systematic evaluation or assessment* - is an external way of monitoring the education system by comparing learners' performance to national indicators of achievement. It involves monitoring of their attainment at regular intervals, using nationally or provincially defined measuring instruments. This form of evaluation compares and aggregates information about learner achievement so that it can be used to assist in curriculum development and evaluation of teaching and learning (DoE 2004(a):2).

- *Annual National Assessment (ANA)* - is an external assessment administered nationally. Used as a diagnostic and baseline for learners from Grades 2 to 6, it is written every year in February with the results compared nationally.

These evaluations have revealed that South African learners still read below their age-appropriate level. According to Theron and Nel (2005:237), most teachers lack training, knowledge, tools and time to support learners with limited English proficiency wishing to achieve their potential. Taking this factor into account, the DoE has launched a number of campaigns in order to remedy the situation:

- *Quality Improvement Development Support and Upliftment programme* - for public schools (QUIDS-UP), launched in 2007 as an affirmative action programme targeting schools serving high poverty school communities, where the quality of education is seriously compromised due to the lack of resources, shortage of skilled personnel, lack of basic infrastructure and overcrowding in classrooms.
- *Foundation for Learning Campaign (FFL)* - launched in 2008 as a four-year campaign to improve the reading, writing and numeracy of all learners. It was intended to provide clearer more specific guidelines for teacher as directives to support schools and education officials across the system. Teachers were supplied with the following documents in order to implement the campaign:
 - *Handbook in Teaching Reading in the Early Grade* - which explained the core methodologies advocated by the campaign.
 - *Assessment framework books* - (for Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase) that set the milestones or knowledge and skills to be taught for each grade for each term.
 - *Quarterly Assessment Activities for Literacy and Numeracy* - (Grades1-3) providing further assistance for teachers in developing assessment tasks.
 - *Lesson Plans for Grade 1-6* -based on the Assessment Framework milestones.
 - *Workbooks* - that aimed to expand on the lesson plans.
- *National Reading Strategy* - launched in 2008 with the vision that “Every South African learner will be a fluent reader who reads to learn and read for

enjoyment and enrichment.” This campaign was aimed at improving the reading competencies by engaging teachers and learners to a “Drop All and Read,” with an additional half an hour per day allocated for everyone to read for enjoyment (DoE 2008:4&15).

- *Gauteng Primary Literacy Strategy (GPLS)* - launched by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) in 2010, with the underlying vision that: “By the end of primary school, all Gauteng learners can read and write fluently for purpose and enjoyment.” The aim was to improve literacy teaching in 792 underperforming primary schools. In order to implement this strategy the teachers were supplied with a complete resource pack that included learner’s workbook, set of readers, phonetic programme and a teacher’s guide.

In order to further improve the implementation of these campaigns, the DoE has amended the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grade R-12 with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement document (CAPS), an amendment that took effect from January 2012 for the Foundation Phase. The Intermediate Phase was to implement this amendment later because the document was in the developmental stage. The content (knowledge, concepts and skills) in CAPS is organised by term, using the following headings: Listening and speaking, Reading and phonics, and Writing and handwriting (DoE 2010:7). Teachers therefore play an important role in the implementation of these changes and also in the teaching of learners. As a result they are encouraged to know different approaches and methods to teaching learners to read.

2.4 READING APPROACHES AND METHODS

Of the various reading approaches and methods, the follow are most pertinent to this study.

2.4.1 Reading approaches

A reading approach is a way to start teaching beginning readers (Lingualinks 2011:1). According to Vacca, Vacca and Gove (2000:28), these approaches were developed in order to describe the way readers use language information to construct meaning from print. Learners learn in different ways, so teachers use a

variety of approaches when teaching reading. According to Landsburg, Kruger and Nel (2005:140), reading approaches can be grouped into:

- *The bottom-up approach* - The advocates of this approach assume that the process of translating print to meaning begins with the print and the act of reading is triggered by grapho-phonemic information such as letter, syllables and words, in order to construct meaning from print (Vacca, Vacca& Gove 2000:28-29). The approach represents the school of thought of behaviourism, which regards reading as a process that moves from parts to the whole (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:84). The emphasis of this approach is to teach learners the letter-sound relations and then to sound and say the word. It is “data-driven,” with data in this case being letters and words on the page (Vacca, Vacca& Gove 2000:29). According to this approach, the reading material is more important than the person reading (Ekwall&Shanker 1989:3-4). It relates to phonics as a reading approach.
- *The top-down approach* - In contrast to the bottom-up approach, advocates of this assume that the process of translating print to meaning begins with the reader’s prior knowledge, and the act of reading is triggered by his or her prior knowledge and experience in order to construct meaning (Vacca, Vacca& Gove 2000:28-29). The top-down approach represents the school of thought of psycholinguistics, which regards reading as a process that moves from the whole to the parts (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:84). The emphasis is to teach learners to identify whole words and read sentences without sounding them. It is “conceptually driven” because the idea or concept in the mind of the reader triggers information processing during reading (Vacca, Vacca& Gove 2000:30). The reader is therefore more important than the text being read (Ekwall&Shanker 1989:4). This approach relates to ‘look-and-say’ as a reading method.
- *The interactive approach* - In this approach the emphasis is on both bottom-up and top-down approaches. Followers assume that the process of translating print into meaning involves making use of both prior knowledge and print (Vacca, Vacca& Gove 2000:28).

2.4.2 Reading methods

Reading methods are different ways in which reading is being taught. Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008:89-94) highlighted the following reading methods.

2.4.2.1 Phonic method

The phonic method focuses on phonetics, which is the science of forming and pronouncing speech sound (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:89). As discussed in section 2.2.1, this method regards reading as a bottom-up process. Phonics refers to the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes (the sound of spoken language) and graphemes (the letter that present those sounds in written language) (DoE 2010:27). When using this method the learners understand that there is a correspondence between the sound (auditory) with the letter and letter combination (visual) in their particular language. Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008:89) further explain this method as a synthetic method because parts (sounds) are connected to the form of the whole (words), where sounds are learned step by step, for example: /b/+i/+n/ is *bin*. Readers using this method are required to learn individual letters and features first, followed by diagraphs and other multi-letter units before single words are read. Wallace (2001:23) also points out the strong correlation between phonemic awareness, the ability to process words automatically and quickly, and reading achievement.

The THRASS method (Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skills) is an example of this programme in which phonemes (sound or speech sound) are distinguished from graphemes (units of writing). The phonemic sound and the formation of each letter are learned simultaneously (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:165). This approach helps learners to understand the 'building blocks' of English language because it teaches them the 44 phonemes of spoken English and the 120 graphemes of written English (*Key facts about THRASS* 2011:1).

2.4.2.2 Look and say method and Whole language approach

The Look and say method or Whole language approaches based on the Gestalt theory, which focuses on the whole not the part (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:91). Reading is regarded as a top-down process in which the meaning of the text is dependent upon the background knowledge and understanding that the reader

brings (Wren 2005:1). When using this method a learner recognises that the word is read in totality rather than as isolated letters. Joubert, Bester and Meyer (2008:91) regard it as an analytic method because it focuses on the whole and then analyses the parts. Learners are therefore taught to develop knowledge of language including the graphonic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of language (Lingualinks2011(b):1). They are also required first to read words, then sentences and, finally, to build a story. Emphasis is on the recognition of geometric shape of the word and not individual letters or sound, for example: look. This method relies on the visual memory of the learners and if unable to recognise the word the learner is lost (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:91). Children learn to use the words in context, for example, creating poems and composing songs.

2.4.2.3 Language experience approach

In the Language experience approach the learner's own experience of language based on real-life experiences is used to teach reading and writing. According to Gordon (2007:97), this approach follows four steps, namely experience, description, transcription and reading. The learners relate their own news and experiences or discuss a picture, and learn that written symbols represent spoken words (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:93). Sight vocabulary and word recognition play an important role in this approach. Words are used to construct sentences relating sentences relating to stories narrated. The best story is selected and can be read to other classes or during library period.

2.4.2.4 Eclectic method or Combined method

This Eclectic method or Combined method blends phonics and the Look and Say approach. It uses sentences and the word as a point of departure. Learners are taught that words are formed by letters, which have sounds (Joubert, Bester & Meyer 2008:92).

2.4.2.5 Alphabet method

According to the Alphabet method, learners learn the letters before moving to reading. This suggests that there is a correspondence between letters (graphemes), which are the basic units of writing, and sounds (phonemes) (Vacca, Vacca & Gove 2000:17). The writing system for English language is based on the alphabetic principle (Gunning 2008:153). The letters are used to represent speech sound or

phonemes. English spelling is more complex with 26 letters and 40+ phonemes of the spoken language (Lingualinks 2011(a):2).

Teaching reading does not conform to a universally adaptable instructional mentality, so there is not a single “correct” way to teach reading to everyone (Vacca, Vacca& Gove (2000:10-11). Teachers are therefore forced to know various reading methods in order to teach reading well, and to be able to accommodate different learners in their classrooms.

2.5 WORD RECOGNITION

Word recognition is a process by which readers match written representation of words with their sound and spelling on memory (Walpole & McKenna 2007:48). This process does not refer merely to recognising words on a flashcard, but requires rapid retrieving of them from memory, which is triggered by the application of letter-sound knowledge. Gough (1984:225) sees word recognition as the foundation for the reading process because before meaning can be attributed to what is read, the reader must first recognise the word. According to Frith (1995:28-29), readers go through the following set of stages of word recognition:

- *Logographic reading* - learners are not able to read letters in the word but they associate features with the word. They recognise a word as a whole. For example, they are likely to recognise the word ‘look’ by associating the double ‘o’ with eyes.
- *Transitional alphabetic* - this stage covers the early first grade in which learners begin to read words by their letters. This includes alphabetic produce and early phonemic spelling.
- *Alphabetic reading* - learners start attempting to read the word. They begin sounding the letters of the word even if it is not properly pronounced. For example, the learner might say “fire sta-t-yon” instead of “fire station”.
- *Orthographic reading* - learners are now looking at words in terms of spelling patterns, not just one letter to one sound, but rather by familiar patterns, for example -ake, -ight and later -tion.

Readers who recognise words automatically and without word analysis can pay attention to meaning. According to Gough (1984:226), the two indices of word recognition are accuracy and speed. The more the learner easily recognises the word the faster he or she can read. Faster reading rate therefore improves comprehension skill. Stanovich (1991:418) also emphasises that word recognition is strongly related to the speed of initial reading acquisition. Researchers have also shown that there is a close correlation between word recognition and fluency in reading. Word recognition also increases the reading comprehension ability. If learners do not recognise many words automatically they will not fully experience the sudden increase in reading rate and fluency in reading (Gillet, Temple & Crawford 2004:42).

2.6 WORD RECOGNITION STRATEGIES

According to Jennings, Caldwell and Lerner (2006:185), word recognition strategies can be divided into those that foster reading fluency (sight words) and those that foster reading accuracy (phonics, structural analysis and context).

2.6.1 Sight words and High frequency words

Sight words are words that are recognised immediately, without further analysis (Jennings, Caldwell & Lerner 2006:185), and make up 75 percent of most reading task (DoE 2010:27). They help learners to remember the forms and recognise the words instantly and enhance reading speed. Two currently used high frequency words are *Dolch basic words*, which are graded from pre-primary to Grade Three, and *Fry instant words*, which have one thousand words organised in order of frequency (Burns, Roe & Ross 1992:100) (see appendix K). These words are categorised into: high potency words, high frequency functional words and content words. The high frequent words are those that are grammatically necessary, and include: articles, conjunctions, pronouns, verbs of beings, and prepositions that bind together information-bearing words. They occur repeatedly in text. These words are referred to as functional words because they help in the functioning of the sentence. Nouns, action verbs, adjectives and adverb are content words because they supply the content of the topic (Vacca, Vacca& Gove 2000:186). Sight words form the core of basal reading.

2.6.2 Phonics

As discussed in section 2.2.2.1, phonics refers to the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes and graphemes (DoE 2010:27). The learners understand that there is a correspondence between the sound (auditory) and the letter and letter combination (visual) in their particular language. Phonics also provides foundation for word recognition abilities. **Shanahan (2008:8-9)** further classifies phonics:

- *Synthetic phonics*: sometimes referred to as *explicit phonics*, by which learners are taught the individual sound of words and how to blend these individual sounds into word pronunciation. For example: cat = c-a-t.
- *Analytic phonics*: sometimes referred as *word analogy phonics*, by which the learners are taught to analyse sound-symbol relationship by seeing how parts of words sound alike and are written similarly. Emphasis is on larger units of pronunciations. For example when “sh” sound is taught in **shell**, **dash**, **dish**, **fish**

Through phonics, learners will be able to learn the relationship between sound and letters. Phonics also gives learners essential word attack skill and spelling skill. Word attack skill is the ability to take a previously unknown word, then sound it out and make meaning of it (DoE 2010:27).

2.6.3 Structural analysis

Structural analysis refers to the process of recognising words by identifying the meaningful parts within them (Richeck, List & Lerner 1983:231). Thus, words are analyzed into syllables such as word roots and suffixes. For example, the word ‘unable’ is divided into ‘un’ as a prefix and ‘able’ as a word root. The division of words into syllables is usually based on spelling rules.

2.6.4 Contextual clues

A contextual clue is when sentence clues are used to read unfamiliar words that are difficult to decode (Landsberg, Kruger & Nel 2005:126). The strategy is used in order to emphasise the meaning of the missing word. For instance, in the sentence: “The -- - is used to absorb water and mineral salt from the soil,” the learner knows

something about the context so will be able to deduce that the missing word is 'roots'.

2.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, reading, word recognition, word recognition strategies and implication of word recognition were discussed. It also gave a brief historical background to reading and how reading is addressed in South Africa in order to identify reading problems. Different reading approaches and methods were also highlighted. In the next chapter, focus is on Grade 4 learners, their developmental level and their expectation in terms of their reading abilities.

CHAPTER THREE

GRADE FOUR LEARNERS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to section 29 (1) of South Africa's Constitution, all citizens have the right to basic education, including adult basic education, and measures must make it progressively available and accessible. As a result, according to the South African Schools Act (SASA, 1996), schooling is compulsory from age seven (Grade 1) to age 15 or the completion of Grade 9. The White Paper 6 (2001) further emphasises that all learners, irrespective of their disability, are to be admitted to mainstream schools. In South Africa, schooling is divided into two bands: the General Education Training band (GET band), which ranges from Grade R to 9; and the Further Education Training (FET band), which ranges from Grade 10 to 12. The GET band is divided into three phases, the Foundation Phase (Grades R to 3), Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 to 6) and Senior Phase (Grade 7 to 9). The Grade 4 learner is thus at the entrance level of the Intermediate Phase.

3.2 DISCUSSION OF GRADE 4 LEARNERS

A learner is defined by the SASA as any person, whether child or adult, who receives education (DoE 1996:7). According to the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE 2011:16) the age of the learner entering Grade 1 in public schools is aged five turning six by June in the year of admission. Taking that into account, a Grade 4 learner will therefore be between ages nine and 10 if not retained in the lower grades. As highlighted above, the Grade 3 at a school precedes Grade 4, which is the last grade in the foundation phase and forms the entry grade in the Intermediate Phase. It is therefore the fourth year of study in primary education, and forms a transitional stage between the Foundation and Intermediate Phases. For the purpose of this study, as discussed in Chapter 1 section 10.2, a Grade 4 learner will be any person who has completed formal education in the Foundation Phase and has progressed to the entry grade in the Intermediate Phase at any specific institution.

3.3 DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF GRADE 4 LEARNERS

The concept of periods of development is a social construction because there is no definable moment when the child becomes an adolescent, or an adolescent becomes an adult (Papalia, Olds & Feldman 2009:10). The reality of the concept is therefore based on societal shared perceptions or assumptions. According to Papalia, Olds and Feldman (2009:21), child development is divided into five periods or stages:

- the prenatal period, which covers from conception to birth
- infancy and toddlerhood, which covers from birth to age three
- early childhood, which covers ages three to six
- middle childhood, which covers ages six to 11
- adolescence, which covers ages 11 to 20.

As stated in the previous section, Grade 4 learners are between the ages of nine and 10, and so fall in the middle childhood stage. This stage is also referred as the 'school years', because school is the central experience of this time. According to Slavin (2009:30), the term 'development' refers to how people, grow, adapt and change over the course of their lifetime, through physical development, personality development, socio-emotional development and cognitive development, which includes thinking and language development.

3.3.1 Physical development

According to Mwamwenda (2004:494), physical development refers to the changes in the body, such as height, weight and brain size, and in motor skills. Learners in Grade 4 may display the following characteristics with regard to their physical development:

- weight gains are greater than the increases in height
- growth is faster in the extremities (arms and legs)
- the head and the brain reach adult size
- the first set of teeth is replaced by permanent ones
- hairs become coarse, and the nose grows larger and longer (Mwamwenda, 2004:57).

During this stage the learners undergo rapid hormonal, physical and physiological changes which affect their development of sense of self, and the emotional and

social life. From personal experience, the teacher's role is made more difficult by having to discuss with some girls their physical development as early as age nine, when they also start to develop interest in their physical appearance. Some boys, on the other hand, start comparing themselves with their peers with regard to their strength, and engage in activities to prove supremacy, such as boxing and wrestling. Generally, most of these learners are more engaged with activities such as swimming, running, jumping and climbing.

Physical weakness or immaturity leads to poor coordination or lack of endurance, which is likely to affect a child's learning (Mwamwenda 2004:57). Learners who are physically weak or immature may struggle in class, become tired easily and have a short concentration span. Their handwriting may be very bad due to incorrect handling of the pen resulting from immature motor development skills, and they may be unable to sit in a comfortable posture for the whole lesson. Mwamwenda (2004:58) has found that learners who are physically mature tend to develop a positive concept and as a result perform well. They have confidence in their physical competence, are approved and socially admired.

3.3.2 Cognitive development

Cognitive development is the development of a person's mental capacity to engage in thinking, reasoning, interpretation, understanding, knowledge acquisition, remembering, organising information, analysis and problem-solving (Mwamwenda 2004:84). It is also closely related to physical, social and emotional growth; for example, the ability to read depends on the physical development of the mouth and the brain and whether the learner is experiencing difficulties in expressing himself or herself verbally. This may cause a negative reaction from others, which in turn affects his or her popularity and sense of self-worth (Papalia, Olds & Feldman 2009:10).

According to Piaget, the child's intellect or cognitive abilities progress through four distinct stages, which can be summarised as follows:

Table 3.1: Four stages in the progression of a child's intellect or cognitive abilities

| Stages | Approximate Ages | Major Accomplishments |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Sensorimotor | Birth to 2 years | Formation of concept of 'object permanence' and gradual progression from reflexive behaviour to goal-directed behaviour. |
| Preoperational | 2 to 7 years | Development of the ability to use symbols to represent objects in the world. Thinking remains egocentric and self centred. |
| Concrete operational | 7 to 11 years | Improvement in ability to think logically. New abilities include the use of operations that are reversible. Thinking is de-centred and problem solving is less restricted by egocentrism. Abstract thinking is not possible. |
| Formal operational | 11 years to adulthood | Abstract and purely symbolic thinking possible. Problems can be solved through the use of systematic experimentation. |

Source: Piaget (cited in Slavin 2009:34)

With reference to the above table, a Grade 4 learner will therefore be at a concrete-operational stage. The learner may further display the following characteristics (Slavin 2009:37). They:

- have difficulty with abstract thoughts
- think logically as long as it applies to concrete objects
- think reversibly (be able to reverse a physical operation, e.g., understand that subtraction is the inverse operation of addition)
- respond to inferred reality (see things in the context of their meanings),
- arrange things in logical progression (learn seriation) - arrange objects according to some criteria/dimensions
- learn skill of transitivity (be able to mentally arrange and compare objects), and class inclusion skill (think simultaneously about a class of objects and about relationships among its subordinate classes)

- move from egocentric to de-centred or object thought (allowing them to see that others can have different perceptions from theirs).

When these learners are learning to read, the letter 's' remains an 's' whether it is lower or upper case, printed, or handwritten (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 2006:58). Mwamwenda (2004:115) agrees with Piaget that cognitive development is developmental, and that a learner's performance improves with either age or level of education or both. The children shift from rigid, illogical thinking to flexible logical thinking, interact with more people and come into contact with a range of viewpoints.

According to Papalia, Olds and Feldman (2009:351), these learners become less egocentric and proficient with tasks that required logical reasoning, such as spatial thinking, understanding of causality, categorisation, inductive and deductive reasoning, conversation and working with numbers. Their reason is limited to here and now. From personal observation it is evident that learners like to explain, seek attention and ask 'why' questions.

3.3.3 Intellectual development

According to Woolfork (2007:112), 'intelligence' is a basic ability that affects performance on all cognitively-oriented tasks, from computing mathematical problems to writing poetry or solving riddles. For Papalia, Olds and Feldman (2009:358), school children's intelligence may be measured by either individual or group test, the most widely used of which are:

- the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for children (WISC-III) - suitable for learners ages six through 16 and measures verbal and performance abilities.
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence scale - suitable for children for ages two and upwards. It is used to measure knowledge, quantitative reasoning, visual spatial processing and working memory.
- Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT8) - suitable for learners in primary through Grade 12.

In the (OLSAT8), children are asked to classify items, showing an understanding of verbal and numerical concepts, display general information and follow directions. In addition to these tests, the Department of Education (DoE) uses a number of assessments to measure learners' performance, as discussed in section 2.3 in the previous chapter. Learners at this stage are expected to be more independent and

as a result know how to read, write and comprehend. Siegler (cited in Papilia, Olds & Feldman 2009:365) further suggests that these children should use their stored knowledge in order to check information against what they already know.

From personal observation, scholastically, the Grade 4 learners perform within their set criteria and like to compete with their peers to show their competency. They use reading in order to incorporate all learning areas and to express their views. They are also able to conduct research and study on their own, as well as reading for enjoyment.

3.3.4 Emotional development

Mwamwenda (2004:487) refers to emotional development as the changes in the manner in which children express their emotions as they grow. During this developmental stage, they are more aware of their own feelings, are able to identify their parents' values and as a result become more independent in their decision-making. They are sensitive to other people's feelings and enjoy each other's company. They also like to please adults and their friends. As they grow older they are also expected to be able to regulate their emotions.

According to Eisenberg (in Papilia, Olds & Feldman 2009:386), emotional self-regulation involves effortful (voluntary) control of emotions, attention and behaviour. As a result, children who are low in effortful control tend to become frustrated when prevented from doing something they want to do, whereas those with high effortful control can stifle the impulse in order to show negative emotion at inappropriate times.

3.3.5 Social development

Social development refers to the acquisition of new strategies for relating to one's social environment as one grows and develops (Mwamwenda 2004:500). According to Erikson, people pass through eight psychosocial stages in their lifetime, summarised as follows:

Table 3.2: Eight psychosocial stages in a lifetime

| Stage | Approximate Age | Psychosocial Crises | Significant Relationships | Psychosocial Emphasis |
|-------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|
| I | Birth to 18 months | Trust vs. mistrust | Maternal person | To get To give in return |
| II | 18 months to 3 years | Autonomy vs. doubt | Parental person | To hold on To let go |
| III | 3 to 6 years | Initiative vs. guilt | Basic family | To make To “make like” |
| IV | 6 to 12 years | Industry vs. inferiority | Neighbourhood, school | To make things To make things together |
| V | 12 to 18 years | Identity vs. role confusion | Peer groups and models of leadership | To be oneself(or not to be) To share being oneself |
| VI | Young adulthood | Intimacy vs. isolation | Partners friendship, sex, competition, cooperation | To lose and find oneself in another |
| VII | Middle adulthood | Generativity vs. self-absorption | Divided labour and share household | To take care of |
| VIII | Late adulthood | Integrity vs. despair | “Mankind,” “My kind” | To be, through having been To face not being |

Source: Erikson (cited in Slavin 2009:47)

Taking into account the above explanation, Grade 4 learners will fall into stage IV, during which their social relationships strengthen with peers and teachers. They want to do things for themselves. The challenges of this stage include acquiring basic skills necessary for adult work, such as physical ones (e.g., sports or games of skill), cognitive (e.g., learning to read or hunt), and social (e.g., taking on responsibilities at home). Their peers become more important because they are able to compare themselves in terms of the tasks and skills they are performing. Mwamwenda (2004:57) confirms that an African child at this stage is able to make

lasting friendships, follow instructions and engage in games that are governed by rules. Again in the African context, they are able to read and write letters for their parents who are unable to write themselves. They also conform to peer pressure, which is influential in shaping their behaviour, and are taught to respect their teachers and how to work with other children by their parents.

For many learners, Grade 4 is a happy time of increasing independence, friendship and developing interest in activities such as sports or art. They also recognise a shift in their academic performance, which creates many challenges for them in coping with their academic demands.

3.4 CHALLENGES FACED BY GRADE 4 LEARNERS

According to Pretorius and Ribbens (2005:140), learners move from *learning to read* during the Foundation Phase to *reading to learn* in the Intermediate Phase. Learners should be able to read expository (information) text and critically analyse a variety of texts. They are now expected to read, write and comprehend what they have read in order to cope with the academic demands, which means that they are expected to understand English well in order also to understand all learning areas.

At this stage, these learners start to experience profound changes at school as they are expected to adjust to its environment, such as moving from one class to another in order to attend different learning areas; being taught by different teachers as opposed to the one in the Foundation Phase; and completing tasks independently and carrying out research within a set period. Sometimes they also need to work together as a group in order to complete certain tasks that can be stressful to most of them. The workload they are supposed to complete also increases dramatically because they are now expected to learn eight learning areas as opposed to the three they were used to in the Foundation Phase. In the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), from 2013 onwards the number of learning areas in Grade 4 is to be reduced to six.² Their assessment becomes more formal and they are expected to sit for a common examination, find a set position in a hall and follow certain rules. This makes most of them nervous, and if unable to cope they struggle with the academic demands. They also have problems organising themselves and their books when they enter class for the first time. They have a number of exercise

² When this research was conducted the number of learning areas was eight.

books and textbooks for each learning area, multiple folders and other stationery, all of which can present a challenge in terms of proper organisation. The use of daily timetable also creates a challenge as they have to pack the right books before leaving home. Another challenging factor is the use of the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT), which is English in most of the Gauteng schools from Grade 4 onward. In most African schools the mother tongue is used as the LOLT, with English their second or even their third language.

3.5 EXPECTATION OF GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN THE LANGUAGE LEARNING AREA

The Language Learning Area (English) Learning Outcome 3 - Reading and Viewing states that: 'learners will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts' (DoE 2005(c):33). This learning area is presented in three parts, each with its own volume or assessment standards, namely, Home Language, First Additional Language and Second Additional Language.

3.5.1 English-Home Language

The home language assessment standards assume that learners come to school able to understand and speak the language (DoE 2005(c):16). According to the DoE (2005(c):32-36), they are expected to meet the following assessment standards. The learner should:

- i) read a variety of South African and international fiction and non-fiction texts for different purposes (e.g., poems, stories, myths, brochures, reference books and text-books):
 - read independently using a variety of reading comprehension strategies appropriate for different purposes
 - skim for general ideas
 - scan for specific details
 - survey content page, headings, index for overview
 - make predictions, use contextual clues to determine meaning, and make inferences

- read aloud clearly and with expression.
- ii) View and comment on various visual and multimedia texts for different purposes (e.g., pictures, posters, cartoons and, where available, computers and CD-ROMs):
- interpret message
 - identify and discuss graphical techniques such as colour, design, choice of images, etc., and how they affect the message conveyed.
- iii) Describe feelings about the text (factual or literary, visual or multimedia), giving reasons.
- iv) Discuss how choice of language and graphical features influence the reader.
- v) Show understanding and identify and discuss aspects such as central idea, characters, setting and plot in fiction texts.
- vi) Infer reasons for actions in the story.
- vii) Understand the vocabulary and discuss the choice of words, imagery and sound effects in poems, stories and multimedia texts (e.g., rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, word pictures, humour).
- viii) Recognise the different structures, language use, purposes and audiences of different kinds of texts:
- identify the different purposes of texts (e.g., speeches, stories, poems advertisements)
 - identify the way texts are organized
 - identify how language and register (degree of formality) differ according to purpose and audience
 - identify the language used in different kinds of texts (e.g., direct speech in fables, sequence words in procedures, passive speech in reports).
- ix) Identify and discuss values in texts in relation to cultural, social, environmental and moral issues (e.g., the moral of the story and its validity in different contexts, situations and characters).
- x) Understand and respond appropriately to information texts:
- identify main and supporting ideas

- scan for specific details in texts (whether reports, bus timetables, maps)
- follow short printed instructions and directions.

xi) Interpret simple visual texts (tables, charts, posters, graphs, maps) and can change text from one form to another (e.g. graph to explanatory paragraph).

xii) Select relevant texts for own information needs (e.g., dictionaries, children's encyclopaedias and reference books).

With reference to the above assessment standards, the focus in Grade 4 is that the learners will extend their literacy skills, build their confidence and fluently use oral languages. This applies to all three parts that were discussed, i.e., Home Language, First Additional Language and Second Additional Language. Cross-curriculum work will form an important part of learning activities (DoE 2005:21), as learners will be able to read text independently and with understanding, express themselves and interpret simple texts.

3.5.2 English-First Additional Language

The first additional language assumes that learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language when they arrive at school (DoE 2005(c):16). The curriculum is then designed in a way that they are being taught to understand and speak the language. According to the DoE (2005(c):59-61), they are expected to meet the following assessment standards. The learner should:

- Understand in a simple way some elements of stories:
 - title (e.g., chooses the best title from alternatives and gives reasons)
 - characters (e.g., thinks of appropriate names for unnamed character)
 - notice how characters and plots are constructed to represent a particular view of the world
 - notice the role that pictures play in the construction of meaning.
- Understand, in a very simple way, some elements of poetry:
 - rhyme (e.g., ring, sing)
 - words which begin with the same sounds-alliteration (e.g., 'Naughty Nomsa never listens')
 - words which imitate their sound-onomatopoeia (e.g., swish, swish)

- differences in the way languages represent these sounds (e.g., 'cluck cluck' and 'krikri').
- Read for information:
 - read simple maps and plans (e.g., follows a route)
 - read and follows texts involving procedure (e.g., a recipe)
 - read and follows timetables
 - read diagrams, graphs and charts (e.g., a family tree)
 - summarise a paragraph with support (e.g., fill in missing words in written summary)
 - read texts across the curriculum (e.g., textbooks in other Learning Areas).
- Read media texts:
 - understand the layout and design of a poster or public notice.
- Read for pleasure and information:
 - read fiction and non-fiction books at appropriate reading and language level
 - evaluate books in a book report
 - read and solves puzzles (e.g., a crossword).
- Use reference book and develop vocabulary:
 - use a dictionary
 - demonstrate a reading vocabulary of between 1000 and 2500 common words. Learners who will study other Learning Areas through their additional language should aim for 2500 words.

The focus in English Additional Language is to make learners understand many words and structures, and use this knowledge to check their use of language, especially when writing. They should develop confidence and also read for enjoyment (DoE 2006:47), and therefore be able to read fiction and non-fiction at the appropriate levels.

3.5.3 English- Second Additional Language

The second additional language is intended for learners who wish to learn three languages and the assessment standards ensure that they are able to use it for general communicative purposes (DoE 2005(c):17). According to the DoE (2005(c):79-80), a learner is expected to meet the following assessment standards:

- i) Read short texts with visual support:
 - match words and sentences with pictures
 - an advertisement
 - picture stories with simple captions
 - comic strips
 - signs in the environment (e.g., traffic signs).
- ii) Read, listen to and/or sign a simple, popular song.
- iii) Use reference books for language learning:
 - bilingual/ monolingual dictionary
 - grammar reference book
 - multimedia courses where available.
- iv) Read and understand up to 500 words in context by the end of Grade 4.

The purpose at this stage is to equip learners with the skill to interact with other South African and to use what they know to construct new knowledge and put their skills into practice (DoE 2006:71).

3.6 READING LEVELS AND EXPECTANCIES OF GRADE 4 LEARNERS

Learners entering Grade 4 should be early fluent and independent readers (Rault-Smith 2009:35), and according to the DoE (2007(a):10-11) display the following characteristics:

An early fluent reader:

- uses different 'cueing' systems, such as phonics (sounding out), language knowledge (familiar sentence structures), and general knowledge in order to make meaning
- recognises most familiar words on sight (approximately 200 words)
- reads fluently at least 60 words per minute
- uses punctuation to enhance comprehension and stops at full stops

- begins to understand implied meaning
- reads texts with longer, more complex sentence structures
- demonstrates a developing knowledge of story elements, such as the plot, the characters, and the resolution of a problem
- reads silently for extended periods
- uses reference materials, with guidance
- reads books with chapters that have smaller print.

An independent reader

- uses 'cueing' systems (phonics, language and general knowledge) unconsciously, having integrated them into his or her general approach to new texts
- reads fluently at least 60 or more words per minute
- understands books with unfamiliar settings
- reads and understands implied meanings
- reads longer and more advanced books, books with chapters, fiction and non-fiction
- uses reference book independently.

Grade 4 learners are thus supposed to access information, become critical readers, analyse information from texts, generalise information, construct new knowledge and understand abstract concepts (DoE 2007(b):10). In terms of their reading level, they are expected to read 158 words per minutes (DoE 2007(b):25). From research, most Grade 4 learners have been found to read below the expected criteria, and they seem to lack the necessary reading skills (see Table 3.3 below). The researcher also observed that they read slowly because they are unable to recognise most of the words instantly.

3.7 READING PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN GAUTENG

According to the Department of Basic Education (DBE 2011:34), the percentage of learners performing at adequate levels are unacceptably high in South Africa. Other developing countries, including relatively wealthy ones, face similar problems. From personal observation, the assessment process conducted nationally and the DBE, it is evident that their reading abilities have dropped.

The Annual National Assessment (ANA) was conducted in February 2011 for learners starting in Grades 2 to 7, the focus being on the levels of learner performance in the previous year, which is in Grades 1 to 6 (DBE 2011:5). The results also indicate that most learners perform below their expected grade level. With reference to the Ekurhuleni South District (ES) district, where this study was conducted, the statistics provided by the GDE indicate that the Grade 4 learners in languages perform at 39.7%, compared to the provincial average of 40.3% and DBE of 28%. This results confirms that learners still perform at a poor level in literacy or languages (GDE 2011:6)

The ANA 2011 draws from experiences in a number of international assessment programmes in which South Africa actively participated during the last decade. These include the regional Southern and Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality(SACMEQ) programme, the global Progress in International Reading Literacy Strategy (PIRLS) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) programme (DBE, 2011:5).

In 2006, the PIRLS revealed that learners in Grade 4 performed at a minimum level determined by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The learners' performance is indicated in table below:

Table 3.3: Learners passing the low reading benchmark in 2006

| Participating country | % of learners |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Indonesia | 54 |
| Iran | 60 |
| Kuwait | 28 |
| Morocco | 26 |
| Qatar | 33 |
| South Africa | 22 |
| United States | 96 |

Source: PIRLS (DBE 2011:35)

From the above results it is evident that Grade 4 learners in South Africa still perform poorly in comparison to those compared from other countries.

With reference to the assessment reports provided, it can be concluded that South African Grade 4 learners are performing lower than their expected level. In order to

remedy this problem the teachers should start with the basics, such as teaching them to recognise words instantly and without effort, thus making them increase their reading tempo, fluency and comprehension when reading. This will also help them improve their language ability, and read independently and with confidence.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has described Grade 4 learners, their developmental stages and the expectation level in terms of the reading ability. Challenges that they are facing were highlighted. The reading performance of South African Grade 4 learners, compared to those in other countries, was indicated. The three different parts of language teaching were also discussed briefly.

The next chapter presents the research methodology employed when conducting the study and a description of the qualitative research instruments used for gathering the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As outlined in the previous chapters, the aim of this research study is to determine guidelines for supporting Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when reading. Information gathered from the literature will be used as a basis to answer the critical research question “Which strategies can be used to support Grade 4 learners who experience problem with word recognition when they read?”

This chapter focuses on the description and discussion of the research design and methodology used to collect data in the research project. First, the methodological paradigm and research design, research site, population and sampling procedures will be discussed. Lastly, details of data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical consideration, validity and limitation of the study will be provided.

4.2 THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

Barker (2003:312) explains a paradigm as a model or pattern containing a set of legitimated assumptions and a design for collecting and interpreting data, whereas Babbie (2007:31) sees it as the fundamental model or frame of reference used to organise observation and reasoning. A research paradigm is therefore the researcher’s point of view for understanding reality. This study is based on understanding real human activities and the researcher will thus observe teachers’ actions when addressing word recognition in class and how learners respond when they are taught.

A paradigm shapes both what we see and how we understand it (Babbie2007:32), and has a major impact on the philosophy and methodology of the social sciences (Mouton & Marais 1990:150). The researcher will base the study on what was happening in class and also take into account the different methods that the teachers were using when addressing word recognition problems and how learners

responded. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006:6), paradigms are all-encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking that define for researchers the nature of their enquiry along three dimensions, namely:

- Ontology, which specifies the nature of reality that is to be studied and what can be known about it
- Epistemology, which specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher (knower) and what can be known
- Methodology, which specifies how researchers may go about practically studying whatever they believe can be known.

Qualitative research is an umbrella term for different approaches or paradigms, each having its own theoretical background, methodological principles and aims (Flick 2006:6). According to Schurink (in De Vos, Delpont, Fouche' & Strydom 2011:311), the following four paradigms can be categorised:

Table 4.1: Evolving research perspective

| Paradigm | Ontology | Epistemology | Methodology | Method of data collection and analysis | Report/writing style |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Objectivism Positivism | The life world of the subjects can be discovered in an objective manner | Interpretation arises from the observation of the researcher. With the right methods meaning can be discovered. | For example classic ethnography and phenomenology | For example participant observation and interviewing | Description of day-to-day events experienced in the field, realist tales in an authorial, supreme voice to represent and interpret the other's story |
| Interpretivism Modernism Realism | The real world can be discovered by means of a systematic, interactive methodological approach | Knowledge arises from the understanding of symbols and meaning (symbolic interactionism) | Grounded theory | Data are gathered by means of participants observation, human documents and interviewing, and are analysed systematically | The researcher provides insights into the behaviour displayed and the meanings and interpretations that subjects give to their life world |
| Constructivism Postmodernism Impressionism | There is no real world or truth out there, only a narrative truth. Reality can thus only be known by those who experience it personally | Those who are personally experiencing it construct knowledge through a process of self-conscious action | Newer forms of ethnography: auto-ethnography, collaborative inquiry (PAR), Appreciative inquiry, personal-reflexive ethnography, narrative inquiry | Interviewing, participant observation, human documents, personal narrative, lived experience, poetic representations and fictional texts | The story must be lifelike, evocative, believable and possible to enable the readers to put themselves in the place of others and have empathy. |

Source: Adapted from Schurink: 1998: 246-247 (in De Vos, Delpont, Fouche' & Strydom).

The constructivist approach will best suit the study, which according to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2006:83) is as a view that does not see knowledge as given, but as actively and continuously constructed by individuals, groups and society. Knowledge gained is not passive but actively constructed. For Neuman (2011:72) it emphasises that the interpretive approach in qualitative research analyses social actions in their natural setting, through direct and detailed observation, in order to understand and interpret how people create meaning in their social world. This view point corresponds with the study to be conducted, because the researcher will be observing learners being actively involved in the learning process when word recognition is being taught in its natural setting.

4.3 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The topic the researcher wants to explore is best suited to a qualitative study, because the researcher aims to gain a firsthand, holistic understanding of word recognition in the Ekurhuleni South District by means of a research project. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:5), qualitative research denotes the type of inquiry in which the qualities, characteristics or properties of a phenomenon are examined for better understanding and explanation. Qualitative design is further classified into interactive design which uses a face-to-face technique to collect data from people in the natural setting and non interactive design which investigates concepts and events through an analysis of documents (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:26-27). In this regard, an interactive design will be used because the researcher will have an interactive relationship with the participants who will be observed teaching word recognition and interviewed in order to capture their understanding regarding the topic. This will put the researcher in a position to gather firsthand information on word recognition problems at specified schools. Qualitative methodology rests on the assumption that valid understanding can be gained through accumulated knowledge acquired firsthand by a single researcher (Foucher & Delport 2005:74). Qualitative method departs from a constructivist point of view.

4.3.1 Characteristics of qualitative research

Creswell (2007:37-39) identifies the following characteristics of qualitative research:

- the researchers tend to collect data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study.
- researchers, as a key instrument, collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behaviour and interviewing participants.
- the researchers gather multiple forms of data rather than rely on a single data source.
- in the entire qualitative research process, the researchers keep a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researchers bring to the research or writers of the literature.
- qualitative research is a form of inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand. The researchers' interpretation cannot be separated from their own background, history, context and prior understanding.
- qualitative researchers try to develop a complex and holistic view of social phenomena.

The researcher took into account the above characteristics when conducting the study, which took place in a natural setting at the identified schools. The researcher had a face-to face interaction with the participants, interviewing them in order to understand their perspectives of the problem under study. The participants were also observed when teaching word recognition, making it possible to interpret, hear, understood and compare the responses with the researcher's own experience and prior knowledge. Documents were analysed. Babbie and Mouton (2001:53) further emphasise that qualitative research is concerned with describing and understanding rather than explaining or predicting human behaviour, hence the purpose of this study is to gain in-depth understanding of how teachers support learners with word recognition problems in the Ekurhuleni South district.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2006:22) as the procedure for conducting a study which includes when, from whom and under what

conditions the data is collected. It is therefore a plan that helps the researcher decide how the research will be carried out (Mouton 2003:55). The research design provides the overall structure for the procedure the research follows, the data the research aims to collect, and the data analysis the research will conduct (Leedy&Ormrod 2005:85).

For the purpose of this study an ethnographic research design was selected.

4.4.1 Ethnographic design

Ethnography is described as the study of interacting culture social groups characterised by (participant) observation, description and interpretive data analysis (De Vos 2005:275). According to Johnson and Christensen (2011:48), an ethnographer is interested in describing the culture of the group of people and learning what it is like to be a member of the group from a perspective of its members. In this study the researcher was interested in documenting the attitude of the teachers towards learners who were experiencing word recognition problems and their practice in terms of supporting them.

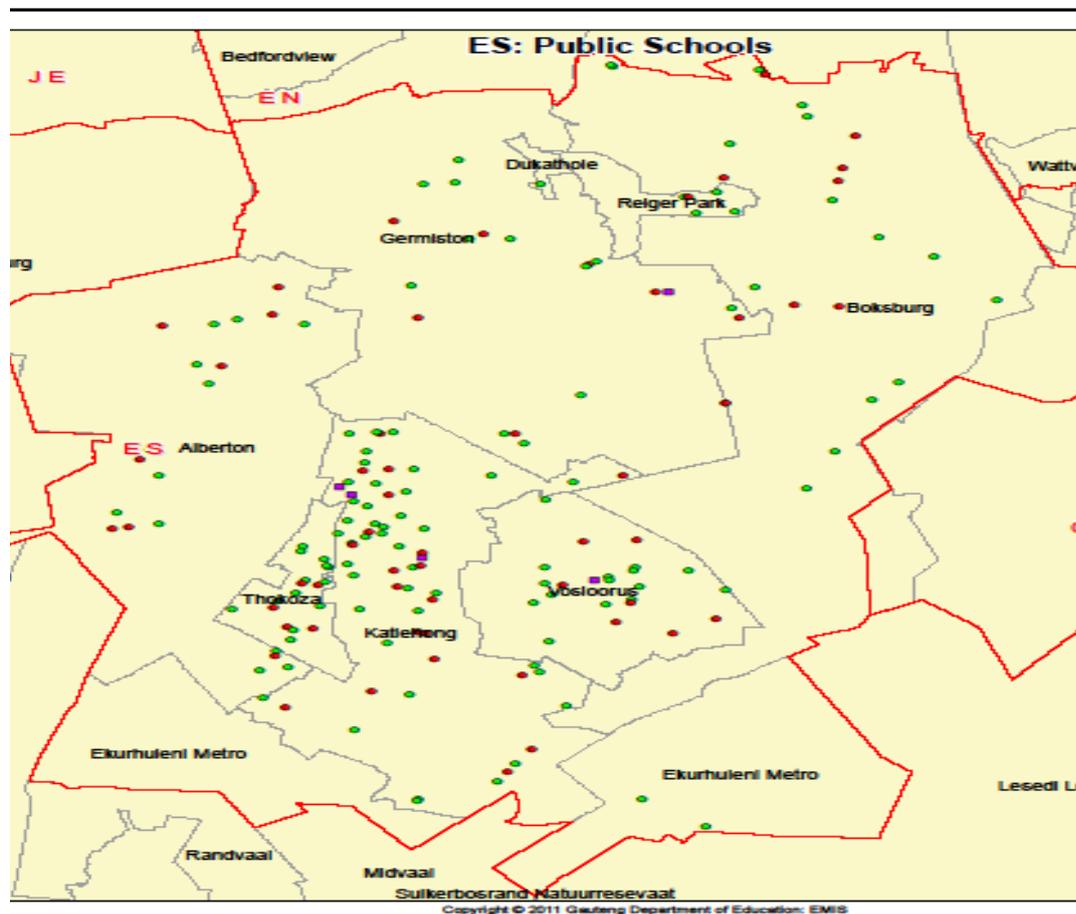
Creswell (2007:242) further explains that the observation should take place over a prolonged time by the researcher in the field. The researcher thus spent two days per week in each site for four weeks, in order to systematically observe learners reading and responding to questions, to interview teachers regarding their teaching approaches towards word recognition problems, and to capture relevant information as it naturally presented itself in the Ekurhuleni South district.

4.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

According to Johnson and Christensen (2011:218), a population is explained as a large group of people to which a researcher wants to generalise the sample results, whereas a sample is a set of elements taken from a large population. De Vos (2005:199) also viewa sample as a subset of measurements drawn from a population of interest. To structure the study, purposive sampling was used when selecting respondents. According to Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010:34), purposeful sampling involves the selection of participants who have key knowledge or information related to the purpose of the study, hence the researcher selected teachers who had experience in teaching English to Grade 4. In purposive sampling

data, collection must be guided by a process that will provide rich and detailed data on the problem of study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen 1993:33). Sampling depends on the researcher's judgement on who can provide information. In this study the researcher purposely identified Grade 4 English teachers from four different primary schools in the Ekurhuleni South district. In total, seven teachers were involved, of whom one teacher was in a pilot study. The participants were selected based on their knowledge as English teachers, the way they addressed the identified problem and the fact that they were all teaching Grade 4. The researcher classified the participants by years of teaching experience, different approaches used to address word recognition problems and their school settings. The researcher selected Grade 4 because of the knowledge, experience and understanding of the context and because it is regarded as a transitional stage in which learners move from learning to read in the Foundation Phase to reading to learn in the Intermediate Phase. The district was selected because it was easy for the researcher to conduct the study as an employee. The specific schools were also selected because of their geographical setting and accessibility for the researcher to collect data. The figure below shows where schools in the Ekurhuleni south district are located.

Figure 4.1: Maps of Ekurhuleni South District Public Schools



4.5.1 Pilot study

Barker (2003:327-328) defines a pilot study as a procedure for testing and validating an instrument by administering it to a small group of participants from the intended test population. A pilot interview should be conducted before the real interviews can be conducted, the purpose being to determine whether the relevant data can be obtained from the respondents (Royse in De Vos 2005:331). For De Vos et al. (2005:331), in qualitative research the pilot study is usually informal and a few respondents possessing the same characteristics as those of the main investigation can be involved in the study, merely to ascertain certain trends. Before collecting data, I informally piloted the research questions with one of the neighbouring Grade 4 teacher who had the knowledge and skill pertaining to the topic and grade under study. The teacher was purposefully selected and possessed the same

characteristics as those of the main study. This gave an overview of what to expect from the participants, and again whether to use the same questions, to rephrase them or change completely.

The researcher used semi-structured interviews in order to get in-depth and rich data regarding the research question: "Which strategies can be used to support Grade 4 learners who experience problem with word recognition when they read?"(See section 5.3.1 for copy of the pilot schedule). I also assured the teachers that their identities would and shall be kept as confidential as possible, hence the use of pseudonyms. The process was tape-recorded, transcribed and the transcripts analysed. For McLean (1994), piloting involved testing to check the clarity of the interview questions, to eliminate or minimise ambiguity and difficulties in wording, and to gain feedback on the type of questions

De Vos et al. (2011:395) identified the following aspects of a pilot study:

- *Reviewing the literature* - which involves making decisions on the place and role of a literature review in a qualitative study. In order to ensure this, the researcher reviewed different literature pertaining on how Grade 4 teachers can support learners with word recognition problems.
- *Discussions with experts* - interviewing experts it helped the researcher with the identification of themes for further investigation in order to conduct a valid literature review and to verify findings. The researcher had an informal discussion with the language facilitator in the district under study so as to identify possible themes for further investigation.
- *Feasibility of the study* - this stressed the importance of undertaking a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the real situation to be investigated. During this phase the researcher formed an opinion on the openness of a group of respondents, their willingness to cooperate and the number likely to be involved until data saturation was achieved. Six English Grade 4 teachers were willing to be interviewed, observed and to share their experience of how they supported learners with word recognition problems. Their documents were analysed, including their lesson plans, work schedules, NCS policy documents and learners' readers.

- *Testing the measuring instruments* - this involved testing whether the instruments would be relevant for the purpose for which they were aimed. The researcher observed teachers, conducted interviews and analysed documents, which helped in testing whether the measuring instruments were suitable for collecting the correct data.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection is the vehicle through which researchers collect information to answer the research question and defend conclusions and recommendations based on the findings for the research (Mertens 1997:285). For the purpose of this research, two research methods were combined, namely a literature study and an empirical study. The literature study made a contribution towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of word recognition. It was appropriate because it informed the researcher about a relatively unknown terrain, and helped in understanding and gathering information regarding word recognition before conducting the qualitative research. The literature review also guided the researcher in formulating questions during the actual research.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:10), the word *empirical* means guided by evidence obtained from systematic research rather than by opinion or authorities. The following methods were employed to gain empirical data.

4.6.1 Interviews

For the purpose of affirmation of the literature study the researcher used interviews. Collin (in De Vos 2002:298) defines an interview as a social interaction in which meaning is negotiated between a numbers of selves. According to De Vos (2002:298-303), the following types of interviews can be distinguished:

- A semi-structured interview, which seeks to gain a detailed picture of a participant's belief about, perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic and allows researcher and participants much more flexibility.
- An unstructured interview, also referred to as in-depth interview, which is conducted without utilising any of the researcher prior information, experience or opinions of a particular area.

- An ethnographic interview, which is described as a particular kind of speech and is used to gather cultural data.

For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews were considered appropriate because the researcher was interested in understanding the experience of Grade 4 teachers with regard to problems relating to word recognition and its implication for reading ability for Grade 4 learners. One-to-one interviews were conducted with the participants after the school's contact hours so that the normal teaching hours would not be disrupted. The interviews took between 45 minutes to an hour, until the data was saturated. The interviews were audio-taped and afterwards transcribed by the researcher with the permission of the participants.

4.6.1.1 *Semi-structured interview*

Cohen, Manion and Morrisson (2000:279) view the semi-structured interview as one in which the content and procedures are organised in advance. They provide the researcher with an opportunity to ask individually tailored questions and do not limit the field of inquiry (Denzin& Lincoln 2000:107). Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler (2010:124) write that semi-structured interviews are clearly identified as interviews, with specific times, dates, and topics identified in advance. I carefully planned my interview before carrying it out, and made necessary arrangements in advance with the participants about when to conduct them.

4.6.2 Observation

Observation implies seeing as well as observing with the other senses (Henning et al. 2004:82). Marshall and Rossman (2011:139) explain observation as the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviour and artefacts (objects) in the social setting. This phenomenon is a naturally occurring situation over an extended time, coupled with writing extensive field notes to describe what happened (McMillan& Schumacher 1993:43). In this study, the researcher observed the participants in their natural setting, which was their classroom. About two days over four weeks were spent in each identified school, observing learners reading a passage. The researcher also wished to see how learners were responding to the teaching and learning regarding word recognition, and also the reading methodologist used by the teachers. This was carried out in order for the researcher to gain firsthand experience of the phenomenon. The researcher comprehensively

captured field notes throughout the period, including detailed, non-judgemental, concrete descriptions of what was being observed.

According to De Vos (2002:280) there are two types of observation, namely participatory and non-participatory. The former is a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural and everyday set-up in a particular community and situation, whilst in the latter the researcher observes the subject from a distance without interacting with the participants. The researcher is therefore not interested in investigating the symbolic sphere (Silverman 2011:17). Participatory observation was used for this study, which according to Silverman (2011:17) has the following characteristics:

- Establishing a direct relationship with the social actors
- Staying in the natural environment
- Observing and describing social actions
- Interacting with them and participating in their everyday ceremonies and rituals
- Learning their codes (or at least some) in order to understand the meaning of their actions.

Throughout the process the researcher was a complete observer, observing the process without participating, so as to explore how the topic would be addressed.

4.6.3 Document analysis

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:457), document analysis is a non-interactive strategy for obtaining qualitative data with little or no reciprocity between the researcher and the participants. The researcher used government policy on the NCS document, the CAPS document and other documents which indicated the assessment standards that the learner must achieve in order to check whether the topic that was being investigated was being properly addressed by teachers. Different records from teachers and learners were collected, such as teachers' lesson plans, work schedules, class timetables and learners' readers, in order to see as whether different word recognition strategies were being used when planning, and whether the readers used by learners were grade-appropriate. All the documents were analysed for emergent themes.

4.6.4 Triangulation

For Johnson and Christensen (2011:439), triangulation is the term given when the researcher seeks convergence and corroboration of results from different methods studying the same phenomenon, whilst Marshall and Rossman (2011:252) regard it as the act of bringing more than one source of data to bear on a single point. Denzin and Lincoln (in Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler 2010:35) also see qualitative researchers using more than one method of data collection in the same study, and comparing the results obtained through these multiple methods. In this study the researcher used observation and interview methods to collect data, which helped in verifying what was said in one document against other information. Again, the researcher used these methods in order to add to the thoroughness, richness, and depth of understanding the study.

Triangulation is less about getting 'the truth' than finding multiple perspectives for confirming social theory (Marshall & Rossman 2011:254). Hence, the study took place in schools where the researcher was able to interact with the participants and gather as much information as practical pertaining to the topic under study.

According to Jick (in De Vos 2002:342), using triangulation in qualitative research have the following advantages:

- It allows researchers to be more confident of their results
- It may also help to uncover the deviant or off-quadrant dimension of a phenomenon
- The use of multiple methods can lead to a synthesis or integration of theories.

Triangulation is used to increase the credibility or trustworthiness of a research finding.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organizing data into categories, and identifying patterns (i.e., relationship) among the categories (McMillan & Schumacher 2006:364). For De Vos et al. (2002:339), it is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. During the analysis, data

was transformed into findings and I was obliged to monitor and report the analytic procedure that I used (Patton 2002:432,434). Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010:180) state that data collection and analysis in qualitative research is an inductive process, with numerous small pieces of data being collected and gradually combined or related to form broader, more general descriptions and conclusions. In this study, the researcher collected data through interview questions and observational notes, which were later generated into themes. Lidico et al. (2010:180) write that when collecting and analysing data the following steps need to be followed:

- Prepare and organise the data
- Review and explore the data
- Code data into categories
- Construct thick description of people, place, and activities
- Build themes and test hypotheses
- Report and interpret data.

According to Creswell (1998, in Leedy&Ormrod 2005:150), data analysis is a spiral, that is, in view, equally applicable to a wide variety of qualitative studies. Taking this view into account, the researcher went over the data several times, following these steps:

- organise the data in the form of smaller units
- peruse the entire data several times to get a sense of what it contains as a whole
- identify general categories or themes, and perhaps sub-categories or sub-themes, classify and categorise accordingly
- integrate and summarise the data for the readers. These steps might include offering presuppositions that describe relationships among categories.

4.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Lincoln and Guba (in Maykut&Morehouse 1995:64), trustworthiness refers to the believability of the research findings and as such answers the question “to what extent can we place confidence in the outcome of the study?” Trustworthiness of data addresses issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability and authenticity (Lincoln & Guba1994:300). To ensure trustworthiness

of the data, the researcher conducted the study in an ethical manner to collect data in a real situation on real issues faced by Grade 4 teachers when addressing word recognition problems. As highlighted by Lincoln and Guba (1994:300), in the above explanation there are five criteria used for ensuring trustworthiness in the research, as discussed below.

4.8.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to whether the participants' perceptions of the setting or events match with the researcher's portrayal of the research report (Lodico et al. 2010:196). For Creswell (2003:196), credibility in qualitative research is the extent to which data analysis takes into account the social and cultural contexts in which it is gathered. It will ascertain that the inquiry be conducted in such a manner that the subject has been accurately identified and described. Lincoln and Guba (1999, in De Vos et al. 2011:199) outline various strategies for increasing the credibility of qualitative research:

- Prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field
- Triangulation of different methods
- Peer debriefing
- Member checks
- Formalised qualitative method such as grounded theory and analytic induction

In order to increase credibility the researcher spent two days per week for four weeks in each school, observing and interviewing the Grade 4 teachers in order to receive as much information as possible. This allowed the participants to verbalise their views. The researcher also triangulated the study by gathering data from multiple sources.

4.8.2 Transferability

For Lodico et al (2010:173), transferability refers to the degree of similarity between the research site and other sites as judged by the researcher. To obtain transferability the researcher checked whether the findings gathered during the interview and observation of the Grade 4 teachers when addressing word recognition problems could be transferred to other Grade 4 teachers who needed to support learners with word recognition problems.

4.8.3 Dependability

Dependability is parallel to reliability in quantitative research and refers to whether one can track the procedures and processes used to collect and interpret the data (Lodico et al. 2010:172). According to De Vos et al. (2010:420), dependability requires a check on whether the process is logical, well documented and audited. To ensure dependability I used an audiotape recorder for the interviews, made field notes and analysed documents in order to understand the teachers' experience on how they supported Grade 4 learners experiencing word recognition problems.

4.8.4 Conformability

The extent to which findings are free from bias is referred to as conformability (Lincoln & Guba 1994:318). For De Vos et al (2010:421), conformability captures the traditional concept of objectivity and is used to assure that a researcher has provided evidence that corroborates the findings and interpretations by means of auditing. In order to assure conformability I used the technique of a member check, as highlighted by Lincoln and Guba, in section 4.8.1. The transcripts of the interviews were returned to the participants for review. I then continued monitoring my own subjective perspective by working through reflective notes of my thoughts, feelings and experiences about how to support learners with word recognition problems in Grade 4.

4.8.5 Authenticity

Authenticity is said to be something known to be true or genuine (Oxford English Dictionary 2011:40). In this study it refers to the explanation of the site, participants and process that took place during the study. To maintain authenticity I asked the participants to review the themes so that what was captured and interpreted was their perception and understanding regarding the topic being discussed.

4.9 ETHICS IN RESEARCH

Ethics are the principles and guidelines that help us to uphold the things we value, whereas research ethics are guiding set of principles that are to assist researcher in conducting ethical studies (Johnson & Christensen 2011:99-100). As this study

involves human beings it is important for the researcher to conduct her study in an ethical manner where the principles of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality should always be addressed. The following ethical issues will be adhered to:

- As the research was conducted in schools I will firstly requested permission from the GDE to conduct a study with identified schools in the Ekurhuleni South district (see Appendix A).
- After permission had been granted by the GDE I sought permission from the District director (see Appendix B).
- I then approached the principals of the identified school to gain permission (see Appendix D).
- Participants were also asked to give consent in writing to be observed and interviewed. They were notified that they were not being forced to take part in the study and could withdraw at any stage if they did not want to continue (see Appendix E).
- I assured participants that pseudonyms would be used in order to maintain the principle of confidentiality and privacy.
- I then assured them that tapes of interviews would be locked in a safe place and destroyed after use.

4.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted in four primary schools in the Ekurhuleni South District in Gauteng. At the time of this research there were about 125 primary schools offering Grade 4. The enquiry was thus limited to those schools and to six Grade 4 teachers, but it is assumed that the data collected and the findings will represent a wide spectrum.

4.11 CONCLUSION

The chapter has given a comprehensive description of the research methodology used, as directed by the type of research paradigm. The research design, sampling, data collection method, data analysis and interpretation, ethical considerations and

limitations of the study were also discussed. The importance of triangulation was highlighted as a way of verifying what was said in one document by other information. In the next chapter I present and analyse the data, which will lead to recommendations to be made in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores how Grade 4 English teachers address word recognition problems in an inclusive classroom in Ekurhuleni South, Gauteng. In Chapters Two and Three relevant literature was reviewed and the findings qualitatively presented in line with the main objective of the study, *“To determine guidelines for supporting Grade 4 learners who experience problem with word recognition when reading”*. The sub-aims were:

- To clarify the concept word recognition.
- To determine the level and problems of word recognition to grade 4 learners in relation to their reading ability.
- To determine different types of sight word and reading strategies that teachers can use to address word recognition by Grade 4 learners.
- To understand the Grade 4 learner.
- To describe the word recognition problems encountered by Grade 4 learners when they read.

The data was collected through conducting semi-structured interviews with Grade 4 teachers, with the participants recorded on audio tape and verbatim transcripts used to validate the data. The teachers were also observed while addressing word recognition problems in their real life setting. Field notes were taken and documents that the Grade 4 teachers used were collected and analysed. The data generated will be presented in words and tables, and categorised into themes directed by the research question: *“Which strategies can be used to support Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when they read?”*

The chapter commences with a brief profile of the schools and Grade 4 teachers participating in the study, followed by an analysis of the data.

5.2 PROFILES OF THE SCHOOLS AND GRADE 4 ENGLISH TEACHERS

The data of the profile of the teachers was gathered from question 1. The teachers interviewed and observed were all teaching Grade 4 during the time of study. The participants were asked to introduce themselves and tell the researcher their qualifications, before the observation took place and their responses were written as part of the field notes for later analysis. During the interviews the researcher also managed to gather the teachers' experiences. The four participating schools will be identified as 'School A-D' and participants as 'Participants E1-E6.' In Table 5.2.1 below the background information about the four schools and teachers is presented.

Table 5.1: Profile of the schools(S) and participants (P)

| School(S) | Participants (P) | Qualifications | Work profile |
|-----------|------------------|---|--|
| A | E1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transvaal Higher Education Diploma (THED) - Bachelor of Arts degree (BA) - BEd (Honours) in Linguistics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 44 years teaching experience - Taught grade 4 for 17 years - Taught different grade and subjects - Head of Department for Languages in the Intermediate Phase. |
| B | E2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bachelor of Science (BSC) - Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7 years teaching experience - Taught Grade 4 for 3 years - Taught Grade 7 English and Social science for 4 years - Head of Department of Intermediate Phase |
| | E3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Junior Primary Teachers Diploma (JPTD) - BA degree in Communications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 years teaching experience - Taught Grade 4 for 6 years - Taught Grade 1-3 for 7 years - She is a senior teacher - Taught communications at a college |
| C | E4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18 years teaching Grade 4. - Taught grade 2 and 3. |

| | | | |
|---|----|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remedial Diploma - BA degree - BEd in Adult Education - BEd (Honours) in Alternative Argumentative Communication (AAC) - MED in Early Childhood Development. | |
| D | E5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD) - Higher Education Diploma(HED) - Further Education Diploma (in Remedial Education) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 35 years teaching experience - Taught Grade 4 for 27 years - Taught Grade 5 for 5 years - Senior Teacher |
| | E6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 38 years teaching experience - Taught Grade 4 for 38 years - Senior Teacher |

Participant E1 was a White female teacher, teaching in school A. The school was located in the Ekurhuleni metropolitan municipality in the East rand, in the Alberton area seven km from the Ekurhuleni South District office. The school has four Grade 4 classes, all being taught English by one teacher. The Language of Teaching and Learning (LOLT) was English from Grades 1-7. The teacher qualified as a junior primary teacher and furthered her studies to obtain a BA and BEd (Honours) in Linguistics. She had 44 years teaching experience, and had taught English Grade 4 for 17 years. At the time of study she was HoD for Languages in the Intermediate Phase. She also taught other grades and subjects.

Participant E2 was teaching in school B, located in the Ekurhuleni metropolitan municipality in the East Rand, in the Alberton area 10km from the Ekurhuleni South District Office. The school had four Grade 4 classes, each taught by a different teacher. The LOLT was English from Grades 1-7. The teacher was a White female with seven years teaching experience. She had taught Grade 4 for three years and Grade 7 English and Social science for four years. She was HOD for Intermediate Phase. The teacher was not trained as a teacher but had studied for a Bachelor of Sciences and then for a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

Participant E3 was a White female teacher in school B, with 30 years teaching experience. She had taught English Grades 4 for six years and Grades 1-3 for seven years. She also taught communication at a college. The teacher had qualified as a junior primary teacher, and was a senior teacher at the school. She also had a BA degree in Communications.

Participant E4 taught at school C, located in a Black township in the Katlehong area in the East Rand, in an area under the Ekurhuleni metropolitan municipality. The school operated from Grades R-7. During the time of study Grades R-3 learners were taught in their mother tongue, which is Sepedi, only exposed to English as LOLT from Grade 4 upwards. The school has four Grade 4 classes, with all classes taught by one teacher, a Black female with a Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD), Remedial Diploma, BA, BEd in Adult Education; and BEd (Honours) in Alternative Argumentative Communication (AAC). She had 18 years teaching experience in Grade 4 and also taught Grades 2 and 3.

Participant E5 was a White female teacher teaching at school D, situated in the East Rand's Germiston area. The school fell under the Ekurhuleni metropolitan municipality, and was admitting learners from all racial groups, with Blacks dominating and the teachers both Black and White. The LOLT was English from Grades R-7. The school had four classes for Grade 4, taught by two teachers. The teacher had qualified as a senior primary teacher, then studied for remedial education and obtained her Further Education Diploma (FED). She later obtained a Higher Education Diploma (HED), and was a senior teacher at the school with 35 years teaching experience. She had taught English Grade 4 for 27 years and Grade 5 for five years.

Participant E6 was a Black female teacher teaching at school D. She had 38 years teaching experience and was a senior teacher. She had qualified as a junior primary teacher and had taught English Grade 4 for 38 years.

Looking at the profiles above, the LOLT of schools A, B and D was English from Grade 1-7. School C used a mother tongue, Sepedi, as LOLT from Grades R-3 and English from Grades 4-7. It can be concluded that Grade 4 learners from schools A, B and D were more familiar with English because they had been exposed to it from

an earlier stage than those in school C, who were only exposed to English for the first time in Grade 4.

The teachers' years of experiences in teaching English Grade 4 were 38, 27, 18, 17, 6, 3, which indicates that they had sufficient knowledge and skills pertaining to the study, and they will provide the researcher with rich information. All Grade 4 teachers participating in the study were all female, which may perhaps provide evidence that the profession was likely favoured by females, especially in the lower Grade. Grade 4 falls under the Intermediate Phase (IP) and it became clear that three of the participants had studied for Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD), one having the Transvaal Higher Educational Diploma (THED) and one a PGCE, which is relevant to the Grade under study. Only one had qualified for Junior Primary Teachers Diploma (JPTD), but had accumulated enough experience in Grade 4. This might also indicate that previously, when teachers were appointed for a particular post at a school, the type of qualification they had was not strictly considered. Five teachers had also tried to improve their qualifications, which indicates that they wanted to keep themselves abreast of the new curriculum changes and improve their knowledge so that they would be confident when assisting learners.

During my observation I noted that the quality of teaching by all teachers was the same, but noticed a difference when they were supposed to pronounce words. White teachers experienced no problem related but some of the words were not pronounced correctly by their Black counterparts. This was because all White teachers were English home language speakers. When teaching phonics, White teachers found it easier than did Black teachers, again because the home language played a role in the LOLT of the schools.

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

Data analysis involves organising what the researcher have seen, heard and read, so that he or she can determine what one has learned and experienced (Glesne 2011:184). De Vos et al. (2011:335) further emphasise that data analysis is a method of categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising data to attain answers to a specific research question. Qualitative data analysis is primarily an

inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying pattern among it (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:483).

The researcher used semi-structured interview questions and observation notes which were later generated into themes. Firstly, the research questions were piloted, as indicated in section 4.5.1 of the previous chapter. The researcher then transcribed and analysed the transcripts. The data relevant to my research question was:

- Question 2b was difficult for the participants and did not always provide rich data, hence in some cases a thorough explanation was given to the participants.
- Question 6 was not clear to participants and they needed to be given an explanation of it.
- Two tape recorders should be used in order to complement one another.

5.3.1 Original interview questions

The questions asked during the pilot study were:

1. *How long have you been teaching English Grade 4 ?*
2. *In your own experience how can you explain a Grade 4 learner?*
- 2b. *Then how can you explain their stages of development? with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?*
- 3a. *What do you think reading is all about?*
- 3b. *Why is it important to teach reading?*
4. *During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?*
5. *How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?*
6. *What are reading approaches?*
7. *Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your Grade 4 classroom?*

8. *It is normally said that learners in the Foundation Phase learn to read and from Intermediate Phase they read to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?*
9. *In your opinion, what makes Grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?*
10. *What do you think word recognition is all about and how does it skill affect Grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?*
11. *What challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your Grade 4 learners?*
12. *Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?*
13. *Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?*
14. *Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?*

5.3.2 Rephrased interview questions

From the original questions asked during the pilot study it was discovered that Question 2b, regarding the developmental stages of the learner, was difficult for the participant to answer. In order to elicit enough data I had decided to rephrase the Question by giving reference to the different developmental stages. With reference to Question 6 the participant was unable to attach meaning to be explanation of the reading approach; hence I first explained what reading approaches were. The question was phrased in such a manner that it gave participant an opportunity to give their own understanding regarding the concept. Interview questions were rephrased as follows:

1. *How long have you been teaching English Grade 4 ?*
- 2a. *In your own experience how can you explain a Grade 4 learner?*
- 2b. *Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?*
- 3a. *What do you think reading is all about?*

- 3b. *Why is it important to teach reading?*
4. *During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?*
5. *How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?*
6. *Do you know reading approaches?*
7. *Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your Grade 4 classroom?*
8. *It is normally said that learners in the Foundation Phase they learn to read and from Intermediate Phase they read to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?*
9. *In your opinion, what makes Grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?*
10. *What do you think word recognition is all about and how does it skill affect Grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?*
11. *What challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your Grade 4 learners?*
12. *Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?*
13. *Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?*
14. *Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?*

5.4 RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS

For the researcher to identify units of meaning related to how teacher support learners with word recognition problems, the researcher adopted Creswell's model as highlighted in section 4.7 in the previous chapter. The researcher started by transcribing the data through making a text from taped interviews and documents

and then typed them as word processing documents. The participants' responses were also clustered and grouped under every question as formulated in the semi-structured questions (see Appendix H). The researcher commenced the process by reading and rereading all the data and then divided it into smaller meaningful units. Data units were then organised into a system which was derived from the data, and comparisons used to build and refine categories which were then modified.

According to the responses based on Question 2a, Participants E2 and E6 explained a Grade 4 learner as the first-time learner in the Intermediate Phase. Participant E3 gave an explanation with regard to their development: "*A Grade 4 learner is not the baby of the school anymore.*" Participants E1 and E6 gave a more contextual explanation in terms of what the Grade 4 learners needed: "... *they need everyday guidance, help with their own work, individual attention*" and "*the learner need more time*". Participants E1, E5 and E6 also highlighted that these learners experienced adjustment problems and that they could not adapt quickly to the demands of the grade (see Appendix H, Table 2).

In response to Question 2b, on how the teachers explain the stages of development, the participants stressed that cognitively the Grade 4 learner was on a concrete level. Participant E6 added that the learners start to think when they answer questions. Socially, they indicated that the learners were happy, loved little games, had friendship with children of the same sex and were more mature. Participant E4 also highlighted that the social aspect of the learner depended on contact with the environment: "*Socially on the disposition of the teacher and the home background most of them are outgoing, explorative; a few are shy and they need to be prompted.*" Physically, the participants indicated that the learners grew faster. Participant E3 reported on her experience in terms of how boys and girls develop: "*I have noticed girls developing harmoniously much, much faster and are concern with their sexuality whereas boys like to play soccer and like to fight among themselves about who is older*" (see Appendix H, Table 3). According to participants E2 and E4, emotionally the learners were sensitive to criticism (see Appendix H, Table 3). The following challenges, among others, were highlighted in section 3.3: adjustment problems, moving from class teaching to subject teaching, more formal assessment, and organization problems. This corresponded with the above teachers' responses.

Responding to Question 3a, on explaining what reading was about, participants remarked that it was a skill that needed to be taught. Participants E3, E5 and E6 gave a comprehensive explanation and responded that reading was about gaining knowledge and understanding what one was reading. Participant E6 expressed her personal understanding and further integrated it with the uses of the sense: "*I think reading is interpretation of what the senses take out in the environment, process into the brain and become an output throughout the mouth and how and the accuracy of the eye*" (see Appendix H, Table 4).

Responding to Question 3b, all participants gave their inputs with regard to the importance of teaching reading. All agreed that reading was important for one's everyday life. Participants E2 gave her personal understanding and remarked that "*I feel that if you can't read, you can't do anything into the future you need to know*" (see remarks in Appendix H, Table 5).

Responding to the fourth question, regarding whether the teachers were trained on how to teach reading, it was evident that not all educators were trained. Participants E1 and E2 were taught because they were trained as junior primary teachers, whereas Participants E3, E4, E5 and E6 were not trained. Participant E6 gave her personal feeling about the kind of training that he received from the college: "*I do regret the years I spent in a college*" (see Appendix H, Table 6).

Responding to the fifth question, regarding the type of support teachers receive from the district or department, participants said that they often received training from the district. They also remarked that the training that they received was general and repeated itself. Participant E5 remarked that: "*They do a general workshop, they don't have specifics*", whereas Participant E4 indicated that: "*There is not often but is the same one that is repeated.*" Participant E4 indicated that sometimes the department outsourced or used other service providers to train them on how to teach reading: "*But at least today nowadays the department at least make a point that time and again we are invited to be taught by various service providers on teaching reading*" (see Appendix H, Table 7).

According to the responses based on Question 6, participants knew what reading approaches were except, Participants E3 and E5. Participant E3 indicated that she

was only familiar with what the other teachers taught her, while Participant E5 stressed that she used her own strategies (See Appendix H, Table 8).

Responding to Question 7, regarding the reading approaches used, participants indicated that they did not have a prescribe method or approach for teaching reading. The most common used by teachers were the eclectic method, phonics and whole word approach. Participants E1 and E4 favoured the eclectic approach while Participants E3 and E4 favoured sounding words or phonics. Participant E6 indicated that she was being controlled by the learners' need when deciding on a particular approach to follow. She also mentioned her personal knowledge in order to indicate the type of reading approach that she used, remarking that: *"I have to know my children, there is a theory that say a child whose right hemisphere dominate struggle reading through phonics and the child whose left brain is dominant is able to read through the phonic method"* (see Appendix H, Table 9).

Responding to Question 8, on the understanding of the statement that says learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from Intermediate Phase they learn to read, participants emphasised that in the foundation phase the learners are taught the basics of how to read. Participants E6 explained how the learners learn how to read in the Foundation phase and stated that: *"they learn from understanding and saying sounds correctly from there they do word building"* All participants agreed that learners in Grade 4 used reading in order to be able to attach meanings to what they would be learning. Learners had to read to learn. Teachers were no longer teaching learners how to read. The learners used what they had read to gather information. They read with understanding so that they were able to perform tasks for other learning areas, and to comprehend what they had read (see remarks in Appendix H, Table 10).

According to Question 9, on why the Grade 4 learners were unable to read, the participants showed that there were different factors that might affect the learners' reading ability. Among them, the following factors were highlighted: lack of concentration, poor word concept, lack of basics and their perceptual skills were also not developed. Participant E3 indicated a lack of family involvement as another contributory factor: *"Not to be encouraged at home"*. Participant E2 used her personal experience with her own child to explain why learners were unable to read:

“children have eye problem where their eyes skip, I actually know that it happens with my daughter” (see Appendix H, Table 11).

According to Question 10, on what word recognition is and its effect on the Grade 4 learners' reading ability, the participants gave their own personal understanding of the concept. All participants explained word recognition as the ability to recognise the word when they saw it. Participant E1 gave a more contextual explanation and saw it as a pivot around which everything turned. All participants agreed that word recognition did affect the learners' reading ability, indicating that the learners' reading speed and understanding were affected. Participant E2 remarked that: *“they will read slowly and take a lot to finish their reading”* (see Appendix H, Table 12).

In responding to Question 11, on the kind of challenges the educators experienced when addressing word recognition, participants indicated that emotional problems, visual problems, inability to divide words into syllables, to spell and use dictionaries, were the common challenges the learners experienced. According to them, these factors left learners unable to recognise the words (see Appendix H, Table 13).

Responding to the Question 12, on the strategies or approaches used by teachers to address word recognition problems, the common strategies used by all participants were breaking down word into syllables and the use of sight words, that is the Dolch list. Participants E2, E4 and E5 indicated that they let the learners sound the words when learning unfamiliar ones. Participant E6 gave her own creative strategy that she had created in order to address word recognition problems (see remark in Appendix H, Table 14). She said that she used the Fry list as another set of sight words (see Appendix H, Table 14).

Questions 13 and 14 required participants to add what they felt had not been covered during the interviews with regard to reading and word recognition. In response to Question 13 the participants indicated other factors they felt the researcher should have included in the research. Participant E1 remarked about subject teaching in Grade 4, which left them unable to conduct follow-ups during the reading period. Participants E2 and E6 commented about the lack of parental involvement and the time allocated for teaching reading. Participant E5 emphasised the need to include the importance of paraphrasing of sentences and punctuation in the research. Lastly, Participant E5 felt that the researcher should have also included

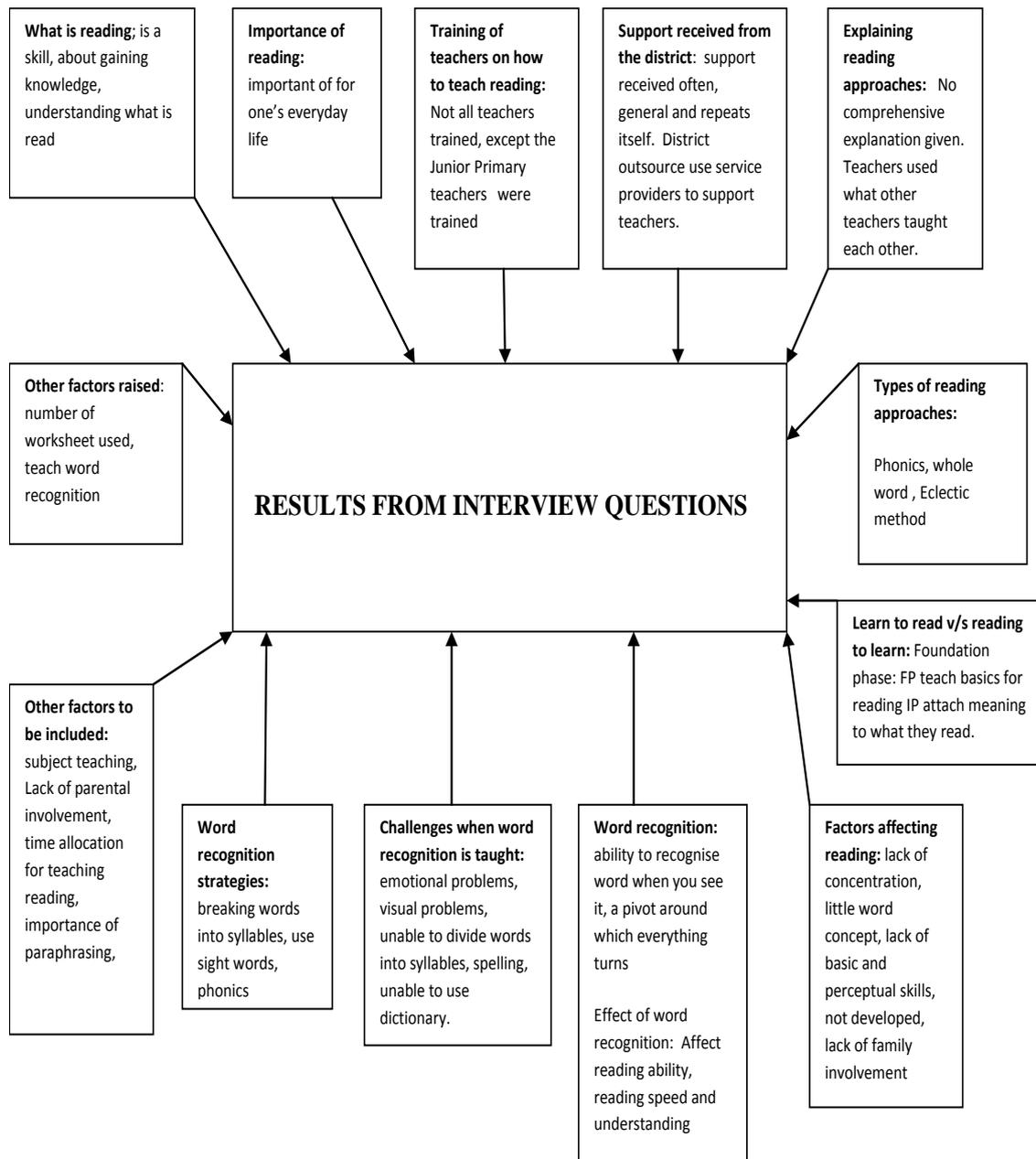
how to teach learners to attach meaning to what they read (see Appendix H, Table 15).

Responding to Question 14, participants said that the way in which word recognition was taught was important. Participants E1 and E4 remarked about the number of worksheets used by teachers which also impacted on the learners to be taught how to recognise the words. Participant E4 remarked that the issue to “*teach word recognition with spelling; how it is taught is an important a challenge faced during curriculum changes*” (see Appendix H, Table 16).

5.4.1 Concluding remarks regarding interviews

During the interviews, the interviewer aimed at gathering information from the respondents' live experiences (Myburgh& Strauss 2000:26). In this study the researcher gathered information from Grade 4 teachers pertaining to the study. The responses gathered during the interviews were summarised in a form of a diagram that helped the researcher to formulate themes in section 5.7.

Figure 5.1: Summary of interview responses from Grade 4 teachers.



5.5 RESULTS FROM OBSERVATIONS

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, lesson observations were conducted. Each teacher was observed twice in a week for a period of four weeks. Each lesson observed lasted about 45 minutes. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011:139), observation is explained as the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviour and artefacts (objects) in the social setting. The researcher looked carefully at how

teachers addressed word recognition problems and how learners read a passage and responded. The researcher also analysed the documents used by teachers during the observation.

In School A, 35 learners in a class were observed. The learners were seated in rows, there were charts and a timetable on the class notice board, the class had a separate storeroom, and each learner had a reader. The learners were well-behaved and the educator managed to hold discipline in class for the whole period. During the presentation of the lesson the teacher used demonstration and different strategies to accommodate each learner's need. After the presentation of the lessons, 15 learners were selected randomly in order to read but only 10 managed to read the whole passage correctly. Five learners made errors when reading and became stuck at the words that they could not recognise.

In School B, I observed two classes with 37 learners in each. The learners were seated in rows. Both classes were well-resourced with overhead projectors and a tape recorder. The classrooms were well organised, each having a storeroom, and each learner having a reader. During the presentation of the lesson the educator used demonstration and different strategies to accommodate each learner's need. After the presentation of the lessons 10 learners were selected randomly in each class to read, and only eight learners in the Participant E3 class managed to read the whole passage correctly. Two learners struggled to read it. In the participant E2 class 5, learners managed to read the passage correctly and 5 learners were unable to read the whole passage and made errors when reading.

In School C there were 64 learners in the class observed, seated in groups, each with eight learners. The class was full and the teacher could not move freely. Not all learners had a reader so two learners shared a book and the teacher made photocopies for the passage to be read for some of the learners. The teacher used a cupboard to store the books. It was difficult for the teacher to maintain discipline in class because of the number of learners. Two learners from each group were selected randomly to read the passage and five managed to read the passage with few errors. Three were unable to read the passage at all.

In School D, two classes were observed. There were 45 learners in the first class and 48 in another. The learners were sitting in rows in both the classes. There were

charts in each class on the wall. One classroom had a storeroom and in the other the educator used a cupboard to store the learners' books. Eight learners were selected in each class to read the same passage. In Participant E5 class, 6 learners managed to read the passage and two struggled to read. In Participant E6 class 4 learners managed to read the passage and four were unable to read.

According to the Rault-Smith (2009:35), learners in Grade 4 were expected to be fluent and independent readers. From my observation, not all Grade 4 learners who were selected had reached this level. There were still learners who were unable to read because they were unable to recognise certain words. The following behaviour was noticed as the learners:

- became easily distracted and frustrated,
- read word for word,
- read slowly and
- could not give meaning to what they had read.

Those learners who did manage to read the passage read with confidence, read fluently, were able to give the summary of the passage and could answer questions related to the passage.

5.6 DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS

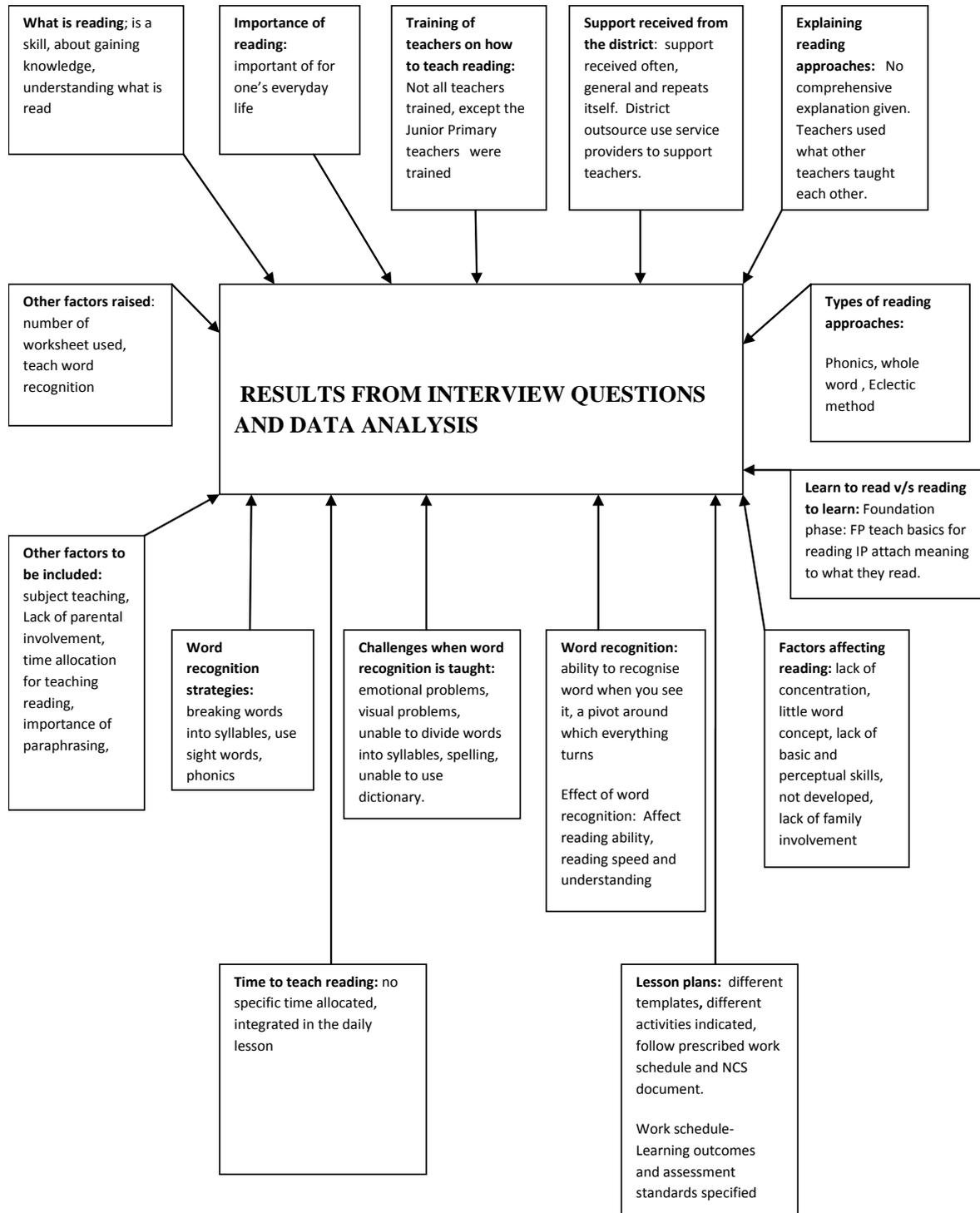
Another method that was used to collect data from the Grade 4 teachers was through analysis of documents. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:457), document analysis is a non-interactive strategy for obtaining qualitative data within little or no reciprocity between the researcher and the participants. Documents such as teachers' lesson plans, work schedules, the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) policy document and teachers' and class timetables were analysed. At the time of research the NCS was used in schools. The CAPS document had not yet been introduced.

From observation, all classes had timetables, which helped the researcher to verify whether there was any period assigned for reading and other components, such as word recognition activities in the classroom. It was also noted that the timetable only

indicated the learning area and the time allocated for learning areas. For English the components such as reading, word recognition, comprehension, spelling and grammar to be taught each day were not indicated, and as a result there was no clear indication as to whether reading and word recognition problems were being addressed or taught in the classroom. This statement was confirmed by participant E2: *“There is no time to teach reading in Grade Four”*.

The teachers did have lesson plans which were in line with the work schedules and NCS document provided by the district, however, each school had its own lesson plan template, which indicated lack of uniformity within the district. Participants E1 and E3 indicated different activities in their plan in order to cater for different learners' levels. Work schedules provided to Grade 4 teachers clearly indicated the content and when it was supposed to be taught, whereas the NCS document provide the learning outcomes and assessment standard that the Grade 4 learners were supposed to achieve. The diagram below indicates the summary from the interview questions and data analysis documents.

Figure 5.2: Summary of interview responses and documents analysis from Grade 4 teachers.



5.7 DISCUSSION OF THE THEMES EMERGING FROM THE FINDINGS

As indicated above, in section 5.3, the interviews were transcribed and data grouped into patterns, categories and themes (see Appendix J, Table 17). The results and analysed data are discussed in conjunction with the identified themes from how Grade 4 teachers support learners with word recognition problems. The themes are discussed in this section.

5.7.1 Understanding the Grade 4 learner

A detailed description of a Grade 4 learner was provided in Chapter Three. In order to give a broad understanding of the Grade 4 learner the participants highlighted several factors which were categorised as sub-themes and discussed below.

5.7.1.1 Perception about a Grade 4 learner

From the data collected all participants attached a different definition to a Grade 4 learner. It was also noted that the definitions were influenced by the participants' opinions and experience. This was affirmed by the following comments. Participant E4 said "*In my experience a Grade Four learner is that learner who still struggle with the demands of a Grade Four class*", whilst Participant E6 remarked that "*I think a Grade Four learner is a learner that you can say is first time learner when comes to the Intermediate Phase.*"

As indicated in Chapter Three section 3.1, a Grade 4 learner is at the entrance level of the Intermediate Phase. Similarly, Participant E2 commented that "*A Grade Four learner is the learner who has moved from Foundation Phase and has just entered Intermediate Phase for the first time.*"

From the information gathered, a Grade 4 learner is still in a developing process and as a result needs to be understood in totality. All developmental changes should be considered when teaching Grade 4 learners, as discussed in the next sub-theme.

5.7.1.2 Developmental changes for a Grade 4 learner

In Chapter Three, the term 'development' was defined as how people grow, adapt and change over the course of their lifetime, through physical development, personality development, socio-emotional development and cognitive development, which includes thinking and language development. From the data collected, all

participants expressed their knowledge and opinion about the development of the Grade 4 learner.

All participants agreed that, cognitively, Grade 4 learners still think and do things on a concrete level. Participant E4 used her knowledge and aligned it with Piaget's theory, commenting that: *"If we align their development with Piaget stages, I think cognitively they are in the concrete level."*

Similarly, Mwamwenda (2004:84) saw cognitive development as that of a person's mental capacity to engage in thinking, reasoning, interpretation, understanding, knowledge acquisition, remembering, organising information, analysis and problem-solving. According to Mwamwenda (2004:84), physical development refers to the changes in the body, such as height, weight and brain size, and in motor skills. Three participants used their own observation to describe Grade 4 physical development. The following comments provide evidence of the statement:

Participant E1 *"Physically they grow faster."*

Participant E2 *"There are hormones and physical changes."*

Participant E6 *"Personally they grow faster and older than before."*

Another factor that was gathered was how boys and girls developed physically. It was noted from the data collected that there was a difference in terms of their development, as was evident from Participant E3's comment: *"Physically girls' hormones develop much faster and this also applies to their concern with sexuality."*

Socially, a Grade 4 learner can be categorised as happy, outgoing, explorative but sensitive to criticism. Participants also indicated that these learners usually form friends from a similar sex and cooperate when placed in a group. Similarly, Mwamwemda highlighted such factors as indicated in section 3.3.5.

From the data collected it can be concluded that Grade 4 learners are older and more developed. They should be taught reading and word recognition skills in a way that interests them, not by using "baby stuff". The ideas and concepts taught should be easy and correspond to their developmental level, also to their interest level. Teachers therefore need to relate the content with what the learners can see, feel or touch, thus helping them understand more easily, increase their comprehension level and be in a position to associate what was read.

5.7.2 Curriculum changes in Grade 4

From the data collected, participants raised different factors that the learners faced when they reached Grade 4. They were all concerned about the number of learning areas taught, which they felt were too many for the learners. This was evident in the following comments: Participant E4: *“Learners move from three learning areas to eight learning areas.”* Participant E2: *“shift in Grade Four is so much.”* With regard to the new Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the number of learning areas in Grade 4 will be reduced from eight to six, but during the time of study the learners studied eight.

Learners in Grade 4 move from being taught by one teacher to being taught by different subject teachers, an issue that raised more concern to the participants because it made them unable to do follow-ups with the learners. Participant E1 supported this, commenting that *“There is no time for follow up.”*

Another issue noted from the data was the teachers' concern about the time allocated for different learning areas. They commented that they did not have time assigned for teaching reading in Grade 4. Participant E3 commented that *“We don't have a certain period just dedicated to reading; we do reading among all we are doing.”* This point corresponds with what I had observed. During the observation I noted that the timetable for all participants only indicated English as a learning area. The learning area was not distributed into different lessons to include all components required for teaching the learning area.

Participants were also concerned about the quality of education given to the learners, as commented on by Participant E4: *“What we are interested in now is coverage of the syllabus, it does not matter whether I have children that can read or not in classroom, as long I can say to the district I have covered so much which to me is of a window dressing, is not quality work.”*

During the observation it was also noted that the time allocated for teaching English was not enough, because the teachers were unable to let all learners read, hence random selection of learners was made. Participant E4 had a challenge in giving intensive individual support to the learners due to overcrowding in her classroom.

With reference to the data collected it was clear that the concept of learner pace was not implemented. The teachers were forced to rush in order to complete the

curriculum while the learners were expected to adjust to changes faced in the new grade. Teachers were not forced to teach reading because there was no time assigned specifically to teaching reading; hence most of the learners were unable to read according to their grade level. Due to these changes the Grade 4 teachers were unable to do follow-ups or corrective teaching for learners who had been identified with reading problems, and as a result the learners were left unattended. These factors frustrated learners, lowered their self-esteem and put them off reading.

5.7.3 Teacher training in the teaching of reading

From the data collected only two participants were qualified as junior primary teachers and they were thus trained to teach reading. Three of the participants were qualified as senior primary teachers and one had not been trained as a teacher. This indicates that what was taught at teacher training was not the same. The teachers still needed to be trained in order to know how to teach reading and to teach specific reading skills, such as word recognition.

5.7.4 Teaching reading in Grade 4

A number of factors emerged in teaching reading in Grade 4.

5.7.4.1 Understanding the concept reading

Reading is a skilled and strategic process of which learning to decode and read words accurately and rapidly is an essential feature (Vaughn, Bos&Schumm 2007:333). From the data collected, four participants agreed that reading was about gaining knowledge and understanding what one is reading. Participant E4 gave a comprehensive explanation in terms of the input and output process: *“I think reading is interpretation of what the senses take out there in the environment, processed into the brain and become an output throughout the mouth and how and accuracy of the eyes.”*

Participants also acknowledged that there were those learners who read below their grade level and also those who could not read at all. From the data it was noted that learners were unable to read as a result of lack of foundation from lower grades, and so battled with the demands of Grade 4. Learners were not taught how to read but

were expected to use reading to understand other learning areas. As Participant E5 said: *“When you come to the Intermediate Phase you do not have to teach reading.”*

The data collected also revealed that all participants interviewed felt it important for Grade 4 learners to read well. This was evident from Participant E3: *“It helps you to acquire knowledge and be able to communicate with other.”* Reading and writing go hand in hand. If one knows how to read one is able to express oneself about what one has read. This was affirmed by Participant E6’s comments that *“without reading the learner cannot write.”* Learners in Grade 4 should be able to read with understanding.

According to Rault-Smith (2009:35), learners entering Grade 4 are expected to be fluent and independent readers. They must be able to read on their own. Participant E4 agreed with the source: *“Reading is very important because it creates independency and make a child to be self-reliant’.* From my observation, when learners were asked to read most read word by word and still required assistance from the teacher. Their vocabulary was limited and as a result they were not fluent in reading. Participant E1 gave a comprehensive personal understanding and commented that: *“The more you read you extend your vocabulary, the more you extend your knowledge of the word”.*

5.7.4.2 Strategies in teaching reading in Grade 4

Participants had similarities and differences when it came to the approach used to teach reading in Grade 4. It was noted from the interviews that they used different reading methods in order to accommodate different learners. This was supported by Participants E3 and E4: *“In Grade Four our reading approach is based on comprehension. We do not use a specific approach,”* and *“I would not say I have a prescribed method.”*

From the data collected the most common approaches preferred by participant were sounding words (Phonics), syllabification and the whole word approach. Participants E1 and E5 indicated the importance of combining the approaches when teaching reading. They commented that they used the eclectic approach.

During the observation I noted that participants used different approaches to encourage learners when reading. All of them started by encouraging the learners to sound the word first if they were not sure about any word when reading. If that word

was not read properly, learners were encouraged to break it into syllables. Participant E1 mentioned concrete objects which related to the story, such as pearls, whereas Participant E4 had pictures to associate them with words used in the story.

Reading is a skill that needs to be taught, because it increases one's vocabulary and independence. The potential to read is within the learner; therefore it is the teacher's responsibility to develop it. Learners are different; hence teachers should use a variety of strategies in order to accommodate them.

5.7.5 Addressing word recognition in Grade 4

This theme indicates how participants understood the concept word recognition and how they addressed it in a Grade 4 class.

5.7.5.1 Understanding word recognition

From the data collected, all participants gave their opinions when explaining the concept 'word recognition'. Participants agreed that it referred to the ability to recognise the word and say it. Similarly, Pikulsin and Chard (2005:515) explain word recognition as being able to recognise the word instantly and thus not to drain energy. Participant E1 further defined it as a central part in which all other parts revolved around: *"Word recognition is of course very crucial, it is the pivot around which everything turns."*

According to Gillet, Temple and Crawford (2004:42), if learners do not recognise many words automatically they will not fully experience the sudden increase in reading rate and fluency in reading. Participants agreed with this statement, and noted the relationship between word recognition in relation to the Grade 4 reading ability. From the data it was noted that word recognition affected the learners' reading speed, understanding, spelling and accuracy when reading. The following comments affirmed the statement:

Participant E1: *"It slow down their speed and they don't like to read"*

Participant E3: *"Word recognition has an impact on the learner a lot because if they can't recognise the word they won't understand what it means when reading and they will not be able to answer questions."*

Participant E4: *“It also affect the speed of reading and the accuracy of reading and all that aspects resultantly affect comprehension which is word meaning.”*

Participant E6: *“If they cannot recognise the word they cannot spell the word. They cannot understand the meaning, they cannot read it.”*

It can thus be deduced that word recognition is a basic reading skill that needs to be addressed, because it has an effect on the learners' reading tempo, reading speed and accuracy, as well as understanding of concepts. When word recognition is achieved it is easy for other components to be taught, such as teaching spelling rules and syllabification.

5.7.5.2 Word recognition strategies

The DoE (2005:67) states that “in applying teaching methods teachers should bear in mind that there is no single classroom in which all learners will be exactly the same or learn in the same way and at the same pace.” As a result, teachers are expected to be creative and use different strategies in order to accommodate all learners. Participants in this study agreed with this statement and identified different strategies for teaching word recognition in Grade 4, such as syllabification, phonics and words and pictures. They also indicated that they preferred to use the Dolch list in order to identify basic words instantly.

According to what I observed, all participants used several strategies when teaching learners an unfamiliar word. These included sounding of words (phonics) and syllabification. Participants E2, E3 and E6 displayed the Dolch list on the wall, whereas learners taught by Participant E1 and E4 pasted the Dolch list at the back of their books. Before starting with the lesson, Participant E4 asked learners to read those words on a daily basis. During the interview Participant E4 also mentioned the Fry list, but from the observation there was no evidence that she used it when teaching learners word recognition techniques.

From what was indicated above it is clear that the teachers were trying hard to accommodate different learners in their teaching. As a result, some learners' needs were considered when addressing word recognition problems.

5.7.6 Insufficient district support

In Chapter Two section 2.3, it was discussed how the GDE demonstrates its commitment to assist in addressing reading problems. It was also noted from the Ekurhuleni South baseline report (GDE 2008:16) that it is the responsibility of the district to re-train its teachers. In the re-training an emphasis has been placed on word recognition to enable learners to relate what was read. From the data collected, all participants acknowledged that training through workshops is being organised by the district, however, there were challenges raised around the matter. They raised concern regarding the kind of workshops offered by the district. According to them the most challenging issue was that the kinds of workshops offered were general and not addressing their needs.

Participant E2 said that: *“Generally the workshop that we attend is more on English as a learning area to discuss Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards not on how to teach reading and its components such as word recognition.”* Participant E5 also raised concerns and highlighted that the workshops were the same and repetitive: *“If called for reading workshop is usually the same one. We had the Phonics and the reading workshop twice in two years in a row.”*

From the data it was noted that five participants strongly emphasised the insufficient support provided by the district. Participant E6 managed to indicate the number of workshops attended. The following quote supported the statement: *“Not so often maybe twice in a year, they will call us for an English workshop.”*

Another point that was raised was the lack of regular support in the Intermediate Phase as compared to the Junior Phase. The Intermediate Phase teachers felt that they were being left out when support was provided by the district. This was evident from the following comment from Participant E3: *“In the Intermediate Phase we really don’t attend such training..”*

It can be deduced from the data that the Grade 4 teachers were not trained on how to teach reading in classes, hence it was the responsibility of the English district facilitator to provide adequate support. Grade 4 teachers had the knowledge of what the concept of reading and word recognition involved. They needed to know how to teach those concepts and, if support was not provided, they ended up not knowing what to do and not teaching reading at all. As a result, continuous class visits were

needed in order to observe with an aim of support and to ensure that reading was taught properly in class.

5.7.7 Lack of parental involvement

In order for the learners' reading ability to improve, all parties should be involved, but due to parents working and lack of enough knowledge this was not possible. According to Darling and Westberg (2004:774), parent involvement has a great impact on the child's acquisition of reading. Parents need to encourage their children to read and to assist them on how to recognise words instantly. Contrary to what was indicated, participants felt that parents were not giving themselves time to read with their children at home. Two participants highlighted lack of support from home as a challenging effect. This could lead to the learner being unable to develop interest in reading. The following comments were made:

Participant E3: *"Not be encourage at home"*

Participant E4: *"Secondly involvement of parents in improving the children's reading."*

It is therefore necessary for parents to be involved in their children's learning process, as this could be used to improve Grade 4 learners' reading abilities. In paired reading programmes, parents read together with children and encourage them to read every day at home, thus enhancing their self-esteem.

5.7.8 Insufficient resources

This theme relates to all resources used by Grade 4 teachers in supporting learners with word recognition problems. According to Darling and Westberg (2004:774), resources are also an important aspect in the improving the learners reading. During the observation it was noted that not all learners in E 4's class had readers and textbooks, hence the teacher photocopied the passage to be read in class in order to be able to cover all the learners. This finding raised concern and might also be one of the contributory factors for learners not being able to read and recognise words as they come across them.

To be able to read and recognise word requires one to interact with reading material on a daily basis, because the more one reads the more one learns different words, and the more one learns different words the more one becomes aware and able to read them. The lack of resources also deprived the learners the opportunity to transform what was taught at school to home. Again, the parents at home were unable to assist or monitor their children's reading progress or to devise strategies on how to recognise words during their reading. These also affected the learners' reading abilities.

5.7.9 Time allocation and Lesson plans

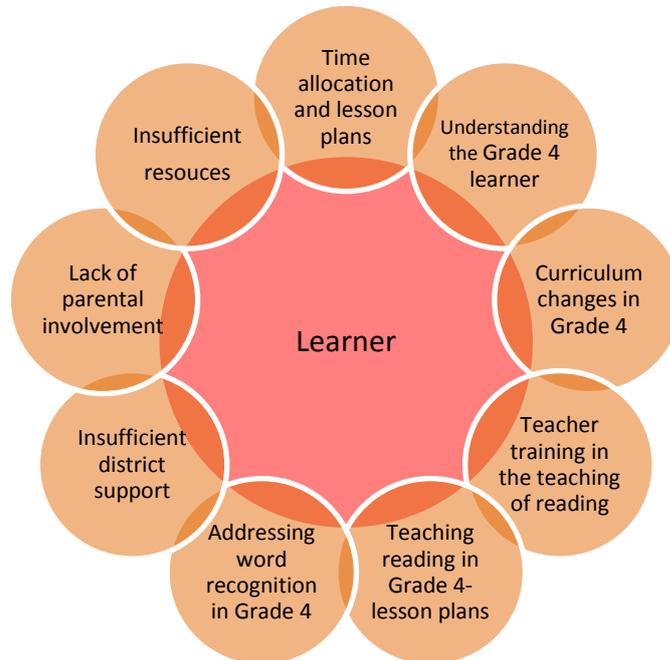
From the data collected it was noted that English was taught in Grade 4. However participants indicated that they did not have any period assigned specifically for teaching reading, as confirmed by Participant E2: *"The is no time to teach reading in Grade Four."*

During the observation I noted that all participants planned ahead for the topic they were going to address. They had their plans on a daily basis, which were in line with the work schedules and NCS document provided by the district. Each school had its own lesson plan template which indicated lack of uniformity within the district. Participants E1 and E3 indicated different activities in their plan in order to cater for different learners' levels. Work schedules provided to Grade 4 teachers clearly indicated the content and when it was supposed to be taught, whereas the NCS document provide the learning outcomes and assessment standard that the Grade 4 learners were supposed to achieve.

5.8SUMMARY AND DIAGRAMATIC REPRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

From the discussion it can be concluded that the teachers were trying to use their knowledge, skills and abilities to address word recognition problems. However, they also needed support from the district in order to improve themselves. This confirms Bronfenbrenner's ecological system, discussed in section 1.6, in that what happens on one level will directly or indirectly affect the function in another. The figure below illustrates findings raised when teachers support Grade 4 learners with word recognition problems in Ekurhuleni South, Gauteng.

Figure 5.2: Summary of findings: Factors experienced by Grade 4 teachers when supporting learners with word recognition problem



The diagram above presents the themes emerging from the findings. It should be noted that these are interconnected with each other and are extremely useful when trying to support Grade 4 learners with word recognition problems. The study was conducted at school level with Grade English 4 teachers who were responsible for implementing policies set by the DoE. As a result the teachers were the main respondents for the study. With reference to Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system discussed in section 1.6, the micro level will be relevant for the study. The centre represents the learner who is directly or indirectly affected by the themes identified. The outer circles represent the emergent themes which have an overlapping relationship and the relationship to the learner at the centre. If the factors highlighted in orange are not addressed they will have a negative effect when teachers support learners with word recognition problems. This finding corresponds with Haihambo’s argument (2010:65) that the overlapping micro, meso-, exo- and macro system all contribute to form the whole that the individual will perceive as positive or negative.

5.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher has discussed the finding gathered in a qualitative inquiry in line with the purpose of the study. The data collected was then classified

into patterns, categories and themes. Sub-themes were also identified, which were interrelated with the main themes. The themes emerged from the analysis were: understanding the Grade 4 learner, curriculum changes in Grade 4; teacher training in the teaching in the teaching of reading; teaching reading in Grade 4; addressing word recognition in Grade 4; insufficient district support; lack of parental involvement; and insufficient resources. The themes were then summarised in a form of a diagram surrounding the learner at the centre. These factors may influence the success of the learner if not addressed.

The semi-structured interviews and class observations revealed that teachers used different strategies when addressing word recognition problems in order to accommodate every learner in an inclusive classroom. However, they need support from the district in order to keep themselves abreast with new strategies on how to support learners.

In the next chapter the researcher will draw conclusions, list limitations of the study and make recommendation arising from the study.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION OF STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The teaching of reading and its components, such as word recognition, is still a challenge for most Grade 4 English teachers. However, it was noted that teachers used their knowledge and experiences to address the challenge being investigated and that learners in Grade 4 were still reading below their grade level. The DoE has launched a number of campaigns to remedy the situation.

In this study a qualitative approach was used to determine how teachers support learners who experience problem with word recognition. In addressing the research question, interviews, observation and data analysis were used as methods of data collection. The summary of the findings, recommendations and limitations of the study will be discussed in this chapter, thus providing evidence that the research question and objectives pertaining to the study have been addressed.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When reflecting on the findings of the study it was noted that teachers were using different strategies to support learners with word recognition problems. Thus the research question “Which strategies can be used to support Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when they read?” was answered. There are, however, factors that hamper the success of both the teacher and the learner. The findings from the literature review, interviews, observations and documents were addressed according to themes identified from the analysis. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the themes and sub-themes were interrelated. This section provides a brief summary of findings and makes recommendations.

6.2.1 Understandings the Grade 4 learners

From the findings the theme was broken down into two sub-themes, which addressed the perceptions of a Grade 4 learner and the developmental changes pertaining to the Grade 4 learner. This was done in order to gather a broad

understanding of the Grade 4 learner. In Chapter 1 section 1.8.2 a Grade 4 learner was explained as any person who has completed formal education in the Foundation Phase and has progressed to the entry grade in the Intermediate Phase at any specific institution. It was evident from the findings that the teachers used their knowledge and experience to formulate their definition of the Grade 4 learner, however they aligned it with the phase under which the grade fell. This was affirmed by GDE (DoE2004(a):12) as being the Intermediate Phase.

With reference to the developmental stages for the Grade 4 learner, the teachers explained the learner in terms of cognitive, social, physical and emotional development. These developmental stages were affirmed by the literature in Chapter 3. Cognitively, the findings revealed that teachers agreed that the learners were still operating on the concrete level, but were a little bit mature, whereas physically they grew faster. They also agreed that, socially, learners were happy, liked little games and formed friendships with others of the same sex. However, emotionally, the learners were still sensitive to criticism. These findings affirmed those of Mwanemba (2004), noted in Chapter 3 section 3.3. Based on the finding it is evident that learners are unique and need to be treated differently, even though they belong to the same class.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that teachers understand the different developmental stages of the learners so that they will be in a position to treat them as unique and different.

6.2.2 Curriculum changes in Grade 4

The research findings indicated that teachers were concerned with the changes that the learners encounter when they reach Grade 4. Firstly, they raised concern about the number of learning areas in Grade 4 as opposed to the Foundation Phase. During the research it was noted that the Intermediate Phase learners were following the NCS and were doing eight learning areas, whereas in Grade 3 they were doing three. However, with the CAPS the learning areas for Grade 4 will be reduced to six. The NCS documents (DoE 2004(a):12) confirms the number of learning areas offered in Grade 4.

Secondly, they were frustrated by the time allocated per learning areas. Teachers raised concern that they did not have time to follow up with the learners as the time allocated for English did not allow it. This factor indicates the type of quality of education that Grade 4 learners are receiving. Another factor is the issue of subject teaching as opposed to class teaching. This made most of the Grade 4 learners frustrated as they were unable to cope with the demands of Grade 4. Hence, it was also noted during the observation that not all Grade 4 learners were able to recognise words quickly or effortlessly when they read, and teachers were trying to support them in order to address this challenge.

Recommendations

- The DoE should consider the issue of learner pace when allocating time for teaching different learning areas especially in Grade 4.
- It is recommended that the school have only Grade 4 class teachers responsible for teaching Grade 4, in order to familiarise the learners with the issue of moving from one class to another and for attending different learning areas from different teachers.
- It is recommended that schools be responsible for preparing learners for Grade 4. During the last term, Grade 3 teachers must introduce the names of the different learning areas to be taught in Grade 4 so that when learners progress they have an idea of what is expected from them.

6.2.3. Teacher training in the teaching of reading

Findings revealed that not all teachers received training on how to teach reading. Those who qualified as junior primary teachers were the ones who had trained, and this raised a challenge for most Intermediate Phase teachers as they lacked the equivalent knowledge. This finding confirmed findings from the literature studied in Chapter 2 section 2.3, that most teachers lacked training, knowledge, tools and time to support learners with limited English proficiency wishing to achieve their potential. In order to address this challenge teachers will need training so as to improve themselves. The findings affirmed the Education White Paper 6 (2001:18), which calls for teachers to improve their skills and knowledge in order to develop new ones. To address the gaps identified, the following recommendations are made by the researcher:

Recommendations:

- The DoE to organize in-service training for English Grade 4 teachers where all strategies on how to teach reading will be discussed.
- District officials to organise site-based workshops for Grade 4 teachers on how to teach reading.
- District to use NGOs to train teachers on how to teach reading.
- Retired expert English teachers to be used as mentors in schools where they demonstrate their knowledge on how reading is taught.
- Neighbouring schools to form clusters in which teachers share their good practices and assist each other in addressing their challenges in terms of how reading is taught.

6.2.4 Teaching reading in Grade 4

The findings revealed that teachers were trying to teach reading in Grade 4, however there was no time assigned for this. Teachers had their own understanding about the concept of reading, based on their own experiences and knowledge. It was also noted that there were challenges raised that hampered the learners' progress when they were being taught to read. These corresponded with the literature review discussed in Chapter 3. The findings revealed the different approaches used by teachers when teaching reading, and which correspond with the approaches discussed in Chapter 3.

Recommendations:

- Schools should make provision for reading periods in which Grade 4 learners will be taught how to read in a controlled and structured manner.
- Grade 4 teachers should be trained on how to use different approaches in order to accommodate different learners.
- Teachers should encourage reading together and reading aloud in order to improve the learners' ability to read.

6.2.5 Addressing word recognition

Literature in Chapter 3 revealed that word recognition forms the foundation for the reading process, because before meaning can be attributed to what is read the reader must first recognise the word. From the findings it is evident that teachers were trying to address problems related to word recognition, however, there were challenges which raised concern.

The study revealed that teachers understood the concept of word recognition and its effect on reading. They explained it as being able to recognise a word and say it, affirming the findings of Pikulski and Chard (2005:515) that word recognition is being able to recognise a word instantly and thus not drain energy. Lack of word recognition skills affect the learner's reading tempo, reading speed and accuracy, as confirmed during the observation when learners were asked to read. The findings corresponded with the literature studied in Chapter 2 section 2.5, which raised similar concerns.

The study also addressed the critical question posed in Chapter 1 section 1.4: *"Which strategies can be used to support Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when they read?"* The study found that teachers used the Dolch basic words in order to increase the learners' ability to recognise words. It was also evident that teachers used the phonics, the whole word approach and syllabification as strategies to support learners who experienced word recognition problems. The strategies used also affirmed by the literature studied in Chapter 2 section 2.6.

From these findings it can be concluded that effective word recognition strategies permit learners to quickly translate the letters into speech sounds and make it easier for them to identify words and understand their meanings. Based on the findings, it is evident that the sub-aims of this study, as highlighted in section 1.5, have been addressed. The sub-aims were:

- To clarify the concept 'word recognition'.
- To determine the level and problems of word recognition in Grade 4 learners in relation to their reading ability.

- To determine different types of sight words and reading strategies that teachers can use to address word recognition by Grade 4 learners.
- To understand the Grade 4 learner.
- To describe the word recognition problem encountered by Grade 4 learners when they read.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that teachers use different word recognition strategies when assisting learners. The following strategies are recommended for Grade 4 English teachers:
 - The phonics approach (letter-sounding relationship): the phonics is helpful in teaching reading and spelling. The teachers teach the learners to sound the letters and name the letter and to recognize their relationship. For example the word mat= m/a/t

Naming the letters: m = “em”,

a= “aey’

t =”tee”

Sounding the letters: m for man and m say “mmm”

a for ant, a say “ae”

t for toy, t say “tah”

When the teacher has completed teaching, he or she should let the learners identify the name of the letter in order to check if they have understood the sound and letter. The teacher should also emphasise phonic rulesthen take into account the word pattern.

- The whole word approach: this approach emphasises reading for meaning. The learners are taught to read the word in totality not in isolation. The teachers then use a picture which corresponds with the word in order to help the learners remember it more easily. For example, the word “man” will be read as “man” not m/a/n. Then the picture of a man will be showed to the learners to emphasise the word taught.

- The use syllabification (breaking words into syllables) when dealing with unfamiliar and complex word. This method helps learners to analyse words by syllables, such as word roots and suffix. For example the word “consternation” will be analysed as having four syllables, “con/ster/na/tion”.
- The use of contextual clues: the teachers should use this strategy in order to emphasise the meaning of the missing words. The learners are encouraged to use sentence clues in order to decode unfamiliar words. For instance, the teacher can leave out a word in the text and replace it with a picture, as in “The boy plays with his  on the ground”, or by simply leave a blank space so that the learners need to think which word can fit in the gap. In a sentence such as: “The --- is used to absorb water and mineral salt from the soil,” the learner knows something about the context so will be able to deduce that the missing word is ‘roots’.
- Teach words with meaning of the sentences: if the learners cannot read the word encourage them to read the whole sentence and let them have a sense of the meaning of the sentence before trying to read the word.
- It is also recommended that teachers use different sets of sight words in the beginning of the reading instruction, when addressing word recognition problems. Sight words are those that are read instantly and without further analysis. This includes the high frequency words and those related to the passage to be read. They are used at the beginning of the reading stage in order to familiarise learners with the content that needs to be learned. Sight words, such as the Dolch basic words and Fry instant words, should be used in order to complement one another. When using the sight words the teachers should highlight to the learner on a weekly basis which set of words is to be studied. The teacher groups the frequency words and each week five new words are added. When new words are added the teacher explains the meaning and each word as used in a form of a sentence. The teacher also emphasises the spelling and pronunciation of those words. Teachers should conduct assessment after the sight words are taught in order to check whether they have been mastered.

- Games such as snakes and ladder can be played in order to consolidate what is learned. Instead of the game having pictures of snakes and ladders only there are also words written in each block. The learner throws the dice and if it is five he or she then reads five words from the block instead of counting the numbers. The games should be structured and the rules clearly enforced.

6.2.6 Insufficient district support

Findings from the study revealed that teachers acknowledged that they received support in the form workshop from the district. However, they were not happy with the way the district officials supported the Intermediate Phase teacher as compared to the Foundation Phase teachers. This study also found that teachers were not impressed with the types of workshop provided by the district, feeling it repeated itself and did not address their needs. In order to address this concern, the following recommendations are made.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that continuous monitoring be strengthened at district level. District English facilitators should conduct class visits with the aim of supporting teachers on how to improve their teaching and the implementation of policies.
- District facilitators can conduct a needs analysis with teachers before planning any workshop, in order to check with the teachers what they need and to verify which workshops they have attended so as to avoid repeating any.
- Workshops organised by the district should be specific and address teachers' needs.
- A cluster model to be adopted by the district, in which schools will be grouped together according to their needs. This will improve regular support and contact between districts facilitators and teachers.

6.2.7 Lack of parental involvement

The literature revealed that parent involvement has a great impact in the child's acquisition of reading (Darling & Westberg 2004:774). In contrast, it was noted from the findings that some teachers expressed their concern regarding lack of parental

involvement. They felt that parents were not giving themselves time to read with their children. In order to encourage parents to be involved and to assist their children who experience word recognition problem, the following recommendations are made.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that parent support groups be organised at schools, with teachers providing basic workshops to parents on how they can assist their children who experience reading and word recognition problems at home.
- Paired and group reading should be encouraged at home, where siblings read together and parents read with the children. As a result they assist one another in identifying words.
- Parents must motivate and stimulate learners to read by themselves, by creating a suitable reading atmosphere at home and by setting an example by reading themselves. Parents should also visit the local library with their children, where they can be taught to be independent readers.
- Communities may organise community support groups with retired teachers to assist parents with strategies on how to assist children at home. This will improve their knowledge and make them more fully involved in their children's studies.

6.2.8 Insufficient resources

Resources are an important aspect of solving word recognition problems. The findings from the interview with the teachers revealed that not all learners in some schools had resources to use for reading. Teachers had to photocopy the passage to be read in order to cover all learners. During the observation, the finding was confirmed as some learners were using photocopied material when asked to read. This raised a serious challenge for teachers who were to give extra work for reading at home.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the committee for Learner Teachers Support Material (LTSM) at schools make sure they procure reading material for each learner.

- Teachers to encourage learners to bring old reading materials (such as books, magazines and newspapers) to school. Learners may use them to read for enjoyment during their free periods, thus increasing their vocabulary and the ability to recognise words.
- The schools to approach local community libraries and ask for donations of old books.

6.2.9 Time allocation and lesson plans

In order for teachers to achieve expected outcomes in class, enough time and proper planning is required. The findings from the interviews revealed that there was no time specifically assigned for teaching reading. However, it was noted that the DoE (2008:15) had recommended half an hour of the school day to be allocated to reading and writing, but in the school reading was not done on a daily basis. This finding was confirmed during the observation because the class timetables only indicated the name of the learning area, not the component to be taught on that day. The finding also revealed that teachers were planning for each lesson before they went to class, however, it was noted during the observation that each school had its own lesson plan template.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that there be a period assigned for teaching reading in Grade 4. This will increase the learners' ability to read.
- The timetables should indicate the different component to be taught for each day.
- The district official should design a lesson template that all Grade 4 English teachers can use, so as to promote uniformity within the district.

6.4 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations highlighted above acknowledge the important role that teachers, parents, district officials, peers, siblings, the community and wider government structures can play in providing support for Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition. This affirmed Bronfenbrenner's

ecological theory, as mentioned in section 1.6, which indicated significant influence in shaping different levels of a system in the social context, and interaction in the process of child development. It is therefore significant to note that this recommendation confirms the need for educational support services to adopt a comprehensive and integrated approach to ensure that proper support is provided at various levels of the system.

6.5 GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS ON HOW TO SUPPORT LEARNERS WITH WORD RECOGNITION PROBLEMS

As stated in Chapter 1 section 1.6, the primary aim of the study was to determine guidelines for supporting Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when reading. The guidelines were based on the themes that emerged from the study in Chapter 5. The teaching of reading and its components, such as word recognition, is still a challenging factor in most of the Grade 4 English teachers and district officials are trying to support teachers from the district level. The DoE aims to transform ordinary schools into inclusive schools, but teachers do not have prescribed strategies to accommodate different learners in their classrooms. This study suggests the following guidelines for Grade 4 English teachers in order to be able to support learners with word recognition problems.

- Teachers should note that learners with word recognition problem need systematic instruction and as a result they should make provision for them to have plenty of practice with the words in context and in isolation.
- Repeated reading is an important aspect to consider when supporting learners who experience problems with word recognition. Based on that, teachers should consider reading as a daily activity in which learners are given an opportunity to engage with different reading materials and to read for enjoyment. This will also help them increase their vocabularies and pronunciation.
- Teachers should understand that learners are different, and as a result different word recognition strategies should be used in order to complement one another and to accommodate all learners. The phonic approach, whole

word approach, syllabification, contextual clues, sight words, games and teaching words with meaning of the sentences as recommended should be used.

6.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is evident that teachers still experience problems with supporting learners who have word recognition problems, and as a result the learners' academic progress is affected. Word recognition permits learners to quickly and automatically translate the letters into speech sound and help them identify words, giving meaning to what is read. The study found that there is a gap in terms of how teachers were trained as teachers and with the actual teaching process in schools. I believe that there is a need to follow up research in the field of teaching reading and its components, such as word recognition, especially in Grade 4. The recommendations from such research could be used to improve academic achievement of learners, particularly in Grade 4.

Further research could be conducted in the following areas.

- A comparative study with Gauteng and other provinces on how problems with word recognition are addressed in Grade 4.
- An investigation into how institutions could enhance the teaching of reading and its components in schools.
- An investigation into how district officials could effectively support Grade 4 English teachers in terms of assisting learners who experience word recognition problems.
- A study on the methodologies of teaching word recognition in Gauteng.

6.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The following limitations were anticipated and considered in the study:

- There were about 125 primary school in the Ekurhuleni South District during the time of study, which was conducted in four primary schools at the district.

This created a limitation as it did not allow the research to be conducted in all the primary schools.

- The district, at which level the study was conducted, contains ex-model C schools, township schools, farm schools and independent schools. The study took place with three ex-model C schools and one township school. This created an imbalance in terms of selection and created tension as the voice of independent schools and farm school teachers were not heard.
- The researcher works at the same district as an official. Based on that, teachers could have answered the questions to impress the researcher. If the study was conducted by a neutral person the results might have been different.

6.8 CONCLUSIONS

The primary aim of the study was to determine guidelines for supporting Grade 4 learners who experience problems with word recognition when reading. The chapter brought the research to its conclusion. The critical question formulated in Chapter 1 was investigated and the aims and sub-aims met.

The teaching of reading and its components, such as word recognition, is still a challenge for most Grade 4 teachers; however, teachers used their knowledge and experiences to address the challenge being investigated. There are still some factors which affect teachers when supporting learners with word recognition problems, such as the lack of strategies to be used when supporting learners. It was also noted from the findings that it was unclear when reading was to be taught in the classroom. This is an issue that needs to be discussed at macro-level, where policies are being formulated. When addressing such matters the provincial departments should be given an opportunity to come up with ways on how to structure their school's timetable in order to make sure that all components of reading and learners' reading needs are being addressed and met.

If teachers can be properly trained on how to teach reading and components such as word recognition, and receive continuous monitoring and support from the Department, there could be great improvement on how they support learners who

experience word recognition problems, especially in Grade 4. As a result, the reading level for the Grade 4 learners could also be improved.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

APPROVAL LETTER FROM GAUTENG EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no. 02011/65

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Date: | 10 January 2011 |
| Name of Researcher: | Phala T.A.L. |
| Address of Researcher: | 190 Pretoria Road |
| | Rynfield |
| | Benoni |
| | 1501 |
| Telephone Number: | 011 425 3523 / 082 955 6177 |
| Fax Number: | 011 421 3742 |
| Email address: | Thembi.Phala@gauteng.gov.za |
| Research Topic: | Problems in word recognition for Grade 4 learners in an inclusive classroom at Ekurhuleni South District |
| Number and type of schools: | THREE Primary Schools |
| Districts/HQ | Ekurhuleni South |

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

2nd Floor 111 Commissioner Street Johannesburg 2001
P.O. Box 77-0 Johannesburg, 2009 Tel: (011) 356 0500
Email: David.Melthode@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gmp.gov.za

Melthode

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

David Makhado
.....

Dr David Makhado

Director: Knowledge Management and Research

DATE: 2012/10/19

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 365 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gps.gov.za

APPENDIX B

P.O.BOX 275

BENONI

1500

02 MARCH 2010

Attention: District Director

Ekurhuleni South District

Dear Sir

RE: PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH STUDY AT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

I request permission to conduct research at primary school. I am currently employed as a Senior Education Specialist in the Inclusion and Special School unit (ISS) in the district. I am registered for Masters in Inclusive Education with the University of South Africa under the supervision of Professor AJ. Hugo, tel no 012 429-4002.

Research topic: "PROBLEMS IN WORD RECOGNITION FOR GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM IN EKURHULENI SOUTH, GAUTENG."

The objectives of the study are:

1. To clarify the concept of word recognition.
2. To determine the level and problems of word recognition in Grade 4 learners in relation to their reading ability.
3. To determine different types of sight words and reading strategies that teachers can use to address word recognition by Grade 4 learners.
4. To understand the Grade 4 learner.
5. To describe the word recognition problems encountered by Grade 4 learners when they read.

The design that will be used in conducting the research will be qualitative, and interviews, observation of how word recognition is taught will be done, and documents pertaining to the teaching of word recognition will be collected and analyzed. Teachers who are experienced in teaching English in Grade 4 will form part of the study.

Teachers will be interviewed by the researcher in English and this will take one hour after the normal teaching time. Interviews will be transcribed, after completion audiotapes will be destroyed. A copy of the transcription will be brought back to the participants to make sure that no misunderstanding occurred.

Confidentiality, anonymity and privacy will be assured. I have already requested permission from the Gauteng Department of Education and the permission has been granted.

I believe that the result of this study may assist the Department and the district on how word recognition affects grade 4 learners reading abilities and to determine the guidelines thereof.

Thanking you in advance

TAL PHALA(MRS)

082 9556 177

APPENDIX C
P.O.BOX 275

BENONI
1500

MARCH 2011

The Principal

Dear Sir/ Madam

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY AT _____
PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

I am requesting permission to do research at your school. The research is about "Problems in word recognition for Grade 4 learners in an inclusive classroom in Ekurhuleni South, Gauteng. The objectives of the study are:

1. To clarify the concept of word recognition.
2. To determine the level and problems of word recognition in Grade 4 learners in relation to their reading ability.
3. To determine different types of sight words and reading strategies that teachers can use to address word recognition by Grade 4 learners.
4. To understand the Grade 4 learner.
5. To describe the word recognition problems encountered by Grade 4 learners when they read.

The qualitative design will be used in conducting the research and the methods for data collection will be in the form of interview, observation of reading lessons, and documents pertaining to the teaching of word recognition strategies will be collected and analyzed.

Participants in the study will be English teachers who are experienced in teaching Grade 4. The researcher will observe the teachers teaching word recognition in class. The teachers will be interviewed by the researcher in English and this will take one hour after normal teaching time. Interviews will be audiotape with the consent of the participants. Only the researcher and supervisor will listen to the audiotape interviews and they will safely be stored under lock and key. The interviews will be transcribed and be destroyed after completion. A copy of the transcription will be brought back to the participants to make sure that no misunderstanding occurred.

Be assured that the principles of confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy will be adhered to and pseudonyms will be used. I have already requested permission from the Gauteng Department of Education, the District and have been granted permission thereof.

Thanking in advance.

Yours truly

T.A.L. Phala (Mrs.)
0829556177

APPENDIX D

P.O.BOX 275
BENONI
1500

MARCH 2011

Dear Participant

RE: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

The researcher is a registered student for a Masters degree in Inclusive Education at the University of South Africa. Currently the researcher is doing a research on "Problems in word recognition for Grade 4 learners in an inclusive classroom, in Ekurhuleni South, Gauteng". The researcher is under the supervision of Professor AJ Hugo, tel no 012 429-4002. The objectives of the study are:

1. To clarify the concept of word recognition.
2. To determine the level and problems of word recognition in Grade 4 learners in relation to their reading ability.
3. To determine different types of sight words and reading strategies that teachers can use to address word recognition by Grade 4 learners.
4. To understand the Grade 4 learner.
5. To describe the word recognition problems encountered by Grade 4 learners when they read.

You will be invited to take part in the interviews that will be done in English, and the researcher will interview you. The audiotape interviews will take one hour, they will only be listened by the researcher and the supervisor and they will be stored safely under lock and key. An independent coder will transcribe the interviews then after completion the audiotapes will be destroyed; a copy of the transcription will be brought to you to make sure that no misunderstanding occurred.

The researcher will do observation of the lesson on word recognition during normal school and class visit. Field notes will be made, documents pertaining to the teaching of this programme will be collected and analyzed.

Participation is voluntarily. Your identity will be dealt with in the strictest confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used. I have already requested permission from the Gauteng Department of Education, the Principal and the research has been approved.

The findings of this research will be used to assist the Department in assessing how word recognition affects the learners in their reading ability.

Completion of the attached consent form will give an indication that you agree to take part in this study.

Thanking you in advance.

ThembiAnastacia Lucky Phala
082 9556 177

APPENDIX E
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

Name: _____

I hereby give consent to participate in the research study conducted by Mrs ThembiAnastacia Lucky Phala on “Problems in word recognition for Grade 4 learners in an inclusive classroom in Ekurhuleni South, Gauteng.”

I have read the consent form and voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

Signed _____

Date _____

APPENDIX F

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SCHEDULE

1. How long have you been teaching English Grade 4 ?
- 2a. In your own experience how can you explain a Grade 4 learner?
- 2b. Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?
- 3a. What do you think reading is all about?
- 3b. Why is it important to teach reading?
4. During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?
5. How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?
6. Do you know reading approaches?
7. Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your Grade 4 classroom?
8. It is normally said that learners in the Foundation Phase they learn to read and from Intermediate Phase they read to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?
9. In your opinion, what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?
10. What do you think word recognition is all about and how does it skill affect Grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?
11. What challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your Grade 4 learners?
12. Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?
13. Is the anything that was not asked about reading but you thinks the researcher should know?
14. Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

PARTICIPANT E1

Researcher: Good Afternoon mam?

Participant: Good Afternoon mam?

Researcher: Thank you for allowing me to do an interview with you. I'm a researcher in UNISA. What I m going to find out is more in terms of the reading in Grade 4. So I m going to ask you questions, if maybe you don't understand or running to fast please just stop me so that we can be on the same line. My first question to you is:

Researcher: How long have you been teaching English grade 4?

Participant: I taught grade 4 for 17 years but I have been teaching all eeh, kinds of subjects and all kinds of grades for 44 years.

Researcher: In your experience how can you explain a grade 4 learner?

Participant: Well a grade 4 learner is very much still part of a foundation phase learner, although is a transitional between the foundation phase and senior phase but they still need the everyday guidance, eeh, help with all their own work, individual attention .Eeeh a child in grade 4 find it exceptionally difficult to adjust to all different subject because there more subject in grade 4 and they don't even understand what the subject is all about, if they say to them we are going to do social science.....they don't really mean what, what you really mean by that and you have to take it very gradually and explain to the children so beautifully and be very organized about their homework, about what they have to do because otherwise it become exceptionally for those in grade 4 learners, you must make their topic interesting.

Researcher: Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?

Participant: Cognitively they are still very much on the concrete phase they have not reach the stage of abstract thinking and I would say that they are far closer to the grade 3 in social development than to a grade 5 child. Although during the course of the year ee.....h they develop quite radical and by the end of the year you will see a big change.

Socially: this is a happy age in a child's life, they are very still naïve little children, ee...h not part of adult world, they love little baby games, ee....h stories to listen to, they love even fairy tale is still very much part of their life, they love magic, they like to be imaginative, ee....m their development is like I said is very still and happy in their small social group, it is not like when they become older, they don't want to mix with certain children, they are very happy among each other. It is of course a very still nice grade to teach.

Physically they grow faster than before.

Researcher: What do you think reading is all about?

Participant :Reading is the basic of all learning, the more you read , obvious the more you extend your vocabulary, the more you extend knowledge of the world.

Researcher: Why is it important to teach reading?

Participant: For a child in grade 4 is essential to read every day, not only their class reader but read extensively about the subject matter and anything that they can lay their hands on also the grammatical structures, anything will improve by means of reading

Researcher: During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?

Participant: Because it was so long ago, ahaa(laughed) , Yes I definitely was(laughed). That was a large section of, of the curriculum, because in my days we did not do a degree we had to do a diploma and it was all very practical. We have to do subject like subject methodology of every subject that was part of our curriculum when we were students.

Researcher: How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?

Participant: When I started teaching long ago, I had many many courses also very well presented and also may circulars were about teaching of reading. Previously district meetings were held quite regularly as compared to now, where we were given all the latest of the teaching of language and of teaching reading and often this was also presented by films where model lessons will be given by experienced teachers which make a big impression on me. Because I remember even those lesson today. I have model my lessons around what was shown to me. I also remember that at that time every school had an extended reference library for teachers where all latest publication were send to the schools and if you were an alert reader you will always very en touched with new ideas and new method of teaching.

Researcher: Do you know reading approaches?

Participant: I presume I do, Yes(laughed)

Researcher: Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your grade 4 classroom?

Participant: The approach I have been using the past few years because of English being a second language to the school I'm teaching. I would, my approach will be , I would use reading lesson in all sort manners not only reading lesson but I will use reading lesson to reinforce the gramma for all of other work. In other words the reading lesson will be central to my other learning that will take place in that week so that they hear the same words over and over again and they become familiar with the unfamiliar structure and vocabulary.

I prefer the eclectic approach and where you use phonics and you use recognition word attack skills, where you would also use ee...h how can I put it? Where you can use the idea of the story just guess words, is not wrong to guess ee....h, ee.....h the word, because that is a skill to help you discover words.

Researcher: It is normally said that learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from the intermediate phase they are reading to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?

Participant: Ooh, by the time you get to grade 4 you should be able to read quite fluently, in other words you have nobody nobody has to teach how to attack words . From grade 4 onwards you have just to take the reading matter to enhance your knowledge to any topic or vocabulary. Read with understanding or to comprehend what they have read . Foundation phase read only words.

Researcher : In your opinion what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?

Participants: I think especially with children whose language is not English, that is English is their second language not their mother tongue, it is not really that they do not know the mechanism of reading, it is more of a question of they are unfamiliar with the knowledge that is presented in the reading lesson, for example : you have a story about a pearl and the children had never had experience about a pearl or touch a pearl, so in their little world is something totally unfamiliar and that is a problem, that is a problem that is very prevalent among children whose home language is not English, so the knowledge of the world of concept is so limited, is not that they can't get the word but they don't know what the word represent.

Researcher: What do you think Word recognition is all about and how does it affect grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?

Participant: Word recognition is of course crucial; it is the pivot around which everything turns. You should be able to recognize the word and know what it represent and I think for that is why I mentioned earlier on that you have to do the reading lesson orally, show them what a pearl look like and introduce all sort of ideas and with pictures anything so that when it comes to the real reading they are able to recognize the word because they are already know the concept. It therefore affect the way they read and how they understand what has been read.

Researcher: what challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your grade 4 learners?

Participant: Word recognition is a big problem for grade 4 child and I taught them to do syllabification and to sound the word. But it is a big problem for them, it slow down their speed and as a result of the word recognition problem they don't like to read because it is a big struggle if you can't recognize the word and they become so slow and then eventually they don't want to do it because they also lose focus and forget what they were reading about. You have to encourage them all the time, make reading matter quite easy like I said, and explain a lot of things beforehand, so that when it comes to the actual reading, it is an easy task for them and they enjoy doing it that will eventually lead to better word recognition as they grow confidence.

Researcher: Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?

Participant: I think pre-teaching at all times, make sure that what you give in a reading lesson is familiar, choosing the correct reading matter, is not good getting a book from England, where the condition are so totally foreign to South African children and expecting them to be able to read. So choosing the right material, pre-teaching, teaching how to recognize the phonic sound, a lot of teaching must be done beforehand so that the actual reading process is quite an easy process afterwards. According to me strategies for word recognition can also be called word attack skills. I can mention four of the word recognition skills:

- The first one can be Configuration which mean that you look at the shape of the letter. The letters that are long and tall or short and you can more or less guess what the word is by looking at the configuration.
- The second word recognition attack is when focusing on consonants rather than on vowels because you can actually read sentences where you deleted all

vowels even language in the world such as Hebrew's they don't use vowels at all and yet people can read what they have read. An example will be: The bell will go now, if you take that sentence and delete all the vowels (Thbllwll g nw), you will be able to recognize the word and read. So teach children to concentrate on the consonants rather than on vowels only.

- The third word recognition skill will be making use of guess work, not guessing widely but think of the context you reading and think what the word could be and that is a very important skill to master.
- Lastly if the word is very long make use of syllabification where you break the words up into syllables and teach the children to clap the words so that they are able to recognize. An example of syllabification will be the word syllabification will be: sylla bi fi cation.

Again I also make use of Dolch sight words when teaching word recognition. Sight words are very important and old fashion method like flash cards, putting them in your class, showing them to children, repeating them even words that are difficult to read which do not have meanings like nouns and verbs are easy to teach because you you can show them or give , show picture but words such as although or abstract words those are very difficult for children to read, so make use of flash cards eeh explain it, make sentences with the words. Let them pronounce the word, do little rhyme, rhymes where you get phonic sound to practice the correct phonic sound. For example a little rhyme I can think of is called "Goodness miss hook, the pudding you have cook, you could have look at your cookery book", where you teach the children the oo sound correctly and if the children repeat those little rhyme after you, you get the correct pronunciation of English sound.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: I feel very strongly about the fact that nowadays children have subject teaching in grade 4 and since they have done subject teaching reading has gone down the hill because in subject teaching the children leave you after an hour and you don't see them again for the rest of the day if you are an English teacher, yet when you are a class teacher you start the morning with work, throughout the day, you allow every child to read to you, while they are colouring, while they are leaving the room for break you grasp the last child and say come and read to me, in that manner you listen to every child every day while they are in your class, which does not happen at all with subject teaching and you cannot do the follow up work that grade 4 child still need , like as I have explain the jump from grade 3 to grade 4 is far too large and part of the problem is subject teaching is all about the child is not about the teacher, whether the teacher prefers the subject is not the point, the point is what is best for the child, and definitely it is only class teaching so that you can spend all your time on individual children, individual needs, individual help and also listening to the reading, you cannot in an hour lesson do the spelling, do the grammar and whatever is expected and still find time to listen to reading which still should be part of grade 4 syllabus because they have not master like they should have in reading, the process of reading, they still need to practice learning to read.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: Yes, also perhaps what I have noticed throughout the years is that, teachers are inclined to make use of too many worksheets. Teachers have his erroneous idea that if a child has done a worksheet they have the knowledge and are able to recognize words which is not true. When I was studying my B.A Honours in Linguistic I have learned that a child had to learn or hear the words at least four hundred times before it become part of his vocabulary, so doing one sheet on a specific topic does not solve any problem, they need to have far more access to oral work, where teachers tell story, read the story to the children, do more oral work as well as reading aloud, reading to the teacher and do worksheet. In English oral work should be emphasize and precede reading lesson. Listening to stories is really the beginning of reading and learning to recognize words.

Researcher: Thank you for your time

Participant: Thank you for having me

Researcher: Bye

Participant: Bye.

PARTICIPANT E2

Researcher: Good Afternoon mam?

Participant: Good Afternoon mam?

Researcher: Thank you for allowing me to do an interview with you. I'm a researcher in UNISA. What I m going to find out is more in terms of the reading in Grade 4. So I m going to ask you questions, if maybe you don't understand or running to fast please just stop me so that we can be on the same line. My first question to you is:

Researcher: How long have you been teaching English grade 4?

Participant: I have been teaching English grade 4 for 3years now, but in total I have 7 years teaching experience. I have previously taught English and social sciences for 4 years.

Researcher: In your experience how can you explain a grade 4 learner?

Participant: A grade 4 learner is the learner who has moved from the foundation phase and has just entered the intermediate phase for the first time. She is still thinks concrete level but at the process of starting to explain things as they are.

Researcher: Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?

Participant: I find that is the year where they are still, they change quite a bit, so their behaviour is generally good and I don't have any problem. But you find that there are hormones and physical changes especially towards the end of the year it start to come in and you can see that. Cognitively they are ideally at the beginning this is the way I seen it and learn it . They are ideally at the stage where they still need help but by the end of the year they should be at the point where they can work and read by themselves without any problems and without needing me so much in that, because when they do first come from grade 3 they need you a lot and you gonna "eeh" sort of winning them off that because in grade 5 they are not gonna want it. So I think Intellectually they are very reliant at the beginning and hopefully they get better at the end of the year. Emotionally they are still sensitive to criticism.

Researcher: What do you think reading is all about?

Participant: Reading is gaining knowledge, gaining knowledge and understanding what you have gaining.

Researcher: Why is it important to teach reading?

Participant: It is important because no matter where in their life they are going to need to use reading, just reading a bottle of a poison bottle not to drink it you need to understand what you are reading.

Researcher; During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?

Participant:I did not train as a teacher. I did PGCE with UNISA. So there is no practical already. There is a bit of practical but you are already teaching at that stage.

Researcher: How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?

Participant: Teacher centre training workshops, in all my years of experience I have attended 3 courses for general teaching of English, reading methods and then started to go into writing as well. None of them was totally on how to teach reading.

Researcher: Do you know reading approaches?

Participant: Not so much. I am familiar with what I have been taught by other teachers and that is generally what I use.

Researcher: Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your grade 4 classroom?

Participant: Basically listen to them reading. Teaching them how to sound out words, which actually blend together. So I am teaching them how to sound out correct names, speaking them and to make sure that they especially understand, because I found in grade 4 specifically because I also did English grade 7 as well, but the time they go to grade 4 as they go up they can read but cannot understand the words. They basically Para-fashioned learned words instead of understanding what the meaning. So whenever I do reading my approach to the reader is to get whoever to read and correct as we go along or you know I won't to give them the words straight away, I make them sound out and we then go to the understanding what it means.

Researcher: It is normally said that learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from the intermediate phase they are reading to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?

Participant: There are so many subject in the Intermediate phase. What I understand is that foundation phase educators teaches them words and how to read whereas by the time they get to grade 4 in the Intermediate phase they have to know how to read in order to get information. So you do not teach them anymore to read they got to know.

Researcher: In your opinion what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?

Participant: Not being taught the basics properly, not to be encourage at home is a big thing, you don't have like your parents to help you from home, but I also think there is not enough focus on the Foundation Phase .There is not enough focus on reading like you said the reading methods and reading techniques, spelling because those two are very important I feel. So the shift to grade 4 is so much, there is no time to teach them to read any more or to help them and as a result they start loose out.

Researcher: What do you think Word recognition is all about and how does it affect grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?

Participant: Word recognition to me is to be able to recognize the word, know what you are looking at, and understand it and to say it. The effect will depend on the type of method that they have learned for the spelling. They often don't recognize the word. As I said to you what I have encountered is that they learn to say the word and not understand what the word means. So as much as they can see it and know that word but they can't understand it. Their reading pack is also affected because the spend most of the time looking at the word and not being able to recognize it and make it difficult for them to read the words quickly.

Researcher: what challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your grade 4 learners?

Participant: They are unable to use a dictionary at this stage. Basically if they cannot recognize the word or you tell them how to spell the word and tell them to look that word in a dictionary they can't recognize the word because they don't know the spelling and they can't get the right spelling correct in the dictionary and they cannto even look around to get the correct spelling.In grade 4 we obviously have many learning areas, basic and more intense terminologies come along and they cannot recognize them.

They can't understand the basic word and root word and they don't know what a root word is and they don't know how to break words into syllables to say them correctly.

Researcher: Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?

Participant: I am a syllable person. I do try to get them break the word either to break out phonetically into their syllables so that they will be able to say it. I also use the Dolch list but some of the classes use sight words with shorter list which as they grow up the list is longer but grade 4 Dolch list is the best because it is their basic everyday words that they use.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: No

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: With word recognition I think how it is taught is important, not with us but with other phase because I found that they have took out, although they are bringing know in phonics in grade 1,2 and 3 they took out. The schools were allowed to choose whichever way they wanted to teach spelling basically, and I feel like even at this stage you find kids from different schools, they say words differently, see words differently, they spell word differently or cannot do it at all depending on which method they use. But this has so being correctly, I saw in grade 4 now, they are bringing phonetics again which helps a lot with the recognition of words, helps a lot in the reading and also in how to say the word.

Researcher: Thanks for your time.

Participants: Thank mam.

PARTICIPANT E3

Researcher: Good Afternoon mam?

Participant: Good Afternoon mam?

Researcher: Thank you for allowing me to do an interview with you. I'm a researcher in UNISA. What I m going to find out is more in terms of the reading in Grade 4. So I m going to ask you questions, if maybe you don't understand or running to fast please just stop me so that we can be on the same line

Researcher: My first question is how long have you been teaching English grade 4?

Participants: I have been teaching grade 4 English for 6 years now and I was actually qualified as a Junior Primary teacher from grade 1-3 when I first qualify and I taught that for 7years and I went into tertiary education in an old black college where I taught communication and then I came back into teaching grade 4.

Researcher: In your experience how can you explain a grade 4 learner?

Participants: A Grade 4 learner is not the baby of the school anymore, they need to know the reading and word recognition. They need to know all those aspect because they use that into things like writing exams, writing test, they need to understand what they actually reading, so they should be at a level where they have mastered all the basics of word recognition and how to read. All those things were sorted up to know and they need to move forward to Intersen or Senior phase where the questions are more application questions although we still need to guide them on these level.

Researcher: Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?

Participants: Cognitively they are still doing things in the concrete level but move out this a bid toward the end of the year. They also like to reason issues but at a concrete level.

Socially as well they are more matured, if they stay in the same school they have made grouping. Again what I have experience when they are working they work very well and quietly at this stage. They are still at that stage where they enjoy having the teacher to teach them as opposed to Grade 7 where they feel cork sure of themselves. These children in grade 4 level are quite dependent of the teacher to guide them and help them to do their work. Another fact is that behaviorally if there is discipline in class they work very quietly although in groups they sometimes the group work end up with arguments but general the behaviour is still good.

Physically I have in the past few years when I started teaching to now, I have notice girls developing harmoniously much, much faster and are concern with their sexuality that what I have found in Grade 4 level and in grade 4 boys like to play soccer and like to fight among themselves about who is older. In general coordination is quite good in most of them although there are exceptions.

Personality

Researcher: What do you think reading is all about?

Participants: I think personality that reading is about acquiring knowledge. Knowing and understanding what you are reading.

Researcher: Why is it important to teach reading?

Participants: I feel that if you can't read, you can't do anything into the future you need to know. Reading and word recognition goes together you need to understand what you are reading before you can do any instructions and basic packages to the food that we

buy to filling of forms. So personally I feel reading encompass everything single things that you do in life, if you can't do it to a certain successful degree in life you are going to battle. In other words it helps you to acquire knowledge and .o be able to communicate with others.

Researcher: During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?

Participants: Yes, I was taught because I was a junior primary trained teacher. I was taught how to teach reading and reading and I applied that in my first years that I started teaching and I think to a certain degree I probably applied now but obviously not much because we don't have a certain period just dedicated to reading we do reading among all work we are doing.

Researcher: How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?

Participants :On grade 4 level there are courses that the department is encouraging us to do, I can't tell you of hand how exactly when they have been but at our school they make announcement in the staffroom about courses that are offering how to teach learners who are having problems with reading and so on more get to the Junior Primary but I think if you as a grade 4 teacher want to get involve they can't say you can't attend. I just did not go to such courses. In the Intermediate Phase we really don't attend such training regularly and generally the workshop that we attend is more on English as a learning area to discuss its learning outcomes and assessment standards and not on how to teach reading and its components such as word recognition.

Researcher: Do you know reading approaches?

Participants: I can't tell you the reading approach as in the name of it. Ok I know that when I start teaching we use the "Kathy and Mark" books where the children sound the word out and learn to recognize those words in their reading context, but I can't tell you what the name was it.

Researcher: Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your grade 4 classroom?

Participants: When I teaching in the Junior Primary Phase we start with word recognition and build up from the basic word and read short sentences to reading longer sentences and to get into reading books. Now in grade 4 our reading approach is based on comprehension. We do not use a specific approach what we do in class is that when we get a worksheet or book or page to read we read together together, read individual, ask questions about it and recognize the more difficult words understand those, look in the dictionary because that is another skill I find the children are lacking a little bit, the children are battling to find words in the dictionary, sometimes they become very lazy to find it, so we always encourage them to have a dictionary, go through the worksheet look for words, discuss them so that they understand those words and we put them in a sentences, answer questions orally and sometimes in written.

Researcher: It is normally said that learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from the intermediate phase they are reading to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?

Participants: I understand that in the Foundation Phase somebody is helping them to learn or to teach them on how to approach reading and actually how to read, that is they know only the basic of reading, whereas from grade 4 onwards they should have

mastered that and know what they are doing with the information they have read and through that reading they can learn different learning area because the foundation has already been mastered in the Foundation Phase.

Researcher: In your opinion what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?

Participants: I think some learners have backlogs because they have not, I'm not sure that they have been taught how to read properly from grade 1. I find some of them having concentration problems where they become easily tired when they read. I have also find children with eyes problems where their eyes skip around their eye movement is not correct, 'eeh'. I have referred them to optometrist to have their eyes tested because their eyes skip. I actually now that, it happen to my daughter when she was to go to grade 9 at a high school. 'eeeh" she started battling very badly with comprehension and somebody said go and have her eyes tested. It is a special test that they do where the eyes skip words, her eyes were skipping to the end of the sentence, she could not focus like this(showing) through the end of the page and therefore she lost concentration and can't understand what she was reading about. Also poor word recognition, the children are sometimes not learning how to sounding the words, they will just look at it, look at it and will not be able to say B-a-t to say that is Bat. But when, if we test the reading age, we look at Holbornreading scale, there are various reading I know some of those reading scale are not "eeem" , we use them to give us an idea, and there are quite a few children who can read but they are one way under age for their reading level and therefore when they got to read comprehensions they start battling with reading that. So those are the problems why they sometimes can't read.

Researcher: What do you think Word recognition is all about and how does it affect grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?

Participants: For me word recognition is about being able to read the word immediately as you see it, there is no need to think first. I think word recognition has an impact on the learners a lot because if they can't recognize the words they won't understand what it means when reading and they will also be unable to answer questions. Again they will read slow and take a lot of time to finish their reading.

Researcher: what challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your grade 4 learners?

Participants: To be honest with you I can answer like this way that THRASS. You know our school is big on THRASS. 'eeeh' I find it to me some problems with word recognition, I really don't know if I really like the THRASS method, the children turn to learn the sing the song in that but some can't identify the words but others they do well on it. There are a lot of children coming from other schools and other provinces that they have not done THRASS they also battle with this method. So there is a little time to teach them how to recognize these words. The other problem is that from grade 4 they start writing more intense test, they can't read, they are quite intelligent, there is nothing wrong with their brain, they can't read the questions and they answer the questions anyway because they can't recognize those words. That is what I have found.

Researcher: Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?

Participants: At the moment what I m doing, just one of the things that I do in he afternoon I have a reading a reading Lab where the children go there, they do comprehension. There is all in the box, they go through a little comprehension and the

word that they need to recognize and the key words. It really helps those learners who battle when they are going to exams or writing any test or worksheet wherever you know that the teacher is not there to give explanation. The learner learn how to recognize words on their own , try to figure out the meaning and it just build their vocabulary because I think is part of that to build up much wider vocabulary to be able to recognize those words.In class you know individual help, peer teaching also help with word recognition. I also let them sounding out the word like B-a-d for Bad, I also use sight words they must know by hard the Dolch list and also allow them to break the words. That is what I believe in.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?

Participants: I don't know is what I think you should know about or is a recommendation that if I can say this, I really believe learners from grade 4 although we are doing English and reading worksheet or whatever, I still think that we should set aside the time where we can read more and reading to me is just a most important thing even if we you can't do Maths, you still need to know how to read. Maybe again grade 4 teachers be given more strategies and even more courses on how to help this learners because you assume in grade 4 that learners come knowing how to read but the reading is really hampering their achievements. I am seeing a parent this afternoon for example this boy is tested and performing at a level of an eight year old to read whereas he is ten years turning eleven, so he has a backlog and 'aah' is just hampers everything. Again parents in the olden days used to read for their children, I still read to my grandchildren, bed stories is also important. But now parents are not doing that anymore there is no love for reading, children think reading is a curse. Sometimes those who love reading do very well and those that think reading is a curse they don't do well.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?

Participants:No, I just think word recognition goes with reading, whether I'm right or wrong, if you can't recognize the word you can't read it. So I think that is the bottom line.

Researcher: Thank you for your time, mam.

Participants: Thank you for having me, bye

PARTICIPANT E4

Researcher: Good Afternoon mam?

Participant: Good Afternoon mam?

Researcher: Thank you for allowing me to do an interview with you. I'm a researcher in UNISA. What I m going to find out is more in terms of the reading in Grade 4. So I m going to ask you questions, if maybe you don't understand or running to fast please just stop me so that we can be on the same line. My first question to you is:

Researcher: How long have you been teaching English Grade 4?

Participant: I taught, I would say I have started with grade 2, then I moved in 3 and 4, but I spend more time in Grade 4. I would say about 18years teaching Grade 4.

Researcher: The second question is in your experience how can you explain a Grade 4 learner?

Participant: In my experience a grade 4 learner is that learner who still struggles to cope with the "eeheeh" the demands of a Grade 4 class because this learner is used to stay with the teacher the whole day, one teacher the whole day with only reduced learning areas. Now the learner joins Grade 4 and the learner has the adjustment problem because teachers come in and go out and suddenly from the three learning areas , there are eight learning areas, which is quite heavy for this learners more over of them are still shaking regarding the Language of Teaching and Learning.

Researcher:Then the next question is, then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?

Participant: If we align their development with Piaget stages, I think cognitively they are in the concrete level, well their development differs because we need to keep in mind the could be an intelligent who could be above that stage but we can also keep in mind that the could be a slow learner who, who is still at the beginning of a concrete stage. Socially depending on the disposition of the teacher and the home background most of them are outgoing, explorative, a few are shy and they need to be prompted. Physically they are becoming to be aware of their gender, I am a boy, I am a girl, I am playing with girls, you playing boys don't touch me, you know stuff like that. Emotionally they are very sensitive especially to criticism.

Researcher: Ok the next question, what do you think reading is all about?

Participant: I think reading is interpretation of what the senses take out there in the environment, processed into the brain and become an output throughout the mouth and how and the accuracy of the eye. You know reading over letters joined together into words. It is a skill that needs to be taught.

Researcher: Why is it important to teach reading?

Participant: I would say it is important to teach reading, the potential is there to read, but the potential need to be developed because this children need reading skills. They need to learn how to analyze and synthesis a word. They need to learn discrimination of words. They need to know words that sound the same but are spelled differently. Reading is very important because it is, it creates independently and make a child to be self reliance.

Researcher: During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?

Participant: I would say I do really regret the years I spend in a college. I was trained as a primary school teacher, higher primary school teacher but I really remember our lecturer teaching us how to teach reading or rather giving us a lesson on reading skill. It was superficially done in as much as when I joined “eeh, eeh”, the school as a new teacher, to me reading was a child looks a book and read and I was surprised because I thought on my first day those learners could read but when I check they were saying words but not looking at the reader. And it makes me think this is more rote learning than reading.

Researcher: Ok, the next question, how often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?

Participant: You know “eeh” in the olden days there were no training. It was the teacher’s initiatives like I realize that the children cannot read and I am lacking in terms of how to teach them reading then I registered for a diploma in specialized education which is remedial at Wits University. It was like I am at a college and I kept asking myself, this is what the college should have taught me. How to prepare a learner to read, which encompasses the development. I mean the perceptual development skill, the pre-reading skill, the picture reading, vocabulary development before the child can learn to read. But at least today, nowadays the department at least make a point that time and again we are, are, invited to be taught by various service providers on teaching of reading, like one of them the “ABARCARD” an interesting, playful way of teaching reading. Keeping in mind that this are children they learn more while they play.

Researcher: Do you know reading approaches?

Participant: Yes, the two reading approaches that I am aware of is the phonic method and the word identification which is the whole word method.

Researcher: Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your grade 4 classroom?

Participant: I would not say I have a prescribed method I normally consider, I have to know my children, there is a theory that says “a child who is, whose right hemisphere is dominant struggles reading through the phonic method and the child whose left brain is dominant is able to read through the phonics method. So my approaches depends on the child’s need. Those that can do phonics, I do phonics method with them and those that are right brainers I do the whole word method with them.

Researcher: It is normally said that learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from the intermediate phase they are reading to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?

Participant: In the Foundation Phase as I said earlier that reading is not acquired this children still learn how to read, they learn from understanding and saying the sound correctly from there they do the word building. There they played game until they are able to build up the word and read it, and this method has an advantage that once the child has learned reading through the phonics that child can read even a new word because this child has been given skills on how to read. “Eeh” reading to learn this children can read, their reading is solid though they use this skills for reading to acquire and explore other learning areas. They can read their own social sciences book, they can read their history book. So now they are reading to learn.

Researcher: In your opinion what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?

Participant: I would say in my opinion, “eeh” one thing that I have picked up especially after I have qualified for the remedial “eeh”, course, perceptual development is not taught as it is supposed to be. I would say this begins in Grade R and if the child’s perceptual development is underdevelopment a child’s begin to struggles with reading, because that programme teaches the child to know what makes word the same, what makes words different, why are words sounded differently. What makes “b and d” differently, even in terms of writing. Again the word has position, the initial, the middle and the ending. So Grade 4 learners, they missed all that in grade 3 there is a gap but again the question of early entry to the school also contributes to that. I think we were let down by Minister(pseudoname), when he shift, when he change the entry level from seven and lowered it to six forgetting hat children do not mature at the same time. Yes some six year old manage but a lot of them they got caught up in Grade 4, because Grade 4 has more work than the Foundation Phase.

Researcher: What do you think Word recognition is all about and how does it affect grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?

Participant: Word identification is all about the child, child’s ability to look at a word and be able to read it but this does not suggest that the child can write the word, but what it is important is to look at a word and say it. Look at the picture and name it, associate the word and a picture. It does affect a Grade 4 learner because one word can appear in different settings and if that word is not mastered it will not be. He won’t be able to read it in different setting.

Researcher: what challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your grade 4 learners?

Participant: A Grade 4 learner’s reading ability can also be affected by an unidentified visual problem, could be short sightedness, could be poor visual skills and it can also be affected by the child’s confidence. It can also be affected by underlining emotional problems, which the child cannot share with anyone. And thus word recognition then is affected by word meaning if the child does not understand the meaning of the word because that word is taught in isolation of a picture but again it does become a problem because some words does not have pictures. So the teacher needs to teach the children symbols represented by those words. It also affect the speed of reading and the accuracy of reading and all that aspects resultantly affect comprehension which is word meaning.

Researcher: Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?

Participant: “Aah,aah” out of creativity I have device the following:

- The first strategy I present a word and a picture and I say out the word and the child show me the picture. The child shows, “eeh” I show the picture and the child shows me the word and if I am positive that this has been mastered all those words on the word card.I write them on a chart. If the child is able, I block those word with another chart, all the open word means the words that the child cannot read. Now children are very intelligent they look and memorize those words on a chart. To ensure that those words are, can be read is not a route learning. I would take an A4 page divide it into two columns. The first column would be represented by colours. I can have as many colours as I want in a raw, let say in

raw 1 the colour is red. Raw 1 I have words which take them from the chart but I write those words randomly not in a sequence of a chart. The second raw could be yellow, other list of words. Third raw green, other list of words. Fourth raw blue, other list of words, depending on how many words you have taught or how many word you have worked with the children.

- And then I give them colours and I say to them, I stick on this pages on their books, then I say to them now listen to the instruction. Look for the word for an example “*table*” in which column do you think table is? What colour represent that column. They will take, if the word is in the colour, in red colour, they will take a red crayon but if among them there is a child who is guessing, she will look around to see which colour the other has taken and if she does not know the word, yes she will mark the red column but she wouldn’t mark the correct word. Then I understand this child has just memorized , we then go back to word identification. Once the children can colour this word we move on to game now . The board games like snakes and ladder instead of counting I have this reading card. I f the child tossed a dice and the dice gives number four instead of saying one, two, three, four on the snakes and ladder the child will read four words. If the child is unable to read the child moves out of the game and goes back to stage 1.
- Then the next stage I teach them what makes up this word through syllabification. I emphasize that each syllable must be accompanied by a vowel. Again this teaches them to listen to themselves and learns how many times, how many parts a word can be “eeh” broken. For instead when start with the word “*table*”, I say to the child say the word “*table*” and clap your hand and listen to yourself. How many times you clap? A child who is not listening will say “*table, table, table*”.Then I say “no” listen “*ta-ble*”how many times, two times, split the word. I give the child to cut, a pair of scissor to cut the word inttwo.The game go on until when I give them split words, and say now look for syllables and built up the words.For instance I say to them, I have this word “*Grade*”. Now let us say it and clap our hands and listen while clapping. “*Gra-de*”, now look for those two syllables that say “*Grade*”. They look for those syllables and stick into their book. Then I am positive we are moving to mastery of reading.
I can say I don’t rush into a reader. I also use sight word, Dolch list which has 220 words. If the child is able to read those then that is a step on. The is also a Fry list.

Researcher: We are now approaching to the last two questions our interview, those question needs your opinion in terms of reading and word recognition, the question: Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: “Eeh” would say, “eeh” the researcher will also “eeh” check on the schools and see if reading is taught and are the period allocated for reading. There is a confusion that teachers do where by a language book is used to teach language and as well as to read and you find you find that in the classroom there is no reader except the language book. Secondly involvement of parents in improving the children’s reading. When children get back home they rush for their TV games, they watch TV, no reading happens. You visit the library there are less children in the library. There is nothing that

pushes the children to read, there is no reading for pleasure, there is no reading for exploration, there is no reading for increasing information. Reading is only done to pass assessment.

Researcher: Then our last question, Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: Yes, I think in learning the word recognition approach, the child still cannot write the word, he can read the word but has not been taught how to write it. So one question is now after the children can recognize this word ,how do we teach spelling of this word because a child who has learnt through the word recognition in most cases is a bad speller which is a disadvantage as opposed to a phonic method. And a child who has learnt through a word recognition sometimes cannot read a new word that has not been taught to him.

Researcher: Ok. Thank you mam for your time I have learnt a lot from you.

Participant: I hope I have covered your section because one other thing I forgot to indicate why reading is no longer taught. You now is interesting because NCS was emphasizing learner phase but because of G, GPMLS, MILESTONES, CAPS, it seems we have forgotten about learner phase. What we are interested in now is coverage of the syllabus, it does not matter whether I have children that can read or not in classroom, as long I can say to the district I have covered so much which to me is of a window dressing, is not a qualitative work.

Researcher: Thank you mam.

Participant: Thank you too.

PARTICIPANT E5

Researcher: Good Afternoon mam?

Participant: Good Afternoon mam?

Researcher: Thank you for allowing me to do an interview with you. I'm a researcher in UNISA. What I m going to find out is more in terms of the reading in Grade 4. So I m going to ask you questions, if maybe you don't understand or running to fast please just stop me so that we can be on the same line. My first question to you is:

Researcher: Q.1 How long have you been teaching English grade 4?

Participants: I have been teaching grade 4 for 27 years but I have 35years teaching experience.

Researcher: In your experience how can you explain a grade 4 learner?

Participants: They are keen to learn and very attentive if you use right tactics. When you teach them you cannot rely on oral you also need aids. They like to be involved because they still enjoy playing, they are still children. They also like to act up in a story. So they lose interest if you don't engage them in you class.

Researcher: Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?

Participants: Physically they are just before the stage of puberty, so they still more baby like. So I love the grade 4 because I normally say they are too young to be naughty and they are not that old to chat back, they never chat back but when they come to grade 5 they start to think that they are big.. Socially they are at a stage where they like to form friendship from the same sex. They are very close two people will be friend but if the third one comes in forget it there is no more relationship. They are also behaving in a normal way. They still see you as an authoritative person. These learners are still at the age where they are still growing up but they are not that independent. They still show love, they will come and hug you out of the blue. Cognitively they are still in a process of going out of the concrete level.

Researcher: What do you think reading is all about?

Participants: Reading to me is not just recognizing of words, anybody can recognize word, I can take a medical book and read it but I will not understand what I have read. Reading to me is all about understanding what you are reading.

Researcher: Why is it important to teach reading?

Participants: It is important because it forms the basis of all education, if the a child or might be at a high IQ, but never taught to read, and I think that is the cause with our children. We tend to label them as stupid, they can't read, we put them aside and they will not achieve but in the mean time I think there is just a brick of their foundation, missing one sound that they have skip, some things where they miss up.

Researcher: During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?

Participants: No I was never being taught how to teach reading, only the Junior Primary students. I'm a Senior Primary Teacher. We were never been taught how to teach sound, how to teach a child to learn to read because I think they took it as common knowledge you learn to read in grade 1,2 and 3.

Researcher: How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?

Participants: There is not often but is the same one that is repeated. If called for reading is usually the same one. We had the phonics and the reading workshop twice in two years in a row.

Researcher: Do you know reading approaches?

Participants: Different reading approaches, yes I do.

Researcher: Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your grade 4 classroom?

Participants: I normally use phonics combined with syllabification and the reason I use this is because I believe that if a child cannot identify a sound he cannot read. What they need from us now is eclectic approach, the child see the word and read it. I feel that the child must first know the different sound of word. Sounding the word so that when he encounters the word that is above his reading level he will be able to read that just by looking at the different sound syllables and things like the "fairy e".

Researcher: It is normally said that learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from the intermediate phase they are reading to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?

Participants: Well that is easier said than done what they mean is that they mean is when you come into the intermediate phase you do not have to teach reading that is what I've done. Now the child must use his reading to learn if he cannot read he can't learn. In the foundation they teach them how to read that is the basic aspects of reading.

Researcher: In your opinion what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?

Participants: First of all they don't know the basis they don't know the different between those sound that are close together and when you combine two vowels together they are lost. Give them short one three letter word like, pot, mat, pen and hot they can read but when you add a double m and a longer word they are lost.

Researcher: What do you think Word recognition is all about and how does it affect grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?

Participants: Word recognition for me knows to say a word when you see it even as an adult today. I always say is either I recognize the word if is "an" in a novel, I will read pass the word and I still make meaning of the word. When you come to word recognition myself sometimes you drive in a car and you read something from the board you remember that the word start with a "b" and I saw double "l" so the name must be 'bully'. So by just recognizing the first letter and the double 'l' I can make meaning of what was the rest of the word in the board. Word recognition affect their understanding of the word. Some of them will go back and look at it and say to themselves I know what this word is but I m too lazy to go back and read the sentence again, so I read half the instruction and only do half of the instruction. The children lose meaning because they come to the word and stop now they want to break it into parts it takes them too long, now they get the word but they have loss the rest of the previous part they have read.

Researcher: what challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your grade 4 learners?

Participants: The problem is that as a teacher you are half and half when you start teaching at the beginning of the year when you are responsible for teaching language. You expect the child to have mastered the basic sound even though you know that there will be letters and sound that they can't recognize that you can deal with but the child

comes to your class and you ask a simple word that has two consonant and a vowel and he write them incorrectly that is where the frustrations start setting in .

Researcher: Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?

Participants: 'Eeeh" well before I start a reading lesson I start with all the difficult words, and then we as the class break the word into syllables. With the double "ll" they know is where the word should be broken down. We then tackle the word, what part can be recognized say the word scandals, you can see the word scandal. The learners that were taught in their mother tongue in the foundation phase start with the three letter words. I also encourage peer help where the brighter learners helps others on how to break and sound the word. I also use the Dolcith sight words where they read learn them by heart.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?

Participants: I think another important part is how to help learners to have meaning because some children you can give them a bible to read they will read it, but if you ask what they have read about they have no meaning.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?

Participants: No I think you have dealt with everything.

Researcher: Thanks for your time and good bye.

Participants: Thank you for having me, enjoy your study.

PARTICIPANT E6

Researcher: Good Afternoon mam?

Participant: Good Afternoon mam?

Researcher: Thank you for allowing me to do an interview with you. I'm a researcher in UNISA. What I m going to find out is more in terms of the reading in Grade 4. So I m going to ask you questions, if maybe you don't understand or running to fast please just stop me so that we can be on the same line. My first question to you is:

Researcher: How long have you been teaching English grade 4?

Participant: I have been teaching English grade 4 for 28 years but I have been teaching for 38 years.

Researcher: In your experience how can you explain a grade 4 learner?

Participant: I think a grade 4 learner is a learner that you can say is a first time learner when it comes to the intermediate phase because this learner is used to stay with one teacher for the whole day and now in grade 4 he has to rotate , go to this teacher and go to that teacher and the number of learning areas has increased. So firstly they don't adapt very quickly in grade 4 because everything is new to them. So the grade 4 learner I can say is the learner that needs more time everything if maybe you give them a lesson, you cannot give them a 30 minute lesson and think that everything is done in that lesson. You have to introduce your lesson steadily, present it, maybe up to presentation, thereafter is then that you can go to, maybe the following day or next period is then that you can maybe go to writing, corrections but all in all in grade 4 they need time, they are very slow.

Researcher: Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?

Participant: Cognitively it depends on the grade 3 class where they come from, others are well developed and start to think when they answer questions. Just like this year, this year grade 4 , I think they are much better than the grade 4 that we use to have previous years because when you give them work, we don't have to struggle taking long to write, long to understand even the time table they have adjusted themselves, this indicates that they improve each year. They understand better the work that we give them. Personally they grow fast and they look older than their ages. Socially they have friends from similar gender and they also like to take part in activities and play in the ground. Behaviourally as I have said, this is a new class all together some seems to be withdrawn because of the difficulty that they find, they don't finish their work and they are slow which make them feel that they are lost.

Researcher: What do you think reading is all about?

Participant: I think reading is about understanding, understanding about you are reading, the story you are reading, the understanding, how can I put it? Understanding "mmm" recognizing of word in a story, spelling words. Reading is all about, it entitled, it entails a lot of things, is not only reading because when you are reading you have to see the word, understand the message, you have to get to know what is all about the things you are reading.

Researcher: Why is it important to teach reading?

Participant: It is important because without reading the learner cannot write, a learner has to know how to read, has to know how to pronounce a word, has to know how to pause in the correct place that is punctuations so that the sentence will make sense.

Researcher: During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?

Participant: No we were never been trained because I have done Senior Teachers Diploma.

Researcher: How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?

Participant: Not so often maybe twice in a year they call us for an English workshop. They do a general workshop, they don't have specifics. In fact even though they cannot have specific way because children differs you have to handle them the way you see them.

Researcher:Q.6. Do you know reading approaches?

Participant: A few. I just use my own strategies, as I saw them.

Researcher: Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your grade 4 classroom?

Participant: I usually use the whole word approach because I believe that the child must know the word and then after I can go to dividing them into syllables. This means the whole word must be known then divide and then go to phonics.

Researcher: It is normally said that learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from the intermediate phase they are reading to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?

Participant: Read to learn "eeh" I understand that they read so that they can achieve something from what they are reading, some knowledge. Just like for example in Technology they have to know exactly what they are learning, they are learning what is happening through reading. Learn to read they learn the basic principles of reading.

Researcher: In your opinion what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?

Participant: I think the learners were not well founded in the Junior phase that child cannot read at all.

Researcher: What do you think Word recognition is all about and how does it affect grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?

Participant: I think is all about being able to recognize the word you come into contact with. Spell the word, how to pronounce the word, how to, to let children understand the word, what the word about. It affects the children because if they cannot recognize the word, they cannot spell the word. They cannot understand the meaning of that word. They cannot read it

Researcher: What challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your grade 4 learners?

Participant: I experience that they do not know the syllables most of them. Some of them they cannot pronounce the word the way I want them to pronounce.

Researcher: Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?

Participant: I use syllabification where they divide the word into different parts. I use the spelling method where the learners spell the word. I also use the phonics where the learners sound the word.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: I think paraphrasing of the sentence is also a problem because if you read a sentence and you don't use correct punctuation in the correct places, that sentence will not give sense. So paraphrasing and punctuations I think should also be included.

Researcher: Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?

Participant: 'Eeuh' is the letters, the alphabet because there are learners who cannot differentiate between b and d. So how do you recognize that this is the correct word if you cannot differentiate b from d and then some pronounce words in a wrong way, the way you pronounce the word make it have another meaning instead of what you really want.

Researcher: Thank you for your time

Participant: Thank you mam.

APPENDIX H

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW DATA

Table 1 Question 1: **How long have you been teaching English grade 4?**

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| I taught grade 4 for 17 years but I have been teaching alleeh, kinds of subjects and all kinds of grades for 44 years. | I have been teaching English grade 4 for 3years now, but in total I have 7 years teaching experience. I have previously taught English and social sciences for 4 years. | I have been teaching grade 4 English for 6 years now and I was actually qualified as a Junior Primary teacher from grade 1-3 when I first qualify and I taught that for 7years and I went into tertiary education in an old black college where I taught communication and then I came back into teaching grade 4. | I taught, I would say I have started with grade 2, then I moved in 3 and 4, but I spend more time in Grade 4. I would say about 18years teaching Grade 4. | I have been teaching grade 4 for 27 years but I have 35years teaching experience | I have been teaching English grade 4 for 28years but I have been teaching for 38 years. |

Table 2 Question .2a: **In your experience how can you explain a grade 4 learner?**

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| Well a grade 4 learner is very much still part of a foundation phase learner, although is a transitional between the foundation phase and senior phase but they still need the everyday guidance, eeh, help with all their own work, individual attention .Eeeh | A grade 4 learner is the learner who has moved from the foundation phase and has just entered the intermediate phase for the first time. She is still thinks concrete level but at the process of starting to explain | A Grade 4 learner is not the baby of the school anymore, they need to know the reading and word recognition. They need to know all those aspect because they use that into things like writing exams, writing test, they need to understand | : In my experience a grade 4 learner is that learner who still struggles to cope with the "eeheeh" the demands of a Grade 4 class because this learner is used to stay with the teacher the whole day, one teacher the whole day with only | They are keen to learn and very attentive if you use right tactics. When you teach them you cannot rely on oral you also need aids. They like to be involved because they still enjoy playing, they are still children. They also like to act up in a story. | I think a grade 4 learner is a learner that you can say is a first time learner when it comes to the intermediate phase because this learner is used to stay with one teacher for the whole day and now in grade 4 he has to rotate , go to this teacher and go |

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|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| <p>a child in grade 4 find it exceptionally difficult to adjust to all different subject because there more subject in grade 4 and they don't even understand what the subject is all about, if they say to them we are going to do social science.....they don't really mean what, what you really mean by that and you have to take it very gradually and explain to the children so beautifully and be very organized about their homework, about what they have to do because otherwise it become exceptionally for those in grade 4 learners, you must make their topic interesting.</p> | <p>things as they are.</p> | <p>what they actually reading, so they should be at a level where they have mastered all the basics of word recognition and how to read. All those things were sorted up to know and they need to move forward to Intersen or Senior phase where the questions are more application questions although we still need to guide them on these level.</p> | <p>reduced learning areas. Now the learner joins Grade 4 and the learner has the adjustment problem because teachers come in and go out and suddenly from the three learning areas , there are eight learning areas, which is quite heavy for this learners more over of them are still shaking regarding the Language of Teaching and Learning.</p> | <p>So they lose interest if you don't engage them in you class</p> | <p>to that teacher and the number of learning areas has increased. So firstly they don't adapt very quickly in grade 4 because everything is new to them. So the grade 4 learner I can say is the learner that needs more time everything if maybe you give them a lesson, you cannot give them a 30 minute lesson and think that everything is done in that lesson. You have to introduce your lesson steadily, present it, maybe up to presentation, thereafter is then that you can go to, maybe the following day or next period is then that you can maybe go to writing, corrections but all in all in grade 4 they need time, they are very slow.</p> |
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Table 3 Question 2b: Then how can you explain their stages of development with reference to their cognitive, social, physical and emotional development?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Cognitively they are still very much on the concrete phase they have not reach the stage of abstract thinking and I would say that they are far closer to the grade 3 in social development than to a grade 5 child. Although during the course of the year ee....h they develop quite radical and by the end of the year you will see a big change. Socially: this is a happy age in a child's life, they are very still naïve little children, ee...h not part of adult world, they love little baby games, ee....h stories to listen to, they love even fairy tale is still very much part of their life, they love magic, they like to be imaginative, ee....m their development is like I said is very still and happy in their small social group, it is not like when they become older, they don't want to mix with certain children, they are very</p> | <p>I find that is the year where they are still, they change quite a bit, so their behaviour is generally good and I don't have any problem. But you find that there are hormones and physical changes especially towards the end of the year it start to come in and you can see that. Cognitively they are ideally at the beginning this is the way I seen it and learn it . They are ideally at the stage where they still need help but by the end of the year they should be at the point where they can work and read by themselves without any problems and without needing me so much in that, because when they do first come from grade 3 they need you a lot and you gonna "eeh" sort of winning them off that because in grade 5 they</p> | <p>Cognitively they are still doing things in the concrete level but move out this a bid toward the end of the year. They also like to reason issues but at a concrete level. Socially as well they are more matured, if they stay in the same school they have made grouping. Again what I have experience when they are working they work very well and quietly at this stage. They are still at that stage where they enjoy having the teacher to teach them as opposed to Grade 7 where they feel cork sure of themselves. These children in grade 4 level are quite dependent of the teacher to guide them and help them to do their work. Another fact is that behaviorally if there is discipline in class they work very quietly although in</p> | <p>If we align their development with Piaget stages, I think cognitively they are in the concrete level, well their development differs because we need to keep in mind the could be an intelligent who could be above that stage but we can also keep in mind that the could be a slow learner who, who is still at the beginning of a concrete stage. Socially depending on the disposition of the teacher and the home background most of them are outgoing, explorative, a few are shy and they need to be prompted. Physically they are becoming to be aware of their gender, I am a boy, I am a girl, I am playing with girls, you playing boys don't touch me, you know stuff like that. Emotionally they are very sensitive especially to</p> | <p>Physically they are just before the stage of puberty, so they still more baby like. So I love the grade 4 because I normally say they are too young to be naughty and they are not that old to chat back, they never chat back but when they come to grade 5 they start to think that they are big.. Socially thy are at a stage where they like to form friendship from the same sex. They are very close two people will be friend but if the third one comes in forget it there is no more relationship. They are also behaving in a normal way. They still see you as an authoritative person. These learners are still at the age where they are still growing up</p> | <p>Cognitively it depends on the grade 3 class where they come from, others are well developed and start to think when they answer questions. Just like this year, this year grade 4 , I think they are much better than the grade 4 that we use to have previous years because when you give them work, we don't have to struggle taking long to write, long to understand even the time table they have adjusted themselves, this indicates that they improve each year. They understand better the work that we give them. Personally they grow fast and they look older than their ages. Socially they have friends from similar gender and they also like to take part in activities and play in the ground. Behaviourally as I have said,</p> |

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| <p>happy among each other. It is of course a very still nice grade to teach. Physically they grow faster than before.</p> | <p>are not gonna want it. So I think Intellectually they are very reliant at the beginning and hopefully they get better at the end of the year. Emotionally they are still sensitive to criticism.</p> | <p>groups they sometimes the group work end up with arguments but general the behaviour is still good. Physically I have in the past few years when I started teaching to now, I have notice girls developing harmoniously much, much faster and are concern with their sexuality that what I have found in Grade 4 level and in grade 4 boys like to play soccer and like to fight among themselves about who is older. In general coordination is quite good in most of them although there are exceptions</p> | <p>criticism.</p> | <p>but they are not that independent. They still show love, they will come and hug you out of the blue. Cognitively they are still in a process of going out of the concrete level.</p> | <p>this is a new class all together some seems to be withdrawn because of the difficulty that they find, they don't finish their work and they are slow which make them feel that they are lost.</p> |
|---|---|--|-------------------|---|--|

Table 4 Question 3a: What do you think reading is all about?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Reading is the basic of all learning, the more you read , obvious the more you extend your vocabulary, the more you extend knowledge of the world.</p> | <p>Reading is gaining knowledge, gaining knowledge and understanding what you have gaining.</p> | <p>I think personality that reading is about acquiring knowledge. Knowing and understanding what you are reading.</p> | <p>I think reading is interpretation of what the senses take out there in the environment, processed into the brain and become an output throughout the mouth and how and the accuracy of the eye. You know reading over letters</p> | <p>Reading to me is not just recognizing of words, anybody can recognize word, I can take a medical book and read it but I will not understand what I have read. Reading to me is all about understandin</p> | <p>I think reading is about understanding, understanding about you are reading, the story you are reading, the understanding, how can I put it? Understanding "mmm" recognizing of word in a story, spelling words. Reading is all</p> |

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| | | | joined together into words. It is a skill that needs to be taught. | g what you are reading. | about, it entitled, it entails a lot of things, is not only reading because when you are reading you have to see the word, understand the message, you have to get to know what is all about the things you are reading. |
|--|--|--|--|-------------------------|--|

Table 5 Question 3b: Why is it important to teach reading?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| For a child in grade 4 is essential to read every day, not only their class reader but read extensively about the subject matter and anything that they can lay their hands on also the grammatical structures, anything will improve by means of reading | It is important because no matter where in their life they are going to need to use reading, just reading a bottle of a poison bottle not to drink it you need to understand what you are reading | I feel that if you can't read, you can't do anything into the future you need to know. Reading and word recognition goes together you need to understand what you are reading before you can do any instructions and basic packages to the food that we buy to filling of forms. So personally I feel reading encompass everything single things that you do in life, if you can't do it to a certain successful degree in life you are going to battle. In other words it helps you to acquire knowledge | I would say it is important to teach reading, the potential is there to read, but the potential need to be developed because this children need reading skills. They need to learn how to analyze and synthesis a word. They need to learn discrimination of words. They need to know words that sound the same but are spelled differently. Reading is very important because it is, it creates independently and make a child to be self reliance. | It is important because it forms the basis of all education, if the a child or might be at a high IQ, but never taught to read, and I think that is the cause with our children. We tend to label them as stupid, they can't read, we put them aside and they will not achieve but in the mean time I think there is just a brick of their foundation, missing one sound that they have skip, some things where they miss up. | It is important because without reading the learner cannot write, a learner has to know how to read, has to know how to pronounce a word, has to know how to pause in the correct place that is punctuations so that the sentence will make sense. |

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| | | and .o be able to communicate with others. | | | |
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Table 6. Question 4: During your training as a teacher, were you been trained on how to teach reading?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Because it was so long ago, ahaa(laughed) , Yes I definitely was(laughed). That was a large section of, of the curriculum, because in my days we did not do a degree we had to do a diploma and it was all very practical. We have to do subject like subject methodology of every subject that was part of our curriculum when we were students</p> | <p>I did not train as a teacher. I did PGCE with UNISA. So there is no practical already. There is a bit of practical but you are already teaching at that stage.</p> | <p>Yes, I was taught because I was a junior primary trained teacher. I was taught how to teach reading and reading and I applied that in my first years that I started teaching and I think to a certain degree I probably applied now but obviously not much because we don't have a certain period just dedicated to reading we do reading among all work we are doing.</p> | <p>I would say I do really regret the years I spend in a college. I was trained as a primary school teacher, higher primary school teacher but I really remember our lecturer teaching us how to teach reading or rather giving us a lesson on reading skill. It was superficially done in as much as when I joined "eeh, eeh", the school as a new teacher, to me reading was a child looks a book and read and I was surprised because I thought on my first day those learners could read but when I check they were saying words but not looking at the reader. And it makes me think this is more route learning than reading.</p> | <p>No I was never being taught how to teach reading, only the Junior Primary students. I'm a Senior Primary Teacher. We were never been taught how to teach sound, how to teach a child to learn to read because I think they took it as common knowledge you learn to read in grade 1,2 and 3.</p> | <p>No we were never been trained because I have done senior teachers diploma.</p> |

Table 7 .Question 5: How often do you receive training from the department or district on how to teach reading?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>When I started teaching long ago, I had many many courses also very well presented and also may circulars were about teaching of reading. Previously district meetings were held quite regularly as compared to now, where we were given all the latest of the teaching of language and of teaching reading and often this was also presented by films where model lessons will be given by experienced teachers which make a big impression on me Because I remember even those lesson today. I have model my lessons around what was shown to me. I also remember that at that time every school had an extended reference library for teachers where all latest publication were send to the schools and if you were an alert reader you will always very en touched with new ideas</p> | <p>Teacher center training workshops, in all my years of experience I have attended 3 courses for general teaching of English, reading methods and then started to go into writing as well. None of them was totally on how to teach reading.</p> | <p>On grade 4 level there are courses that the department is encouraging us to do, I can't tell you of hand how exactly when they have been but at our school they make announcement in the staffroom about courses that are offering how to teach learners who are having problems with reading and so on more get to the Junior Primary but I think if you as a grade 4 teacher want to get involve they can't say you can't attend. I just did not go to such courses. In the Intermediate Phase we really don't attend such training regularly and generally the workshop that we attend is more on English as a learning area to discuss its learning outcomes and assessment standards and not on how to</p> | <p>You know "eeh" in the olden days there were no training. It was the teacher's initiatives like I realize that the children cannot read and I am lacking in terms of how to teach them reading then I registered for a diploma in specialized education which is remedial at Wits University. It was like I am at a college and I kept asking myself, this is what the college should have taught me. How to prepare a learner to read, which encompasses the development. I mean the perceptual development skill, the pre-reading skill, the picture reading, vocabulary development before the child can learn to read. But at least today , nowadays the department at least make a point that time and again we are , are,</p> | <p>There is not often but is the same one that is repeated. If called for reading is usually the same one. We had the phonics and the reading workshop twice in two years in a raw.</p> | <p>Not so often maybe twice in a year they call us for an English workshop. They do a general workshop, they don't have specifics. In fact even though they cannot have specific way because children differs you have to handle them the way you see them.</p> |

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| and new method of teaching | | teach reading and its components such as word recognition. | invited to be taught by various service providers on teaching of reading, like one of them the “ABARCARD” an interesting, playful way of teaching reading. Keeping in mind that this are children they learn more while they play. | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

Table 8.Question 6: Do you know reading approaches?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| I presume I do, Yes (laughed) | Not so much. I am familiar with what I have been taught by other teachers and that is generally what I use. | I can't tell you the reading approach as in the name of it. Ok I know that when I start teaching we use the “Kathy and Mark” books where the children sound the word out and learn to recognize those words in their reading context, but I can't tell you what the name was it. | Yes , the two reading approaches that I am aware of is the phonic method and the word identification which is the whole word method. | Different reading approaches , yes I do. | A few. I just use my own strategies, as I saw them. |

Table 9.Question 7: Which reading approaches do you normally use when teaching reading in your grade 4 classroom?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| The approach I have been using the past few years because of English being a second language to the school I'm | Basically listen to them reading. Teaching them how to sound out words, which actually blend together. So I am | When I teaching in the Junior Primary Phase we start with word recognition and build up from the basic word and read | I would not say I have a prescribed method I normally consider, I have to know my children, there is a | I normally use phonics combined with syllabification and the reason I use this is because I believe that if a child cannot | I usually use the whole word approach because I believe that the child must know the word and then after I can go to |

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| <p>teaching. I would, my approach will be , I would use reading lesson in all sort manners not only reading lesson but I will use reading lesson to reinforce the grammar for all of other work. In other words the reading lesson will be central to my other learning that will take place in that week so that they hear the same words over and over again and they become familiar with the unfamiliar structure and vocabulary. I prefer the eclectic approach and where you use phonics and you use recognition word attack skills, where you would also use ee...h how can I put it? Where you can use the idea of the story just guess words, is not wrong to guess ee....h, ee.....h the word, because that is a skill to help you discover words.</p> | <p>teaching them how to sound out correct names, speaking them and to make sure that they especially understand, because I found in grade 4 specifically because I also did English grade 7 as well, but the time they go to grade 4 as they go up they can read but cannot understand the words. They basically Para-fashioned learned words instead of understanding what the meaning. So whenever I do reading my approach to the reader is to get whoever to read and correct as we go along or you know I won't to give them the words straight away, I make them sound out and we then go to the understanding what it means.</p> | <p>short sentences to reading longer sentences and to get into reading books. Now in grade 4 our reading approach is based on comprehension. We do not use a specific approach what we do in class is that when we get a worksheet or book or page to read we read together, read individual, ask questions about it and recognize the more difficult words understand those, look in the dictionary because that is another skill I find the children are lacking a little bit, the children are battling to find words in the dictionary, sometimes they become very lazy to find it, so we always encourage them to have a dictionary, go through the worksheet look for words, discuss them so that they understand those words and we put them in a sentences, answer</p> | <p>theory that says "a child who is , whose right hemisphere is dominant struggles reading through the phonic method and the child whose left brain is dominant is able to read through the phonics method. So my approaches depends on the child's need. Those that can do phonics, I do phonics method with them and those that are right brainers I do the whole word method with them.</p> | <p>identify a sound he cannot read. What they need from us now is eclectic approach, the child see the word and read it. I feel that the child must first know the different sound of word. Sounding the word so that when he encounters the word that is above his reading level he will be able to read that just by looking at the different sound syllables and things like the "fairy e'.</p> | <p>dividing them into syllables. This means the whole word must be known then divide and then go to phonics.</p> |
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| | | questions orally and sometimes in written. | | | |
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Table 10. Question 8: It is normally said that learners in the foundation phase learn to read and from the intermediate phase they are reading to learn. What do you understand by the following statement?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT -E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| <p>Ooh, by the time you get to grade 4 you should be able to read quite fluently, in other words you have nobody nobody has to teach how to attack words . From grade 4 onwards you have just to take the reading matter to enhance your knowledge to any topic or vocabulary. Read with understanding or to comprehend what they have read . Foundation phase read only words.</p> | <p>There are so many subject in the Intermediate phase. What I understand is that foundation phase educators teaches them words and how to read whereas by the time they get to grade 4 in the Intermediate phase they have to know how to read in order to get information. So you do not teach them anymore to read they got to know.</p> | <p>I understand that in the Foundation Phase somebody is helping them to learn or to teach them on how to approach reading and actually how to read, that is they know only the basic of reading, whereas from grade 4 onwards they should have mastered that and know what they are doing with the information they have read and through that reading they can learn different learning area because the foundation has already been mastered in the Foundation Phase.</p> | <p>: In the Foundation Phase as I said earlier that reading is not acquired this children still learn how to read, they learn from understanding and saying the sound correctly from there they do the word building. There they played game until they are able to build up the word and read it, and this method has an advantage that once the child has learned reading through the phonics that child can read even a new word because this child has been given skills on how to read. "Eeh" reading to learn this children can read, their reading is solid though they use this skills for reading to acquire and explore other learning areas.</p> | <p>Well that is easier said than done what they mean is that they mean is when you come into the intermediate phase you do not have to teach reading that is what I've done. Now the child must use his reading to learn if he cannot read he can't learn. In the foundation they teach them how to read that is the basic aspects of reading.</p> | <p>Read to learn "eeh" I understand that they read so that they can achieve something from what they are reading, some knowledge. Just like for example in Technology they have to know exactly what they are learning, they are learning what is happening through reading. Learn to read they learn the basic principles of reading.</p> |

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| | | | They can read their own social sciences book, they can read their history book. So now they are reading to learn. | | |
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Table 11. Question 9: **In your opinion what makes grade 4 learners in your class unable to read?**

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| <p>I think especially with children whose language is not English, that is English is their second language not their mother tongue, it is not really that they do not know the mechanism of reading, it is more of a question of they are unfamiliar with the knowledge that is presented in the reading lesson, for example : you have a story about a pearl and the children had never had experience about a pearl or touch a pearl, so in their little world is something totally unfamiliar and that is a problem, that is a problem that is very prevalent among children whose home language is not English, so the knowledge of</p> | <p>Not being taught the basics properly, not to be encourage at home is a big thing, you don't have like your parents to help you from home, but I also think there is not enough focus on the Foundation Phase .There is not enough focus on reading like you said the reading methods and techniques, spelling because those two are very important I feel. So the shift to grade 4 is so much, there is no time to teach them to read any more or to help them and as a result they start loose out.</p> | <p>I think some learners have backlogs because they have not, I'm not sure that they have been taught how to read properly from grade 1.I find some of them having concentration problems where they become easily tired when they read. I have also find children with eyes problems where their eyes skip around their eye movement is not correct, 'eeh'. I have referred them to optometrist to have their eyes tested because their eyes skip. I actually now that, it happen to my daughter when she was to go to grade 9 at a high school. 'eeeh" she started battling very badly with</p> | <p>: I would say in my opinion, "eeh" one thing that I have picked up especially after I have qualified for the remedial "eeh", course, perceptual development is not taught as it is supposed to be. I would say this begins in Grade R and if the child's perceptual development is underdevelop ment a child's begin to struggles with reading, because that programme teaches the child to know what makes word the same, what makes words different, why are words sounded differently. What makes "b and d" differently, even in terms of writing.</p> | <p>First of all they don't know the basis they don't know the different between those sound that are close together and when you combine two vowels together they are lost.Give them short one three letter word like, pot, mat, pen and hot they can read but when you add a double m and a longer word they are lost.</p> | <p>I think the learners were not well founded in the Junior phase that child cannot read at all.</p> |

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| <p>the world of concept is so limited, is not that they can't get the word but they don't know what the word represent.</p> | | <p>comprehension and somebody said go and have her eyes tested. It is a special test that they do where the eyes skip words, her eyes were skipping to the end of the sentence, she could not focus like this(showing) through the end of the page and therefore she lost concentration and can't understand what she was reading about. Also poor word recognition, the children are sometimes not learning how to sounding the words, they will just look at it, look at it and will not be able to say B-a-t to say that is Bat. But when, if we test the reading age, we look at Hollburnreading scale, there are various reading I know some of those reading scale are not "eeem" , we use them to give us an idea, and there are quite a few children who can read but they are one</p> | <p>Again the word has position, the initial, the middle and the ending. So Grade 4 learners, they missed all that in grade 3 there is a gap but again the question of early entry to the school also contributes to that. I think we were let down by Minister(pseudoname), when he shift, when he change the entry level from seven and lowered it to six forgetting hat children do not mature at the same time. Yes some six year old manage but a lot of them they got caught up in Grade 4, because Grade 4 has more work than the Foundation Phase.</p> | | |
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| | | <p>way under age for their reading level and therefore when they got to read comprehensions they start battling with reading that. So those are the problems why they sometimes can't read.</p> | | | |
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Table 12. Question 10: What do you think Word recognition is all about and how does it affect grade 4 learners with regard to their reading ability?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| <p>a. Word recognition is of course crucial; it is the pivot around which everything turns. You should be able to recognize the word and know what it represent and I think for that is why I mentioned earlier on that you have to do the reading lesson orally, show them what a pearl look like and introduce all sort of ideas and with pictures anything so that when it comes to the real reading they are able to recognize the word because they are already know the concept. It therefore affect the way they read and how they understand</p> | <p>Word recognition to me is to be able to recognize the word, know what you are looking at, understand it and to say it. The effect will depend on the type of method that they have learned for the spelling. They often don't recognize the word. As I said to you what I have encountered is that they learn to say the word and not understand what the word means. So as much as they can see it and know that word but they can't understand it. Their reading pack is also affected because the spend most of</p> | <p>For me word recognition is about being able to read the word immediately as you see it, there is no need to think first. I think word recognition has an impact on the learners a lot because if they can't recognize the words they won't understand what it means when reading and they will also be unable to answer questions. Again they will read slow and take a lot of time to finish their reading.</p> | <p>Word identification is all about the child, child's ability to look at a word and be able to read it but this does not suggest that the child can write the word, but what it is important is to look at a word and say it. Look at the picture and name it, associate the word and a picture. It does affect a Grade 4 learner because one word can appear in different settings and if that word is not mastered it will not be. He won't be able to read it in different setting.</p> | <p>Word recognition for me knows to say a word when you see it even as an adult today. I always say is either I recognize the word if is "an" in a novel, I will read pass the word and I still make meaning of the word. When you come to word recognition myself sometimes you drive in a car and you read something from the board you remember that the word start with a "b" and I saw double "l" so the name must be 'bully'. So by just recognizing the first letter and the double 'l' I can make</p> | <p>I think is all about being able to recognize the word you come into contact with. Spell the word, how to pronounce the word, how to, to let children understand the word, what the word about. It affects the children because if they cannot recognize the word, they cannot spell the word. They cannot understand the meaning of that word. They cannot read it</p> |

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| what has been read. | the time looking at the word and not being able to recognize it and make it difficult for them to read the words quickly. | | | meaning of what was the rest of the word in the board. Word recognition affect their understanding of the word. Some of them will go back and look at it and say to themselves I know what this word is but I m too lazy to go back and read the sentence again, so I read half the instruction and only do half of the instruction. The children lose meaning because they come to the word and stop now they want to break it into parts it takes them too long, now they get the word but they have loss the rest of the previous part they have read. | |
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Table13. Question 11: **What challenges did you experience when addressing word recognition problems with your grade 4 learners?**

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| Word recognition is a big problem for grade 4 child and I taught them to do syllabification and to sound the word. But it is a big problem for them, it slow down their speed and as a result of the | They are unable to use a dictionary at this stage. Basically if they cannot recognize the word or you tell them how to spell the word and tell them to look that word in a dictionary they | To be honest with you I can answer like this way that THRASS. You know our school is big on THRASS. 'eeeh' I find it to me some problems with word recognition, I really don't | A Grade 4 learner's reading ability can also be affected by an unidentified visual problem, could be short sightedness, could be poor visual skills and it can also be affected by | The problem is that as a teacher you are half and half when you start teaching at the beginning of the year when you are responsible for teaching language. You expect the | I experience that they do not know the syllables most of them. Some of them they cannot pronounce the word the way I want them to pronounce. |

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| <p>word recognition problem they don't like to read because it is a big struggle if you can't recognize the word and they become so slow and then eventually they don't want to do it because they also lose focus and forget what they were reading about. You have to encourage them all the time, make reading matter quite easy like I said, and explain a lot of things beforehand, so that when it comes to the actual reading, it is an easy task for them and they enjoy doing it that will eventually lead to better word recognition as they grow confidence.</p> | <p>can't recognize the word because they don't know the spelling and they can't get the right spelling correct in the dictionary and they can't even look around to get the correct spelling. In grade 4 we obviously have many learning areas, basic and more intense terminologies come along and they cannot recognize them. They can't understand the basic word and root word and they don't know what a root word is and they don't know how to break words into syllables to say them correctly.</p> | <p>know if I really like the THRASS method, the children turn to learn the song in that but some can't identify the words but others they do well on it. There are a lot of children coming from other schools and other provinces that they have not done THRASS they also battle with this method. So there is a little time to teach them how to recognize these words. The other problem is that from grade 4 they start writing more intense text, they can't read, they are quite intelligent, there is nothing wrong with their brain, they can't read the questions and they answer the questions anyway because they can't recognize those words. That is what I have found.</p> | <p>the child's confidence. It can also be affected by underlining emotional problems, which the child cannot share with anyone. And thus word recognition then is affected by word meaning if the child does not understand the meaning of the word because that word is taught in isolation of a picture but again it does become a problem because some words does not have pictures. So the teacher needs to teach the children symbols represented by those words. It also affect the speed of reading and the accuracy of reading and all that aspects resultantly affect comprehension which is word meaning.</p> | <p>child to have mastered the basic sound even though you know that there will be letters and sound that they can't recognize that you can deal with but the child comes to your class and you ask a simple word that has two consonant and a vowel and he write them incorrectly that is where the frustrations start setting in .</p> | |
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Table 14. Question 12: Which strategies/approaches are you using to address word recognition problem?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| <p>I think pre-teaching at all times, make sure that what you give in a reading lesson is familiar, choosing the correct reading matter, is not good getting a book from England, where the condition are so totally foreign to South African children and expecting them to be able to read. So choosing the right material, pre-teaching, teaching how to recognize the phonic sound, a lot of teaching must be done beforehand so that the actual reading process is quite an easy process afterwards.</p> <p>According to me strategies for word recognition can also be called word attack skills. I can mention four of the word recognition skills:</p> <p>The first one can be Configuration which mean that you look at the shape of the letter. The letters that are long and tall or short and you can more or less guess what the word is by</p> | <p>I am a syllable person. I do try to get them break the word either to break out phonetically into their syllables so that they will be able to say it. I also use the Dolch list but some aothe classes use sight words with shorter list which as they grow up the list is longer but grade 4 Dolch list is the best because it is their basic everyday words that they use</p> | <p>At the moment what I m doing, just one of the things that I do in he afternoon I have a reading a reading Lab where the children go there, they do comprehensio n. There is all in the box, they go through a little comprehensio n and the word that they need to recognize and the key words. It really helps those learners who battle when they are going to exams or writing any test or worksheet wherever you know that the teacher is not there to give explanation. The learner learn how to recognize words on their own , try to figure out the meaning and it just build their vocabulary because I think is part of that to build up much wider vocabulary to be able to recognize those words. In class you know individual help, peer teaching also help with word recognition. I</p> | <p>: "Aah,aah" out of creativity I have device the following: The first strategy I present a word and a picture and I say out the word and the child show me the picture. The child shows, "eeh" I show the picture and the child shows me the word and if I am positive that this has been mastered all those words on the word card.I write them on a chart. If the child is able, I block those word with another chart, all the open word means the words that the child cannot read. Now children are very intelligent they look and memorize those words on a chart. To ensure that those words are, can be read is not a route learning. I would take an A4 page divide it into two columns. The first column would be represented by colours. I can have as many</p> | <p>'Eeeh" well before I start a reading lesson I start with all the difficult words, and then we as the class break the word into syllables. With the double "ll" they know is where the word should be broken down. We then tackle the word, what part can be recognized say the word scandals, you can see the word scandal. The learners that were taught in their mother tongue in the foundation phase start with the three letter words. I also encourage peer help where the brighter learners helps others on how to break and sound the word. I also use the Dolcth sight words where they read learn them by heart.</p> | <p>I use syllabification where they divide the word into different parts. I use the spelling method where the learners spell the word. I also use the phonics where the learners sound the word.</p> |

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| <p>looking at the configuration. The second word recognition attack is when focusing on consonants rather than on vowels because you can actually read sentences where you deleted all vowels even language in the world such as Hebrew's they don't use vowels at all and yet people can read what they have read. An example will be: The bell will go now, if you take that sentence and delete all the vowels (Thblwl g nw), you will be able to recognize the word and read. So teach children to concentrate on the consonants rather than on vowels only. The third word recognition skill will be making use of guess work, not guessing widely but think of the context you reading and think what the word could be and that is a very important skill to master. Lastly if the word is very long make use of syllabification where you break the words</p> | | <p>also let them sounding out the word like B-a-d for Bad, I also use sight words they must know by hard the Dolch list and also allow them to break the words. That is what I believe in.</p> | <p>colours as I want in a row, let say in raw 1 the colour is red. Raw 1 I have words which take them from the chart but I write those words randomly not in a sequence of a chart. The second raw could be yellow, other list of words. Third raw green, other list of words. Fourth raw blue, other list of words, depending on how many words you have taught or how many word you have worked with the children. And then I give them colours and I say to them, I stick on this pages on their books, then I say to them now listen to the instruction. Look for the word for an example "table" in which column do you think table is? What colour represent that column. They will take, if the word is in the colour, in red colour, they will take a red crayon but if among them there is a child</p> | | |
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| <p>up into syllables and teach the children to clap the words so that they are able to recognize. An example of syllabification will be the word syllabification will be: syl-la bi fi ca-tion.</p> <p>Again I also make use of Dolch sight words when teaching word recognition.</p> <p>Sight words are very important and old fashion method like flash cards, putting them in your class, showing them to children, repeating them even words that are difficult to read which do not have meanings like nouns and verbs are easy to teach because you can show them or give , show picture but words such as although or abstract words those are very difficult for children to read, so make use of flash cards eeh explain it, make sentences with the words. Let them pronounce the word, do little rhyme, rhymes where you get phonic sound to practice the correct phonic</p> | | | <p>who is guessing, she will look around to see which colour the other has taken and if she does not know the word, yes she will mark the red column but she wouldn't mark the correct word. Then I understand this child has just memorized , we then go back to word identification.</p> <p>Once the children can colour this word we move on to game now . The board games like snakes and ladder instead of counting I have this reading card. If the child tossed a dice and the dice gives number four instead of saying one, two, three, four on the snakes and ladder the child will read four words. If the child is unable to read the child moves out of the game and goes back to stage 1.</p> <p>Then the next stage I teach them what makes up this word through syllabification.</p> | | |
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| <p>sound. For example a little rhyme I can think of is called "Goodness miss hook, the pudding you have cook, you could have look at your cookery book", where you teach the children the oo sound correctly and if the children repeat those little rhyme after you, you get the correct pronunciation of English sound.</p> | | | <p>I emphasize that each syllable must be accompanied by a vowel. Again this teaches them to listen to themselves and learns how many times, how many parts a word can be "eeh" broken. For instead when start with the word "<i>table</i>", I say to the child say the word "<i>table</i>" and clap your hand and listen to yourself. How many times you clap? A child who is not listening will say "<i>table, table, table</i>". Then I say "no" listen "<i>ta-ble</i>" how many times, two times, split the word. I give the child to cut, a pair of scissor to cut the word into two. The game go on until when I give them split words, and say now look for syllables and built up the words. For instance I say to them, I have this word "<i>Grade</i>". Now let us say it and clap our hands and listen while clapping. "<i>Gra-</i></p> | | |
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| | | | <p><i>de</i>”, now look for those two syllables that say “<i>Grade</i>”. They look for those syllables and stick into their book. Then I am positive we are moving to mastery of reading.</p> <p>I can say I don’t rush into a reader. I also use sight word, Dolch list which has 220 words. If the child is able to read those then that is a step on. The is also a Fry list.</p> | |
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Table 15. Question 13: Is there anything that was not asked about reading but you think the researcher should know?

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| <p>I feel very strongly about the fact that nowadays children have subject teaching in grade 4 and since they have done subject teaching reading has gone down the hill because in subject teaching the children leave you after an hour and you don’t see them again for the rest of the day if you are an English teacher, yet when you are a class teacher you start the morning with work,</p> | <p>No</p> | <p>I don’t know is what I think you should know about or is a recommendation that if I can say this, I really believe learners from grade 4 although we are doing English and reading worksheet or whatever, I still think that we should set aside the time where we can read more and reading to me is just a most important thing even if we you can’t do Maths, you still</p> | <p>“Eeh” would say, “eeh” the researcher will also “eeh” check on the schools and see if reading is taught and are the period allocated for reading. There is a confusion that teachers do where by a language book is used to teach language and as well as to read and you find you find that in the classroom there is no reader except the language book. Secondly</p> | <p>I think another important part is how to help learners to have meaning because some children you can give them a bible to read they will read it, but if you ask what they have read about they have no meaning.</p> | <p>I think paraphrasing of the sentence is also a problem because if you read a sentence and you don’t use correct punctuation in the correct places, that sentence will not give sense. So paraphrasing and punctuations I think should also be included.</p> |

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| <p>throughout the day, you allow every child to read to you, while they are colouring, while they are leaving the room for break you grasp the last child and say come and read to me, in that manner you listen to every child every day while they are in your class, which does not happen at all with subject teaching and you cannot do the follow up work that grade 4 child still need , like as I have explain the jump from grade 3 to grade 4 is far too large and part of the problem is subject teaching is all about the child is not about the teacher, whether the teacher prefers the subject is not the point, the point is what is best for the child, and definitely it is only class teaching so that you can spend all your time on individual children, individual needs, individual help and also listening to the reading, you cannot in an</p> | | <p>need to know how to read. Maybe again grade 4 teachers be given more strategies and even more courses on how to help this learners because you assume in grade 4 that learners come knowing how to read but the reading is really hampering their achievements. I am seeing a parent this afternoon for example this boy is tested and performing at a level of an eight year old to read whereas he is ten years turning eleven, so he has a backlog and 'aah' is just hampers everything. Again parents in the olden days used to read for their children, I still read to my grandchildren, bed stories is also important. But now parents are not doing that anymore there is no love for reading, children think reading is a curse. Sometimes those who love</p> | <p>involvement of parents in improving the children's reading. When children get back home they rush for their TV games, they watch TV, no reading happens. You visit the library there are less children in the library. There is nothing that pushes the children to read, there is no reading for pleasure, there is no reading for exploration, there is no reading for increasing information. Reading is only done to pass assessment.</p> | | |
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| hour lesson do the spelling, do the grammar and whatever is expected and still find time to listen to reading which still should be part of grade 4 syllabus because they have not master like they should have in reading, the process of reading, they still need to practice learning to read. | | reading do very well and those that think reading is a curse they don't do well. | | | |
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Table 16. Question 14: **Is there anything that was not asked about word recognition but you think the researcher should know?**

| PARTICIPANT E1 | PARTICIPANT E2 | PARTICIPANT E3 | PARTICIPANT E4 | PARTICIPANT E5 | PARTICIPANT E6 |
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| Yes, also perhaps what I have noticed throughout the years is that, teachers are inclined to make use of too many worksheets. Teachers have his erroneous idea that if a child has done a worksheet they have the knowledge and are able to recognize words which is not true. When I was studying my B.A Honours in Linguistic I have learned that a child had to learn or hear the words at least four hundred times before it become part of | With word recognition I think how it is taught is important, not with us but with other phase because I found that they have took out, although they are bringing know in phonics in grade 1,2 and 3 they took out. The schools were allowed to choose whichever way they wanted to teach spelling basically, and I feel like even at this stage you find kids from different schools, they say words differently, see | No, I just think word recognition goes with reading, whether I'm right or wrong, if you can't recognize the word you can't read it. So I think that is the bottom line. | Yes, I think in learning the word recognition approach, the child still cannot write the word, he can read the word but has not been taught how to write it. So one question is now after the children can recognize this word ,how do we teach spelling of this word because a child who has learnt through the word recognition in most cases is a bad speller which is a disadvantage as opposed to a phonic | No I think you have dealt with everything | 'Eeuh" is the letters, the alphabet because there are learners who cannot differentiate between b and d. So how do you recognize that this is the correct word if you cannot differentiate b from d and then some pronounce words in a wrong way, the way you pronounce the word make it have another meaning instead of what you really want. |

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| <p>his vocabulary, so doing one sheet on a specific topic does not solve any problem, they need to have far more access to oral work, where teachers tell story, read the story to the children, do more oral work as well as reading aloud, reading to the teacher and do worksheet. In English oral work should be emphasize and precede reading lesson. Listening to stories is really the beginning of reading and learning to recognize words.</p> | <p>words differently, they spell word differently or cannot do it at all depending on which method they use. But this has so being correctly, I saw in grade 4 now, they are bringing phonetics again which helps a lot with the recognition of words, helps a lot in the reading and also in how to say the word.</p> | | <p>method. And a child who has learnt through a word recognition sometimes cannot read a new word that has not been taught to him. I hope I have covered your section because one other thing I forgot to indicate why reading is no longer taught. You now is interesting because NCS was emphasizing learner phase but because of G, GPMLS, MILESTONES, CAPS, it seems we have forgotten about learner phase. What we are interested in now is coverage of the syllabus, it does not matter whether I have children that can read or not in classroom, as long I can say to the district I have covered so much which to me is of a window dressing, is not a qualitative work.</p> | | |
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APPENDIX I

FIELD NOTES OF DATA COLLECTED AT PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

| THEME | SCHOOL A | SCHOOL B | SCHOOL C | SCHOOL D |
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| Classroom environment | <p>-1 class observed taught by participant E1</p> <p>-The class is well equipped with resources which are accessible to be used by both the teacher and learners.</p> <p>-Classroom clean, attractive and welcoming with flowers on the teacher's table.</p> <p>-There is a notice board which is the size of the classroom wall at the back.</p> <p>-Birthday chart also is displayed on the notice board with learners' name on it for different months.</p> <p>-The classroom policy displayed also at the board</p> <p>-The time-table is also displayed with different learning area. Time allocated for each period is 45 minutes. English is allocated 10 periods in a week, that is two period a week</p> <p>-Different charts are displayed at the noticed board which are categorised according to different learning area</p> <p>-At the English portion there is a Dolch list chart and new word which serves as sight words which correspond with the theme to be studied at that time.</p> <p>-The following words were displayed at that time: pearl, beautiful, favourite, and amazed.</p> | <p>-2 classes were observed taught by participant E2 and E3.</p> <p>-Both classes are well equipped with resources which are accessible to be used by both teachers and learners.</p> <p>- Classroom clean and attractive.</p> <p>- There is a notice board which is the size of the classroom wall at the back.</p> <p>-Birthday chart also is displayed on the notice board with learners' name on it for different months.</p> <p>-The time-table is also displayed with different learning area. Time allocated for each period is 45 minutes. English is allocated 10 periods in a week, that is two period a week</p> <p>-Each classroom has a THRASS chart.</p> <p>-Different</p> | <p>-1 classroom observed taught by participant E4</p> <p>-The class has a chalk board and a cupboard for the teacher.</p> <p>- The class is clean and welcoming</p> <p>- Charts are displayed haphazardly at the wall and are not grouped according to different learning areas.</p> <p>-The time table is displayed also at the wall. Time allocated for each period is 45 minutes. English is allocated 10 periods in a week, that is two period a week</p> | <p>-2 classes were observed taught by participants E5 and E6.</p> <p>- Both the classes have a chalk board and a cupboard for the teacher.</p> <p>- The classes are clean and welcoming</p> <p>-There is a notice board which is the size of the classroom wall at the back in each of the classroom</p> <p>-The time-table is also displayed with different learning area. Time allocated for each period is 45 minutes. English is allocated 10 periods in a week, that is two period a week</p> <p>-Different charts are displayed at the noticed board which are categorised according to different learning area</p> <p>-In both classes there is a "My self" chart where English stuff is</p> |

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| | | charts are displayed at the noticed board which are categorised according to different learning area -In one class where participant E2 teach at the English portion there is a chart which explains part of speech. In participant E3 class there is Dolch list chart. | | displayed. |
| Classroom organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Classroom well organised. -Tables and chairs arranged in four rows and two learners share a desk. -There are 35 learners in a class. -There is a mixer of racial groups in a classroom - The classroom is spacious enough to allow free movement for both the teacher and learners. - The classroom has a separate room which serves as a store room where text books are kept. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both classrooms were well organised. -In each classroom tables and chairs were arranged in four rows and two learners share a desk. -There are 37 learners in a class. -Classes composed of a mixer of different racial group. - The classrooms are spacious enough to allow free movement for both the teachers and learners. - Each classroom has a separate room which serves as a store room where text | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The class is organised -Table and chairs arranged in groups. There are 8groups with 8 learners in each group. -There are 64 learners in class. -All learners are blacks -The class is cramped and the teacher is unable to move freely - The classroom has a cupboard where the teacher stores the learners' books. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both classrooms were well organised. -In each classroom tables and chairs were arranged in four rows and two learners share a desk. -There are 45 learners and 48 learners in a class respectively. - All learners are blacks - The classrooms are spacious enough to allow free movement for both the teachers and learners. The classrooms havecupboards where the teacher stores the learners' books. - Each |

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| | | books are kept. | | classroom has a reading corner where different readers are displayed and used by learners during their spare time. |
| Teacher-Learner relationship and learners interaction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Positive relationship between the teacher and the learners -The learners are free to interact with the teacher -All learners were participating in the lesson. They responded when asked questions and also they were free to ask question when they don't understand. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In both classrooms observed there was positive relationship between the teacher and the learners -The learners were free to interact with the teachers -All learners were actively participating during the lesson. They responded when asked questions and also they were free to ask question when they don't understand. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Positive relationship between the learner and the teacher -The learners free to interact with the teacher - Not all learners were participating during the lessons -Learners struggles to communicate in English | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In both classrooms observed there was positive relationship between the teacher and the learners -The learners were free to interact with the teachers -All learners were actively participating during the lesson .They responded when asked questions but some of the learners struggles to communicate in English. |
| Discipline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Learners were well behaved and the teacher managed to hold discipline for the whole of the period. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners were well behaved and the teacher managed to hold discipline for the whole of the period in both the classes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most learners were well behaved -The teacher managed to keep discipline except the one group at the back who was talking to each other. The following Sesotho comment was used by | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners were well behaved and the teachers managed to hold discipline for the whole of the period in both the classes |

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| | | | the teacher in order to let them keep quite “ <i>Tholang</i> ” meaning “ <i>Silent</i> ” | |
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Chalk board is available which is in a good condition. -Physical Resources includes overhead projector, radio, computer and a projector. -Each learner has a grade appropriate reader and a content textbook for English. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Chalk board is available which is in a good condition. -Physical Resources includes overhead projector, radio, computer and a projector. -Each learner has a THRASS chart in their books. -Each learner has a grade appropriate reader and a content textbook for English. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Chalk board is available which is in a good condition. -Two learners in a group share an English textbook. -No readers for learners, teacherr has one set of readers and photocopy for learners when in use. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Chalk board is available which is in a good condition - In participant E6 classes all learners have textbooks and a reader -In participant E5 class all learners have readers but share the English textbook (content) |
| Teaching and Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teacher has a work schedule, Learning programme, National Curriculum Statement policy document, Assessment policy guideline and a Lesson plan. -Lesson plan indicate clearly the topic to be covered, Learning Outcome, Assessment Standard, content to be taught and assessment activities. -Teacher used one lesson plan for the whole class but indicate different assessment activities in order to suite different learners’ abilities. - Observed eight lessons for four weeks. Two lesson per week. - One topic was covered | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both teachers has a work schedule, Learning programme, National Curriculum Statement policy document, Assessment policy guideline and a Lesson plan. -Lesson plans indicate clearly the topic to be covered, Learning Outcome, Assessment Standard, content to be taught and assessment activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teacher has a work schedule, Learning programme, National Curriculum Statement policy document, Assessment policy guideline and a Lesson plan. -Lesson plan indicate clearly the topic to be covered, Learning Outcome, Assessment Standard, content to be taught and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both teachers have a work schedule, Learning programme, National Curriculum Statement policy document, Assessment policy guideline and a Lesson plan. -Lesson plans indicate clearly the topic to be covered, Learning Outcome, Assessment Standard, content to be taught and assessment activities. |

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| | <p>during the observation period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The first lesson used to introduce the topic and to explain unfamiliar words identified by the teacher . -Teacher also gave the summary of the passage to be read. -Second lesson for read -Teacher read and learners follow after they dramatized the story. -Learner read the story individually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teachers used one lesson plan for the whole class but indicate different assessment activities in order to suite different learners' abilities. - Observed eight lessons for four weeks for each participant. Two lesson per week. - One topic was covered during the observation period. | <p>assessment activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teacher used one lesson plan for the whole class . - Observed eight lessons for four weeks. Two lesson per week. - One topic was covered during the observation period. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teachers used one lesson plan for the whole class but indicate different assessment activities in order to suite different learners' abilities. Participant E6 further has another lesson plan where she use multi level planning and indicates different levels identified in her class. - Observed eight lessons for four weeks for each participant. Two lesson per week. - One topic was covered during the observation period. |
| Teaching reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The teacher asked the learners to read the Dolch list displayed at the back before starting with the lesson. -The teacher introduced the lesson with the song relating to the passage to be read. The title of the story was: "<i>BEAUTIFUL LADY</i>" -The teacher asked the learner to read the identified unfamiliar words written on the flash cards which were similar to those written on the chart and displayed at the notice board. -The teacher gave the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Participant E2- first asks the all learners to read the passage together. The teacher then read the passage and explains the difficult words to the learners. The words explained: cave, calabash, roftes, fives. -The teacher gave the summary of the passage read. -Learners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The teacher ask the learners to sing a song which she taught them about the letters of the alphabets (from A-Z) -The teacher give the learners the summary of the passage before they read. -The teacher code switch when giving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Participant E5 introduced her lesson by telling a story about what they are going to read. - The teacher identified words that might be difficult to read and write them on the chalkboard and then read the words and let the learners follow her while reading |

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| | <p>summary of the passage to be read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The teacher read first the whole passage alone with expression and learners passively listen to the educator. -The whole class read the story together - 15 learners were selected randomly to read the passage. -The learners form groups in order to dramatized the passage read -The learners answer questions related to the passage read orally and then formally individual in their books. | <p>asked to read in raw.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -10 learners were selected randomly to read the passage - The learners answer questions related to the passage read orally and then formally individual in their books. -Participant E3- wrote unfamiliar words on the board(example s of words: permanent, inhabitant, cushion, machinery) -The teacher first drill the words with the learners and emphasize the spelling rule(th, sh and ch sounds). -Learners check the meanings of unfamiliar words in the dictionary. -The class read the passage aloud together. -8 learners were selected randomly to read the passage. -The learners answer questions related to the passage read orally and then formally | <p>the summary to a clearer meaning of the passage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher use flash cards of identified unfamiliar words and teacher give the meaning of those words -The educator read the passage first alone and then followed by the learners. - The teacher divide the passage among the groups and let each group read (group reading) -The whole class then read the whole passage together. - 1 learner from each group was selected to read the passage - The teacher asks learners questions from the passage and the learners answer them orally. | <p>.Examples of words are : <i>environmental, recycling, thoroughly, realise.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The teacher also asked learners to sound the words before reading. - The teacher also emphasize rules when the learners were reading. Egei <i>has an a sound as in eight and gh has an h sound as in thoroughly.</i> The “fairy e rule” was also emphasized as in <i>realise</i> -The teacher read the passage to the learners and requested them to point where she was reading. -All learners were asked to read the passage together at the same time. -The learners were stucked at the word <i>thoroughly.</i> The teacher then referred the learners at those words written on the board and emphasizes the rule that “<i>gh is sound as h</i>”. |
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| | | individual in their books. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 learners were selected randomly and were asked to read. -6 learners managed to read the passage. -2 learners struggled to read. - Participant E6 first read the whole passage asks all learners to read the passage together. Then the teacher read the passage again alone. -The teacher gives the summary of the passage and explain unfamiliar words. -8 learners were selected randomly and were asked to read. -4 learners managed to read the passage while 4 were unable to read. |
| Reading Method for teaching Word recognition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The teacher pre teach the unfamiliar words to the learners by using flash cards so that learners are familiar with the words -Learners are asked to sound the words first such as “beautiful”. They sound each letter and then asked to read the word as a whole. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The teacher let learners to sound the words (<i>cushion, thatched, machine</i>). -The teacher use picture to match with the words (1.hut matched | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The teacher use flash card with the unfamiliar words written on them - The teacher reads the words and the learners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Participant E5 asked the learner to sound the words and emphasize the rule. -She also encourages the learners to break the words into |

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| | <p>-The learners were asked to break the word "<i>beau-ti-ful.</i>"</p> <p>-The learners drill the identified words. They were asked to read the word with their eyes open and then asked to close their eyes and spell the word.</p> <p>-The teacher words on the chalk board and let the in alphabetical order.</p> | <p>with the words thatched, rural, mud and clay 2. cushion with Bedouin and camel)</p> <p>-Syllabification of words was used by the teacher.</p> | <p>follow</p> <p>-Each identified word had a picture to complement.</p> <p>- The teacher presented a word and a picture separately and the teacher say out the word and the learners showed the picture.</p> <p>-The teacher showed the picture and the child shows the word. The teacher wrote the word on a chart.</p> <p>-The teacher used an A3 page and divides it into two columns. The first column was represented by a blue colour and words from the chart were randomly written (written words: comic, crutch, cripple, dairy).The second raw was presented in green and</p> | <p>syllables eg. Eighteen- Eigh/teen</p> <p>-Participant E6 encourages the learners to sound unfamiliar words and to break them into syllablese.g recycling- re/cy/cl/ing</p> |
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| | | <p>another set of words were written (written words: afraid, beautiful, cross, excited). -The teacher gave learners the words and let them stick it in their books. She also gave them colours. The teacher gave instruction. Look for the word for an example "cripple" in which column do you think cripple is? What colour represent that column and colour the word with that colour.</p> <p>- The teacher gave each group a snake and ladder board games and gave one learner in each group the responsibility to toss the dice. In the first group the learner tossed a dice and gave her five</p> | |
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| | | | <p>from the group five learners were asked to read five words from the list. One learner was unable to read the word "excitement" then that group lost one point. The scores were written on the board for each group.</p> <p>-For the words that the learners were unable to read the teacher asked them to break them into syllables. From the first group the word excited was used and the learners clap their hands to break the word into "ex-cit-ed"</p> <p>- Each group was given the opportunity to play the game.</p> | |
| RESULTS FROM LEARNERS READING THE PASSAGE | <p>-15 learners were asked to read individually.</p> <p>-13 learners managed to read the passage. They also managed to read those words identified by the educator as the</p> | <p>In participant E2 class 10 learners were asked to read the passage. 7 learners managed to</p> | <p>-1 learner from each group was asked to read the passage.</p> <p>-Managed to</p> | <p>-In both classes 8 learners were asked to read the passage. In participant E5, 6 learners</p> |

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| | <p>words unfamiliar to them.</p> <p>-Learners read fluently, managed to follow what was read and gave the summary of the passage in their own words. They also answered questions orally correctly. They follow punctuations.</p> <p>-2 learners were unable to read the whole passage correctly; some of the words were read incorrectly.</p> <p>-</p> <p>Tumelo(Pseudonym)when approaching difficult words he stopped and tried to sound them. Then after managing to read the word, he start reading the passage from the beginning again. He reads very slowly and didn't observe punctuations. In some instance he jump words that he does not know.</p> <p>-Zandi (pseudonym) also stopped at the difficult word. She repeats the word again and again. If then unable to read the word again she then spells the word. The minute she realise that she cannot read the word she become so frustrated and nervous. When approaching another difficult word she reads so low that we could hardly hear what she was reading. She also replace other words in the passage such as <i>tried with fried, was with saw</i> .</p> <p>- Tumelotried to give the summarise but it didn't give meaning and Zandi kept quiet and refused to say anything.</p> <p>- When asked to answer the question orally about what they have read</p> | <p>read the passage and 3 learners struggled with some of the words from the passage. In participant E3 class 8 learners were asked to read 5 learners managed to read the passage and 3 struggles to read the whole passage.</p> <p>-From both of the classes the learners who managed to read the passage the following behaviour were identified: the learners were confident, read fluently and with understanding, follow punctuations correctly, read with expression.</p> <p>- For those learners who struggles with the passage the following behaviours were noticed: learners were shy to read and express themselves, they read unsure words they read word by word, repeats words, read slowly and their voices changes.</p> | <p>read the passage. The learners were confidence when reading -some were unable to read the passage correctly. The following were identified from the learners: learners were not confident, they struggle to spell the words, they read very slowly, they were very shy and they pronounce words incorrectly.</p> | <p>managed to read the passage and in Participant E6, 4 learners managed to read the passage.-From both of the classes the learners who managed to read the passage the following behaviour were identified: the learners were confident, read fluently and with understanding, follow punctuations correctly, read with expression.</p> <p>- For those learners who struggles with the passage the following behaviours were noticed: learners were shy to read and express themselves, they read unsure words</p> |
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| | Tumelo answered even though the answers were wrong. Zandi was unable to answer she just kept quite. | | | |
| Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual attention was not done in class for Zandi because she was supposed to attend the next period. -The teacher gave Zandi a reading book which was lower her grade but appropriate to her reading level in order to read at home. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In both the classes' individual attention was not provided due to the time allocated for the learning area. Learners who experience problems with reading are to attend an extra lesson for 30 minutes every Tuesday in order to improve their reading ability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -When the words were not read correctly the teacher ask the class to help. - intensive individual attention was not provided due to the number of the learners in a class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When the words were incorrectly the teachers ask the class to help. - intensive individual attention was not provided due to the number of the learners in a class |

APPENDIX: J

TABLE: 17

PATTERNS, CATEGORIES AND THEMES RELATED TO THE PROBLEMS IN WORD RECOGNITION FOR GRADE 4 LEARNERS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM IN EKURHULENI SOUTH, GAUTENG

| THEME 1: UNDERSTANDING THE GRADE 4 LEARNER | | |
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| PATTERNS | CATEGORIES | |
| E1: "A grade 4 learner is very much still part of the Foundation phase learner, although is a transitional between the Foundation Phase and Senior Phase." | Explaining a grade 4 learner | Explaining a grade 4 learner |
| E2: "A grade 4 learner is the learner who has moved from Foundation phase and has | Explaining a grade 4 learner | |

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| <p>just entered the Intermediate Phase for the first time.” E3: “Not a baby of the school anymore</p> <p>E4: “In my experience a Grade 4 learner is that learner who still struggles with the demands of a Grade 4 class.”</p> <p>E5: They are keen to learn and very attentive</p> <p>E6: “I think a Grade 4 learner is a learner that you can say is first time learner when comes to Intermediate Phase.”</p> | <p>Development/understanding the Grade 4.</p> <p>Explaining a Grade 4 learner</p> <p>Explaining a grade 4 learner</p> <p>Explaining a grade 4 learner</p> | |
| <p>E1: “Cognitively they are still very much on concrete phase “They develop quite radically.” “Socially it is a happy age in the child’s life , they are very still naive” “Love little baby games.” “Physically they grow faster than before.”</p> <p>E2: “ Still is thinks in a concrete level but starting to explain things as they are.” “There are hormones and physical changes.”</p> <p>E2:” Emotionally they are still sensitive to criticism” “ Intellectually they are very reliant at the beginning”</p> <p>E3: “Cognitively they are still doing things in a concrete level” E3; “ They like to reason issues but at a concrete level E3: Socially are more matured , they have made grouping Work very well and quietly at this stage E3: “Behaviourally if there is discipline in a class they work quietly in a group</p> | <p>Concrete level</p> <p>How they develop</p> <p>Happy and naive</p> <p>type of games preferred grow faster</p> <p>Concrete level</p> <p>Hormones and physical changes</p> <p>Sensitive to criticism</p> <p>Very reliant</p> <p>Concrete level</p> <p>Concrete level</p> <p>More matured Form groups</p> <p>Cooperates with members of the group(quietly)</p> <p>Cooperates with members of the group(quietly)</p> | <p>Developmental changes of a grade 4 learner</p> |

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| <p>“Behaviour is still good” E3: “Physically girls develop hormones much faster and concern with sexuality (boys like to play soccer and like to fight among themselves who is older)” E3: “ Coordination is good”</p> <p>E4: “I think cognitively they are in a concrete level.” “Socially they are out going, explorative, and a few are shy and they need to be prompted” “Physically they are becoming aware of their gender.” “Emotionally they are very sensitive especially to criticism”</p> <p>E5: “Physically they are just before the stage of puberty.” “Socially they are at a stage where they like to form friendship from same sexes” Cognitively they are still in the process of going out of concrete level.”</p> <p>E6: “Cognitively they are well developed and start to think when they answer questions.” “Personally they grow faster and they look older than their age” “Socially they have friends from similar gender.” “Behaviourally some seem to be withdrawn.”</p> | <p>Good behaviour Girls v/s boys</p> <p>Hormone’s development</p> <p>Coordination</p> <p>Concrete level</p> <p>Social behavior</p> <p>Gender awareness</p> <p>Sensitive to criticism</p> <p>Development</p> <p>Social friendship</p> <p>Cognitive development</p> <p>Age v/s appearance</p> <p>Grow faster</p> <p>Gender awareness</p> <p>Withdrawn</p> | |
| <p>E1: “Understand what they actually reading E1: ‘At a level where they have mastered all basic of Word recognition and how they read</p> <p>E3: “Children sound the word out and learn to recognise those words in their reading context “When I was a teacher in the Junior Phase we start</p> | <p>Level of reading Level of readnig</p> <p>Teaching reading in Junior phase classes</p> | <p>Expectation of grade 4 learner</p> |

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| with word recognition and build "reading is based on comprehension | | |
| E1: "They still need everyday guidance, help with their own work, individual attention." E2: "At this stage they still need help." E3:"They need guidance, help with own work E3: " You have to encourage them all the time E3: Depend of the teacher, to guide them and help them to do their work E5: " Don't rely on oral you need aids E6: "Learner need more timelesson | Need guidance and individual attention Need help Guidance Encourage Assistance required Need aids More time/ Assistance required | Support required by grade 4 learners (Teaching and learning) |
| E1: "You cannot do follow up work with "Jump from grade3 to grade 4 is year to large E2: "Unable to use dictionary E3: "Find it difficult to adjust to all different subject E3: "Don't understand what the subject is all about E4: "Adjustment problem "still shaking regarding the Language of Learning and Teaching "Perceptual development not taught in Grade R E6: " They don't adapt quickly "they are very slow which make them feel that they are lost "Not founded.....cannot read "Difference between "b" | No individual support change Lack dictionary skill Adjustment problems Adjustment problems LOLT Lack perceptual skill Adjustment problem Tempo Lack foundation Lack perceptual skill | Challenges faced by grade 4 learners |

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| and “d” | (reversals) | |
| THEME 2 : CURRICULUM CHANGES IN GRADE 4 | | |
| PATTERNS | CATEGORIES | |
| <p>E1: “ Questions are more application question “Nowadays children have subject teaching in grade 4” “Make use of worksheet</p> <p>E2:”There are so many subject in the Intermediate Phase “No enough focus on reading “Shift to grade 4 so much “ No time to teach reading..... “In grade 4 we obviously have many learning areas</p> <p>E3: “More subject in grade 4 “ We don’t have a certain period just dedicated to teach reading, we do reading among all we are doing”</p> <p>E4: “Used to stay with the teacher the whole day.....learning area “From Three learning area to eight learning</p> <p>E4: “ Grade 4 has more work than Foundation Phase</p> <p>E6: “ Learner used to stay with one teacher now rotate “Number of learning Area has increased</p> | <p>Types of questions</p> <p>Subject teaching</p> <p>Quality compromised by quantity Number of subject changes</p> <p>Lack reading time</p> <p>change Lack reading time Many learning areas</p> <p>Number of subject changes Lack reading period</p> <p>Class teaching v/s subject teaching</p> <p>Number of learning areas (change)</p> <p>More work</p> <p>Class teaching v/s subject teaching Increase number of learning area</p> | Curriculum changes |
| THEME 3 :TEACHING WORD RECOGNITION IN GRADE 4 | | |
| PATTERNS | CATEGORIES | |
| <p>E1: Word recognition is of course very crucial , it is the pivot around which everything turns.”</p> <p>E2: “Word recognition to me is able to recognise the word, know what you are looking</p> | <p>Personal understanding of word recognition</p> <p>Personal understanding of word recognition</p> | UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT WORD RECOGNITION |

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| <p>at, understand it and say it.”</p> <p>E3: “For me word recognition is about being able to read word immediately as you see it, there is no need to think first.”</p> <p>E4: “ Word recognition is about the child’s ability to look at a word and be able to read it.”</p> <p>E5: “Word recognition for me know to say when you see it.”</p> <p>E6: “I think is all about being able to recognize the word you come into contact with.</p> | <p>Personal understanding of word recognition</p> | |
| <p>E1: “I think pre-teaching. The first one can be configuration. The second word recognition attack is when focusing on consonants than vowels. The third word recognition skill will be making use of guess work. Lastly if the word is very long make use of syllabification. “Again I also make use of Dolch sight words when teaching word recognition.”</p> <p>E2: I am a syllable person” “ I also use Dolch list</p> <p>E3: “I have a reading Lab where the children go there, they do comprehension.” “In class you know individual help, peer teaching also help with word recognition. I also let them sounding out the word like B-a-d for Bad. I also use sight words they must know by heart the Dolch list and allow them to break the words.”</p> <p>E4: “ The first I present a</p> | <p>Pre-teaching</p> <p>Focus on consonants rather vowels</p> <p>Guess words</p> <p>Syllabification</p> <p>Dolch Sight</p> <p>Syllabification Dolch words</p> <p>Reading Lab</p> <p>Individual help, peer teaching and sounding words</p> <p>Dolch list</p> <p>Word and picture</p> | <p>METHODS FOR TEACHING WORD RECOGNITION(WORD RECOGNITION STRATEGIES)</p> |

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| <p>word and picture. The next stage I teach them what makes up this word through syllabification.”</p> <p>“ I also use sight words, Dolch list which has 220 words.</p> <p>The is also a Fry list</p> <p>E6: “I use syllabification. I use the spelling words where the learners spell the words.”</p> <p>“I also use the phonics where the learners sound the word.”</p> | <p>Syllabification</p> <p>Dolch list</p> <p>Fry list</p> <p>Syllabification and spelling words</p> <p>Phonics</p> | |
| <p>E1: “ It therefore affect the way they read and how they understand what has been read</p> <p>“It slow down their speed and they don’t like to read..... forget what they were reading about</p> <p>E2: “They learn to say the word and not understand the word means</p> <p>“If they cannot recognize the word.....spelling</p> <p>E3: Word recognition has an impact on the learner a lot because if they can’t recognize the word they won’t understand what it means when reading and they will not be able to answer question.</p> <p>“ Again they will read slow and take a lot of time to finish their reading.”</p> <p>E4: ‘t does affect a grade 4 learner Word recognition is Affected by word meaning”</p> <p>E4 :“I:t also affect the speed of reading and the accuracy of reading and all that aspects resultantly affect comprehension which is word meaning.”</p> <p>E5:” Word recognition affect their understanding the word</p> <p>“The children lose</p> | <p>Affect understanding</p> <p>Affect speed</p> <p>Forget what is read</p> <p>Lack of understanding</p> <p>Unable to spell words</p> <p>Unable to understand and answer questions</p> <p>Read slowly</p> <p>Affect word meaning</p> <p>Affect speed , accuracy and comprehension</p> <p>Lack of understanding</p> <p>Lose meaning and takes too</p> | <p>EFFECT OF WORD RECOGNITION TO LEARNERS READING ABILITY</p> |

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| <p>meaning because they come to the word and stop now they want to break it into parts it takes too long.”</p> <p>E6; “If they cannot recognize the word they cannot spell the word. They cannot understand the meaning , they cannot read it.”</p> | <p>long</p> <p>Problem with spelling, understanding and reading.</p> | |
| <p>THEME 4: TEACHING READING IN GRADE 4</p> | | |
| <p>PATTERNS</p> | <p>CATEGORIES</p> | |
| <p>E1: “Reading is the basic of all learning.” “ There more you read you extent your vocabulary, the more you extend your knowledge of the world</p> <p>E2: “Reading is gaining knowledge, gaining knowledge and understanding what you have gaining.” “ It is important because no matter in their life they are going to need to use reading</p> <p>“Foundation Phase teaches them words how to read and in Intermediate phase they have to know how to read in order to.....</p> <p>E3: “I think personally reading is about acquiring knowledge knowing and understanding what you are reading.” “Personally feel reading encompasses every single thing you do in life” “ I feel if you can’t read, you can’t do anything into the future.” “ It help you to acquire knowledge and be able to communicate with others.”</p> <p>E4: “I think reading is interpretation of what the senses take out there in the</p> | <p>Definition of reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Personal understanding of the concept reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Reading in Foundation phase v/s Intermediate Phase</p> <p>Definition of reading (personal opinion)</p> <p>Personal feeling/ opinion about reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Perception about reading</p> | <p>UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT READING</p> |

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| <p>environment, processed into the brain and become an output throughout the mouth and how and the accuracy of the eye.</p> <p>“It is a skill that needs to be taught.”</p> <p>“Reading is very important because it creates independently and make a child to be self reliance.”</p> <p>E5: “Reading to me is all about understanding what you are reading.”</p> <p>“It is important because it form the basis of all education.”</p> <p>E6 “I think reading is about understanding about what you reading.”</p> <p>“It is important because without reading the learner cannot write.”</p> <p>“Read so that they achieve</p> <p>“ Learn what is happening through reading</p> | <p>Perception about reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Perception about reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Perception about reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> <p>Importance of reading</p> | |
| <p>E1: “I prefer the eclectic approach and where you use phonics and you use recognition word attack skill.</p> <p>E2: “Basically listen to them reading, teaching them how to sound out words, which actually blend together.”</p> <p>E3: “In grade 4 our reading approach is based on comprehension. We do not use a specific approach .“</p> <p>E4: “I would not say I have a prescribed method</p> <p>“So my approach depends on the child’s need.”</p> <p>E4: “ Phonic method and word identification</p> <p>E5: “ I normally use phonics combined with syllabification.”</p> <p>“What they need is</p> | <p>Eclectic approach</p> <p>Sounding words</p> <p>No specific approach because learners are different.</p> <p>No specific method</p> <p>Approach depend on learner’s need.</p> <p>Phonics and word identification</p> <p>Phonics and syllabification</p> <p>Eclectic approach</p> | <p>METHOD OF TEACHING READING(READING APPROACHES)</p> |

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| eclectic approach” E6: “ I usually use whole word approach because I believe that the child must know the word and then after I can go to dividing them into syllables.” | Whole word and syllables Whole word approach and dividing words into syllable. | |
| THEME 5: INSUFFICIENT DISTRICT SUPPORT | | |
| PATTERNS | CATEGORIES | |
| E1: “When I started teaching long ago, I have attended many courses “Previously district meeting were held regularly as compared to now.” E2: : “Teacher training workshops, in all my years experience I have attended three courses. E3: “ On grade 4 don’t attend such training regularly courses that department encourage to do. “ In the intermediate phase we really don’t attend such training regularly. E4: But at least today nowadays the department at least make it a point that time and again we are invited to be taught by different service providers on how to teach reading.” E5: “The is not often but is the same one repeated E6:” Not so often maybe twice years in a year they will call us for an English workshop.” | Enough support Continuous District support Lack of enough support Lack of enough support Junior Primary support v/s Intermediate phase Lack of enough support District support Not enough district support Not enough district support | INSUFFICIENT DISTRICT SUPPORT |
| E1: We were given all latest of teaching of language and of teaching reading” E2: “.Generally the workshop that we attend is more on English as a Learning area to discuss learning outcomes | Type of workshop then General workshop | DISTRICT WORKSHOPS/ TEACHER DEVELOPMENT/ |

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| <p>and assessment standards and not on how to teach reading and its components such as word recognition.”</p> <p>E3. “More on English as a Learning Area and to discuss Learning Outcomes and Assessment standards not on how to teach Word Recognition.”</p> <p>E4: We are taught by various service providers on teaching reading, like one of them the “ABACARD”.</p> <p>E5: “ If called for reading workshop is usually the same one. . We had the phonics and the reading workshop twice in two years in a row</p> <p>E6: “General workshop they don’t have specific</p> | <p>Type of workshop attended</p> <p>Type of workshop attended</p> <p>-workshop not specific</p> <p>-type of workshop</p> <p>same workshops</p> <p>-General workshop</p> | |
| THEME 6 :TEACHER TRAINING ON HOW TO TEACH READING | | |
| PATTERNS | CATEGORIES | |
| <p>E1: “Yes I definitely was. That was a large section of the curriculum, because in my days we did not do a degree we had to do a diploma and it was all very practical.”</p> <p>E2: “I did not trained as a teacher, I did PGCE with UNISA, So there is no practical already.”</p> <p>E3: “ Yes I was taught because I was a Junior Primary trained teacher.”</p> <p>E4: “I was trained as a Higher Primary School Teacher but I don’t</p> | <p>Trained</p> <p>Not trained</p> <p>Trained</p> <p>Not trained</p> | TEACHER TRAINING |

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| remember our lecturer teaching us how to teach reading or rather giving us a lesson on reading skill.” | | |
| E5: “No I was never being taught on how to teach reading only the Junior Primary student, I am a Senior Primary teacher. | Not trained | |
| E6: “ No we were ever trained because I have done Senior Primary | Not trained | |
| THEME 7: LACK OF PARENTAL SUPPORT | | |
| PATTERN | CATEGORIES | |
| E2: “Not be encouraged at home” | Parental support | Lack of parental support |
| THEME 8: INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES | | |
| PATTERN | CATEGORIES | |
| In E4’s class it was observed that some learners used photocopied passage. | Not enough readers | Insufficient resource |
| THEME: 9 TIME ALLOCATION AND LESSON PLAN | | |
| PATTERN | CATEGORIES | |
| E2: “There is no time to teach reading in Grade 4.” E3: “We don’t have a certain period just dedicated to teach reading, we do reading among all we are doing.” | Insufficient time to teach reading Insufficient time to teach reading | Time allocation |
| It was observed that: - All teachers plan ahead for the topic to be taught. -Each school had its own lesson plan template. | -Planning done -Different lesson plans used | Lesson plan |

APPENDIX K

EXAMPLE OF SIGHT WORDS

Dolch Sight Word List

| Preprimer | Primer | First | Second | Third |
|-----------|--------|-------|---------|--------|
| a | all | after | always | about |
| and | am | again | around | better |
| away | are | an | because | bring |
| big | at | any | been | carry |
| blue | ate | as | before | clean |
| can | be | ask | best | cut |
| come | black | by | both | done |
| down | brown | could | buy | draw |
| find | but | every | call | drink |
| for | came | fly | cold | eight |
| funny | did | from | does | fall |
| go | do | give | don't | far |
| help | eat | going | fast | full |
| hers | four | had | first | got |
| I | get | has | five | grow |
| in | good | her | found | hold |
| is | has | him | gave | hot |

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|--------|--------|-------|-------|----------|
| it | he | how | goes | hurt |
| jump | into | just | green | if |
| little | like | know | its | keep |
| look | must | let | made | kind |
| make | new | live | many | laugh |
| me | no | may | off | light |
| my | now | of | or | long |
| not | on | old | pull | much |
| one | our | once | read | myself |
| play | out | open | right | never |
| red | please | over | sing | only |
| run | pretty | put | sit | own |
| said | ran | round | sleep | pick |
| see | ride | some | tell | seven |
| the | saw | stop | their | shall |
| three | say | take | these | show |
| to | she | thank | those | six |
| two | so | them | upon | small |
| up | soon | then | us | start |
| we | that | think | use | ten |
| yellow | there | walk | very | today |
| you | they | where | wash | together |
| | this | when | which | try |
| | too | | why | warm |
| | under | | wish | |
| | want | | work | |
| | was | | would | |
| | well | | write | |
| | went | | your | |
| | what | | | |
| | white | | | |
| | who | | | |
| | will | | | |
| | with | | | |
| | yes | | | |

APPENDIX L

LETTER FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

Acknowledgment of Language Editing

Date: Saturday, 15 December 2012

This is to certify that Language Editing has been carried out on the following
Master's Dissertation:

*Problems in word recognition for Grade 4 learners in an
inclusive classroom in Ekurhuleni South, Gauteng*

by

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