

**Teachers' Perceptions on Development of Tshivenda Reading Skills at Selected
Primary Schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa**

BY

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

LANGUAGE EDUCATION

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: DR N.C RAÑANGA

NOVEMBER: 2024

DECLARATION

I, **Phalanndwa A.C.**, hereby declare that this dissertation, titled "**Teachers' Perceptions on Development of Tshivenda Reading Skills at Selected Primary Schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa,**" is an original work undertaken by myself. I acknowledge that all sources utilised or referenced in this dissertation have been properly cited and credited in the references section, in accordance with accepted academic conventions. Furthermore, I confirm that this dissertation has not been previously submitted, in whole or in part, for any academic degree or examination at any other institution.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the following individuals and entities whose support and guidance enabled me to complete this study successfully.

First and foremost, I give thanks to the Almighty God, whose divine guidance, wisdom, and strength sustained me throughout this academic journey.

To my loving family, Phumudzo (My Wife), Mulinda (My daughter) and Mbuelo (My son), I extend my deepest appreciation for their unwavering support, encouragement, and patience. Your love and understanding fuelled my determination to succeed.

I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr N.C Rañanga for expert guidance, valuable insights, and constructive feedback throughout this study. Your academic expertise and mentorship significantly enhanced the quality of this submission. Furthermore, I acknowledge the valuable contributions of all individuals who have supported me in various capacities throughout the completion of this dissertation. Your collective efforts, guidance, and encouragement have been invaluable.

Thank you.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is respectfully dedicated to the Almighty God, whose divine guidance and providence sustained me throughout my academic pursuit. I also extend my deepest gratitude and dedication to my loving family: my wife Phumudzo, and our children, Mulinda and Mbuelo, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and unconditional love were a constant source of inspiration and strength during this research journey

ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study investigates teachers' perceptions regarding the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills among learners in the foundation phase. The research also explores the diverse strategies employed by educators to address the challenges associated with teaching reading in this context. The study employed a random sampling procedure to select participants. Two circuits out of 18 in the Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa, were randomly selected. This was done by numbering the circuits from 1 to 18, placing them in a box, and drawing the first two circuits. Subsequently, 10 schools were randomly selected from the two chosen circuits. This involved numbering the schools, placing them in a box, and drawing the first 10 schools. Finally, eight Grade 3 teachers from these 10 schools were randomly selected to participate in the study. This was done by numbering the teachers from 1 to 10, placing them in a box, and drawing the first eight teachers. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews and classroom observations with these eight participating teachers. The findings, which emerged from a thematic analysis of semi-structured interview data and classroom observations indicate that teachers encounter significant obstacles when teaching reading in the foundation phase. These challenges collectively create barriers to effective reading instruction. Notably, teachers rely on professional development workshops, phase and grade meetings, and personal experience to mitigate these challenges. The study recommends that the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education, specifically the Vhembe East District, implement ongoing teacher training programmes that focus on reading strategies, supplemented by continuous support and guidance from Subject Advisors.

Keywords: Tshivenda Home Language reading skills, Foundation phase education, Teacher perceptions, Reading instruction challenges and Professional development.

ACRONYMS

PIRLS – Progress in International Reading Literacy

SACMEQ – South African and Eastern African Consortium for Checking Education Quality

DOE – Department of Education

DBE – Department of Basic Education

PED – Provincial Education Department

NLPF – The National Language Policy Framework

RSA – Republic of South Africa

CAPS – Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement

ATP – Annual Teaching Plan

USA – United States of America

Covid-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019

NCS – National Curriculum Statement

MTSS – Multi-Tiered System of Support

RTI – Response to Intervention

ORF – Oral reading Fluency

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

UN – United Nations

EBD – Education Bureau Department

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

MDG – Millennium Development Goals

ANA – Annual National Assessment

SE – Special Education

SNA1 – Support Needs Assessment Form 1

SBST – School Based Support Team

LST – Learning Support Team

TREC – Turfloop Research Ethics Committee

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of reading skills in indigenous languages like Tshivenda Home Language is crucial for promoting literacy and academic success among primary school learners. Research has shown that teachers play a vital role in shaping learners' reading skills, and their perceptions can significantly impact the effectiveness of reading instruction.

Studies have highlighted the importance of teachers' knowledge and beliefs about reading instruction in the development of learners' reading skills (Dixon and Oakhill, 2024). In the South African context, where multilingualism is prevalent, teachers' perceptions of reading instruction in indigenous languages like Tshivenda Home Language can influence the quality of reading education provided to learners.

A study by the National Department of Basic Education (2017) found that reading development is vital for teachers, involving linguistic, textual, and code-based skills. Moreover, research has emphasized the need for teachers to employ diverse linguistic approaches to reading instruction, moving beyond traditional Eurocentric models.

In the Vhembe East District, where Tshivenda Home Language is widely spoken, teachers' perceptions of reading instruction in Tshivenda Home Language can have a significant impact on learners' reading skills (Mudau & Makamane, 2022). A study on reading literacy in primary schools in South Africa found that educators' instructional focus and pedagogy can influence reading literacy outcomes.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District. By exploring teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices regarding reading instruction in Tshivenda Home Language, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that influence reading education in multilingual contexts.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Reading ability is a foundational skill, a critical requirement for all academic advancement and survival in everyday living (Duke & Carta, 2024). Reading failure can negatively impact individuals and societies (Cronje, 2021). South Africa is currently experiencing a challenge of learners who cannot read according to their grade levels (Howie & Van Staden, 2021).

Reading is important for many different activities in many areas of our lives (Cunningham & Stanovich, 2020). Reading fluency and comprehension helps learners to be well-informed and comes with better prospects for them in life. Text-based materials are commonly used in curriculum courses, making it crucial for learners' academic performance.

According to Hattie and Yates (2021), reading comprehension involves combining textual clues with prior knowledge and experience to predict and construct meaning. It has a significant impact on learners' academic progress and future life results. According to Olifant, Cekiso, and Rautenbach (2019), learners' weak reading abilities pose a significant global concern.

One study observed that 40% of children in the United States of America struggle to develop reading skills. Britain declared 2008 as a National Year of Reading to address English learners' weak reading skills (Chaka, 2015). According to Olifant, Cekiso, and Rautenbach's (2019) study in Francophone Guinea, many learners do not know the entire alphabet by the end of Grade 2.

In South Africa, reading performance is consistently ranked low nationwide and global studies. According to Spaul and Kotze (2020), the Progress of International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) of 2006 placed our learners in Grade 4 and 5 in the last position out of 45 contributing countries with a score of 302 with a level of 400 being the limit idea for low-slung achievers. The Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Checking Education Quality [SACMEQ] (2011) places the level of reading ability of learners in South African schools in position number 4 out of 15 African countries for the richest 25% children, and 14 out of 15 for the lowliest 25% (Rule & Land, 2017). The findings of this study align with previous research by Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016), who argued that many South African teachers lack the necessary competence to effectively teach reading skills. Furthermore, their study suggested that a significant

number of teachers may not possess a comprehensive understanding of key reading concepts, including reading progression and instructional approaches

Some studies suggest that learners may struggle to read within their grade level (Moloi and Chetty, 2022). According to systemic evaluations conducted by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), 78% of Grade 3 learners struggled with reading comprehension in their home language (DBE, 2020; Spaul, 2019; Taylor, 2020).

In 2012, the national literacy average at Grades 4 and 6 was 34%, as reported by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). According to the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), reading literacy levels among South African learners remain a concern. In a Grade 6 evaluation by SACMEQ, 27% of students were illiterate, unable to comprehend even simple texts (Spaul, 2013).

Despite efforts, South African learners continue to struggle with low reading skills. Keyser (2017) emphasises the importance of developing reading skills at a young age. Reading fosters curiosity, inventiveness, creativity, and promotes positive self-esteem. A person's ability to read is required for efficient social functioning. Reading is the foundation for all academic studies.

Reading helps you perform efficiently in society. Reading is the foundation for all academic studies. An engaged reader engages with the text by anticipating future events, exploring main themes and characters, and applying existing knowledge.

An active reader engages with the book by predicting what will happen next, researching the main concepts and characters, and linking what they read to what they already know. Learners who struggle with reading fluency and need to decode words may not completely comprehend what they read. It is consequently critical that reading abilities are developed by the time a kid reaches Grade 3.

Learners face challenges such as accent, fluency, pronunciation, audibility, reading skills, punctuation, nonverbal language use, text comprehension, self-confidence, and time management (Kothari and Garg, 2019).

Similarly, systemic assessments conducted by the Department of Basic Education, Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) as well as world-wide organisations show that learners in South African schools do not perform well when verified for their capability to read at age-appropriate ranks (DoE, 2008). Based on these unpleasing scenarios, the researcher finds more grounds to conduct this study.

The study was expected to contribute to the development of reading literacy, as it documented and evaluated teachers' insights into the improvement of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected schools in the Vhembe-East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The low reading literacy levels in Tshivenda Home Language among primary school learners hinder their ability to comprehend and effectively utilize written language, thereby limiting their potential to fully participate in and contribute to society. According to Oyowe (2022), one reason for a high rate of failure in Grade 12 is the learners' lack of basic reading skills to enable them to explore issues in a manner consistent with active readers. This suggests that some of the learners may progress from one phase to another with reading deficiencies. In the same way, the teaching of reading literacy in the country has changed its dimension. The problem to be addressed through this study was that learners at primary schools have reading deficiencies. As a result, this study sought to explore teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected schools in the Vhembe-East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is a vital tool for communication, and its significance in human interaction cannot be overstated (Hymes, 2020). South Africa, a multilingual nation, boasts a rich linguistic diversity with approximately 25 languages (Banda, 2020). The Tshivenda Home Language is one of the 12 officially recognized languages in the country (Parliament of South Africa, 2023). The National Language Policy Framework (NLPF, 2003) emphasizes the importance of promoting indigenous languages to foster national unity and social cohesion (Alexander, 2020). Research highlights the significance of language in education, particularly in reading instruction. Manyike and Lemmer (2014) emphasize the importance of language reading in education, as it directly impacts teaching and learning outcomes worldwide. Similarly, a study by Spaul (2020) found that learners who perform better in the language of instruction tend to achieve higher academic success rates. For instance, learners in lower grades who received instruction in their home language may demonstrate proficiency in that

language, but this outcome is likely influenced by a multitude of factors, including individual differences, instructional quality, and socio-cultural contexts.

1.4.1 Importance of reading skills

According to Phajane and Mokhele (2013), reading is an introductory skill that all children need to acquire if they want to succeed. In other words, if learners fail to attain reading skills from Foundation Phase, they will struggle to catch on, even with the help of corrective instruction. Mafokwane (2017) indicates that reading as a basic form of communication enables learners to get most of the information essential in teaching and learning conditions in daily life. Adeniji and Omale (2010) highlight reading skills as significant in finding or hunting for information. This tells us that if learners are unable to read, it will be difficult for them to receive the curriculum, especially those who transit to grade 4. Reading plays an important role in learners' education. Mullis, Kennedy, Martin and Sainsbury (2006) indicate that learners read to acquire, partake in groups of readers in school and in daily life, and also for pleasure. Eisenclas, Shalley and Guillemin (2013) are of the view that the price of not investing in fruitful mother tongue reading programmes would be greater in the long run than their application costs in Australia. In a similar fashion, Xhemaili (2013) is convinced that home language reading skills can have a facilitating role in second language acquisition. This means that home language reading plays an active role in instructed second language learning.

1.4.2 Characteristics of teachers with effective reading skills

The qualities of home language teachers play a key role in the effective growth of reading skills. Research by Kaya (2014) discloses that the more teachers spend much of their time teaching learners how to read, the more learners advance their reading abilities in different spheres. These teachers were found to scaffold through modelling, demonstrations, explanations, and exemplifications and used a wide range of literacy activities. The South African government, through the Department of Basic Education, assigned Foundation Phase teachers to instruct learners during the first three years of formal education (De Vries, 2014). This was considered because there is an association between teacher uniqueness, language and literacy improvement, and proficiency.

1.4.3 Factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiency

There are several factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiency, both learner-related, teacher-related, school and home-related factors. According to Linnakyla, Malin and Taube (2004), these factors include the child family structure, several siblings, immigrant status, gender, pressure to achieve, skipping classes, academic self-esteem and the socio-economic background of the learner. In another study, Mahommed and Amponsah (2018) associate low reading skills with lack of pre-reading books at home and at school, poor motivation by teachers, lack of confidence to practise reading on the side of learner, a shortage of libraries, teachers' insufficient knowledge of the phonemic responsiveness strategy of teaching reading, lack of reading bats and lack of reading races among pupils.

The South African National Department of Education has officially recognized the problems that South African teachers experience in teaching reading (DoE, 2019). The Department of Education further points out that many teachers have an under-developed understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing, whereas others simply do not know how to demonstrate reading, and still others only know one way of teaching reading, which does not provide the learning desires of all their learners.

1.5 THE ROLE OF THEORY IN THE STUDY

The study was underpinned by:

1.5.1 Traditional bottom-up theory to reading

The theory requires the learner to tie letters with sounds in a clear sequence. According to this theory, reading is a process by which readers interpret a text word by word, connecting the words into phrases and then sentences (Pardede, 2010; Ngabut, 2015). According to Kamil and Pearson (2016), the bottom-up theory puts more emphasis on the mastery of lesser level reading skills before one can move to advanced level reading skills. This theory was used by designing posters with letters of the alphabet, words, and letter combinations that produce sounds for learners to master before constructing phrases and sentences. The theory was chosen because it allows learners to start reading from the basics and therefore lays a better reading foundation for lower-grade learners.

1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. To achieve this aim, the following research questions were addressed:

1.6.1 Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

- How is Tshivenda Home Language reading promoted in the schools?
- What kind of barriers do learners in class experience when learning Tshivenda Home Language reading and how do teachers address or overcome these barriers?
- How does the method of teaching Tshivenda Home Language reading impact teacher competency and teaching efficiency?

1.6.2 Study objectives

- To determine the role of the teacher in the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in Vhembe East District.
- To assess teacher qualities required for successful development of Tshivenda Home language reading skills in the study area.
- To establish rankings of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills amongst Vhembe East District Schools.
- To determine how documentary sources, contribute to the development of reading skills among learners.

1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 Research approach

The study followed a qualitative approach with a primary goal of in-depth description and understanding of the actions of lower grade teachers who were offering Tshivenda Home Language as they occurred in selected public schools. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), qualitative research is an enquiry in which researchers collect data through face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their settings. The study will be based more on information, accounts, opinions, and feelings of participants expressed in words. The researcher deeply understood and described

the development of reading skills by lower grade teachers in the Vhembe East District in their respective schools. Qualitative research is concerned about the quality of data in a study rather than numerical aspects.

1.7.2 Research design

This study employed an instrumental case study design, a type of case study that aims to gain a better understanding of a social issue (Creswell, 2020). According to Yin (2020), a case study design involves an in-depth exploration of a bounded system based on extensive data collection. It provides insight into an issue or theme, studied with the purpose of illuminating it (Creswell, 2020).

In this study, the instrumental case study design was used to investigate teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. This emphasizes the value of instrumental case study design in providing in-depth insights into educational phenomena, including teacher perceptions and learners learning outcomes (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2020).

The researcher employed interactive qualitative methods, collecting data through face-to-face techniques in natural settings (MacMillan & Schmacher, 2006). This approach enabled the researcher to gain a rich understanding of the issue under investigation.

1.7.3 Research paradigm

This study was grounded in an interpretivist paradigm, which posits that reality is constructed through individual experiences and social interactions (Creswell & Poth, 2022). From this paradigmatic perspective, the goal is to gain a nuanced understanding of a phenomenon within its unique contextual boundaries, rather than seeking generalizability (Merriam & Tisdell, 2020). To achieve this, the study employed qualitative methods, including interviews and observations, to gather rich, contextualized data on teachers' perceptions regarding the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in Grade 3 learners.

1.8 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

1.8.1 Population

A population is the total number of all possible individuals which can be included in a study if there are enough resources (Kumar, 2021). According to Creswell (2022), a

population can consist of objects, individuals, or even proceedings. In the Vhembe East District, the population is comprised of 605 Grade 3 Tshivenda Home Language teachers (DBE, 2015).

1.8 2 Sampling

The study employed a multistage cluster sampling procedure, which involved initial sampling at the district level, followed by sampling of schools from selected circuits, and finally, sampling of eight Grade 3 teachers from the selected schools

Two circuits out of 18 were randomly sampled by numbering them from 1 to 18 and placing them in a box. The first two circuits drawn from the box were used to provide a total of 10 schools. To obtain 10 schools from the two circuits, all schools were numbered and placed in a box for a draw. The first 10 schools drawn were used to provide eight teachers. The Grade 3 teachers from the 10 schools were numbered 1–10 and placed in a box for a draw. The first eight teachers drawn served as the participants.

1.9 DATA COLLECTION

A multiple collection of data techniques or instruments was employed to increase the credibility and validity of the results obtained from different sources, such as questionnaires, observations, and documentary sources, through triangulation.

1.9.1 Semi-structured interview

This study employed face-to-face semi-structured interview as a primary data collection method to gather insightful information from teachers. Consistent with Yin's (2020) framework, data collection involved establishing study boundaries, utilizing multiple sources (observations, interviews, and documentary data), and implementing a recording protocol. This approach aligns with Creswell's (2022) notion that data collection entails capturing facts and information tailored to the research problem's characteristics. To explore teaching methods in various schools, in-depth semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were conducted with eight foundation phase teachers from selected primary schools.

Following Patton's (2020) assertion that interviewing is a potent means of understanding human perspectives, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were

employed. Open-ended questions guided the discussions, and a diary and tape recorder ensured accurate documentation.

1.9.2 Overt observation

Observation is a valued process for collecting data in qualitative studies as it has an exploratory character (Patton, 2020). Observation was used by the researcher as an information gathering method. Foundation Phase teachers were observed on how they taught reading skills to lower grade learners in real classroom settings. The researcher used observation sheets and wrote down field notes during classroom visits. This, among others, involved how lessons were introduced, learner participation, teachers' use of language and their ability to identify reading challenges, and the availability of reading books. The observation type that the researcher used was overt, as everyone knew that they were being observed. Foundation Phase teachers were observed in their real classroom practice.

1.9.3 Documentary sources

Documentary research technique refers to the examination of documents that contain data about the phenomenon we wish to research (Bailey, 1994). The documentary research method is used in exploring and sorting physical sources, mostly printed documents, whether in the private or public field (Ahmed, 2010). The documentary sources that were consulted included the CAPS document, ATP (Annual Teaching Plan), Planner and Tracker, lesson plans, and rubrics to determine how they contributed to the teaching of reading among learners.

1.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. According to Kiger and Varpio (2020), thematic analysis is a way for examining qualitative data by probing across a data set to recognise, examine and report frequent patterns. The researcher carefully examined the data and sorted them into shared themes or topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that came up frequently. The study used inductive methods to analyse interview scripts. To conduct effective research, the researcher undertook the following research process steps:

1.10.1 Observation

In this step, the researcher made detailed observations of the studied phenomenon.

1.10.1.1 Pattern recognition

The researcher looked at the data in detail once it had been collected, with the goal of finding insight and trends that could be used to form the first categories and ideas.

This means looking at the data for patterns, themes, and relationship.

1.10.1.2 Theory development

The researcher created initial categories or concepts based on the patterns and themes from the data analysis. This means putting the data into groups based on their similarities and differences to make a framework for understanding the content being studied.

1.11 QUALITY CRITERIA

Since the study is within the qualitative approach, it addressed the following quality criteria:

1.11.1 Credibility

The research data needs to be true and representative. According to Gagani (2019), the research has credible evidence, when data are based on natural world settings and the researcher's task is to arrange, organise and categorise the data. In this case, information was collected from lower grade teachers in their respective teaching environments. For the results to be credible, the researcher considered member-checking and triangulation. This implied sharing the results with participants to allow them to clarify their intentions and to correct errors.

1.11.2 Transferability

Transferability, a vital consideration in qualitative research, refers to the extent to which findings can be applied to other settings, populations, or contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2020). As noted by Merriam and Tisdell (2022), transferability is not about generalizing findings to a broader population but rather about providing a detailed, thick description of the research context, enabling stakeholders to assess the applicability of the findings to their own situations. To enhance transferability in this study, the researcher employed a contextualizing strategy, explicitly defining the study's context, boundaries, and underlying assumptions (Kumar, 2022). This transparency facilitates

stakeholders' ability to make informed judgments about the practicality of transferring the findings to different contexts (Ollerhead, 2020). This qualitative study aimed to explore the experiences of eight Grade 3 teachers in the Vhembe-East District. While the findings provide valuable insights into the research context, it is essential to acknowledge that qualitative studies by their nature, do not claim generalizability to the broader population (Creswell & Poth, 2020). The sample size of eight teachers is not representative of the entire population of 605 Grade 3 teachers in the Vhembe-East District. However, the detailed description of the research methods and context enables readers to assess the transferability of the findings to their own situations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022). Stakeholders may apply or adapt the results to their contexts, acknowledging the limitations and unique characteristics of this study.

1.11.3 Dependability

Dependability, a crucial aspect of qualitative research, refers to the consistency and stability of findings across similar contexts and situations (Creswell & Poth, 2020). To enhance dependability, a pilot study would have been beneficial to test the study instruments and ensure their reliability (Kumar, 2022). However, in this study, dependability was ensured through a transparent and well-documented research process. The researcher maintained an audit trail, allowing external examiners to scrutinize the research process, including data analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022). The external scrutiny of the research process, including data analysis, enhanced the dependability of the findings, ensuring that the results were consistent, stable, and reliable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022).

1.11.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which the end results of the study are not biased towards the researcher (Creswell, 2014) In this study, the researcher ensured confirmability by describing the process of data collection and revealing the method of data analysis in a precise and exhaustive manner through recording, categorising, and systematising to allow the reader to determine the trustworthiness of the process.

1.12 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to Mafokwane (2017), reading is an important skill which needs to be nurtured at the beginning of the schooling experience as the foundation of all the other subjects that a learner studies. It is through reading that learners are able to

understand ideas, concepts, opinions, and knowledge presented to them. This study contributed to the existing body of knowledge by providing valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of Grade 3 teachers in teaching reading. The study contributed towards the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading levels in lower primary schools of Vhembe East District. The study provided information to other districts on how best to teach Grade 3 learners reading. As a result, the study contributed to the improvement of excellence in reading and teaching in the Department of Education. It also alerted the Limpopo Department of Education on areas that need intervention in terms of teacher support and policy redress with regard to the improvement of reading. The study also informs policy makers of the Department of Education to review the Department's Home Language reading policies and strategies.

Above all, the study was significant to the Limpopo Department of Education to understand the behaviours of Grade 3 learners regarding the reading of Tshivenda Home Language, as well as suggesting strategies to improve reading resulting from the data collected. The Limpopo Department of Education is not an exception; other provinces will also benefit from the findings of the study.

1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When conducting research in an academic or professional setting one needs to be aware of ethics behind the research activity (Black well, 2013). The study considered participants' privacy, secrecy, informed consent, voluntary participation, rights, anonymity, and self-respect in the following ways:

1.13.1 Permission to conduct the study

Before carrying out this study, the researcher had to receive an approval letter from the faculty, which was sent to the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee, which issued an ethical clearance certificate. Thereafter, the researcher sent the approval to the Limpopo Department of Education. The Limpopo Department of Education issued an approval letter together with the provincial ethical clearance certificate. The researcher then sent the approval letter and provincial ethical certificate, together with their application, to the selected schools in the Vhembe East District for further clearance.

1.13.2 Informed consent

Teachers were asked to give their consent through completing and signing a consent form indicating that they were participating voluntarily, and that they would not receive any stipend. The researcher informed the participants about the research topic and explained it in detail so that they would comprehend what was required of them in relation to the study. Furthermore, the researcher told them about their rights to privacy before they were interviewed. This included the right to agree or disagree to participate, respond to questions without being forced, the use of pseudonyms so that their names could not be disclosed, the right to withdraw at any moment, and the right to refuse to respond to some questions that they did not want to respond to. Mouton (2021) considers that the right to privacy is expressed more concretely when the participants have the right to refuse to be interviewed, refuse to answer any question, refuse to answer telephonic or e-mail questionnaires and refuse not be interviewed for long periods. The consent form was written in English as the data were developed and collected using the English language.

1.13.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

According to Bhandari (2023), confidentiality means that you know who the participants are, but you remove all identifying information from your report. The study observed the privileges of the participants to confidentiality and anonymity to guarantee them that the data collected would not be made accessible to unauthorized persons. Such data were sincerely used for research purposes only. The researcher did not use their names but numbers (e.g., participant 1, 2, 3). Information about participants and schools was reserved and not reported in such a way that schools or educators were recognizable.

1.13.4 Voluntary participation

Gribich (2013) states that the subjects must agree voluntarily to participate in the research. The agreement was based on full and open information provided to them in a language of their choice. The information provided to the participants clearly showed that participation was unpaid and that participants could pull out from the study if they were no longer interested. At the time, they were requested to complete an agreement form.

1.13.5 Protection from harm

The researcher made sure that participants were safe in all spheres of their lives and even psychologically. The researcher did not ask questions that triggered participants' emotions to protect their psychological health. The researcher also ensured that the environment in which data were collected was favourable and harmless, so that no one was wounded. The researcher did not report any delicate data that may have led to legal risks or a breach of privacy.

1.14 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This research report is organized into chapters that logically flow from one to the next as follows:

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research context, background, and problem statement. It also outlines the purpose, objectives, and significance of the study, as well as the research questions and methodology.

Chapter 2 reviewed the relevant literature related to teachers' perceptions on the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in Grade 3 learners. The chapter examined the importance of reading in the Foundation Phase, the characteristics of teachers with effective reading skills, and the factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiencies. Additionally, the chapter discussed the role of the teacher in the development of reading skills, outlined strategies for developing reading skills, and explored the theories of reading. The chapter also highlighted South Africa's reading problem and concluded by presenting the SIAS process as a policy introduced to support learners with reading difficulties.

Chapter 3 investigates the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in Grade 3 learners. The chapter explores the teaching methods, strategies, and challenges faced by teachers in developing reading skills in Tshivenda Home Language, with a focus on identifying effective practices.

In chapter 4 the researcher presents, analyzes and interpret data collected from teachers, and classroom observations, highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges of teaching reading skills in Tshivenda Home Language.

Chapter 5 discusses review of the study, findings, and recommendations drawn from the study on developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in Grade 3 learners. The chapter highlights the implications of the findings for teaching practices, curriculum development, and future research, with a focus on improving reading instruction in African languages. The limitation of the study was brought to light in this chapter.

1.15 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The chapter highlighted the importance of reading skills in education, particularly in the context of multilingualism in South Africa. The study found that teachers play a vital role in shaping learners' reading skills, and their perceptions can significantly impact the effectiveness of reading instruction. The research identified several factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiency, including teacher-related, learner-related, school-related, and home-related factors. The study also emphasized the need for teachers to employ diverse linguistic approaches to reading instruction, moving beyond traditional Eurocentric models. The study poses significant implications for the development of reading literacy in South Africa, particularly in the context of indigenous languages like Tshivenda Home Language. The research suggests that teachers need to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach reading skills, and that the development of reading literacy should be a priority in education policy. Ultimately, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on reading literacy and provides valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of Grade 3 teachers in teaching reading. The study's findings can inform policy makers, educators, and other stakeholders on how to improve reading instruction and promote literacy in South Africa.

CHAPTER 2

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the background as well as the research objectives that seek to explore teachers' Perceptions on development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa were provided. This chapter presents an account of the literature review of earlier work in this area. It covers aspects such as the importance of reading skills, characteristics of teachers with effective reading skills, factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiency, the role of the teacher in the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills, teaching strategies for the development of reading skills and reading ranking by globally.

Language is viewed as a social instrument to associate a group of people in the society, both in the large and in the small groups to fulfil their everyday needs (Mahmud, 2022). South Africa, like many other African countries, is a multilingual country with approximately 25 languages (Van Staden, 2021). Tshivenda language is one of the eleven languages that have been granted an official status (RSA, 1996). On the other hand, Manyike and Lemmer (2014) view language reading in education as important in actual teaching and learning worldwide. In simple terms, academic achievement is often defined by learners' proficiency in the language of instruction. This means that learners in lower grades, whose teachers have taught them in their home language, tend to be more proficient in using that language.

2.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review is a comprehensive and systematic examination of existing research and scholarly writings on a specific topic or research question. It provides an overview of the current state of knowledge on the topic, highlighting key findings, methodologies, and gaps in existing research (Ogunyemi & Muthulakshmi, 2022).

A good literature review should: Be comprehensive and up-to-date, provide a clear and concise overview of the topic, critically evaluate existing research, identify gaps and areas for further research and inform the development of the research methodology and theoretical framework (Mabunda, 2020). By conducting a thorough

and well-structured literature review, researchers can lay a solid foundation for their study, demonstrating their expertise and understanding of the research topic.

2.2.1 The importance of reading skills

Reading and comprehension skills are fundamental for a child's development. Reading helps children improve their cognitive skills, enlightens them to new ideas, and develops their critical thinking skills. According to Keyser (2021), reading is a gateway to learning anything about everything. In other words, if learners fail to attain reading skills from Foundation Phase, they will struggle to catch on, even with the help of corrective instruction.

Early exposure to books helps children develop vocabulary and language skills. Unfortunately, thousands of learners and adults lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. Statistics show that about 60% of households have no books for entertainment, and only 14% of the population actively read books (Hjetland & Mével, 2020). Reports suggest that a mere 5% of parents read to their children. Results from the 2021 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) assesses reading comprehension of Grade 4 learners, confirmed that learning losses caused by the Covid-19 pandemic are severe across South Africa. Nationally, 81% of learners cannot read for meaning by the age of 10 years. South Africa's PIRLS score dropped from 320 (2016) to 288 (2021), taking the country back to the 2011 level.

Mafokwane (2017) indicates that reading as a basic form of communication, enables learners to get most of the information essential in teaching and learning conditions in daily life. Kirschner, and van Merriënboer (2020) highlight reading skills as significant in finding or hunting for information. This tells us that if learners are unable to read, it will be difficult for them to receive the curriculum, especially those who transit to grade 4. Reading plays an important role in learners' education. Goldman and Lee (2023) indicate that learners read to acquire, partake in groups of readers in school and in daily life, and for pleasure. Eisenclas, Shalley and Guillemain (2013) are of the view that the price of not investing in fruitful mother tongue reading programmes would be greater in the long run than their application costs in Australia. In a similar fashion, Xhemaili (2013) is convinced that home language reading skills can have a facilitating

role in second language acquisition. This means that home language reading plays an active role in instructed second language learning.

2.2.2 Characteristics of teachers with effective reading skills

The qualities of home language teachers play a key role in the effective growth of reading skills. Research by Kaya (2014) discloses that the more teachers spend much of their time in teaching learners how to read, the more learners advance their reading abilities in different spheres. These teachers were found to scaffold learning through modelling, demonstrations, explanations, and exemplifications, and they use a wide range of literacy activities. According to Surles (2023), effective instruction for students who struggle with reading should be systematic. It should be systematic in that it follows a scope and sequence that builds in level of difficulty and complexity while also building in time for review for students to practice the skills they have already learned. It should also be explicit, as research has shown that teacher-directed instruction is more effective than less teacher-directed, less explicit instruction. Several elements are involved in explicit instruction. The instructor's explanation comes first.

The teacher explanation should be short and concise. It should provide an objective or a target area of learning for that part of the lesson, and the quicker the teacher explanation is, the more time there is for students to respond to instruction. The South African government, through the Department of Basic Education, assigned Foundation Phase teachers to instruct learners during the first three years of formal education (De Vries, 2014). There is an association between teacher uniqueness, language and literacy improvement and proficiency.

2.2.3 Factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiency

There are a number of factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiency, both learner-related, teacher-related, school and home-related factors. According to Lleras and Sanchez (2023), these factors will include the child family structure, a number of siblings, immigrant status, gender, pressure to achieve, skipping classes, academic self-esteem and the socio-economic background of the learner. In another study, Mahommed and Amponsah (2018) associate low reading skills with lack of pre-reading books at home and at school, poor motivation by teachers, lack of confidence to practise reading on the side of learner, a shortage of libraries, teachers' insufficient

knowledge of the phonemic responsiveness strategy of teaching reading, lack of reading bats and lack of reading races among pupils. The South African National Department of Basic Education has officially recognised the problems that South African teachers experience in teaching reading (DoE, 2019). Department of Basic Education further points out that many teachers have an under-developed understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing, whereas others simply do not know how to demonstrate reading, and still others only know one way of teaching reading, which does not meet the learning desires of all their learners. There are numerous and complex factors that cause reading difficulties in learners (Makonko, 2022). These factors emanate from within or outside the learner. Factors that emerge from within the learners are referred to as intrinsic factors and they may include neurological, cognitive, intellectual, language, and physical factors. Factors emanating from outside the learners are referred to as extrinsic factors. The learner, school, home, and community environment are causes of extrinsic barriers. The intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence reading difficulties among Foundation Phase learners are discussed in the next sub-sections.

2.2.3.1 Intrinsic factors

Intrinsic factors, including biological, genetic, cognitive, neurological, visual, and auditory processing characteristics, significantly influence reading proficiency. As these factors are innate and uncontrollable, Foundation Phase educators must understand their impact to provide targeted support for learners with reading difficulties, ensuring differentiated instruction and optimal literacy development (Scerri, & Schumacher, 2022).

2.2.3.2 Extrinsic factors

Extrinsic factors encompass external influences beyond the learner's control, originating from outside the individual. Research has identified key extrinsic factors impacting Foundation Phase learners, including environmental variables and socioeconomic factors related to the learner's cultural background (Mabunda & Mhlanga, 2023). These external factors can significantly shape the learner's educational experiences and outcomes.

2.2.3.3 Neurological and cognitive factors

Hill and Frazier (2023) suggest that neurological and cognitive factors significantly influence the manner in which an individual's brain functions during the reading acquisition process. Notably, during reading, Foundation Phase learners employ a range of cognitive processes, including memory retrieval, visual processing, linguistic abilities, and auditory processing. This complex interplay of cognitive mechanisms occurs regardless of the level of support provided in the home or community environment.

2.2.3.4 Intelligence and intellectual factors

The early detection of reading difficulties is imperative in the Foundation Phase. To facilitate this, educators should utilise standardized assessment instruments, including intelligence tests, to identify potential reading challenges. These tests assess learners' cognitive functioning, specifically scholastic aptitude, which empirical research has established as a significant predictor of reading achievement (Gillet, Temple, Temple, & Crawford, 2021). The observed correlation between intelligence and reading proficiency highlights the diagnostic utility of intelligence tests in identifying learners requiring targeted reading interventions.

2.2.3.5 Vision and visual problem

A range of visual anomalies, encompassing amblyopia, myopia, phoria, hyperopia, astigmatism, aniseikonia, and strabismus (Gillet et al.; Naidoo et al., 2014, as cited in Makonko, 2022), can significantly impede reading development in the Foundation Phase. Consequently, educators in this phase must develop competencies in detecting visual impairments to provide tailored support. For instance, learners with myopia may experience difficulties with distant visual acuity, necessitating strategic seating placements or specialized referrals for corrective measures, including surgical interventions or prescription eyewear.

2.2.3.6 Hearing and auditory problems

Auditory and hearing deficits encompass various manifestations, including compromised auditory perception. During the Foundation Phase, learners are tasked with developing phonological awareness, encompassing letter-name and sound-letter correspondences. Nevertheless, hearing impairments can substantially impede this acquisition, precluding learners from comprehending instructional directives.

Given the pivotal role of hearing ability in spoken language development, communication and learning. Foundation Phase educators must possess the capacity to identify learners with hearing difficulties. This facilitates the deployment of specialised instructional approaches, catering to the distinct requirements of learners with auditory impairments and promoting inclusive educational practices (Khoza-Shangase & Kanji, 2021).

2.2.3.7 Parental involvement

Parental involvement is a vital component of children's educational development, with parents being recognized as the primary educators (Mourão & Ferreira, 2023). This involvement encompasses participation in both home and school-based educational activities. Despite its importance, many parents remain unaware of their pivotal role in fostering their children's learning outcomes, and consequently, neglect their responsibilities (Mutodi & Ngirande, 2014).

Research underscores the significance of parental attitudes, behaviors, and engagement in home learning activities in enhancing children's academic achievement and mitigating factors that hinder reading skills (Henderson & Mapp, 2020). Parental involvement is crucial for successful learning outcomes, particularly in reading, with active participation in the teaching and learning process being essential. Conversely, parental apathy or negative attitudes toward reading education can have deleterious effects on children's performance.

The South African Education Law and Policy of 1999 emphasizes parental involvement in children's education (Okeke, 2014). Section 20 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 mandates School Governing Bodies to support parents in developing their children's educational skills. Adnan, Akram, and Akram (2016) note that this policy obliges parents to support their children's schoolwork, including reading.

Studies have consistently shown that parental involvement has numerous benefits, including improved attendance, behaviour, and academic performance (Annie, 2022). Moreover, Positive Action (2021) highlights the profound influence parents exert on their children's development, surpassing that of teachers, peers, and the media.

Regrettably, many schools struggle to engage parents in their children's education. Common pitfalls include guilt-tripping uninvolved parents, disregarding parental perspectives, poor communication, and indifference to individual parental needs (Garcia & Thornton, 2014, as cited by Ntekane, 2018).

The literature conclusively demonstrates that family involvement in learning enhances student performance, reduces absenteeism, and restores parental confidence in education (Ntekane, 2018). Therefore, fostering parental involvement is crucial for promoting academic success, economic prosperity, and social well-being.

2.2.3.8 Shortage of libraries

The absence of libraries significantly impedes the development of reading skills among learners, particularly in the rural areas. Early exposure to libraries is crucial for fostering reading proficiency, as it lays the foundation for future academic success. Unfortunately, many public schools in rural areas lack functional libraries, depriving learners of opportunities to practice and refine their reading skills.

Research indicates that a substantial proportion of schools in rural communities lack library facilities, with Mojapelo (2018) reporting that 73% of schools in these areas do not have access to libraries. This scarcity exacerbates the challenges faced by low-income families who cannot afford to purchase books for their children. Moreover, Matchet and Tiemensma (2009) note that 85% of South Africa's population resides beyond the reach of public libraries.

Studies have consistently highlighted the importance of library access for learner development. Oyewole and Adewale (2023) argue that libraries empower learners by providing access to global knowledge, while Maree and Jacobs (2022) demonstrate that schools with libraries and qualified librarians have a positive impact on learner outcomes. These findings suggest that learners with access to library facilities tend to outperform their peers without such access.

The lack of libraries in rural areas perpetuates educational disparities, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to address this issue. Providing learners with access to libraries and qualified librarians is essential for bridging the gap in reading proficiency and promoting long-term academic success.

2.2.3.9 Teacher competency

Research suggests that a significant proportion of teachers in South Africa lack a comprehensive understanding of literacy instruction, particularly in teaching reading and writing (Chetty & Singh, 2021). Specifically, many teachers are limited in their knowledge of effective reading instruction methods, often relying on a single approach that may not accommodate diverse learning styles.

Furthermore, teachers struggle to create stimulating reading environments both inside and outside the classroom, hindering learners' reading development. This misunderstanding about the teacher's role in reading instruction is perpetuated by Curriculum 2005 and reinforced in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

Studies have highlighted the inadequate training of Foundation phase teachers in reading instruction, rendering them ill-equipped to support learners with reading difficulties (Chetty & Singh, 2021). Consequently, teachers often resort to rote teaching methods, prioritizing memorisation over critical engagement.

Recent research underscores the significance of conceptual knowledge base as a major challenge for South African teachers (Dlamini & Mthembu, 2024). Teachers' difficulties in facilitating learners' reading skill acquisition pose a substantial obstacle to the education system.

The Department of Education (2008) emphasizes the detrimental effects of hiring underqualified educators on the overall quality of education. This underscores the need for targeted professional development initiatives to enhance teachers' conceptual knowledge and pedagogical skills in literacy instruction.

2.2.4 The role of the teacher in the development of reading skills

According to Venketsamy and Sibanda (2021), teachers play a significant role in literacy development. They are responsible for using different approaches to develop literacy skills among learners whose mother tongue is not the same as the language of learning and teaching in schools. Teachers need to know several approaches to developing literacy skills among learners and providing flexible instructive feedback (Persaud, 2019). Learner centred teaching generally involves teaching methods that move instruction from the teacher to the learner (Du Plessis, 2020). Below are the 7 (seven) early reading skills that are essential for learner development:

2.2.4.1 Decoding

Decoding is a fundamental skill essential for reading proficiency, encompassing two primary processes: segmenting (breaking down words into individual sounds) and blending (merging sounds to form words). Effective decoding requires a dual understanding of letter-sound relationships and the ability to apply this knowledge to accurately recognise and comprehend written words (Shanahan, 2023).

Research identifies various decoding strategies, including:

- Recognising spelling patterns
- Identifying word families
- Understanding root words
- Analysing prefixes and affixes
- Phoneme blending (combining sounds)
- Phoneme segmentation (breaking down words into sounds)

These strategies facilitate the translation of printed words into spoken language, enabling learners to decode efficiently. In the foundation phase, mastering decoding skills simplifies the learning process, laying a solid foundation for future reading proficiency (Calderwood & Stearns, 2021).

2.2.4.2 Phonics

This is an effective way to teach learners the alphabetical code, building their skills in decoding. According to Kasprick and Brittany (2023), phonics instruction taught early proved much more effective than phonics instruction introduced after first grade. Piasta and Hudson (2022) are of the view that phonics instruction emphasizes the connection between spelling (print) and sound speech. When learners first enter school, they are introduced to letters and corresponding sound that letters make. This simply means that phonics encourages learners to decode written letters by sound based on the grapheme. Struggling readers, who still have problems decoding words letter by letter, need special support in order to avoid their reading skills from falling more and more behind those of their classmates (Volkmer, 2019). Therefore, mastering these skills is the foundation students need for them to move on to reading words. For the gap in a learner's reading performance to close, recognizing and responding to a learner's academic needs is crucial. Teachers should frequently be observing a learner's daily performance during reading instruction as well scores on

reading assessments. Some learners are likely to fall behind in their development of word reading if their teachers are not responsive to them (Duke & Mesmer, 2018).

Implementing MTSS can help provide extra support for learners who are at risk in reading. Schools that implement Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) will provide students, starting as young as kindergarten, with intensive intervention and instruction, reducing the risk of them not receiving explicit instruction until the middle elementary grades (Leonard, Coyne, Oldham, Burns, & Gillis, 2019). Without interventions in the classroom to help learners who are already at risk, this may lead them to lag behind their peers.

According to Kasprick (2023), when learners are not making progress in phonics and reading instruction, a plan must be put into place to support learners' needs. To meet all learners' needs, a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) or a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework needs to be implemented in the classroom. It can involve a great deal of work to align MTSS practices and coordinate support needed for students. However, there is evidence that proves that the extra time spent on figuring out the best practices is worth it in the end. MTSS is a three-tiered level of support targeted at helping learners who are struggling and performing below par in school.

2.2.4.3 Vocabulary

According to CAPS 123, (2023), vocabulary is one of the key components of teaching reading in the foundation phase. It refers to the words that learners need to know and use to communicate effectively in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Vocabulary development helps learners to comprehend texts and express their ideas clearly.

Pretorius (2023) explores some strategies to teach vocabulary in the foundation phase as follows:

- Introduce new words in meaningful contexts and provide multiple exposures.
- Use visual aids, gestures, synonyms, antonyms, examples and non-examples to explain word meanings.
- Encourage learners to use new words in oral and written activities.
- Teach word analysis skills such as prefixes, suffixes and root words.

It is important to understand how to effectively teach vocabulary, especially in the early grades because according to Hiebert, Goodwin, and Cervetti (2017), when

children's vocabularies are smaller as they start school, their prospects for reading successes may depend on the depth of those school experiences. Therefore, it is important to connect theory to vocabulary instruction and explain how children learn to read, thus giving educators another glimpse at how to teach vocabulary. Effective vocabulary instruction presents definitional and contextual information; it provides encounters with words in multiple ways and engages students in the active processing of word meaning (McKeown, 2019). Teachers can teach vocabulary more effectively if they understand how children learn to read. Learning to read words and understanding the meanings of those words is a major challenge for early readers, yet both are needed in comprehension (2019). According to Garden (2022), as learners are reading, writing, listening, and speaking, they learn words and building their vocabulary. Children come to school with varying amounts of words in their lexicon and in the primary grades, most words are learned incidentally, as children are reading, listening, engaging in conversations in the classroom and writing. Children need a continuum of direct and indirect opportunities for learning because of the number of new words they eventually will encounter each year. Graves (2009) as cited by Hennessy (2021) has created a four-part structured approach that targets both acquisition and application of vocabulary knowledge as well as both direct and indirect opportunities for word learning.

This approach includes:

- providing rich and varied language experiences
- teaching individual words
- teaching word learning strategies
- fostering word consciousness.

Teachers play a crucial role in developing learners' vocabulary. One way to achieve this is by providing learners with ample time to read widely and encounter various words in context. Teachers can also intentionally select words worthy of instruction, model their own word-solving strategies, and engage learners in collaborative conversations that incorporate challenging vocabulary. Additionally, teachers should encourage learners to use new words in their speaking and writing, while also identifying potential words to be taught and exposing learners to multiple contexts

where these words can be applied. By implementing these strategies, teachers can help learners develop a robust vocabulary and improve their overall language skills.

2.2.4.4 Fluency

Fluency in reading in the foundation phase means being able to read smoothly and accurately with expression and comprehension. It is an important skill for learners to develop in the early grades of schooling. According to the Western Cape Education Department (2020), fluency in reading can be measured by specific numerical benchmarks, such as words per minute and accuracy rate. According to Paige (2020), reading fluency has been through multiple conceptualizations. These include the rapid reading of individual words, reading words correctly, the speed at which one can read connected text, and reading with expression. Fluent reading is now conceptualized by reading scholars as a construct composed of three facets, or indicators. These include the rate of one's reading, the accuracy at which words are pronounced, and the prosody (meaning expression) in one's voice that brings a text to life. While the indicators are individually identified, they work interactively to produce fluent reading. Fluency in general refers to the ability to read texts "with freedom from word identification problems that might hinder comprehension" (Pretorius & Spaul, 2016). Much of the focus on fluency research has been on oral reading fluency (ORF), specifically during the primary school years. ORF refers to the ability to read aloud with accuracy and speed and with meaningful oral expression, with the reader's voice reflecting the prosody and intonation of spoken language. In contrast, non-fluent readers read slowly and laboriously, in a stilted and monotonous tone, often stopping to stare at words or sound them out. According to Nieporent (2021), there are several ways children can practice fluent reading:

- Child/adult – The adult models, then learner practices.
- Choral reading – reading in unison.
- Assisted reading – reading along with a recorded text.
- Partner reading – reading along with another child.
- Reader's theatre – playing characters, as in a play.

To bring forth better results it is the responsibility of the teacher to see to it that he provides opportunities for learners to learn and practice pre-assembled chunks of language; provide opportunities for them to practice and rehearse speeches and

discussions before they take place and encourage them to spend time studying abroad where they possess the means to do so.

2.2.4.5 Sentence construction and cohesion

Cohesion is how ideas are related to and between sentences whereas sentence construction is how the basic grammatical elements of a sentence are put together. Words and sentences are cohesive when they logically fit together. Understanding sentence structure will greatly improve writing. According to Provost (2022), there are four types of sentence structure:

- Simple sentence structure: This when a sentence is composed of just one independent clause – a clause which contains a subject (the noun performing the action of the sentence) and predicate (the action being taken) and expresses a complete thought, for example: He was correct.
- Compound sentence: This combines two or more independent clauses with coordinating conjunction, example: She was sick, so she didn't attend the workshop.
- Complex sentence: This is consisting of independent clause and dependent clause, for example: You will not do well if you refuse to study.
- Compound complex: Compound complex sentences combine the ideas behind both compound and complex sentences, e.g. Because he was injured, the team played with a short bench and their rivals beat them soundly.

2.2.4.6 Reading comprehension

According to the Beginner's Guide to Teaching Reading in the CAPS Foundation Phase (2022), teaching reading comprehension in the foundation phase requires a comprehensive approach that includes:

- Phonics and phonemic awareness: These are the skills that help learners decode words and sounds. One can use letter-sound cards, songs, rhymes, word games, and decodable texts to teach these skills.
- Vocabulary: This is the knowledge of word meanings and usage. One can use picture books, word walls, semantic maps, and context clues to teach vocabulary.

- Comprehension: This is the ability to understand and interpret texts. One can use questioning, summarizing, predicting, and inferring to teach comprehension strategies.

According to Forsythe and Stukey (2020), comprehension instruction is integral to building strong readers. This instruction is synergistic, not competitive, with the equally important work of explicit, systematic instruction in word recognition. According to Duke, Ward, and Pearson (2021), the relation between word recognition instruction and reading comprehension instruction is more synergistic than competitive.

Therefore, it goes without saying that without phonics, learners will not be able to read with comprehension. Comprehension depends on the amount of vocabulary the learners have acquired. If the learners master the phonics, then they will be able to acquire vocabulary. Their vocabulary will enhance their level of comprehension. To help learners to read fluently, teachers need to emphasise phonics, vocabulary, word recognition, and comprehension when teaching reading. For teachers to develop fluency amongst learners, they must encourage reading aloud and reading silently with peers, parents, teachers, and with other individuals.

2.2.4.7 Memory and attention

According to Cochrane and Green (2023), working memory is typically described as a set of processes that allow for the maintenance and manipulation of information for proximal actions, yet the “action” portion of this construct is commonly overlooked. In contrast, neuroscience-informed theories of working memory have emphasized the hierarchical nature of memory representations, including both goals and sensory representations. These two representational domains are combined for the service of actions. On the other hand, Hakim, deBettencourt, Awh and Vogel, (2020) indicate that working memory maintains information in a readily accessible state and has been shown to degrade as the length of the retention interval increases. Cowan, Rouders, Blume, and Harris (2015) have made a distinction between two key aspects of working memory capacity: the maximum amount of information an individual can hold, and the likelihood of reaching that maximum limit. Visual working memory facilitates the temporary maintenance of information over time for use in ongoing cognitive processes. The majority of working memory research has examined performance over

short (~1 second) retention intervals. However, there is growing evidence that suggests that working memory performance declines after longer (~10 seconds) retention intervals (Donkin, Nosofsky, Gold, and Shiffrin, 2015; Rademaker, Park, Sack, and Tong, 2018).

2.2.5. Teaching strategies for the development of reading skills

The correct and effective teaching strategies are required to improve reading literacy as a matter of urgency. According to Adeniji and Omale (2010), it is important for learners to have access to appropriate reading materials, and for teachers to be guided towards using correct methods of teaching reading in a conducive environment, with adequate educational qualifications and good reading skills in order to help produce learners who perform well in all subjects (Mafokwane, 2017). Studies by Linnakyla, Malin and Taube (2004) found out that the supply of electronic material alongside with more traditional reading materials could be useful, enjoyable and supportive in the development of reading literacy in Finland and Sweden. In other words, reading literacy today may not be limited to printed material but also includes electronic materials. Mohammed and Amponsah (2018) are of the opinion that reading literacy in Ghana could be improved by supplying pre-reader books by parents and the school, parents rewarding and complementing their children for improved reading abilities; schools to organise reading competitions for learners and training of teachers on phonemic awareness strategy of teaching reading. This idea is supported by Harvey (2013) who reiterates that successful literacy learning and teaching should involve a shift in responsibility from teacher to learners, with new learning introduced in the most supportive setting. According to CAPS 123 (2023), before one starts teaching reading, assessing one's learners' literacy levels and needs is essential. It further says that one can use various tools, including standardized tests and informal assessments, to identify areas where learners need extra support. It goes on to say one should also create a literacy-rich classroom environment that includes a variety of books, posters, and other reading materials. This means that Foundation Phase teachers can use various reading strategies to improve learners' reading skills. According to a Beginner's Guide to teaching reading in the CAPS Foundation Phase curriculum (2023), teachers can use various tools including standardized tests and informal assessments, to identify areas where learners need extra support. They should also create a literacy-rich classroom environment that includes a variety of

books, posters, and other reading materials. In addition, teachers can use practical strategies for teaching phonics and phonemic awareness in the Foundation Phase, such as using letter- sound cards, singing songs and rhymes, and playing word games. They can also use decodable texts, which are designed to help learners practice phonics skills and build reading fluency. Vocabulary instruction involves introducing new words and helping learners understand their meanings, while comprehension instruction involves teaching learners how to understand and analyse what they are reading. The Department of Education (DoE) offers a more simplified explanation of what reading strategies are, stating that reading strategies are ways of solving problems that learners may come across while reading (DoE, 2008). This means that reading strategies are techniques or approaches that learners use to overcome obstacles or challenges they encounter while reading, such as understanding vocabulary, making inferences, or identifying main ideas. The researcher believes that the reading tactics listed below are useful for helping learners who struggle with reading, even though they are meant to help all learners improve their reading abilities. However, the teacher needs to adapt and use a specific strategy to suit the specific needs of specific learners with a particular reading difficulty.

2.2.5.1 Shared reading

Shared reading is a whole classroom instructional strategy where the teacher involves all the learners during the reading process including those with reading difficulties. As a result, the interaction between the learners and the teacher at this stage is essential. The teacher reads the text to and with the learners. In class, shared reading usually happens during the first 15 minutes of the reading and writing time two to four days in a week (DoE, 2011). Place (2016) argues that the importance of using this reading instructional strategy is to show the learners “how to”. Similarly, the DoE (2008) shares the same view and maintains that, during shared reading, learners are taught how to read the text by considering the expression and intonation suited to the text and how to respond to the text.

In addition, Nel and Nel (2016) argue that, during shared reading, learners are taught strategies to decode words and solve reading problems, allowing them to take risks during the reading process while being guaranteed support from the teachers and their peers. The teacher uses different texts such as big books, posters, pictures, and

learners' own writing or enlarged text from stories. More importantly, the text should be clear and big enough for all learners to see what is being read. During the first reading lesson, the focus should be on reading for enjoyment, where both the teacher and the learners first "look" at the text and the learners provide their individual meanings about the text. In the second reading lesson, the teachers use the same text but the focus shifts from meaning of the whole to the parts for instruction (Nel & Nel, 2016). At this stage, the emphasis is on making learners to be more involved. The teachers use discussions to enhance the learners' vocabulary, decoding skills, comprehension, and text structure such as grammar and punctuation. In the third and fourth reading lesson, learners read the text themselves and are engaged in practical, written, and oral activities based on the text. Through shared reading, the learners' confidence in reading escalates and their sight words and vocabularies are extended.

2.2.5.2 Group guided reading

Group guided reading is a strategy used with ability-group learners working with texts at their instructional level (Place, 2016; DoE, 2011). It is a teacher-centred instructional activity where the teacher is responsible to group the learners according to their reading abilities and interests and to select a suitable graded reading book for the learners based on their instructional level. Nel and Nel (2016) assert that each group may consist of four to six learners with similar instructional needs using one instructional text, for example, shared reading and each group session might last ten to 15 minutes. During group guided reading, each group works with a different text to read under the teacher's supervision. Even though the learners at that stage will belong to a certain group, it should be noted that these groups are not permanent as they may change based on the teachers' observations and progress of the learners after the assessment. This strategy has benefits for both the teacher and learners. It provides learners with an opportunity to integrate their developing knowledge of the conventions of print, letter-sound relationship and other foundational skills in context and, on the other hand, it provides the teacher with an opportunity to observe the reading behaviours and to identify areas of need for learners (DoE, 2008).

2.2.5.3 Independent reading

For learners who require individual attention such as the remedial readers, independent reading or individual reading is the most suitable strategy. When supporting these learners, the teacher will allow each learner to choose his or her own

reading book based on his or her interest and ability (DoE, 2008; Nel & Nel, 2016). This strategy allows learners to take responsibility for their own learning. During the reading process, the learners will read books for enjoyment to practice and boost their individual reading ability. Then, after the learners are done with their reading, the teacher will have a discussion with each learner based on what he or she has read.

2.2.5.4 Paired reading

Paired reading is another strategy that the teacher may use to support the learners who experience reading problems. But this will depend on the number of learners in need of support in the classroom. Paired reading allows the teacher to read to the learner and the latter following the text. It also allows the teacher to group the learners in pairs where learners will be reading for enjoyment. When two learners are grouped together, one learner will read while the other one will be listening. The grouped learners will be allowed to read either inside or outside the classroom to practice their reading and gain confidence (DBE, 2011).

To improve reading in the Foundation Phase, it is essential for teachers to incorporate this reading method such that learners can acquire reading skills and apply them effectively in their independent reading, in groups and in pairs.

2.2.5.5 Reading aloud

According to the DoE (2008), reading aloud permits the teacher to read the text to the whole class or to a group of learners using the reading text that is related to the learners' reading level. By so doing, learners can hear models of fluent reading (Nel & Nel, 2016). Teachers use this strategy to expose the learners to different texts and to increase their vocabulary and language skill, develop their love for and motivation to learn to read. In support of this statement, Rose, and Smith (2012) argue that reading aloud is the most effective strategy in the development of the learners' vocabulary and language skill when they are actively involved in the reading process rather than when they are passive listeners. Considering the foregoing, it is important for the teachers to ask learners questions during the reading lesson. This is done to prompt discussion and to allow learners to forecast what the text will be all about. Since reading aloud models fluency, increases vocabulary, and develops the love of reading to the learners, it is important for the teacher to have knowledge and understanding of this reading strategy to support learners with reading difficulties.

Tierney (1985) argues that reading is a thought process. Effective readers know that when they read, what they read must make sense. They monitor their understanding and when they lose the meaning of what they are reading, they often unwittingly select and use a reading strategy (such as rereading or asking questions) that will help them reconnect with the meaning of the text. Reading skills and strategies can be explicitly taught as students learn subject-specific content through authentic reading activities. Effective readers use strategies to understand what they read before, during, and after reading.

Before reading, they:

- use previous knowledge to reflect on the topic.
- make predictions about the probable meaning of the text.
- preview the text by scrolling and scanning to get an idea of the general meaning.

As they read, they:

- supervise comprehension by asking questions, reflecting on the ideas and information in the text.

After reading, they:

- reflect on the ideas and information in the text.
- relate what they have read to their experiences and knowledge.
- clarify their understanding of the text.
- expand their understanding critically and creatively.

2.2.6 Theories of reading

In order to improve the techniques of teaching reading, teachers must have an understanding of these four topics, which are the theory of top-down, bottom-up, schema theory and meta-cognitive. By doing so, the reading proficiency of learners of Tshivenda Home Language could be significantly enhanced.

2.2.6.1 Top down model

In top-down models of reading, the cognitive and linguistic competence of the reader plays a key role in the construction of meaning from printed materials. In this case,

understanding, according to these models, is obtained using only the necessary information from the graphic, syntactic and semantic indication. Other ideas are based on the linguistic competence of the reader (Ngabut, 2015). This means that if attendees know the language in which the text is written, they will be able to read it for a better understanding, the reader's background and vocabulary also play a role in decoding the written symbols. All meaningful text has a major impact on reading comprehension that cannot be clarified through experimental procedures that have examined letters, words, and sentences in isolation. In this model, reading is not simply extracting meaning from a text, but a process of connecting information in the text with the knowledge that the reader brings to the act of reading. In this sense, reading is a dialogue between the reader and the text that involves an active cognitive process in which the reader's basic knowledge plays a key role in creating meaning (Pardede, 2017). In the top-down reading model, the emphasis is placed on student engagement with the text. It is not enough to convince students to simply know the word they see, understand its general meaning, and know how to pronounce it if they read aloud. The goal of top-down reading theory is to convince students to become active readers. Active readers have a greater understanding and broader vocabularies and are better able to engage in abstract and logical thinking. If a reader is aware that a current text is related to a previous text, this understanding could guide the evaluation of the knowledge activated by the previous text through ascending resonance mechanisms. A possible starting point for this evaluation process is a title. A title is known to help the reader understand a text she/he is reading, particularly when that text is relatively difficult to understand.

2.2.6.2 Bottom up model

This model sees reading essentially as a process of translation, decoding or coding. Here the reader begins with larger letters or units, and while dealing with them begins to anticipate the words he spells. When words are identified, they are decoded into internal words from which the reader derives the meaning in the same way that he hears. In this process, reading comprehension is believed to be an automatic result of accurate word recognition. This model requires students to match letters and sounds in a defined sequence. According to this opinion, reading is a linear process by which readers decode the text word by word, connecting words into sentences and then connecting those sentences. Bottom-up processes are those that collect stimuli from

letters and words from the outside world, to read and manage such information with a small use of higher-level knowledge. This means that reading is determined by the upward processing of visual information. As the signal spreads through an increasingly complex hierarchy of neural sensors, mental operations become increasingly elaborate. In particular, the left occipito-temporal region/cortex area is gradually responsive to lexical information, ranging from single letters and bigrams to morphemes, and eventually to full words. This model is in line with phonemic awareness and phonetic reading type, so students are forced to read phonetics before they can deal with the whole word.

2.2.6.3 Schema theory

Pearson-Casanave (1980) points out that a schema theory is basically a theory of knowledge. It is a theory of how knowledge is represented and how this representation facilitates the use of knowledge in particular ways. According to schema theories, all knowledge is grouped into units. These units are the patterns. In addition to the knowledge itself, these knowledge packages incorporate information on how to use this knowledge. Therefore, a schema is a data structure to represent generic concepts stored in memory. The basic principle of schema theory assumes that written text has no meaning of its own. Rather, a text only provides guidance to readers on how they should retrieve or generate meaning from their previously acquired knowledge. This prior knowledge is called basic reader knowledge and previously acquired knowledge structures are called patterns. According to the schema theory, understanding a text is an interactive process between the basic knowledge of the reader and the text. Efficient understanding requires the ability to relate textual material to one's knowledge. These theories not only influence the way information is interpreted, which affects understanding, but also continue to change when new information is received. The patterns can represent knowledge at all levels, from ideologies and cultural truths to knowing the meaning of a given word, to knowing which excitation patterns are associated with which letters of the alphabet. We have schemes to represent all levels of our experience, at all levels of abstraction. Our patterns are our knowledge. All our generic knowledge is integrated into the schemas. The importance of schema theory for reading comprehension also lies in the way the reader uses schemas. This is in line with the study by Al-Issa (2006) that concluded that the closer the correspondence

between the reader's outline and the text, the greater the understanding. Understanding of any kind depends on knowledge; that is to say, relating what we do not know (that is, new information, with what we already know, which is not a random collection of facts but a world theory). In other words, our understanding of a text depends on the amount of related schema that we as readers possess in reading. Consequently, the inability of first and second language readers to make sense of a text is due to the lack of an appropriate outline that can be easily adapted to the content of the text. This lack of an appropriate schema can be content, formal, or linguistic.

2.2.6.4 Meta-cognitive

Meta-cognitive knowledge is defined as the knowledge of the mental processes that are involved in different types of learning. Metacognition has two fundamental aspects that are cognition knowledge and self-directed thinking. Self-directed thinking is regulated by evaluation, planning and regulatory activities. 50 Metacognition involves active monitoring and the consequent regulation and orchestration of cognitive processes to achieve cognitive goals. Metacognition is deliberate, planned, intentional, goal-oriented, and future-oriented mental processing that can be used to perform cognitive tasks. Metacognitive strategies differ from cognitive strategies in their scope and application. Unlike cognitive strategies, which are often specific to a particular subject area, metacognitive strategies are transferable across multiple disciplines. This means that learners who possess metacognitive skills can apply them to overcome difficulties in various learning contexts, making them more adaptable and resilient learners. Metacognitive strategies indicate self-thinking and can facilitate increased learning and developed performance, especially among students who are extremely concerned with understanding the written context. Learners are said to become aware of their mental processes. This includes recognizing which types of learning tasks cause difficulties, which approaches to remembering information work better than others, and how to solve different types of problems (Zare-ee, 2007). Knowledge of the metacognitive reading strategy is a higher-order performance element involving planning the causes of learning, monitoring comprehension, and evaluating the success of a learning activity. This includes self-regulation strategies such as planning, self-control, and questioning. Additionally, it involves clarifying and repairing misunderstandings.

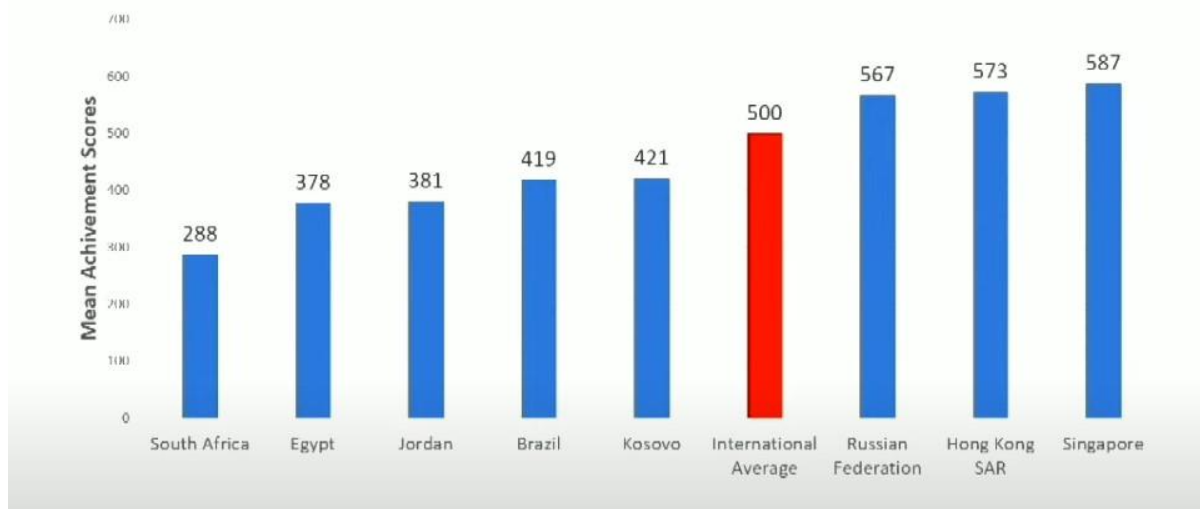
2.2.7 South Africa's reading problem

South African schools are grappling with a severe reading literacy crisis, as evident in the low literacy levels of learners (Pretorius & Lephala, 2011). The Department of Basic Education's Annual National Assessments (ANAs) in Grades 3 and 6 have consistently shown poor literacy and numeracy skills (DBE, 2011). In response, the government launched the Foundations for Learning Campaign in 2008 to improve literacy and numeracy in the Foundation and Intermediate Phases (Siyothula, 2019). The initiative provided schools with resources like DBE workbooks and trained teachers to allocate time effectively for reading and numeracy instruction (Meier, 2011). The programme emphasized the importance of daily reading for at least 30 minutes in primary schools. However, despite these efforts, many Grade 3 learners still demonstrate poor reading comprehension skills in their native languages, as reflected in the ANA and Special Education (SE) results. This is a concerning issue, as learners are struggling with reading proficiency even after three years of schooling.

According to the 2021 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2021), South African Grade 4 learners rank lowest globally in reading literacy, with a staggering 81% unable to read with comprehension. The study, which assessed 12,426 learners in South Africa and compared them to peers in 42 other countries, revealed a mean achievement score of 288, significantly lower than the international average of 500.

Egypt ranked second lowest in the study, but its score of 378 surpassed South Africa's significantly. A concerning trend for South Africa is the substantial decline in its achievement score compared to the 2016 PIRLS study, where 78% of Grade 4 learners struggled with reading comprehension in any language. Although South Africa's decline is notable, 21 out of 32 countries with available trend data also experienced a drop in scores, largely attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on global teaching hours. In contrast, the top-performing countries in the 2021 study were Singapore, Hong Kong, Russia, England, and Finland, with scores ranging from 549 to 588.

Overall Grade 4 Achievement



The results in South Africa varied heavily across languages. Learners who were tested in Afrikaans and English scored significantly higher than those who were tested in African languages.

Those tested in Afrikaans (387) and English (382) scored well above the average, while nine African languages scored below the mean, with Setswana (211) being the worst-performing language.

Moreover, the Western Cape (363), Gauteng (320) and Kwa-Zulu Natal (297) outperformed the 288 mean, with more remote provinces such as Limpopo (244) and North-West (232) significantly lower.

The biggest area of concern is that 81% of learners in the study were below the study's low international benchmark, meaning that 81% of learners cannot read for meaning.

Moreover, only 11% of learners reached the low international benchmark, while 94% of students internationally could reach the low international benchmark.

For South Africa, only 2% of readers could reach a high benchmark, while 1% reached the advanced benchmark.

South Africa is not the only country in which learners do not perform well in reading. Some countries with similar problems as South Africa concerning learners' poor performance in reading, recommend some guidelines on how to teach reading.

2.2.8 Policy support processes in South African Schools

The policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) was introduced in 2014 by the DBE and its purpose is to provide a policy framework for the normalization of the processes to screen, identify, assess, and provide intervention for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion in schools (DBE, 2014 (a)). The SIAS policy enables schools to respond to the learners' needs particularly those that are likely to be marginalised and excluded and vulnerable. But from the study conducted by Estelle (2020), it was showed that SIAS policy is not implemented because SBST was under-utilised. It was determined that the School-Based Support Team (SBST) was consulted to refer a learner for a psycho-educational assessment.

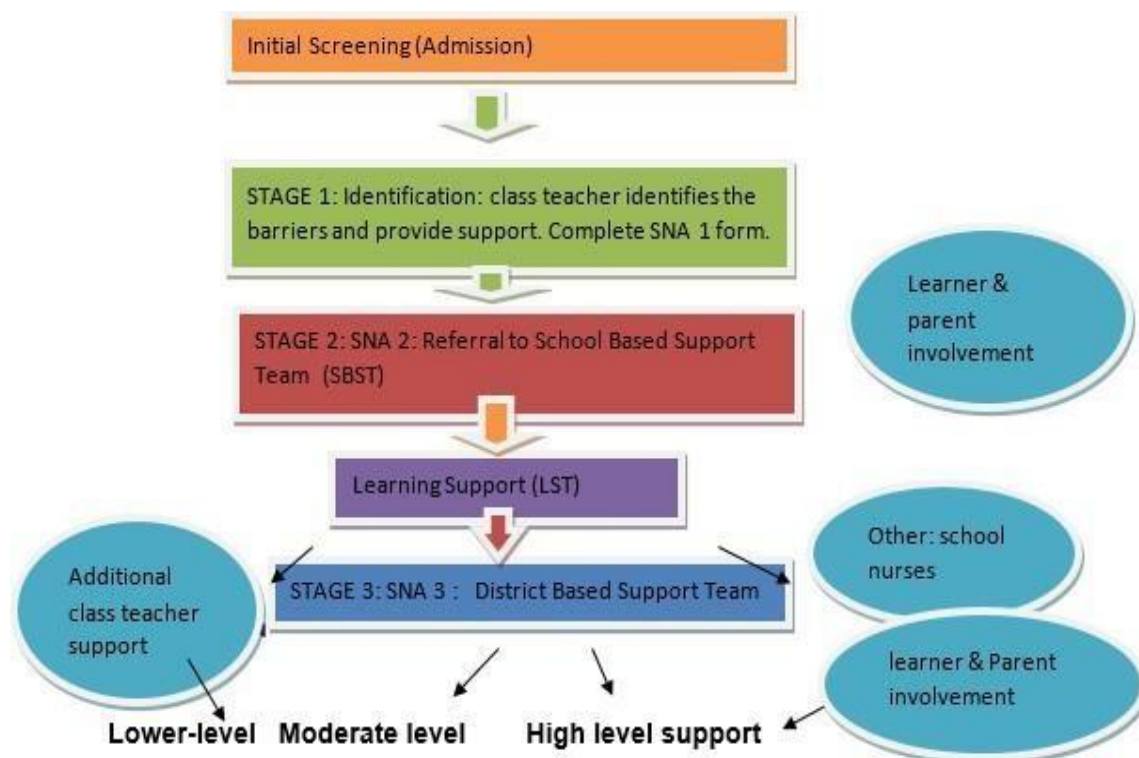


Figure 2.3: SIAS Process: source: SIAS: DBE (2014: 27-28)

The above-illustrated process was obtained from the initial screenings to guide the class teacher as to whether the learner is in danger of encountering learning barriers or not. If the learner is identified as at risk during the initial screening, the class teachers should design an individual support plan for the learner. Before the teacher can start with the support process, the learner's parents or caregivers should be invited to discuss the initial screening results and teacher's plan of action (Aziz et al., 2016; DBE, 2014). The parents should also assist the teacher to complete the Support Needs Assessment form 1 (SNA1).

If the learner is not progressing from the support received from the teacher, the learner should be transferred to SBST. The SBST should also give the learner the support needed, if the learner is not progressing, the SBST should complete SNA 2 for district reference. The class teacher should be invited to the meeting to present the learner's barrier to the team to come up with a plan of action. The team will look at all intervention the class teacher has used and suggest other strategies that the class teacher can use in class with the learner. The team should also involve the LST. According to their timetable (DBE, 2014), the LST should provide support to the learner using the various technical reading skills outlined in the following section.

2.3 CONCLUSION

This literature review highlights the significance of reading skills in learners' educational development, particularly in the context of Tshivenda Home Language in South Africa. The importance of reading skills is underscored by its impact on cognitive development, vocabulary expansion, and critical thinking. However, statistics reveal alarming reading deficiencies among South African learners, with 81% unable to read for meaning by the age of 10. Effective teachers play a crucial role in developing learners' reading skills. Characteristics of effective reading teachers include content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and the ability to create a supportive learning environment. The review also emphasizes the importance of home language reading skills in facilitating second language acquisition. This suggests that investing in mother tongue reading programmes can have long-term benefits for learners. The findings of this literature review provide a foundation for understanding the complexities of developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in primary schools. The subsequent chapters explored the research methodology, data analysis, and findings,

which provided insights into teachers' perceptions on developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in selected primary schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, extensive literature was reviewed to determine what knowledge and ideas have been established on the research topic. The aim of the chapter was to build a broader understanding about the nature and meaning of the research problem by discussing and distinguishing what has been done from what needs to be done. This chapter discusses the methodological choices made in creating a research plan to explore teachers' perceptions on development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in the lower grade's classroom settings. The study's interest focuses on how teachers conceptualise development of reading skills, factors that contribute to learners' reading deficiency and the kinds of strategies that teachers use to develop reading skills. Firstly, the methodological choices made are outlined. Secondly, a description of the research context, the sampling strategy, and the data generation methods employed in the study are outlined; after which explanation of the data analysis process to make meaning of teachers' perception on development of reading skills in the Foundation Phase are discussed. Finally, issues of ethical concern are presented.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discussed among others, the study approach, study design, study paradigm, data collection, and data analysis and quality criteria pertinent to the identified study approach.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study employed a qualitative research approach. The primary goal was to provide a detailed insight into the actions of lower-grade teachers teaching Tshivenda Home Language in selected public schools. The study was based on information, accounts, opinions, and feelings expressed in words. The researcher deeply described the development of reading skills by lower grade teachers in the Vhembe East-District in their respective schools.

Qualitative research focuses on the in-depth analysis and interpretation of data. It seeks to uncover the underlying reasons, motivations, and meanings that shape human behaviour and experiences. This approach emphasizes the importance of context and personal perspectives, often relying on case studies and thematic summaries rather than numerical data (MacDonald & Headlam, 2022). Qualitative research is used to analyse various factors which make people like or dislike a specific thing. The results of study are functions of the researcher's insights and impressions (Kothari, 2004).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a strategy for answering a research question using empirical data, as noted by MacCombes (2023). Effective research design ensures that methods align with objectives and that data analysis is appropriately matched. This is an idea on how the research will be conducted before it is one in practice (Carol, Taylor & Deborah, 2022). It is also understood as a plan for the research from the first step to the last one. Conducting a study helps a scholar to plan and implement the study in a way that will help the investigator to get the intended results, and thus raises the chances of finding information that could be related to the real situation (Grieve & Johnson, 2023).

This study followed a descriptive design in which a researcher will observe, describe, and document various aspects of the phenomenon. The descriptive design also defines what really exists, controls the occurrence with which it occurs, and classifies the information. Evocative research helps to comprehend the features of a group in a state of interest, helps in thinking methodically about aspects of a given situation, offers thoughts for further study and helps make simple decisions (Grieve & Johnson, 2023). Descriptive studies are also concerned with exact predictions, and with the description of facts and characteristics of a specific individual, group or situation (Creswell, 2022).

3.5 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is perceived as a means of seeing the world that surrounds a study topic and encourages the way the investigator reasons about the subject (Abdul-Kamal, 2019). Abbadia (2022) views research paradigm as a method, model, or pattern for conducting research. According to Uiz (2023), research paradigm is a world view or philosophical framework, including ideas, beliefs, and biases, that guides a research process. This simply means that the research paradigm in which a study is situated determines the way in which the research will be conducted. Most research paradigms are based on one of two model types: positivism or interpretivism. In this study, the researcher subscribed to the interpretivist paradigm, and used the paradigm during analysis of the results. The researcher interpreted the results in words and explained how they implied in real life situations. This approach assumes that meaning is rooted in the participant's personal experiences. In this approach, researchers immerse themselves in a culture by observing people, interacting with them, asking questions, analyzing their responses, and reviewing relevant documents (Flick, 2020). Smith and Frieze (2024) view the goal of interpretive study as an attempt to understand the interpretations of people about the social phenomena they are interrelating with, and not to discover the world-wide context and value-free information and fact.

3.6 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.6.1 Population

A population is the total number of all possible individuals which can be included in a study if there are enough resources (Taylor and Cohen, 2023).

According to Smith and Frieze (2022), a population can consist of objects, individuals, or even proceedings. The Vhembe East District comprises 18 circuits and 605 Grade 3 Tshivenda Home Language teachers (DBE, 2015).

3.6.2 Sampling

The study followed a multistage cluster sampling procedure, since Vhembe East consists of 18 circuits and 605 Grade 3 Tshivenda Home Language teachers (DBE, 2015; DDD, 2022). The initial sampling was done at district level and followed by the sampling of schools from selected circuits, and lastly by Grade 3 teachers from the selected schools. The multi-stage cluster sampling decreases the costs of travelling and the compilation of sampling frames (Henry & Chen, 2020)

In this study, a total of eight Grade 3 teachers were sampled. Two circuits out of 18 were randomly sampled by numbering them from 1-18 and putting them in a box. The first two circuits to be drawn from the box were used to provide a total of 10 schools.

To obtain 10 schools from two circuits, all schools were numbered and put in a box for a draw. The first 10 schools to be drawn were used to provide eight teachers.

The Grade 3 teachers from the 10 schools were numbered 1-10 and put in a box for a draw. The first eight teachers to be drawn served as participants.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION

A multiple collection of data techniques or instruments were used to increase credibility and validity of the results obtained from different sources (i.e., triangulation). This included semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentary sources.

3.7.1 Semi structured interview

This study employed semi-structured interviews, as defined by Rubin and Rubin (2022), to gather data from participants through open-ended, face-to-face discussions guided by a predetermined set of questions. This approach allowed participants to express their opinions freely and provide accurate information on the research topic. Consistent with Kvale and Brinkmann's (2020) assertion, semi-structured interviews facilitated direct communication between the researcher and participants, focusing on relevant issues.

Utilising Rubin and Rubin's (2022) recommended framework, a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions and probes was developed to guide the discussions. Face-to-face interviews were conducted at selected schools, with questions posed sequentially as outlined in the interview schedule. Clarifications were provided when necessary, and follow-up probing questions ensured accurate capture of participants' views.

The semi-structured interviews explored teaching methods, promotional strategies, support mechanisms, and motivational techniques employed by teachers to foster reading in the foundation phase. This qualitative approach enabled the identification of challenges affecting reading in selected schools within Vhumbedzi and Mvudi circuits, Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province.

The researcher relied solely on participant responses, observations, and interpretations to draw conclusions, ensuring a thorough understanding of the research context.

3.7.2 Observation

Observation is a key data collection technique in qualitative studies, characterized by its exploratory nature, allowing researchers to gather rich and detailed data (Taylor and Cohen, 2022). Furthermore, observation involves a continuum from the comprehensive viewer to a complete member with a diversity of degrees of participation in-between. The challenge was to make steady notes on observations and experiences in the study field and to change it into field notes as soon as possible to lessen errors. One of the advantages of observation is that the information collected is original since the method is unobtrusive, and subjects cannot fake behaviours (Grieve & Johnson, 2023).

Foundation Phase teachers were observed on how they taught reading skills to lower grade learners in real classroom settings. The researcher used observation sheets and wrote down field notes during classroom visits. This involved, among others, how lessons were introduced, learner participation, teachers' use of language, and their ability to identify reading challenges and the availability of reading books. The observation type used by the researcher was overt, wherein everyone knew they were being observed. Foundation Phase teachers were observed in their real classroom practices.

3.7.3 Documentary sources

Franco, Lee, Vue, Bozonelos, Omae, and Cauchon (2023) note that documentary sources, such as records and archives, can provide valuable information to help answer research questions. Documents here are treated as primary sources, or original source materials that can help with answering some aspects of a research question. Bhat (2023) views documentary research as the research conducted with the use of official documents or personal documents as the source of information. In this study, documentary sources which were consulted include CAPS Policy document, Annual Teaching Plan (ATP), Planner and Tracker and Lesson plans.

The researcher used these documents to:

- Understand the curriculum and teaching guidelines outlined in the CAPS Policy document.
- Analyse the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) to identify the learning objectives and outcomes for the specific grade level.
- Examine the Planner and Tracker to see how teachers planned and tracked student progress.
- Review Lesson plans to understand how teachers implemented the curriculum and teaching strategies.

By analysing these documents, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of:

- The curriculum and teaching practices in the school
- How teachers planned and delivered lessons
- The types of assessments and evaluations used to measure student learning
- Challenges and strengths of the current teaching practices

Overall, the documentary sources provided valuable insights into the research question and helped the researcher identify patterns, themes, and trends that informed the findings and recommendations of the study.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used to examine data. According to Kiger and Varpio (2020), thematic analysis is a way for examining qualitative data by probing across a data set to recognise, examine and report frequent patterns. The researcher carefully examined data and sorted them into shared themes or topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that came up frequently. The study used inductive methods to analyse interview scripts. To conduct effective research, the researcher understood the following research process steps:

3.8.1 Observation

In this step the researcher made detailed observations of the studied phenomenon.

3.8.2 Pattern recognition

The researcher looked at the data in detail once the data had been collected with the goal of finding insight and the trends that could be used to make the first categories and ideas. This meant looking at the data for patterns, themes, and relationships.

3.8.3 Theory development

At this stage the researcher begins to create initial categories or concepts based on the patterns and themes from the data analysis. This means putting the data into groups based on their similarities and differences to make a framework for understanding the content being studied. The researcher followed a step-by-step process that involved familiarisation, coding responses, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes and writing up.

3.9 QUALITY CRITERIA

Since the study was within the qualitative approach, it addressed the following quality criteria:

3.9.1 Credibility

According to Gagani (2019), the research has credible evidence, when data are based on a natural world setting where the researcher's task is to arrange, organise and categorise the data. In this case, information was collected from lower grade teachers in their respective teaching environments. For the credibility of the results, the researcher considered member-checking and triangulation. That means sharing results with participants to allow them to clarify their intentions and to correct errors.

3.9.2 Transferability

Transferability in research refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings (Kirk & Miller, 2020). To safeguard transferability in this study, the researcher needed to define the study context and the assumptions that were dominant in research. It is the responsibility of the person applying the results to determine their practical relevance and suitability for their specific situation. This study involved 8 teachers from a population of 605 Grade 3 teachers in the Vhembe East District. While the findings

may not be generalizable to the entire population, they may still provide valuable insights and be transferable to similar contexts.

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability pertains to the consistency and reliability of data across analogous contexts. A study is deemed dependable when its findings can be replicated with similar participants under comparable conditions (Smith & Frieze, 2023). To ensure dependability, this research employed a systematic and transparent approach, meticulously documenting the research process. An audit trail was maintained, facilitating external examination and scrutiny of the research methodology, including data analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022). This external oversight enhanced the dependability of the findings, confirming their consistency, stability, and reliability, and thereby establishing the potential for replication (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022).

3.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study are free from researcher bias, ensuring that the results accurately reflect the participants' experiences and perspectives (Creswell, 2021). According to Smith and Frieze (2022), confirmability is a crucial aspect of qualitative research, referring to the researcher's ability to demonstrate that the data accurately represent the participants' responses, rather than the researcher's own biases or perspectives. This study ensured confirmability by providing a detailed and comprehensive account of the data collection and analysis procedures. The researcher achieved this through meticulous recording, categorization, and systematization of the data, allowing readers to evaluate the trustworthiness of the research process.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Conducting research in academic or professional settings requires a keen awareness of ethical considerations to ensure responsible and respectful treatment of participants, data, and findings (Smith & Frieze, 2022). The study considered participants' privacy, secrecy, informed consent, voluntary participation, rights, anonymity, and self-respect in the following way:

3.10.1 Permission to conduct the study

Prior to carrying out this study, the researcher received an approval letter from the Faculty of Humanities (See Appendix A), which was sent to the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) which issued an Ethical Clearance Certificate (See Appendix B). Thereafter, the researcher sent the approval letter to the Limpopo Department of Education. The Limpopo Department of Education issued an approval letter together with the Provincial Ethical Clearance Certificate (see Appendix C). The researcher sent the approval letter and the Provincial Ethical Clearance Certificate together with his application letter (See Appendix D) to the selected primary schools in Vhembe East District.

3.10.2 Informed consent

According to Xiao, Li, Karahalios, and Sundaram (2023), informed consent is the cornerstone of ethics in human subject research and through this process, participants learn about the study procedure, benefits, risks, and more to make an informed decision.

Teachers were asked to give their consent by completing and signing a consent form, indicating that they participated voluntarily and did not receive any stipend. The researcher informed the participants about the research topic and explained it in detail so that they comprehended what was required of them in relation to the study. Furthermore, the researcher explained their rights to privacy before they were interviewed. This included the possible advantages, disadvantages, and dangers to which the respondents could be exposed to, as well as the researcher's credibility. Participants were made aware of their right to withdraw from the project whenever they wanted and to decide not to answer questions that they felt they were not comfortable with. Mouton (2021) considers that the right to privacy is expressed more concretely when participants have the right to refuse to be interviewed, refuse to answer any question, refuse to answer telephonic or e-mail questionnaires, and refuse to be interviewed for long periods. The consent form was written in English, but the researcher had to code-switch to Tshivenda as some participants were not comfortable being interviewed in English.

3.10.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

According to Bhandari (2023), confidentiality means that you know who the participants are, but you remove all identifying information from your report. Anonymity refers to the protection of participants' identities, ensuring that their responses cannot be linked to them personally (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2023). The study observed the privileges of the respondents to confidentiality and anonymity to guarantee them that data collected would not be made accessible to illegal persons. All data collected and information was encrypted so that they could only be accessed by authorised persons. Such data were used for research purposes only. The researcher did not use participants' names but used numbers (e.g., participant, 2, 3). Information about participants and schools was protected and not reported in such a way that schools or educators were recognisable.

3.10.4 Voluntary participation

Gribich (2013) states that the subjects must agree voluntarily to participate in research. The agreement was based on full and open information provided to them in a language of their choice. The information provided to the participants clearly showed that participation is unpaid for and that participants could pull out from the study at any time if they were no longer comfortable to continue with the interview.

3.10.5 Protection from harm

The study prioritized participants' safety and well-being, ensuring their physical and emotional protection throughout. A safe and supportive environment was maintained during interviews, and sensitive topics were approached with care to avoid emotional distress. No questions were asked that could trigger negative emotions, and participants' psychological health was safeguarded. Furthermore, all interactions were conducted in a secure and non-threatening setting, and confidential information was handled discreetly to prevent legal risks and protect participants' privacy.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the research methodology that was used to explore teachers' perceptions on the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in the lower grades' classroom settings. The study employed a qualitative research approach, using a descriptive design to gather data from a sample of eight Grade 3

teachers in the Vhembe East District. The data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentary sources. The study's sampling strategy involved a multistage cluster sampling procedure, where two circuits were randomly selected, followed by the selection of 10 schools, and finally, eight teachers were sampled. The data analysis process involved thematic analysis, where the researcher identified patterns, themes, and meanings from the data. The study addressed issues of ethical concern, including obtaining permission to conduct the study, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and protection from harm. The researcher ensured that participants' rights were respected and that their privacy and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study.

CHAPTER 4

4 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a detailed exposition of the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews, which provide a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon. The data analysis will be organized into two primary sections: participant narratives, which capture their lived experiences and perspectives, and observational data gathered from classroom settings, offering a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This study aimed to explore teachers' perceptions on development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in Vhembe East District with a view to gaining a deeper understanding of the complexities and challenges inherent in this context.

4.2 Demographic analysis of participants

This study yielded data from eight participants selected from two circuits comprising diverse primary schools within the Vhembe East District. To maintain participant anonymity and confidentiality, pseudonyms have been employed throughout the study, replacing actual names and school affiliations. The subsequent section provides comprehensive demographic profiles for each participant.

Participants	Gender	Qualifications	Experience	Age	Grade Level Responsibility
1	Female	Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma and Advanced Certificate in Education Management	24 Years	55	3

2	Female	Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma, Adult Basic Education Certificate, Diploma in Adult Basic Education, Advanced Certificate in Life Orientation and Bachelor of Education Honours Degree in Inclusive Education	15 Years	52	3
3	Female	Secondary Teacher's Diploma, Advanced Certificate in Education Management	15 Years	48	3
4	Female	Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma (SPTD), Adult Basic Education Certificate,	13 Years	46	3

		Diploma in Adult Basic Education, Advanced Certificate in Education, Advanced Certificate in Education Management (ACE), Bachelor of Education and Honours Degree in Inclusive Education.			
5	Female		33 Years	55	3
6	Female	Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase	6 Years	53	3
7	Male	Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase	2 Years	26	3
8	Female	Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase	2 Years	41	3

Participant 1

The study included Participant 1, a 55-year-old African female educator who taught at School A in Vhembe East's Vhumbedzi Circuit. Her linguistic background was reported to be Tshivenda. Her qualifications included: Primary Teacher's Diploma (Makhado College of Education) and Advanced Certificate in Education Management (University of South Africa). With 24 years of experience, Participant 1 began teaching in 2000 as a temporary instructor, becoming permanent in 2005. She was assigned to Grade 3 and held a Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma covering subjects like Tshivenda, English, Biology, History, and Education.

Participant 2

Participant 2, a 52-year-old Grade 3 educator at School A, held a Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma from Tshisimani College of Education. Her initial training focused on teaching grades 4-9, with majors in Tshivenda, English, Biology, and History.

She expanded her expertise through additional qualifications: Adult Basic Education Certificate, Diploma in Adult Basic Education, Advanced Certificate in Life Orientation and Bachelor of Education Honours Degree in Inclusive Education.

With 15 years of teaching experience, including five as a temporary instructor, Participant 2 began teaching Grade 7 before transitioning to Grade 3. As Departmental Head in the Foundation Phase and senior teacher, she managed a classroom of 60 learners, became a member of the touring committee, catering committee, foundation phase committee and bereavement committee.

Participant 3

Participant 3, a 48-year-old female educator, held a Secondary Teacher's Diploma from Makhado College of Education (pre-1994). Her career trajectory included 5 years as a temporary teacher and 15 years as a permanent teacher at School A. She enhanced her qualifications with an Advanced Certificate in Education Management, specialising in Economics and Business Economics. Initially trained for secondary level teaching, Teacher 3 adapted to teaching Grade 3 due to post shortages. She received foundational phase training from her Departmental Head and senior teacher, focusing on reading and writing instruction.

Participant 4

Participant 4, a 46-year-old female educator, held an impressive array of qualifications such as Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma (SPTD) obtained from Tshisimani College of Education, Adult Basic Education Certificate, Diploma in Adult Basic Education, Advanced Certificate in Education, Advanced Certificate in Education Management (ACE), Bachelor of Education and Honours Degree in Inclusive Education, University of South Africa (UNISA). At the time of the study, she was pursuing a Master's Degree in Curriculum Studies.

Participant 5

Participant 5, a 55-year-old female educator, taught Grade 3 at School B. Her professional qualifications included Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC) obtained from Tshisimani College of Education and Further Diploma in Education (FDE), Vista University. Tshivenda is her home language; Teacher 5 was trained to teach Sub-A to Standard 5 levels. Her major subjects were Mathematics, English, Afrikaans, Tshivenda, and Methodology. With an impressive 33 years of teaching experience at the same school, Participant 5 managed a class of 54 learners.

Participant 6

Participant 6, a 53-year-old female educator, held a Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase from the University of Venda, specialising in Tshivenda Home Language, English, Mathematics and Life Skills. Qualified to teach Grades 1-3, Participant 6 began her career at a Pre-School before becoming a permanent teacher. Tshivenda is her home language.

Participant 7

Participant 7, a male educator aged 26, was situated at School A in the Vhumbedzi Circuit, Vhembe East District. His linguistic proficiency was grounded in Tshivenda, his mother tongue. Holding a Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase from the University of Venda, Participant 7 initiated his teaching career in 2022. Subsequently, he was appointed to teach Grade 3 learners. Participant 7 had 2 years of experience in teaching at School A.

Participant 8

Participant 8, a 41-year-old female educator, held a Bachelor of Education from the University of Venda with 2 years of teaching experience. She spoke Tshivenda as her home language. Her training focused on foundation phase teaching, and she managed a classroom of 56 learners. Beyond teaching, Participant 8 contributed to the school's Quality Management System (QMS) committee.

4.3 DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

According to Creswell and Creswell (2022), data analysis refers to the process of systematically searching, configuring, and interpreting data to draw meaningful conclusions and make informed decisions. A critical aspect of data analysis involves scrutinising participant responses through the lens of the research problem, with the primary research question informing the analytical approach.

4.3.1 Data analysis method

This study employed thematic analysis, a qualitative data analysis method that involves identifying, coding, and categorising patterns and themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Thematic analysis allowed for a nuanced and detailed exploration of participant responses, enabling the researcher to identify key themes and patterns that address the research question.

4.3.2 Procedure for data analysis

- Data preparation: Transcribing audio recordings of interviews and organising and cleaning the data.
- Familiarization: Reading and re-reading the transcripts to gain a deeper understanding of the data.
- Coding: Assigning codes to relevant data segments, using a combination of inductive and deductive coding techniques.
- Theme identification: Identifying patterns and themes within the coded data, using techniques such as mind mapping and concept mapping.
- Theme refinement: Refining and defining the identified themes, ensuring they are coherent, consistent, and accurately reflect the data.

4.3.3 Participants

The study involved a purposive sample of 8 participants, comprising educators and stakeholders in the education sector. Participants were selected based on their expertise and experience in teaching reading and literacy skills.

4.3.4 Data collection instruments

The study employed semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. The interview protocol consisted of a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions, designed to elicit both detailed and nuanced responses, as well as specific information from participants. The interview questions were informed by the research question and objectives to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and insights related to teaching reading and literacy skills.

4.4 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Data generated from semi-structured interviews were relevant in identifying the teachers' perception on the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in Grade 3 classrooms. Eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with each teacher that teaches Tshivenda Grade 3 lessons in each school. Through a process of thematic content analysis, the following themes emerged: promotion of reading, addressing barriers to reading, challenges regarding reading, parental involvement, overcrowding, support from the Department of Education and methods of teaching reading.

4.4.1 Promotion of reading

In response to the question, "How is Tshivenda reading promoted in your school?" Participant 1 offered the following comments:

"To foster a love for reading in my classroom, I encourage regular reading habits among my learners. Once they've completed their schoolwork or homework, I require them to read to enhance their reading and fluency skills. During lessons in other subjects, I motivate them to read aloud, rewarding correct and fluent sentence reading with stars and positive feedback. Additionally, I provide books for homework reading, and learners read to me the following day."

Participant 2 highlighted that learners were given books to read in the classroom after completing assessment tasks. They also received books to read at home. When asked about how reading was promoted in their school, Participant 2 replied:

"The Department of Education in the province organise(s) reading competition(s) every year, where we compete as circuits, district and as a province."

Participant 3 shared insights on promoting reading at her school, stating the following:

"Twice weekly, learners participate in morning devotions by reading Bible verses."

Participant 4 responded to a question on promoting reading by saying:

"During morning devotions, learners are encouraged to read Bible verses. On certain Fridays, the school community gathers in an open area, where learners take turns reading aloud to their fellow learners."

Participant 5 indicated that reading was actively encouraged within the school. She shared her thoughts on this initiative, stating:

"Our school fosters a culture of reading by incorporating Bible lessons into morning devotions. In my classroom, I promote reading by encouraging learners to choose a book and read quietly after completing their assigned tasks. I also like to engage with their interests by borrowing them books to read at home."

Participant 6 observed that reading was highly encouraged and promoted within the school.

"I motivate teachers to assign a variety of reading tasks to learners. In group reading sessions, I categorize learners by ability, allowing them to progress at their own pace until they master the material. Once proficient, I regroup them to enable peer-to-peer support, pairing stronger readers with those needing assistance."

Participant 7 provided insightful responses regarding strategies employed to promote reading in the classroom, which are summarised as follows:

"I promote reading in my classroom by encouraging learners to read regularly. When they are done with their classwork at school or assignment at home, they must read to develop reading and fluency skills. During lessons in other learning areas, I motivate them to read and I give them rewards if sentences are read correctly. I give them stars and words of encouragement if sentences are read correctly and fluently. I give them books to read at home, and the following day they read to me."

Participant 8 offered insights on fostering a reading culture, stating:

"During morning devotions, learners are encouraged to read Bible verses. On certain Fridays, the school community gathers in an open area, where learners take turns reading aloud to their fellow learners."

The study's eight participants concurred on the vital importance of promoting reading in schools, emphasising the need for a multifaceted strategy.

The participants emphasised the significance of consistency in fostering reading habits, with Participants 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 concurring that daily reading practices, classroom devotions, and post-schoolwork reading are essential. Paige (2020) remarks that consistent reading practice is crucial for developing reading fluency and comprehension. Furthermore, research by Shanahan (2023) highlights the importance of establishing a daily reading routine to promote reading habits.

In addition to consistency, Participants 1, 6, and 7 stressed the effectiveness of reward systems in motivating learners. These incentives include stars, positive feedback, encouragement, and recognition (Mourão & Ferreira, 2023). In supporting this view, Pretorius (2023) affirms that reward systems can enhance learner motivation and engagement in reading activities. In the same vein, Olivier and Weideman (2022) intimate that recognition and rewards can significantly improve learners' reading attitudes and motivation.

Interestingly, Participant 1's comments underscore the interconnectedness of effective reading promotion strategies, highlighting the need for a multifaceted approach that incorporates both consistency and reward systems (Spaull & Kotze, 2020).

A comprehensive reading promotion strategy should also include other essential elements, such as creating a conducive reading environment, providing access to diverse reading materials, and fostering a sense of community among learners.

Similarly, Participants 4 and 5 emphasised consistencies, while Participant 7 highlighted both consistency and reward systems. Participants 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 shared an emphasis on developing reading habits through consistency, while Participants 1, 6, and 7 stressed the motivational power of reward systems.

Participants 1, 4, 6, and 8 shared a common perspective. They concurred that reading aloud has a multifaceted impact, enhancing fluency, comprehension, confidence, and community building.

Similarly, Participants 1, 2, 5, and 7 emphasised the importance of providing learners with books in class and homework reading materials.

The study revealed that some participants' schools had initiatives that promoted reading. Specifically, Participant 2 mentioned that the Department of Education organized an annual reading competition. Similarly, Participants 4 and 8 described school-wide reading gatherings that fostered a sense of friendly competition and school spirit, ultimately promoting a culture of reading within their respective schools. Crucially, Participants 5 and 6 stressed teacher motivation and support as essential factors in fostering a reading culture, providing guidance, feedback, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities (Samuels & Wu, 2022).

Furthermore, Participant 6 highlighted the benefits of ability-based grouping, enabling stronger readers to assist peers, resulting in improved reading skills, enhanced confidence, and motivation. Interestingly, Participant 1 cited both reading aloud and access to reading materials, underscoring the interconnectedness of effective reading promotion strategies. Participants 4 and 8 both mentioned community-focused approaches, including reading aloud and school-wide gatherings, demonstrating a shared emphasis on building reading communities. Krashen's (2020) work supports the idea that interconnected strategies, such as providing access to reading materials, promoting voluntary reading, and reducing stress, can create a comprehensive reading promotion plan. By implementing these interconnected strategies, educators can create a comprehensive reading promotion plan that fosters engagement, motivation, and literacy development.

4.4.2 Addressing barriers to reading

When asked about the common challenges learners in their Tshivenda Home Language class face when learning to read, and how educators address or overcome these challenges, Participant 1 shared her experiences and insights, stating that:

“During the shared reading exercise, I observed that learners struggled to accurately read and pronounce specific words within a sentence. In response, I adapted my instructional approach by suspending the shared reading activity and instead focused on explicit instruction of phonetics and phonology. To facilitate learners’ mastery of challenging words, I employed a systematic approach involving syllabic division, followed by word-level instruction. Subsequently, I engaged learners in repetitive practice, where they echoed my pronunciation, and provided individualized support and guidance as they attempted to read the words independently.”

During the interview, Participant 2 highlighted factors that constrained her reading teaching practices, noting that:

“Upon reflection, I realize I’ve failed to build upon my initial efforts, instead, I consistently regress to the starting point, hindering my ability to move forward.”

When Participant 3 was asked how she addressed learners with barriers to reading she responded saying:

“When I teach reading and discover that a learner is not paying attention I usually stop in the middle of the lesson. I would try to bring them back to the lesson by asking question based on what was read and then ask them to read further”.

To help learners overcome physical barriers, Participant 4 provided support in various ways, stating that:

“Regarding learners with learning barriers, I ensure that I allocate additional time before or after school to provide tailored instruction at

their individual pace. Furthermore, for learners with visual impairments, I make arrangements for them to sit at the front of the classroom to facilitate clear visibility.”

In response to a question about her experiences teaching learners with reading barriers, Participant 5 offered her perspective, stating:

“In my experience, learners who struggle with reading require specialized remedial teaching. Having a dedicated remedial teacher on staff would greatly benefit our school. Unfortunately, when I’m assisting non-readers, it slows down the progress of learners who are more proficient. To mitigate this, I promote group reading and learning activities, encouraging peer-to-peer support and engagement.”

Regarding overcoming reading obstacles, Participant 6 offered their insights and further expounded on learners’ reading challenges reporting that:

“Learners face challenges in phonics, including sound recognition and syllable division. Some struggle to construct sentences using provided words, identify(ing) words by initial sound, or comprehend(ing) pictures. The class’s diverse skill levels and varying learning speeds (rate) impede overall progress.”

On the question asked with regard to her personal experiences of teaching learners with barriers to reading, Participant 7’s response was that:

“These learners need (a) remedial teacher. The school should have a remedial teacher who will only do the remedial work for the school. The learners who cannot read delay those who can read. I encourage group learning, especially reading, when I am busy with those who cannot read.”

To mitigate these physical barriers, Participant 8 employed targeted support strategies, including the following:

“I accommodate learners with physical challenges by seating them near me, ensuring direct communication. When teaching, I maintain eye contact and provide clear instructions. To enhance understanding, I also

use gestures and non-verbal cues. Additionally, I advise parents to consult specialists for targeted support to address specific barriers."

Participants 1, 2, and 3 shared insights on challenges and strategies in teaching reading. Participant 1 identified that learners' struggle with word pronunciation during shared reading exercises, a common challenge in reading instruction. Shanahan (2023) maintains that decoding and phonics instruction are crucial in developing reading skills. In the same vein, Paige (2020) emphasises the importance of explicit phonics instruction in developing reading skills.

In contrast, Participant 2 reflected on her own limitations, noting a tendency to regress to initial efforts rather than building upon them. Mourão and Ferreira (2023) opine that educators must recognise their own limitations and be willing to adapt and improve their instructional practices.

Participant 3 shared a strategy for re-engaging learners with barriers to reading. Olivier and Weideman (2022) support this approach, noting that interactive and engaging reading instruction can promote learners' active engagement and deeper understanding of the material. Specifically, they emphasise the importance of incorporating questioning and discussion into reading lessons to promote learners' critical thinking and comprehension skills.

Overall, the participants' contributions highlight the importance of tailored instruction, continuous professional growth, and interactive engagement in promoting reading development. These insights are invaluable for educators seeking to support their learners' reading proficiency and foster interest in reading.

Notably, Participants 1 and 3 focused on adaptive instruction, while Participant 2 emphasised self-reflection.

According to Kilpatrick (2020), effective reading instruction involves three key strategies that work together. Teachers should be flexible and able to adjust their teaching methods to meet the different needs of their students. Additionally, teachers should regularly reflect on their teaching practices and seek opportunities to improve their skills through ongoing self-reflection and professional growth. Furthermore, teachers should provide targeted support to students who are struggling with reading, such as those with learning disabilities or language barriers. By using these

interconnected strategies, teachers can provide effective reading instruction that meets the diverse needs of their learners. Participants 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 shared valuable strategies for overcoming physical and reading barriers, highlighting the importance of accommodating diverse learner needs (Spaull & Kotze, 2020). Specifically, Participants 4 and 8 employed strategies to support learners with physical challenges, such as seating learners near the teacher, maintaining eye contact, providing clear instructions, using gestures and non-verbal cues, and advising parents to consult specialists. In buttressing this view, Volkmer (2019) highlights the importance of adaptations such as seating learners near the teacher, maintaining eye contact, and using gestures and non-verbal cues to support learners with physical challenges, which aligns with Participants 4 and 8's strategies. Notably these adaptations can significantly enhance learners' accessibility and engagement.

Regarding remedial teaching and support, Participants 5 and 7 emphasised the need for specialized remedial teaching, including dedicated remedial teachers, targeted support for non-readers, and group learning activities to promote peer-to-peer support. Pretorius (2023) emphasises the need for specialised remedial teaching, including dedicated remedial teachers and targeted support for non-readers. This is in line with research by Olivier and Weideman (2022), which propound the importance of tailored support in addressing learners' specific reading challenges.

Participant 6 astutely identified specific reading challenges, including phonics struggles, sentence construction, word identification, and diverse skill levels. In supporting the same idea, Shanahan (2023) emphasises the importance of addressing fundamental reading skills such as phonics struggles, sentence construction, and word identification.

Participants 5, 6, and 7 acknowledged the impact of varying skill levels on overall progress, highlighting the need for differentiated instruction and support. This view is supported by Mourão and Ferreira (2023), who state that differentiated instruction can help to reduce the gap between learners with different skill levels.

Furthermore, Participants 4, 5, 7, and 8 highlighted the importance of targeted support, adapted instruction, peer-to-peer learning, and collaboration with specialists. Krashen

(2020) notes that learners who receive targeted support and adapted instruction are more likely to make progress in their reading development.

By implementing these interconnected strategies, educators can foster a supportive learning environment that promotes reading proficiency, motivates learners, and encourages a lifelong interest in reading.

4.4.3 Challenges regarding reading among learners

In response to the question, "What challenges do you experience in teaching reading in your school?" Participant 1 shared the following insights:

"Amidst the challenges encountered in reading instruction, a notable concern is learners' struggles with phonetic awareness, syllabic recognition, and word-level decoding. Specifically, learners exhibit difficulties in identifying individual sounds and syllables within words, recognizing words as cohesive units, constructing sentences using provided vocabulary, accurately spelling words and sequencing narrative events in a logical and coherent manner".

According to Participant 2, the books supplied by the DoE posed a significant challenge, noting that:

"Schools receive reading books that are not carefully chosen, contain inadequate content, and have not undergone proper editing."

In a discussion on the intersection between reading challenges and instructional strategies, Participant 3 shared that:

"Learners struggle to apply their minds when the teacher asks questions. Furthermore, if learners do not grasp phonics in the early classes, it becomes challenging for the teacher to intervene effectively. Additionally, some learners are unable to identify even the letters in their own names."

According to Participant 4, reading difficulties among learners frequently affected her lesson planning, preparation, and development.

"I prioritize inclusive lesson planning, ensuring that my preparation and development cater to all learners, particularly those facing reading challenges. I firmly believe that oral activities form the foundation of

learning, and I've observed that learners struggling with these activities often face difficulties across their entire school workload."

Participant 5 identified additional challenges in her classroom, including learners' struggles with phonetic recognition, specifically distinguishing consonants and vowels, blending sounds into syllables and words, and constructing coherent sentences. She noted that:

"Learners struggle with differentiating between words and interpreting pictures. Furthermore, they face difficulties blending specific sound combinations, such as the 'th' sound."

Participant 6 reported encountering several challenges while teaching reading by stating that:

"As I reflect on the challenges, I identify inadequate resources, overcrowding, and the promotion of non-reading learners as major concerns. Furthermore, I've noticed some foundation phase teachers lack the necessary skills and knowledge for effective reading instruction, despite available methods. I've also observed that some teachers underestimate the importance of cluster meetings, assuming they're exclusively for SADTU members, leading to a content gap in reading instruction. It's possible their union has discouraged attendance."

In a discussion on the intersection between reading challenges and instructional strategies, Participant 7 shared that:

"These reading barriers impede my teaching efforts, as learners' difficulties with reading and focus create a disruptive learning environment. When students sleep or play during lessons, it hinders my ability to deliver effective instruction."

According to Participant 8, reading difficulties among learners frequently affected her lesson planning, preparation, and development. She further commented as follows:

"My challenge is that reading is allocated only 15 minutes, making it difficult to ensure that all learners read well simultaneously. As a result, some learners read well while others fall behind."

The complexities of reading instruction in the foundation phase were highlighted by Participants 1 - 8. Notably, Participant 1 emphasized that learners' struggles with phonetic awareness, syllabic recognition, and word-level decoding are significant concerns. This phenomenon is supported by research, which underscores the critical role of phonemic awareness and phonics instruction in early reading development (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2020).

Participant 2's response corroborated Participant 1's assertion, highlighting the inadequate quality of reading materials supplied by the Department of Education (DoE). Cantrell and Hughes (2020) emphasizes the importance of high-quality reading materials in supporting early reading development.

Furthermore, Participants 3 and 8 noted that learners' difficulties with phonics and reading comprehension significantly impact their lesson planning, preparation, and development. Specifically, Participant 3 emphasized that learners struggle to apply their minds when questioned by the teacher, while Participant 8 noted that the limited time allocated to reading (only 15 minutes) exacerbates the challenge. Cantrell and Hughes (2020) underscores the significance of allocating sufficient instructional time for reading development to ensure optimal outcomes.

In addition, Participants 4 and 5 identified additional challenges in their classrooms, including learners' struggles with phonetic recognition, syllabic recognition, and word-level decoding. Participant 4 emphasized the importance of inclusive lesson planning and oral activities in supporting learners with reading difficulties, while Participant 5 noted that learners struggle with differentiating between words and interpreting pictures. This assertion is further corroborated by Kilpatrick, Vaughn, and Piasta (2022), who underscore the pivotal role of phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, and oral language skills in facilitating early reading development.

Participant 6's response highlighted the challenges faced by teachers in providing effective reading instruction, including inadequate resources, overcrowding, and lack of necessary skills and knowledge. In support of Participant 6's response, Griffiths and Davies (2022) and Hudson, Lane, and Pullen (2020) underscore the significance of teacher knowledge and skills in facilitating early reading development.

Finally, Participants 7 and 8 noted that reading difficulties among learners can create a disruptive learning environment, hindering teachers' ability to deliver effective

instruction. Cantrell and Hughes (2020) emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive learning environment in promoting early reading development. It is a well-established fact that learners with reading difficulties often struggle to concentrate, primarily because they fail to comprehend the instructional content, leading to boredom and disengagement.

4.3.4 Parental involvement

In response to the question, "How does parental involvement impact learners' proficiency in Tshivenda Home Language reading?", Participant 1 shared the following insights:

"Parents were often requested to come to the school to discuss their children's performance, but they failed to attend. It is because some parents work too far from the school, and others do not want to come for the fear that they would be accused for (of) not helping their children at home. Some of the parents are not supportive because they are illiterate."

Participant 2 experienced lack of parental support, indicating that:

"I struggle to get parents to be involved and assist their children. I try to send messages to parents but do not get the necessary responses."

With regard to parental involvement, **Teacher 3** indicated that parents were not involved in the education of their children:

"Most parents do not bother to come to the school when invited. This is a challenge because parents then do not get the opportunity to discuss their children's performance, parents who attend to school invitations are mostly the ones that are supportive towards their children."

Regarding parental support, Participant 4 noted that:

"I have observed that my learners lack support from their parents, partly because some parents are illiterate. Even among parents who can read,

some show no interest in assisting their children. I have experienced this first hand during school meetings, where I invite parents to attend, but they fail to respond. Additionally, some parents work far from home and leave their children in the care of grandparents, who often struggle to provide the necessary support. Other parents return home late, after their children have already gone to sleep.”

Participant 5 shared the following comments:

“When I inquired from the learners some said their parents do not have time to help them because of overload of household routines. Some parents said they are not teachers to help learners and even if they help their children, they would not be paid. Other learners responded that their parents acknowledged that they are illiterate and therefore cannot be of much help.”

Participant 6 stated that:

“When I ask my learners about parental involvement in their reading, they share concerning responses. Some tell me their parents claim they're too busy and unqualified to help, joking that they wouldn't get paid for it. Others reveal that their parents are absent, and they live with grandmothers who, in some cases, are illiterate and unable to assist (them).”

Participant 7 experienced lack of parental support, indicating that:

“Some learners cannot read, and one of the contributing factors is that parents are not available to assist their children with reading. When we try to invite parents to school, they do not show up.”

Participant 8 noted that:

"Unfortunately, some parents display a lack of interest in their children's educational well-being, evident through inadequate support with homework, non-responsiveness to school communications and absence from school events and activities"

Participants 1, 2, 3, and 4 highlighted significant challenges in promoting parental involvement in supporting learners' reading development. However, participants 1 and 2 note that despite adherence to established protocols, some parents failed to respond to notifications regarding their responsibilities. This lack of engagement hindered teacher progress and created problems in supporting learners' reading development.

Participant 3 observed that while some parents complied with requests for involvement, their methods were often inadequate. Conversely, Participant 1 reported widespread parental disengagement, with most learners returning to class without completing assigned reading activities. Participants 1 and 3 noted that parents increasingly shifted their responsibilities to teachers. According to Participant 4, the main reason for this is that parents lack access to support systems that educate them on their crucial role in their children's education. As a result, many parents are unaware of the significant impact they can have on their children's reading behaviour. Participant 7 was of the same view that most parents did not participate in helping their children. In the same vein Participant 8 states that parents lack of interest in their children's educational well-being, evident through inadequate support with homework, non-responsiveness to school communications and absence from school events and activities.

This knowledge gap results in limited parental understanding of their importance in their children's education, with only a minority of parents demonstrating supportive behaviours. In buttressing this notion, Pretorius (2023), maintains that educating parents on their role can help them develop a sense of responsibility and agency in supporting their children's education.

Participants 6, 7, and 8 noted the significance of parental engagement in fostering effective reading development. Participant 6 illustrated parents' primary influence on their children's education, underscoring the need for cooperation to simplify teaching responsibilities. In supporting this view, Mourão and Ferreira (2023), posit that parental involvement can have a positive impact on learners' reading development and

academic achievement. Conversely, lack of parental engagement negatively impacts reading development.

Participants 6 and 7 noted consistent challenges in securing parental support for reading activities. Despite receiving books for home reading, learners often lacked necessary parental guidance, thereby hindering their progress. This is supported by Olivier and Weideman (2022), who say that parental involvement can help learners develop reading fluency and vocabulary.

4.3.5 Socio-economic environment

In response to the question, "How does the socio-economic environment impact learners' proficiency in Tshivenda Home Language reading?", Participant 1 provided the following insights:

"Most of the parents are unemployed and depend on the social grant given by government monthly. Other parents are labourers and some are domestic workers receiving stipends, and very few are educated and earn better salaries."

The interplay between socio-economic factors and learner performance was seen as a notable aspect of academic achievement.

Participant 2 articulated that,

"As a teacher, I understand the importance of reading resources. To address the shortage some learners, face at home, I actively seek out additional books to engage my students and foster a love for reading."

The socio-economic context significantly influences learner support in schools, with financial constraints limiting parental ability to provide supplementary reading materials, as noted by Participant 3 cited below.

"As I've observed, many parents struggle to provide their children with additional reading materials at home due to financial constraints. Furthermore, visiting the library is a challenge for some of my learners, as it requires traveling to a distant location."

Participant 4 mentioned the socio-economic environment as one of the challenges affecting teaching and learning in her school. She indicated that the unemployment rate of parents was high, and that a few who were employed were either domestic workers or labourers on local farms. It was only a small percentage of parents who had stable jobs, and these were working away from home, leaving their children in the care of grandparents and relatives. She further noted that:

“Most parents earn very little monthly, and some depend on the government social grants. This affects learners in reading because they are unable to buy books for their children to read at home in order to add on the school supply. The library is situated in town, and most learners cannot visit the library because they cannot afford to pay for transport to the library.”

Regarding socio-economic factors, **Participant 5** shared her insights, saying:

“In my observation, most parents struggle financially, working as labourers, while some face unemployment. Others work as domestic workers, earning meagre wages that barely cover household expenses. As a result, many rely on government social grants to ensure their families' basic needs are met.”

According to Participant 6, the socio-economic background of parents played a substantial role in shaping learners' reading skills, noting that.

“Children from affluent, educated families often possess advanced reading abilities, attributed to parental encouragement. Their parents reinforce reading habits by acquiring extra books, beyond school-provided materials, reflecting a deep investment in their educational development.”

Regarding socio-economic environments, Participant 7 stated that:

“Some learners do not have extra reading materials at home. I always make a plan to acquire more books in order to expose learners to enough reading materials.”

Participant 8 identified the socio-economic context as a profound obstacle that influences teaching and learning outcomes at her school. She noted that:

"Financial constraints hinder reading opportunities for learners such as parents' meagre earnings and reliance on social grants, inability to purchase supplementary reading materials and lack access to the town library due to transportation costs"

Participants 1-8 blamed the complex interplay between socio-economic factors, limited reading resources, and teacher resourcefulness for hindering learners' reading development in Tshivenda Home Language. Participants 1, 3, 5, and 6 illustrated that financial constraints prevent parents from purchasing supplementary books, forcing schools to rely heavily on government-supplied stationery. Financial constraints can indeed significantly impact access to reading materials, particularly in disadvantaged communities (Kruger, 2020). In supporting the same idea, Lancaster (2020), opines that financial constraints can limit access to reading materials, hindering learners' reading development.

The inaccessibility of local libraries further exacerbates reading challenges. Participants 1 and 5 noted that local library accessibility issues contribute to reading challenges. Participants 2 and 7 demonstrated teacher resourcefulness by utilising community libraries and reproducing relevant materials to expand learners' reading opportunities.

This is supported by Olivier and Weideman (2022), who emphasises the significance of access to quality reading materials in promoting reading proficiency. A study by Lancaster (2020) reveals that many libraries in South Africa face challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and a lack of trained librarians.

Participants 3 and 6 noted that widespread financial struggles among parents exacerbate reading challenges. Financial struggles among parents are widespread, and this can have a significant impact on children's reading development. A report by the South African Institute of Race Relations (2020) found out that many households in South Africa struggle to make ends meet, with a significant proportion of households living below the poverty line.

4.3.6 Overcrowding

In response to the question, "How do you manage overcrowding in your classroom?", Participant 1 shared the following insights:

"I divide learners into groups, even though it is time-consuming. If I don't group them they don't listen carefully and attentively because they are many and sometimes it is difficult to recognise non-attentive learners. I group learners when I deal with lessons that need adequate and more attention. I do not cope, I put learners with barriers to reading at one side and group them according to their abilities. The gifted once help me when they are doing group work, they report at the end of group work to the whole class."

The challenge that **Participant 2** identified was overcrowding, which hampered the progress of learners in the classroom.

"I have resorted to grouping learners. I give each group activities to do as well as teaching them in groups."

Overcrowding was a problem in School A. When asked how she taught in such a situation **Participant 3** responded by saying that:

"I try to save time by putting learners in manageable groups, then give them activities and allow them to choose their own group representatives. This works as most of the activities are done in a short space of time. Of course not all learners would be active in the groups, but I know which ones need special attention."

As stated by Participant 4, overcrowding in the classroom was a problem to her even though she was trying to come up with strategies to solve the problem:

"I group learners and teach them in groups, this is time-consuming. I give more activities to the groups to do while busy teaching other groups. Overcrowding is a challenge; I often deal with learners' concentration levels, some of which are very low. Discipline also becomes an issue because learners feel they are not being attended to."

Overcrowding among learners was a significant challenge to her. Hence **Participant 5** reflected as follows:

"The learners are many in the classroom and sometimes it becomes difficult to move from one place to another. Some learners can be disturbing at one end of the classroom while I will be helping other learners at one end."

Overcrowding was seen as another challenge by Participant 6:

"The workload is overwhelming for me because teachers from the intermediate and senior phases are unwilling to assist with teaching in the foundation phase, exacerbating the existing issue of overcrowding in our classes."

Another challenge that Participant 7 identified was overcrowding, which hampered the progress of learners in the classroom.

"I can confirm that here in Grade 3, the issue of overcrowding affects the way I teach my learners. Some learners are ill-disciplined, making it hard to teach them in such an overcrowded environment. Additionally, it is difficult to move around the classroom. I am confused and unsure about how to address this issue."

Participant 8 identified classroom overcrowding as a significant problem but was working hard to implement strategies to mitigate its impact as stated below.

"To manage my classroom effectively, I implement group learning, which can be time-consuming. To keep learners engaged, I assign activities to each group while I work with others. However, overcrowding poses significant challenges, particularly in maintaining learners' concentration levels, which can be quite low. Additionally, discipline becomes an issue when students feel neglected."

Participants 1 - 8 indicated the complex relationship between overcrowding, reading barriers, and teaching challenges. Participants 1 - 8 noted that overcrowding hinders effective teaching and learning, leading to disciplinary issues, and inability to provide

individualised support by teachers. This further comes with difficulty in completing tasks, and classroom management and control challenges. Participants 1, 4, and 8 further pointed the complexity of teaching learners with reading difficulties in overcrowded classrooms. This concern is supported by Kanjee (2022), who affirms that overcrowded classrooms can lead to increased noise levels, reduced individualised attention, and decreased teacher morale, all of which can exacerbate reading difficulties. Mafa (2022) suggests that learners with reading difficulties require individualised support and attention, however that would be a pipe dream if it is conducted in overcrowded classrooms.

Participant 6 suggested group learning as a solution to overcrowding, despite time constraints. This approach can be effective in promoting collaborative learning and reducing the teacher-learner ratio (Spaull & Kotze, 2020). However, it requires careful planning and management to ensure that all learners receive adequate support and attention.

To help all learners succeed in reading, teachers need to use a range of strategies that address the challenges of overcrowding, reading difficulties, and teaching in a crowded classroom. These include providing opportunities for learners to practice reading both in and out of the classroom. By taking a comprehensive approach, teachers can reduce the negative effects of overcrowding and create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

4.3.7 Support from the Department of Education

In response to the question, "What form of support does the Department of Education provide to address the challenges and barriers experienced in teaching Tshivenda Home Language reading?", Participant 1 provided the following insights:

"The Department of Education has not given me any support concerning the barriers and challenges that my learners are facing in the classroom. Maybe it is because I did not inform them, but little support was given by the curriculum advisor and the only support I received from the Department of Education was the reading strategies supplied to us as teachers."

Participant 2 reported feeling unsupported by those responsible for implementing the curriculum, and provided context for her dissatisfaction as follows:

"I've been struggling with a lack of workbooks in my classroom, so I reported it to the (School) Principal. However, despite being referred to the Circuit Office, no action has been taken."

As noted by Participant 3:

"Since I started working here at this school, I have never seen curriculum advisors coming to our school. The only curriculum advisors we see are those who come for the intermediate and senior phases. We, as foundation phase educators, only meet with curriculum advisors when we attend workshops."

In response to inquiries about the support she received, Participant 4 commented that:

"From my perspective, the Department's support for addressing reading difficulties is inadequate. Through personal experience, I've seen learners with reading barriers thrive when given the opportunity to master reading skills. They often become more fluent readers than their counterparts. However, subject advisors provide no support. I believe teachers like myself (me) require training on targeted teaching methods and strategies to better serve our students."

According to **Participant 5**, the DoE's support for addressing reading difficulties is insufficient, as she noted that:

"During his school visit, the curriculum advisor presented a generic approach to teaching reading, neglecting to address the specific needs of learners who struggle with reading."

Regarding departmental support, Participant 6 shared her thoughts as follows:"

"The Department of Education (DoE) fails to provide adequate support to tackle reading challenges. Instead, they should engage teachers in collaborative problem-solving sessions. Currently, curriculum advisors

offer only superficial guidance, and despite reporting struggling readers, schools receive no meaningful assistance."

According to Participant 7:

"Department's support is severely lacking, with some being completely unknown to us. We need consistent, empathetic guidance from individuals who understand our teaching challenges."

In response to inquiries about the support she received, Participant 8 *commented that:*

"The Department of Education provides support by employing Reading Champions to help teach learners how to read, although this is not on a permanent basis. It also expects teachers to compile a Reading Audit to profile learners' ability to read."

The support provided by the Department of Education to address the challenges and barriers experienced in teaching Tshivenda Home Language reading is perceived as inadequate by most participants. For instance, Participant 1 noted that the Department has not provided any support, while Participant 2 reported feeling unsupported due to a lack of resources, such as workbooks. Moreover, Participant 3 highlighted that curriculum advisors rarely visit their school, and when they do, it is primarily for the intermediate and senior phases. This support enables teachers to overcome instructional challenges. Regular supervision and support are essential for effective teaching and learning (Moloi, 2020). A study by Sailors and Price (2015) recommended the importance of targeted and specific professional development for teachers and curriculum advisors to address the needs of struggling readers

Furthermore, Participants 4 and 5 echoed similar sentiments, stating that the Department's support is insufficient. Participant 4 emphasized the need for targeted teaching methods and strategies, while Participant 5 noted that curriculum advisors provide generic approaches that neglect the specific needs of learners who struggle with reading. This concern is supported by Van der Berg (2020) who maintains that insufficient support can lead to teacher burnout and decreased learner's achievement.

Additionally, Participants 6 and 7 expressed frustrations with the Department's lack of meaningful assistance. Participant 6 suggested that collaborative problem-solving

sessions with teachers would be more effective, while Participant 7 emphasized the need for consistent and empathetic guidance. In recommending the same approach, Bharoocha and Janks (2022) contemplate that collaborative problem-solving can be an effective way to support teachers in addressing reading challenges.

Conversely, Participant 8 reported that the Department provides some support through the employment of Reading Champions and the compilation of Reading Audits. However, this support is not permanent, and its effectiveness is unclear.

Overall, the participants' responses suggest that the Department of Education's support for addressing reading difficulties in Tshivenda Home Language is inadequate and requires improvement.

4.3.8 Methods of teaching reading

In response to the question, "Does your method of teaching Tshivenda Home Language reading affect learners' reading abilities, and if so, how does it impact their abilities?", Participant 1 stated that:

"Yes, I am required to follow the prescribed methods for teaching reading, as outlined in the policy."

Participant 2 described her teaching strategies as follows:

"Sometimes I do not follow the prescribed method as requested by the policy, because some of the activities are time-consuming and as such do not allow me to cover the work as prescribed in the timetable."

With regard to the teaching of reading, the following was stated by **Participant 3**:

"I do not teach as indicated in the lesson plan. I do switch to do spelling activities while doing shared reading when I realise that learners cannot read. I prepare a lesson plan to cater for all groups of learners and integrate my lessons to all other existing subjects."

Teachers are expected to use different activities in teaching reading. Participant 4 said that:

"I use different methods to all learners with different levels of abilities, I cater for other learners rather than sticking to only one method which will make some learners be disadvantaged. The method of teaching affects my competence and efficiency in that I do not sometimes finish my work on time and set objectives for the day. I do work extra mile to help those learners with barriers by remaining with them after school."

Regarding reading instruction methods, Participant 5 shared her thoughts as follows:

"I begin my reading lesson by gathering a selected group of learners at the teaching area, where we start with a song. Next, I introduce vocabulary words, drilling them with the learners to ensure they can spell correctly. Then, I transition to shared reading, introducing the book and asking questions to spark their interest. I also encourage prediction and explore book features like the cover, spine, and title page. Finally, I read the book aloud twice, covering all pages while the learners listen attentively."

Participant 6 mentioned that her methods of teaching reading affected learners because she did not have enough time to attend to them individually:

"It affects my competence and my reflection is not done every day. It is difficult to teach different groups with different abilities using the same methods because maybe such methods are not meeting the level of a group. It is burdensome to teach fifty-six learners with the same methods and expect to achieve what you intended for."

Participant 7 described her teaching strategies as follows:

"Yes, the fact that some learners read well while others lag behind affects my teaching competency and efficiency. I won't move at my own pace."

Aligned with prevailing educational standards, reading instruction is optimally delivered through a range of pedagogical activities. **Participant 8** offered insightful comments on this multimodal approach, stating that:

"To cater to diverse learning needs, I utilize a range of teaching methods. This flexible approach ensures that no learner is left behind, although it can compromise my timeliness in achieving daily objectives. My commitment to inclusivity extends beyond regular school hours, as I voluntarily provide extra support to learners facing barriers."

Participants 1-8 shared their experiences and perspectives on teaching reading methods, revealing variations in their approach and challenges in implementation.

Participant 1 preferred a phased approach, introducing school readiness, sounds, and syllables before shared reading. This approach is supported by Kilbourne and Mills, (2010) who aver that a systematic and explicit approach to teaching reading skills is effective in promoting reading achievement.

In contrast, Participant 3 used big books for shared reading, incorporating post-reading activities and sentence construction. Participant 3's approach, which incorporates diverse instructional methods to enhance reading comprehension and literacy outcomes, is in line with Krashen's (2004) research on the effectiveness of diverse instructional methods.

Participants 2 and 7 highlighted the challenges of adhering to prescribed teaching methods and timetables in the face of diverse learner needs. Participant 2 noted that she often deviates from the recommended approach due to time constraints, as some activities are too time-consuming, thereby hindering her ability to cover the required material. Similarly, Participant 7 emphasized that the varying reading abilities of her learners significantly impact her teaching approach. She acknowledged that the disparities in reading proficiency influence her instructional pace, forcing her to adapt and prioritize the needs of struggling learners. In essence, both participants underscored the need for flexibility in teaching approaches to accommodate the diverse needs of learners. This view is consistent with the notion that teachers often adapt and modify curriculum guidelines to better meet the needs of their learners (Jita & Ndlalane, 2022). In the same vein, Mosoge and Kgwadi (2022) remark that teachers who were given autonomy to adapt their teaching methods showed improved learners' outcomes.

Participant 5 adapted her approach by incorporating vowel rhyming exercises to enhance engagement, but at the cost of instructional time. Incorporating engaging and interactive activities can improve learners' motivation and participation in reading activities (Mthethwa, 2022). However, Ngcobo and Mthiyane (2022) note that adapting instructional approaches can result in trade-offs, such as reduced instructional time.

Participants 4 and 6 faced challenges in implementing prescribed methods. Participant 4's limited exposure to alternative methods resulted in a simplistic approach, while Participant 6 found CAPS methods unsuitable for overcrowded classrooms. Regarding this, Bahr (2015) elucidates that teachers' limited knowledge and skills in implementing reading programmes can hinder effective reading instruction.

Participants 6 and 7 observed tension between following curriculum guidelines and teacher autonomy in addressing reading difficulties. However, Mohlala (2022) recommends that while curriculum guidelines provide a framework for instruction, they can also constrain teacher autonomy and creativity. Teachers who were given autonomy to adapt their teaching methods showed improved job satisfaction and motivation (Ramaligela & Mthembu, 2022).

Teachers should be able to follow the curriculum while also having the freedom to adjust their teaching to meet the unique needs of their learners. In this way, teachers can make informed decisions that are backed by research and best practice.

4.4 OBSERVATION

The lesson initiation phase saw Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 effectively begin their respective lessons with reviewing essential information and engaging learners in interactive activities such as reciting days of the week, discussing the weather, and singing songs. In contrast, Participants 4 and 8 faced challenges with learner engagement due to overcrowding.

During the vocabulary introduction phase, Participants 1, 2, 3, and 5 employed various strategies, including flashcards, open-ended questions, and big book discussions, to introduce key words and promote visual exploration and critical thinking. Participants 6 and 7 grouped learners to cater for diverse reading proficiency levels and encouraged observation and description of cover page illustrations.

The reading phase saw Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 read aloud to learners, pausing to ask questions and assess comprehension. Participants 4 and 8 utilised big books with vibrant illustrations, but faced challenges with phonetic recognition and reading fluency.

In the post-reading phase, Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 assessed learners' understanding through targeted questions, receiving accurate responses and promoting critical thinking. Participants 4 and 8 observed varying levels of engagement, with some learners actively participating while others became distracted.

Notably, Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 facilitated interactive sessions, encouraging learners to interpret pictures, answer questions, and demonstrate understanding through guided discussions and choral reading exercises. In contrast, Participants 4 and 8 faced significant challenges due to overcrowding, impacting learner focus and visibility of instructional materials.

By employing these strategies, the participants created an engaging and interactive learning environment, promoting learners' understanding and vocabulary expansion, despite some challenges with overcrowding and learner engagement.

4.4.1 Strengths

The participants demonstrated various strengths in their teaching practices. Notably, effective lesson planning and execution were common strengths among Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6, who successfully engaged learners and promoted interest in reading. Moreover, Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 employed engagement strategies to foster learner participation and motivation.

Critical thinking encouragement was another shared strength, evident in the practices of Participants 2, 3, 5, and 6. Similarly, vocabulary building and expansion were highlighted in the approaches of Participants 1, 2, and 3. Comprehension assessment was also a common thread, with Participants 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7 using various methods to evaluate learners' understanding.

In addition, some participants demonstrated exceptional classroom management skills. For instance, Participants 4 and 8 successfully maintained discipline despite overcrowding challenges. Furthermore, Participants 4 and 8, as well as Participant 6, effectively utilised engaging instructional materials to promote learning.

Lastly, phonetic awareness integration (Participant 5) and differentiated instruction (Participant 6) showcased the participants' ability to cater for diverse learner needs. Overall, these strengths underscore the participants' commitment to creating an engaging and effective learning environment.

Table of Strengths:

Participant #	Strengths [Indicate what strengths these are]
1	Effective lesson planning, engagement strategies, vocabulary building, comprehension assessment
2	Effective lesson planning, critical thinking encouragement, vocabulary expansion, visual aids
3	Effective lesson planning, engagement strategies, vocabulary building, critical thinking encouragement
4	Discipline maintenance, engaging instructional materials, fundamental reading skills
5	Effective lesson planning, engagement strategies, phonetic awareness integration, critical thinking
6	Differentiated instruction, engagement strategies, critical thinking integration, comprehension assessment
7	Effective lesson initiation, engagement strategies, language development integration, comprehension assessment
8	Discipline maintenance, engaging instructional materials, fundamental reading skills

4.5 ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

During this study, various documentary sources were consulted to gather information and address the research question. These sources, treated as secondary materials, provided original data that helped answer aspects of the research question.

The analysis of documentary sources involved examining the CAPS Policy document, Annual Teaching Plan (ATP), Planner and Tracker, and lesson plans. The CAPS Policy document provided an understanding of the curriculum and teaching guidelines, while the Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) helped identify learning objectives and outcomes for the specific grade level. The Planner and Tracker provided insight into how teachers planned and tracked student progress, and the lesson plans revealed how teachers implemented the curriculum and teaching strategies.

Analysis of these documents provided valuable insights into the curriculum and teaching practices in the school, as well as teacher planning and lesson delivery. The findings indicate that the Foundation Phase Curriculum is packed with various subjects, leaving limited time for reading. Furthermore, the new Annual Teaching Plan for recovery, which includes introducing two different sounds in a week in Tshivenda Home Language, poses a challenge for some learners.

Additionally, the study found out that participants used lesson plans from the Department, which seemed complicated and had insufficient time allocated for reading instruction. The Big Book used in reading instruction had an attractive and interesting design, but the font size was too small for a large classroom. Notably, the same Big Book were used in both School A and School B, resulting in similar challenges for teachers.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings of a descriptive study that explored the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills among Grade 3 learners in selected primary schools within the Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study revealed that teachers faced numerous challenges in teaching reading, including limited resources, large class sizes, and inadequate training, which

hindered their ability to provide effective reading instruction. Despite these challenges, teachers employed various strategies to promote reading among learners, such as phonics-based instruction, reading aloud, and providing feedback. However, these strategies were often compromised by the challenges faced by teachers, which had a significant impact on their competences and experiences. The study also highlighted the importance of understanding the contextual factors that influence reading instruction, including the role of the Department of Education in providing support for teachers and learners. The findings indicated that while some support was available, it was often insufficient and inconsistent, and that overcrowding in classrooms had an adverse effect on reading instruction. Overall, this chapter provided a nuanced understanding of the complexities of teaching reading in Grade 3 classrooms and highlighted the need for targeted interventions to support teachers and learners in this critical area of the curriculum. The study's findings have implications for teacher training, resource allocation, and educational policy, and suggest that a multi-faceted approach is needed to address the challenges faced by teachers and learners in teaching and learning reading skills. Ultimately, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on reading instruction and highlights the need for ongoing support and development to ensure that teachers are equipped to provide effective reading instruction to all learners.

CHAPTER 5

5 CONCLUSION, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 presents a comprehensive synthesis of the research findings, building upon the thematic analysis presented in Chapter 4. This chapter integrates the key insights gleaned from the study, focusing on teachers' perceptions regarding the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in selected primary schools, as well as the diverse strategies employed by educators to promote reading. The discussion that follows highlights the theoretical and practical implications of the findings, underscoring their significance in the context of Foundation Phase education. Furthermore, this chapter proposes avenues for future research, addressing gaps and limitations identified in the present study. A concise summary of the research findings and recommendations are provided, serving as evidence that the research questions posited in this investigation have been adequately addressed. This chapter thereby provides a culminating analysis of the study's contributions to the existing body of knowledge on reading skills development in multilingual primary school settings.

5.2 REVIEW OF THE STUDY

5.2.1 Chapter 1: Introduction, background and research problem

This study explored teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The research highlights the importance of reading skills in education, particularly in the context of multilingualism in South Africa. The study aims to investigate the factors that influence reading skills in education in multilingual contexts, with a focus on the role of teachers in shaping learners' reading skills. The research problem is rooted in the low reading literacy levels among primary school learners, which hinders their ability to comprehend and effectively utilise written language.

The study employs a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentary sources to gather data from eight Grade 3 teachers. The research questions guiding the study include how Tshivenda Home Language reading is promoted in schools, the barriers learners face when learning to read, and

how teaching methods impact teacher competency and efficiency. The study objectives include determining the role of teachers in developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills, assessing teacher qualities required for successful reading instruction, and establishing the ranking of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills among schools. The research methodology involves a case study design, with a focus on in-depth exploration of the research context. The study findings have significant implications for the development of reading literacy in South Africa, particularly in the context of indigenous languages like Tshivenda Home Language. The research emphasizes the need for teachers to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach reading skills and highlights the importance of promoting reading literacy in education policy.

Overall, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on reading literacy and provides valuable insights into the experiences and perspectives of Grade 3 teachers in teaching reading. The study findings can inform policy makers, educators, and other stakeholders on how to improve reading instruction and promote literacy in South Africa. The research also highlights the importance of considering the unique challenges and opportunities presented by multilingualism in South Africa, and the need for education policies and practices to be responsive to the diverse linguistic needs of learners.

By exploring the complexities of reading instruction in a multilingual context, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the factors that influence reading education and identifies potential strategies for improving reading literacy outcomes. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the development of more effective reading instruction and to promote literacy in South Africa, particularly in the context of indigenous languages like Tshivenda Home Language.

5.2.2 Chapter 2: Literature review.

This chapter provides a comprehensive literature review on the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills, exploring various aspects that influence this process. The importance of reading skills is emphasized, highlighting their impact on cognitive development, vocabulary expansion, and critical thinking. The chapter also discusses the characteristics of teachers with effective reading skills including the

content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and the ability to create a supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, the literature review examines factors contributing to learners' reading deficiencies, including the role of teachers, teaching strategies, and global reading rankings. The significance of home language reading skills in facilitating second language acquisition is also underscored. The review highlights alarming statistics on reading deficiencies in South Africa, with 81% of learners unable to read for meaning by the age of 10.

Overall, this chapter provides a solid foundation for understanding the complexities of developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in primary schools. The literature review synthesises existing research, identifying key themes and gaps that inform the subsequent chapters of the study.

5.2.3 Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology utilized to investigate teachers' perspectives on developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in lower-grade classrooms. A qualitative approach was adopted, incorporating a descriptive design to collect data from a sample of eight Grade 3 teachers in the Vhembe East District. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentary analysis. The sampling strategy involved a multi-stage cluster sampling process, where two circuits were randomly selected, followed by 10 schools, and ultimately, eight teachers. Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns, themes, and meanings within the data. The study prioritized ethical considerations, including obtaining necessary permissions, informed consent, and ensuring participant anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, while also protecting them from potential harm. Throughout the study, the researcher maintained the rights, privacy, and confidentiality of all participants.

5.2.4 Chapter 4: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

This chapter presents, analyses, and interprets data collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers from selected primary schools in Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The data analysis reveals participant narratives that capture their lived experiences and perspectives on the development of Tshivenda

Home Language reading skills. Additionally, observational data gathered from classroom settings provides a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

The demographic analysis of participants shows that the majority of teachers were female, with a significant number having more than 10 years of teaching experience. The data analysis also reveals that teachers perceive the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills as crucial for learners' academic success. However, challenges such as limited resources, inadequate teacher training, and language barriers hinder the effective development of these skills.

The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to support teachers in developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills, including provision of resources, training, and language support. Overall, this chapter provides a rich and nuanced understanding of teachers' perceptions and experiences related to the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills.

5.2.5 Chapter 5: Conclusion, findings and recommendations

This chapter provides a comprehensive conclusion to the study, summarising the key findings and implications of the research on developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study findings highlight the significance of teacher training, parental involvement, and socio-economic factors in promoting reading skills development among early grade readers. The research identified several challenges that hinder effective reading instruction, including inadequate teacher training, overcrowding, and limited access to resources. The study also found that learners struggled with fundamental reading skills, such as alphabet recognition, syllable formation, and text interpretation, due to a lack of phonological mastery and conceptual barriers.

The study recommendations emphasize the need for promoting reading engagement, addressing challenges in reading instruction, promoting parental involvement, reducing overcrowding, and enhancing support from the Department of Education. Additionally, the study suggests that policymakers and education officials should re-evaluate and adapt policies to support teachers and learners in addressing existing shortcomings in Tshivenda Home Language instruction. The study findings also

underscore the importance of considering the socio-economic environment and its impact on learner performance, as well as the need for effective instructional methods and resources to support reading instruction.

The findings provide valuable insights into the perceptions of Grade 3 teachers on developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills. The study's contributions to the existing body of knowledge on reading skills development in multilingual primary school settings highlight the need for further research in this area, particularly in the context of South African education. Overall, the study demonstrates that developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in early grade readers is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach, involving teachers, parents, policymakers, and education officials. By working together to address the challenges and barriers identified in this study, it is possible to improve reading skills development and promote academic achievement among learners in the foundation phase. Future research should build on the findings of this study, exploring innovative strategies for transforming the teaching and learning culture of reading in the foundation phase, and developing targeted interventions to enhance reading instruction in this phase.

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

This descriptive study examined teachers' perceptions concerning the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in the selected primary schools. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of eight teachers, and the resultant data were systematically analysed. The research inquiry was guided by a set of predetermined questions, which ensured that participant responses remained pertinent to the study's objectives. A thematic analysis of the data revealed several critical challenges impacting reading competencies. These challenges include; promotion of reading, teaching reading, addressing barriers to reading, parental involvement, socio-economic environment, overcrowding, support from the Department of Education, and methods used for teaching and learning of reading. The findings of this study highlight the intricate relationships between various factors that impact the development of reading skills among primary school learners.

These factors can be broadly categorised into three groups: Teacher-related factors, such as teaching methods and materials, learner-related factors, including individual

learning styles and abilities, contextual factors, such as classroom environment and available resources.

5.3.1 Promotion of reading

Research emphasises the significance of developing reading competencies and skills in early grade readers through consistent practice (David, 2023). Boyle (2023) underscores the importance of prioritising reading instruction in early classes, necessitating daily engagement in reading activities.

A qualitative analysis of teacher conversations revealed that reading promotion was integrated into classroom practices, albeit with limitations in the provision of sufficient reading activities. Teachers encouraged regular reading habits among learners, typically following completion of classwork and as part of homework assignments.

During lessons in other learning areas, learners were prompted to engage in sentence-level reading. Additionally, learners received weekly word lists on Mondays for at-home reading practice and spelling test preparation. Incentivization strategies, such as rewards in the form of stars and verbal encouragement, were employed to foster a culture of reading.

To further promote reading engagement, weekly and monthly reading competitions were conducted in the two schools. Learners were also provided with take-home reading materials, despite teacher-reported resource constraints. Annual circuit competitions supplemented these initiatives. Moreover, Bible reading was incorporated into morning devotions, reinforcing the value of reading in daily life.

5.3.2 Addressing barriers to reading

Early identification of reading barriers is crucial to provide timely support to learners, enabling them to overcome these challenges (Emily, 2023). The findings of this study underscore the necessity of remedial teaching interventions in schools to address reading difficulties. However, teachers reported inadequate academic support from departmental officials, particularly curriculum advisors, whose role is to ensure effective teaching and learning.

The research findings reveal that learners struggled with fundamental reading skills, including alphabet recognition, syllable formation, word reading, phrase

comprehension, sentence construction, and text interpretation (Kirsch, 2023). This difficulty stems from a lack of phonological mastery, hindering learners' ability to combine sounds, syllables, words, and sentences. Moreover, learners exhibited deficiencies in self-confidence, motivation, persistence, group work skills, and personal competence. Some learners struggled to integrate various components of skills and knowledge necessary for reading comprehension. Physical impairments, such as hearing and visual difficulties, further exacerbated reading challenges. Conceptual barriers, characterised by underachievement, hindered learners' understanding of reading tasks, often resulting from a print-poor environment marked by limited access to a range of reading materials, including picture books, early readers, and other age-appropriate literary texts.

5.3.3 Challenges regarding reading among learners

Participants reported that deviations from the timetable occurred due to the need to address backlog work. Additionally, teachers reported delivering instruction to entire classes simultaneously, disregarding learners' diverse abilities, as overcrowding necessitated this approach.

Teachers acknowledged challenges in managing learners with reading barriers, citing difficulties in maintaining concentration and propensity for disruptive behaviour during group reading activities.

The study findings revealed significant concerns regarding teacher qualifications and preparedness. Specifically, some foundation phase teachers were semi-qualified or unqualified, lacking essential skills and knowledge in reading instruction. This resulted in the prevalent use of monolithic teaching approaches, potentially inadequate for catering to diverse learner needs.

Consequently, this study identified several factors hindering effective reading instruction in the two schools under investigation. These included inadequate teacher training and professional development opportunities, ineffective teaching methodologies, insufficient teacher-learner interactions and overcrowded classrooms.

These factors contributed to suboptimal learning outcomes, characterised by learners' poor acquisition of reading skills and knowledge. Ultimately, this negatively impacted learners' academic performance.

5.3.4 Parental involvement

The extant literature underscores the significance of parental involvement in children's educational outcomes. Active participation of parents in the teaching-learning process is pivotal to effective pedagogy and academic achievement (Boyle, 2022). Moreover, parental involvement is crucial for children's success, mitigating factors that hinder reading skills development among learners (Brozo, 2024). Early parental engagement yields high-quality, long-term results, positively impacting schooling and learners' overall wellbeing.

However, research findings indicate that some parents exhibit limited involvement in their children's education, failing to attend meetings or engage with teachers regarding their academic performance. Factors contributing to this lack of involvement include geographical constraints and work-related obligations.

These findings align with previous research (Scott, 2023; Baker, 2024), suggesting that parents from low socio-economic backgrounds tend to adopt a passive or inactive role in their children's education and development, resulting in constrained educational outcomes.

Notably, parental attitudes and behaviours contradicting the South African Education Policy Handbook (2019) and Anders' (2020) guidelines for Quality Learning and Teaching were observed. Specifically, parents' failure to engage in quality time reading with their children and assisting with homework and reading activities undermines collaborative efforts between parents and educators.

Furthermore, the study revealed that some parents relinquish responsibility for their children's education to schools, while others face barriers due to illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment. This corresponds with research by Boyle and Kirsch (2024), who indicate that parents with low literacy levels are less likely to support their children's reading and writing development, perpetuating cognitive and language development deficits.

The intersection between illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment among parents as noted in this study resulted in inadequate financial support and infrequent attendance at parent-teacher meetings, ultimately contributing to poor academic performance.

5.3.5 Overcrowding

Research conducted by Ogunyemi (2021) identifies several hindrances to effective reading instruction, including inadequate teacher training, suboptimal pedagogical approaches, insufficient collaboration between teachers and learners, and overcrowded learning environments. The study findings confirm that overcrowded classrooms hinder the effective implementation of reading instruction methodologies, making it challenging for teachers to provide individualized attention and support to learners. Specifically, overcrowding hindered teacher mobility and visibility, leading to diminished student engagement and attention. Moreover, teachers faced considerable challenges in providing personalised support to learners with reading difficulties due to the lack of individualised attention afforded by overcrowded conditions. Consequently, meaningful reading activities were often negligible, and classroom management issues arose, exacerbating disciplinary concerns.

5.3.6 Support from the Department of Education

Participants reported receiving inadequate support from the Department of Education to address the challenges and barriers experienced in teaching Tshivenda reading (Makalela, 2020). This lack of support is a significant concern, as research has shown that teacher support is crucial for effective teaching and learning (Nassimbeni & Nel, 2022).

The scarcity of resources, including workbooks and reading materials, exacerbates the lack of support from the Department of Education (Fleisch, Schöer, & Roberts, 2020). This is consistent with research findings that highlight the importance of access to resources in promoting reading skills development (Olivier & Weideman, 2022). Participants emphasised the importance of training on targeted teaching methods and strategies to better serve learners with reading barriers (Motesi, 2023). This is supported by research that highlights the need for teacher training and support in addressing reading challenges (Hungu, Thuku, & Muthukrishna, 2020).

Overall, the findings indicate a significant gap in the support provided by the Department of Education to address reading challenges in Tshivenda teaching. This is consistent with the literature, which highlights the need for comprehensive support for teachers, including resources, training, and guidance (Makalela, 2020).

5.3.7 Socio-economic environment

The participants highlighted the significant impact of the socio-economic environment on Tshivenda reading skills development. This is consistent with research by Hungi, Thuku and Muthukrishna (2020) who found out that socio-economic factors, such as parental education and income, significantly influence learners' reading achievement.

Key findings include the fact that most parents are unemployed or earn low incomes, relying on government social grants. This is supported by a study by Motesi (2020), who noted that many households in South Africa rely on social grants as a primary source of income, which limit their ability to provide educational resources.

Financial constraints also limit parents' ability to provide supplementary reading materials, and visiting the library becomes a challenge due to transportation costs. Research by Nassimbeni and Nel (2020) highlights the importance of access to reading materials and libraries in promoting reading skills development.

Additionally, children from affluent, educated families tend to have better reading skills due to parental encouragement and support. This is consistent with findings by Makalela (2020), who noted that parental involvement and support are critical factors in promoting learners' reading achievement.

Teachers attempt to address the shortage of reading resources by seeking additional books and materials. Research by Olivier and Weideman (2020) emphasises the importance of teacher agency and initiative in addressing resource constraints and promoting reading skills development. Overall, the socio-economic environment significantly influences learner performance, with financial constraints hindering reading opportunities. This is supported by a study by Fleisch, Schöer and Roberts (2020), who found out that socio-economic factors, including poverty and lack of access to resources, significantly impact learners' educational outcomes.

5.3.8 Methods of teaching reading

The study findings demonstrate a significant link between ineffective instructional methods and reading deficiencies. Teachers acknowledged that their pedagogical approaches directly impacted learners' reading proficiency and fluency, ultimately hindering progress. Although teachers followed the Curriculum Assessment Policy

Statement (CAPS) guidelines for teaching reading, they reported difficulties implementing certain specified methods due to challenging classroom conditions, particularly overcrowding.

5.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTION TO NEW KNOWLEDGE

This study addresses a critical knowledge gap by examining teachers' perception on development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills at selected primary schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The findings unequivocally demonstrate the necessity for policymakers and education officials to re-evaluate and adapt policies, ensuring that they adequately support teachers and learners and rectify existing shortcomings in Tshivenda Home Language instruction

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to promote reading engagement among early grade readers:

5.5.1 Promotion of reading

The following strategies can be implemented by teachers and school administrators:

- Integrate Reading into Daily Classroom Practices. Prioritise reading instruction in early classes, ensuring daily engagement in reading activities (Boyle, 2023).
- Provide Sufficient Reading Materials and Resources. Ensure learners have access to a variety of reading materials, including take-home books and resources. Address teacher-reported resource constraints by exploring alternative solutions, such as digital resources or community partnerships.
- Foster a Culture of Reading through Incentivization. Implement Incentivization strategies, such as rewards, verbal encouragement, and recognition to motivate learners and promote a culture of reading. Consider introducing reading competitions, challenges, or games to encourage engagement and friendly competition.
- Engage Parents and the Community in Reading Promotion. Encourage parents to support reading practices at home, providing guidance on how to create a conducive reading environment.

- Monitor Progress and Evaluate Effectiveness. Regularly monitor learners' reading progress, identifying areas of strength and weakness.

5.5.2 Addressing barriers to reading

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to address barriers to reading:

- Early Identification and Intervention: Schools should implement early identification and intervention strategies to detect reading difficulties in learners as soon as possible. This can be achieved through regular assessments and progress monitoring, enabling teachers to provide timely support and remedial teaching interventions.
- Remedial Teaching Interventions: Schools should provide remedial teaching interventions to address reading difficulties, including phonological awareness, phonics, and reading comprehension. This can be achieved by employing specialized remedial teachers or providing professional development opportunities for existing teachers.
- Academic Support from Departmental Officials: Departmental officials, including curriculum advisors, should provide adequate academic support to teachers to ensure effective teaching and learning. This can include providing resources, training, and guidance on best practices for teaching reading.
- Phonological Awareness and Phonics Instruction: Teachers should prioritize phonological awareness and phonics instruction to help learners develop fundamental reading skills, including alphabet recognition, syllable formation, word reading, phrase comprehension, sentence construction, and text interpretation.
- Development of Soft Skills: Teachers should incorporate activities that promote the development of soft skills, such as self-confidence, motivation, persistence, group work skills, and personal competence, to support learners' overall reading development.
- Accommodations for Learners with Physical Impairments: Schools should provide accommodations for learners with physical impairments, such as

hearing and visual difficulties, to ensure equal access to reading instruction and materials.

- **Access to Reading Materials:** Schools and communities should provide learners with access to a range of reading materials, including picture books, early readers, and other age-appropriate literary texts, to create a print-rich environment that supports reading development.
- **Professional Development for Teachers:** Teachers should receive professional development opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching reading, including strategies for addressing conceptual barriers and supporting learners with diverse needs.
- **Collaboration between Teachers and Departmental Officials:** Teachers and departmental officials should collaborate to develop and implement effective reading instruction and intervention strategies, ensuring that learners receive consistent and high-quality support.
- **Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation:** Schools should regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of reading instruction and intervention strategies, making adjustments as needed to ensure that learners receive the support they need to overcome reading barriers.

5.5.3 Addressing challenges in reading instruction

- **Teacher Training and Development:** Provide foundation phase teachers with comprehensive training and professional development opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge in reading instruction.
- **Differentiated Instruction:** Encourage teachers to adopt differentiated instruction approaches to cater to diverse learner needs, rather than relying on monolithic teaching methods.
- **Classroom Management:** Support teachers in developing effective classroom management strategies to minimise disruptions and promote a conducive learning environment.
- **Addressing Overcrowding:** Explore solutions to address overcrowding, such as hiring additional teachers or implementing flexible classroom arrangements.

5.5.4 Promoting parental involvement

- **Parent-Teacher Partnerships:** Foster collaborative relationships between parents and teachers through regular meetings, progress updates, and volunteer opportunities.
- **Parental Education and Support:** Offer workshops, training sessions, or support groups to empower parents with the skills and knowledge necessary to support their children's reading development.
- **Addressing Barriers to Involvement:** Identify and address barriers to parental involvement, such as illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment, through targeted interventions and support services.
- **Encouraging Quality Time Reading:** Promote the importance of quality time reading between parents and children, providing guidance on how to create a supportive reading environment.

5.5.5 Overcrowding

- **Reduce Class Sizes:** Implement measures to reduce class sizes, such as hiring additional teachers, creating smaller learning groups, or exploring alternative classroom arrangements.
- **Optimize Classroom Layouts:** Ensure classrooms are designed to facilitate teacher mobility and visibility, promoting learner's engagement and attention.
- **Provide Individualized Support:** Develop strategies to provide personalised support to learners with reading difficulties, despite overcrowded conditions.
- **Enhance Classroom Management:** Offer teachers training and resources to effectively manage overcrowded classrooms to minimise disciplinary concerns.

5.5.6 Enhancing support from the Department of Education

- **Regular Curriculum Adviser Visits:** Ensure regular visits from curriculum advisers to provide guidance, support, and feedback on reading instruction.
- **Professional Development Opportunities:** Offer teachers ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge in reading instruction.

- Access to Resources and Materials: Provide schools with adequate resources and materials to support reading instruction, including textbooks, and literacy programmes.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: Establish a system to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of reading instruction, identifying areas for improvement and providing targeted support.

5.5.7 Socio-economic environment

- Governments, schools, and organisations should provide free or affordable reading materials to disadvantaged learners.
- Well-resourced school libraries should be established to bridge the gap in reading opportunities for learners from low-income backgrounds.
- Governments or schools should provide transportation assistance to enable learners to visit libraries and access reading materials.
- Schools should encourage parental involvement in reading activities and provide support for parents to promote reading skills development at home.
- Teachers should receive training and support to develop strategies for promoting reading skills development in resource-constrained environments.

5.6.8 Methods of teaching reading

- Teachers should be trained on effective instructional methods for teaching reading to address reading deficiencies.
- The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) guidelines for teaching reading should be reviewed and adapted to accommodate challenging classroom conditions.
- Schools should address overcrowding in classrooms to create a conducive learning environment for teaching reading.
- Teachers should be provided with resources and support to implement effective reading instructional methods despite challenging classroom conditions.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study provides a foundational framework for subsequent investigations into reading instruction in the foundation phase. Future studies can build upon these findings to investigate innovative strategies for transforming the teaching and learning culture of reading in the foundation phase. Additionally, future research can focus on developing and evaluating targeted interventions to enhance reading instruction in this phase, as well as exploring alternative methodologies to inform reading pedagogy. Furthermore, examining the impact of diverse reading approaches on foundation phase literacy development can provide valuable insights for improving reading instruction. Multi-site studies can also identify common challenges affecting learners' reading skills across South African schools, informing evidence-based solutions.

5.7. LIMITATION OF STUDY

The study successfully explored the perceptions of Grade 3 teachers on developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study was successful in getting some good information, but there were some limitations. Sometimes the researcher would arrange to meet a participant, but they wouldn't be there when the researcher arrived. The researcher would then have to talk to someone else who wasn't prepared and wouldn't get all the necessary information needed. Another limitation was the use of semi-structured interviews as the sole data collection method, which may not have captured the full range of challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading. Although the interviews provided valuable insights, the small sample size and limited scope of the study restricted its ability to explore the perceptions of teachers at other schools. Despite these limitations, the study still provided useful information on the topic, and the use of expert validation helped to ensure the validity of the interview instrument.

5.8 CONCLUSION

This study has provided a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and strategies employed by Grade 3 teachers in developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The findings of this study highlight the significance of teacher

training, parental involvement, and socio-economic factors in promoting reading skills development among early grade readers. The study results also underscore the need for policymakers and education officials to re-evaluate and adapt policies to support teachers and learners in addressing existing shortcomings in Tshivenda Home Language instruction. The study's recommendations, which include promoting reading engagement, addressing challenges in reading instruction, promoting parental involvement, reducing overcrowding, and enhancing support from the Department of Education, provide a foundation for improving reading skills development in the foundation phase. Furthermore, the study's findings emphasize the importance of considering the socio-economic environment and its impact on learner performance, as well as the need for effective instructional methods and resources to support reading instruction. The study's contributions to the existing body of knowledge on reading skills development in multilingual primary school settings highlight the need for further research in this area, particularly in the context of South African education. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that developing Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in early grade is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach, involving teachers, parents, policymakers, and education officials. By working together to address the challenges and barriers identified in this study, it is possible to improve reading skills development and promote academic achievement among learners in the foundation phase. Future research should build on the findings of this study, exploring innovative strategies for transforming the teaching and learning culture of reading in the foundation phase, and developing targeted interventions to enhance reading instruction in this phase.

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7 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LETTER OF PERMISSION (LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)

Enq: Mr Phalanndwa A.C

P.O. BOX 905

Cell: 064 537 2420

Mutale

Email: phalaac@gmail.com

0956

13 February 2024

The Circuit Manager

Circuit Office

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOLS

Dear Sir / Madam

I am a Masters student at the University of Limpopo (**Student no: 9111216**) and an educator at Tshidzini Primary School. The title of my research is **“Teachers’ Perceptions on Development of Tshivenda Reading Skills at Selected Primary Schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.”** The research will be conducted under the supervision of Dr N.C Rañanga.

I am requesting permission to conduct research at your schools. The aim of the study is to evaluate teachers’ perceptions on development of Tshivenda reading skills.

The study will employ a qualitative approach and case study method will be used. I will use semi-structured interview, observation and document analysis to collect data. A video recorder will be used to collect data. A letter requesting permission from principals of the schools and teachers as participants in the study will be sent to selected schools after your permission has been granted. I will conduct interviews which will be recorded. Observation of how teachers address the challenges of reading

will be done and this will be recorded as descriptive and reflective notes. Data collected will be confidential and will only be used for the study.

The benefits of the study are:

6. It will make known the challenges affecting foundation phase reading.
7. It will also explore how teachers address these challenges.

Potential risk: No potential risk is being anticipated as this is a very low risk study.

I promise that I will abide by the principles of anonymity and confidentiality.

Attached please find the permission letter granted from Limpopo Department of Education.

I will be grateful if you consider my request.

Yours faithfully

Phalanndwa A.C (Mr)

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF PERMISSION (CIRCUIT OFFICE)

Enq: Mr Phalanndwa A.C

P.O. BOX 905

Cell: 064 537 2420

Mutale

Email: phalaac@gmail.com

0956

20 May 2024

The Circuit Manager

Circuit Office

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOLS

Dear Sir / Madam

I am a Masters student at the University of Limpopo (**Student no: 9111216**) and an educator at Tshidzini Primary School. The title of my research is **“Teachers’ Perceptions on Development of Tshivenda Reading Skills at Selected Primary Schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.”** The research will be conducted under the supervision of Dr N.C Rañanga.

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9. It will also explore how teachers address these challenges.

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Attached please find the permission letter granted from Limpopo Department of Education.

I will be grateful if you consider my request.

Yours faithfully

Phalanndwa A.C (Mr)

APPENDIX C: CONSENT LETTER TO THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Enq: Mr Phalanndwa A.C

P.O. BOX 905

Cell: 064 537 2420

Mutale

Email: phalaac@gmail.com

0956

10 August 2022

The principal

REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY

Dear Sir / Madam

I am requesting to conduct a study at your school (Tshidzini Primary) located at Vhembe East District in Vhumbedzi Circuit. I am currently studying towards master's degree in education in the Department of Language Education at the University of Limpopo.

The title of my research is "**Teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda reading skills at selected primary schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.**" The aim of this study is to evaluate teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda reading skills. Confidentiality of teachers will be the main priority and the researcher is not going to reveal anything without participants' permission. Field notes will be taken through one-on-one interview with participants.

Thanking you in advance.

Yours faithfully

Phalanndwa A.C

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT CONSENT LETTER

Enq: Mr Phalanndwa A.C

P.O. BOX 905

Cell: 064 537 2420

Mutale

Email: phalaac@gmail.com

0956

10 July 2024

Attention: Grade 3 educator

Dear Sir / Madam

I am a Master of Education Student at the University of Limpopo of student number 9111216. I hereby request permission to conduct research in your grade 3 class. I also request you to take part in my research. The research that I am going to conduct is entitled **“Teachers’ perceptions of the development of Tshivenda reading skills at selected primary schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.”** The research will be conducted under the supervision of Dr N.C Rañanga.

You will have right to withdraw from a study without penalty. Your identity will not be exposed in the final research study.

In response to my request, please fill in the given space and provide your signature.

I (Surname & initials) Grade 3 Tshivenda Home Language Educator at ----- Primary School Agreed or Disagreed ----- that I will be the participant in the proposed study.

A Grade 3 Tshivenda Home Language

Educator’s Signature-----

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours truly

Phalanndwa A.C

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Biographic questions

- ❖ How many years have you been teaching?
- ❖ What is your age?
- ❖ What are your academic qualifications, and what were your major subjects in those qualifications?
- ❖ Are your qualifications relevant for teaching in the foundation phase?
- ❖ If yes or no, how does that affect your competence as a teacher?
- ❖ How many years have you been teaching in your current grade?
- ❖ What are your current teaching subjects?

Reading related questions

1. Study aim: To explore teachers' perceptions of the development of Tshivenda reading skills in selected primary schools in the Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa."

- 1.1. How is Tshivenda Home Language reading promoted in your school?
- 1.2. What kinds of resources are available to facilitate the teaching of Tshivenda Home Language reading?
- 1.3. How does the socio-economic environment affect Tshivenda Home Language reading?
- 1.4. How does parental involvement affect Tshivenda Home Language reading?
- 1.5. Does poverty affect Tshivenda Home Language reading? If so, how?
- 1.6. What kinds of barriers do learners in your class experience when learning Tshivenda Home Language reading?
- 1.7. How do you address or overcome these barriers?

1.8. What form of support does the Department of Education provide regarding challenges and barriers experienced in teaching Tshivenda Home Language reading?

2. Objective 1: To determine the role of the teacher in the development of Tshivenda Home Language reading skills in the Vhembe East District.

2.1. What challenges do you experience in teaching reading in your school?

2.2. Are there any other challenges that affect learners' reading abilities? If yes, please provide examples.

2.3. Does your method of teaching Tshivenda Home Language reading affect learners' reading abilities? If yes, how does it impact their abilities?

2.4. Does your method of teaching Tshivenda home Language reading affect your teaching competency and efficiency? How does it impact your teaching?

2.5. How do you accommodate learners who struggle with reading in your teaching?

2.6. How do you manage overcrowding in your classroom?

2.7. Do learners' difficulties with Tshivenda Home Language reading lead to classroom management and control issues? If so, how do you address these challenges?

2.8. Are planning, preparation, and development of lesson plans affected by Tshivenda Home Language reading challenges? If yes, how do these challenges impact your lesson planning?



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TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 04 December 2023

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/1644/2023: PG

PROJECT:

Title: Teachers' Perceptions on Development of Tshivenda Reading Skills at Selected Primary Schools in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province, South Africa
Researcher: AC Phalanndwa
Supervisor: Dr NC Rananga
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Education
Degree: Master of Education in Language Education

PROF D MAPOSA
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

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