

**THE TEACHING OF FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE READING IN
GRADE 4 IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE MORETELE AREA PROJECT
OFFICE**

BY

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Submitted in part fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

CURRICULUM STUDIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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JANUARY 2010

I declare that:

**THE TEACHING OF FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE READING IN
GRADE 4 IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE MORETELE AREA PROJECT
OFFICE**

*Is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been
indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.*

MASTER OF EDUCATION IN CURRICULUM STUDIES

PROMOTER

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. TV Manyike for her resilience, professional guidance, support and patience during the research period.

To my wife, Seipati Zippora Maswanganye and to my children Katlego and Khensani. Thank you so much!

I would also like to acknowledge the diligence of the following friends, who made this project possible, Thabo Mashigo, Thabang Sekhwama, Nancy Thompson for their selflessness in assisting in the project. Dr. Moyo for assisting with the editorial. God bless you.

Thank You!

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ACRONYMS

APO	–	Area Project Office
BICS	–	Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
CALP	–	Cognitive Academic Language Skills
DoE	–	Department of Education
ESL	–	English as a Second Language
FOLK	–	People of Afrikaner Origin
HL	–	Home Language
L 1	–	First Language
L 2	–	Second Language
RNCS	–	Revised National Curriculum Statement
NCS	–	National Curriculum Statement
ISC	–	Institutional Support Coordinator
FAL	–	First Additional Language (English)
SGB	–	School Governing Body
SASA	–	South African Schools Act
NEPA	–	National Education Policy Act
LoLT	–	Language of Learning and Teaching
QTL	–	Quality of Teaching and Learning
QIDS–UP	–	Quality Improvement Development Upgrading Programme
FLC	–	Foundations for Learning Campaign
SE	–	Systematic Evaluation
NRS	–	National Reading Strategy
SES	–	Socio Economic Status
OBE	–	Outcomes Based Education
Grade R	–	Reception Class
HoD	–	Head of Department
ELL	–	English Language Learners
SMT	–	School Management Team
PPM	–	Post Provisioning Model
SES	–	Senior Education Specialist (Subject Advisor)

ABSTRACT

This study reports on the investigation of the educators teaching methods at Grade 4 First Additional Language. The study focused on selected schools in Moretele APO. It took into consideration the teaching methods and the challenges of the environment educators found themselves in teaching FAL.

The study used a qualitative method to investigate the teaching of FAL. The experiences and the qualifications of educators were taken into consideration during the empirical study when the observations and the interviews were conducted.

The empirical investigation revealed that educators did not know how to teach reading in FAL. They knew less about new approaches to teaching reading and that reading was treated as a separate entity from speaking and writing. The conditions that they found themselves were appalling due to lack of motivation, overcrowding in classes, lack of resources and lack of support from the Department of Education.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND, PROBLEM FORMULATION AND AIMS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter a brief history of the South African education system is presented to provide a background to the research problem. This is followed by the problem statement, the aims of the study and the research methods used in data gathering. An assessment of the selection of the research participants as well as the research instrument is included. This is followed by a discussion of the instruments used for data gathering, the data collection procedure and how the data was analysed. An evaluation of the validity and reliability of the instrument follows with the conclusion thereafter.

In order to understand the nature of the education system in South Africa, it is vital to examine the development that has taken place in the field of education. South Africa has a long and involved educational history and consequently the discussion focuses on only the relevant factors. Due to colonialism and the growth of the mining industry in South Africa, a number of social groups emerged (van Zyl 2002). Social relations based on colour and class developed which directly affected education. White children were given free compulsory education, while education for Blacks was left in the hands of the missionaries who constantly experienced a shortage of funds. As a result education became unequal and segregated.

In 1953 the apartheid Government introduced legislation known as the Bantu Education Act. The aim of this policy was varied and was meant to marginalise and subjugate Blacks. It aimed at: reducing the influence of the English language in Black schools; imposing the use of both Afrikaans and English on an equal basis as a medium of instruction in schools; extending mother tongue education; and purposely promoting

the philosophy of Christian Nationalism (van Zyl 2002).

Christian Nationalism propagated notions of separate identity, separate development of each people (*volk*) and the divine responsibility of the Afrikaner people to spread the gospel to the native inhabitants of South Africa and to act as Black people's guardians. (Kamwangamalu 2004: 136). With the church's backing, the apartheid regime saw to it that every ethnic group was educated in their own mother tongue. Language became a yardstick for segregated education. The reversal of this policy came with the Soweto uprisings on the 16th June, 1976. One of the most important results of the uprising was that English was given more prestige to the detriment of both Afrikaans and the African languages.

Most Black people (Africans) assumed that education in their own languages was inferior mainly because, although mother tongue education was encouraged for the first eight years of schooling, the models used to teach in mother tongue were inadequate. This resulted in learners failing to develop cognitive skills in their L1. This, coupled with the fact that the mother tongues of Black learners are indigenous to South Africa and thus have no international use, most Black people opted for education through the medium of English. This position was informed by both educational and economic realities of South Africa. Since June 1976, mother tongue education became stigmatised in South Africa. The stigma lingers on to this day (Kamwangamalu 2004: 136).

The demand for English medium education has to be understood against the background of the socio-economic power and international status of English on the one hand and the legacy of the policy of Bantu education of the apartheid regime on the other hand (Kamwangamalu 2004: 137). Heugh (2007) claims that the apartheid years led to the

formation of separate goals: social and economic development for the dominant minority and social and economic underdevelopment for the marginalised majority; schools were viewed as instruments of ideological oppression. Until 1994, nineteen separate education departments existed.

Two major problems have arisen from the language policy adopted during the apartheid years. The change from mother tongue education to English caused many problems as many learners did not have sufficient proficiency in English to cope with the syllabus. According to (Macdonald 1990), Black learners were subjected to a cognitively impoverished curriculum making it difficult for them to cope with the curriculum in English.

In 1994 South Africa liberated itself from the shackles of apartheid. The apartheid policy was abolished and this gave way to a new dispensation. A multilingual policy was adopted, thus giving recognition to eleven official languages, i.e., Afrikaans, English, and Setswana, isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, siSwati, seSotho, sePedi, XiTsonga and tshiVenda. (Kamwangamalu 2003: 231).

1.1.1 Language policy in South African Schools

South Africa is a multilingual country and in primary schools, Home Language (HL) instruction is encouraged in the first four years of formal education. According to the Language in Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, all learners will have to choose at least one approved language as a Learning Area in Grades 1 and 2. From Grade 3 onwards, all learners will choose their language of learning and teaching (LoLt) and one additional approved language as a Learning Area (Matjila and Pretorius 2004: 1; Department of Education DoE: 2004: 1).

Grade four is a transition between the Foundation and the Intermediate

Phases in primary education and this is the phase where many problems are experienced in teaching English or First Additional Language (FAL) reading. Learners start using English as a LoLT in this grade, and many content subjects are introduced. Moreover, prior to this grade learners were taught by a single educator who was class-based at the Foundation Phase. In the case of this study, the educator offered all the Learning Areas in the medium of the home language, Setswana. In the Intermediate Phase, the learners were exposed to additional five learning areas, seven of them offered in FAL. These learners need to be proficient in the language of instruction in order to successfully access the curriculum.

1.2 **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Against this background, the main research question is formulated:

How effective is the teaching of FAL reading among Grade 4 learners in primary schools in the Moretele Area Project Office?

In endeavouring to address the main research question, the following sub-questions were formulated:

1. What models of teaching reading exist and how are they critiqued?
2. What are the teaching conditions in which educators and learners find themselves?
3. How is reading taught in South African schools?
4. What recommendations can be made to improve the teaching of reading in FAL in Grade 4 classes in primary schools?

1.3 **RESEARCH AIMS**

- To investigate the reading models that exist and how they are critiqued.
- To investigate the teaching condition in which educators and learners find themselves.
- To investigate the effectiveness of the teaching of reading in South African schools.

- To make recommendations on how to improve teaching reading in Grade 4 FAL classes.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The problem is explored using a literature review as well as an empirical investigation. The literature entailed the identification, tracing and analysis of documents containing information relating to the stated problem. These documents comprise professional journals, books, dissertations and papers delivered at conferences. The aim of the review of literature is to provide a theoretical framework for the empirical investigation.

1.5 Empirical investigation

In the empirical investigation a qualitative approach was used. The focus of the study was to determine the teaching of FAL (i.e. English second language) reading in Grade 4 in selected primary schools.

1.5.1 Selection of school participants

Three rural schools were selected in the Moretele Local Municipality area. All the three schools selected are located in the Moretele District in Hammanskraal. Three teachers participated in the study. The criteria used to select the three schools were based on accessibility to the researcher and the availability of information rich participants.

a) Criteria for sample selection

Schools were selected using convenience and purposive sampling. The educators were selected according to the subjects they taught. These educators were Grade 4 English second language teachers. They were selected by either the Head of the Department or the principal at each school. Grade 4 teachers were chosen because in Grade 4 a major transition occurs where learners are introduced to different subject teachers of different learning areas. Learners in

Grade 4 start using English as a medium of instruction for the first time. These learners were using L1 medium of instruction from Grade 1 and had only learned English second language as a subject. Grade 4 also marks the start of the senior primary phase where the demands of the curriculum increase when compared to Grade 1 through Grade 3.

1.5.2 Data gathering

Data were gathered empirically i.e. through observations and interviews. Interviews were conducted using unstructured questions and were recorded using a voice recorder. The researcher then transcribed the interviews to assist in coding and data analysis. The emerging themes were analysed categorically based on the questions.

The observations in the qualitative study were intentionally conducted in an unstructured and free-flowing manner. The researcher shifted from one topic to another as new and potentially significant objects and events presented themselves (Leedy and Ormrod 2005:145); the field notes are diverse. The researcher observed and recorded the phenomena salient to the foreshadowed problems and their broader conceptual frameworks. The contextual features of the interactions were also taken into cognisance in the study (McMillan and Schumacher 2005:348). The environmental conditions of educators were taken into consideration during data analysis.

Qualitative research is focused on “describing, interpreting and understanding” the meaning people attach to their world, how they feel and think about circumstances and situations (Thorne, 2000; Cutcliffe & McKenna, 1999). This study is qualitative as it seeks to explore and understand the experiences of educators who are teaching learners to read in FAL. Qualitative research often employs inductive reasoning and an interpretive understanding that looks at deconstructing

meanings of a particular occurrence (Thorne, 2000). A qualitative study allows the researcher to acquire the descriptions or the narratives of experiences from educators.

Qualitative research from the interpretive inquiry position seeks to understand the meaning of experience, actions and events as interpreted by the participants and the researcher (or co-participant), paying attention to the intricacies of behaviour and meaning in the context of where it naturally occurs (Richardson, 1996). Interpretive inquiry moulds well with a narrative research design as it seeks to understand the personal and the social experiences of the educators in interaction with learners (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

a) The role of researcher

If the researcher and the participants take an active role in the research process, the researcher assumes that he/she will have the deeper understanding of the social phenomenon chosen to study (Silverman 2000). The researcher forms an integral part of the process by bringing in unique experiences and understandings to the process, as he or she observes and participates in the collection of data. The researcher does not stand outside or is not objective to the whole research process. Instead, the researcher plays an important role in understanding and reconstructing the personal accounts and narratives of the participants. As a result the researcher can be viewed as a core participant.

The researcher contributes by attempting to understand, explore and empathise with the participants and chooses to focus on the context and the integrity of the whole story or experience, and hence, does not rely on quantitative facts (Parker, 1994). Qualitative research does not seek to establish a fixed truth or fact. It is trying to make sense of the phenomenon and includes

exploration, elaboration and systemisation of the phenomenon (Parker, 1994). Seeing the “whole story” and not focusing on what is considered “fact” allows the researcher/co-participant to understand the particular phenomenon. The researcher is able to make use of exploration and elaboration within an interview that allows for the development of the story of an experience and rapport and trust.

In this study, I ensured that each participant understood the purpose of the research. In the interviews with the educators, I strove to listen to the responses, allowing the participants/educators to speak of their experiences without judgement. Therefore, the participants were able to speak without feeling as if they were being evaluated and without thinking that they needed to say the correct thing.

b) Ontological position

As meaning of an experience, event or emotion is constructed between people in their everyday living, the researcher maintains that the ontological view in this study is constructivist. Qualitative research and using interviews, in particular, offer the opportunity to explore how everyday life is experienced and how meaning is understood. As a researcher, I have striven for a unique opportunity to probe, explore or negotiate the participants’ experiences regarding the learners’ reading skills and proficiency (Bryman, 2004).

The conceptual framework, research approach and strategies to collect data contribute to the researcher being able to answer the research question (Thorne, 2000).

1.5.3 Validity and reliability of the study

“The validity of a measurement instrument is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure” (Leedy and Ormrod 2005: 28) Validity refers to the accuracy references which are based upon the outcome measures. When qualitative researchers refer to validity, they imply that the research is plausible, credible, trustworthy and defensible. The researcher is aware of the bias (Rodolo 2008: 21).

“Reliability is a necessary but insufficient condition for validity” (Leedy and Ormrod 2005: 29). Reliability refers to the consistency of the outcome measures. A reliable measure has to yield the same outcome if tested more than once. In qualitative studies the researcher is concerned with the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data. (Rodolo 2008: 21).

Validity of the interview instrument was tested by giving it to two educators prior to conducting the interviews. After the interviews, the participants were given feedback to make sure that the researcher captured their experiences correctly.

1.5.4 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to three rural schools in the Moretele Area Project Office (APO). The study did not include former model C schools which could have made it more inclusive and comprehensive. The study was based on the educators teaching Grade 4 FAL reading and did not test the learners. The study concentrated upon the teaching reading with the exclusion of listening, speaking and writing.

Township schools were not visited due to time and financial constraints. Nonetheless, the results obtained suggest what is happening in similar schools in South Africa. The results cannot,

however, be generalised as teachers from different geographic areas were not tested.

1.6 **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to Silverman (2000), informed concern involves giving information about the research that is relevant to a participant's decision to participate in the study. The decision can only be taken if the participants understand the information given (i.e. language of information etc). It includes ensuring that a participant's decision is voluntary. In this study the initial meeting with the relevant educators, heads of departments and/or principals provided the opportunity to explain the study in depth and to clarify questions that participants had.

The interviews were planned to take place after school activities, so as not to disrupt any learning. The educators' schedule also needed to be considered to avoid disrupting extramural activities in schools, marking and preparation that educators need to do. As stated earlier, the interviews were conducted with full consent from each educator and the research findings were made available to the participants upon request.

In this research, ethical considerations were taken into cognisance. The identities of both of the participants and of schools were kept confidential. The participants participated voluntarily and were made aware of their right to choose not to answer questions should they feel uncomfortable. They were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the project should they so wish.

As mentioned, I used a qualitative approach to the research. Qualitative research unlike quantitative research is more likely to be personally intrusive and as such ethical guidelines regarding informed concern, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, deception and care were

undertaken in the study (McMillan and Schumacher 2006:334).

1.6.1 Confidentiality

The schools and the participant’s names were kept confidential. Schools are labelled school A, school B and school C to protect the participants’ identify, yet allows the researcher to link the transcriptions to the field notes.

1.6.2 Trustworthiness of the data

The focus of the interpretation of any social phenomenon, which is the textual data from the interviews, should be viewed as something that can be used for better understanding. However, the validity of the trustworthiness of the data is to be ensured and verified. Some strategies for ensuring validity and relevance of qualitative data according to Fade (2003) include: (1) triangulation; (2) member checking; (3) clear exposition of methods of data collection and analysis; (4) reflexivity; (5) attention to negative cases and (6) fair dealing. Guba and Lincoln (in Lopes 2008) suggest the following in order to increase trustworthiness in a qualitative study, namely: (1) credibility; (2) transferability; (3) dependability; (4) conformability. The following table reflects Seale’s (1999) adaptation of Lopes, Lincoln and Guba’s translation of terms (Lope, 2008).

Table 1: Lincoln and Guba’s translation of terms (Lopes, 2008)

Conventional Enquiry (Found in Quantitative Research)	Naturalistic Enquiry (Found in Qualitative Research)
Truth value (internal validity)	Credibility
Applicability (external validity)	Transferability
Consistency (reliability)	Dependability
Neutrality (objectivity)	Confirmability

1.6.3 Credibility

Credibility includes reflexivity member checking and peer examination. Krefting (1991) suggests that reflexivity increases the credibility of the research if the researcher reflects on what he/she brings into the interview. The researcher becomes a core participant, reflecting and identifying how and what he/she contributes to the process in terms of his/her own experiences, opinions and/or biases that may influence the process (Mason, 1996). This may also include how the researcher interviews the participants. For example, how questions are phrased as well as probing questions may influence how the educators/participants choose to answer. In this study, the researcher had to be aware of the educators' possible need to be politically correct and to provide socially desirable answers, instead of having the freedom to express their true experiences of the teaching of reading in FAL to Grade 4 learners.

1.6.4 Reflexivity

Reflexivity implies that the researcher is transparent and able to describe the methodology and procedures chosen for the study accurately (Dowling, 2006). For this reason, the research process has been clearly outlined, discussed and can be traced via a 'paper trail'. The paper trail refers to the fact that the data, from the raw transcribed data to the analysed and interpreted data, can be traced and viewed. Reflexivity in a qualitative study ensures a coherent, transparent methodology and allows for easy peer review (Lopes 2008:85).

a) Member checking

Member checking was done in order to ensure that the themes and the data that emerged from the study were not biased but truthful and reflect true experiences of the educators (Creswell, 2003). Firstly, each participant was given a copy of his/her own particular interview transcript with the summary of themes to reflect on. The educators were requested to read through their interview transcripts and themes and to consider them thoroughly.

Educators were requested to jot down any additional comments and feedback for the researcher. This was followed up with a meeting with the educators. A follow up meeting was scheduled within two weeks with the three schools to consolidate the transcripts with the educators.

b) Peer examination

In the peer review also referred to as an external audit (Creswell, 2003; Seale, 1999), the data is given to impartial colleagues who may have experience with qualitative methods and the research process, and the findings are then discussed (Krefting, 1991). Peer examination is similar to member checks, but includes a colleague who is experienced with qualitative methodology and is able to discuss the process and findings with the researcher (Lopes 2008:86).

c) Transferability

Transferability proposes that the data which has been “interpreted” can be useful in other situations. The data gathered will be viewed in terms of narratives, topics, questions and the themes that emerge from the interviews (Lopes 2008:86)

d) Dependability

The way the researcher presents the methodology and the results of the study adds to the quality of trustworthiness (Atkinson, Heath & Chenail, 1991; Chenail, 1995; Krefting, 1991) Chenail (1995) describes it more specifically as a “spirit of openness”. Being able to describe in detail the process and the steps that were followed allows the reader to understand and trust the researcher and the conclusions drawn. Member checking, peer checking and auditing, as mentioned above, may improve the dependability of the study (Krefting, 1991).

Allowing one's peers to check methodology and implementation of methodology can improve the dependability of the study.

e) Conformability

Reflection and member checking and the use of an "auditor" can improve confirmability (Krefting, 1991). A peer reviewer is a colleague who has not been directly involved in the process but who can go through the process of the research through the help of audio tapes, transcriptions and summaries that allow him/her to come up with the same conclusions as the researcher (Krefting, 1991; Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The "auditor" is a peer who has expertise in qualitative methodology to appraise the study. The auditor's role is deferred to the peer reviewer. The peer reviewer is a colleague who is present throughout the process, but not directly involved; whereas the auditor verifies the process close to the end of the study. Through the use of the peer reviewer and the auditor, the research findings, themes and narratives, are confirmed and verified.

Confirmability is not easy to achieve as the expert qualitative researcher reviews the process the researcher has undertaken through the audit trail which may bring different interpretations and findings to the fore (Cutcliffe & Mckenna, 2004). Thus, an audit trail does not necessarily confirm findings and interpretations, but can instead bring other findings and interpretations to the researcher's attention. Therefore, the auditor is able to come to other conclusions (Lopes, 2008:87).

1.7 CHAPTER DIVISION

The dissertation has been divided into five chapters:

Chapter one provides the background of the problem statement, research problem, research aims, research methodology, and selection

of respondents, data gathering, data analysis, and limitation of the study, validity of the study, reliability, chapter divisions and conclusion of the study.

Chapter Two examines the literature germane to the study, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and language policy. The relationship between first and second language, challenges associated with reading proficiency skills, lack of expertise, language instruction problems i.e. transitional, sub-emersion and bilingualism, strategies for teaching reading, reading aloud, reading a lot, and peer tutoring, assessment procedures for reading, alternatives to assessment and evaluation, accessing reading and conclusions are discussed.

Chapter Three explores the research design of the study, research methodology and methods of gathering data, literature reviewed empirical investigation, sampling, interviews, ethical consideration and data analysis.

Chapter Four explores the findings of empirical investigation, description of the schools that participated, location of the schools, the culture of teaching and learning, availability of the resources, professionalism of educators, results of the interviews, observational empirical results and the conclusion.

Chapter Five presents an overview of the study, limitations, findings, recommendations and the final conclusion of the study.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The chapter discussed in detail the problem statement, research aims, research methodology and selection of participants. It also discussed how data were gathered and analysed. The limitations, validity, reliability and ethical considerations were discussed.

The chapter concludes with the division of chapters, conclusion and definition of terms. Chapter two will discuss the literature reviewed in detail.

CHAPTER 2

THEORIES OF TEACHING READING IN ENGLISH AS A FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The teaching of reading in First Additional Language (FAL) deserves more attention than it currently receives from educators (Theron and Nel 2005). According to Theron and Nel (2005:237), most educators lack the training, knowledge, tools and time to support learners with limited English proficiency to ascertain that these learners achieve their full potential. These researchers argue that challenges to teaching English as a FAL are often huge classrooms, lack of parental support, and lack of proficiency in mother tongue among learners. These conditions have resulted in the South African learner's underperformance in an international literacy survey in which South Africa came last. Owing to the poor performance of the South African learners, the Minister of Education barred the participation of South African schools from all similar surveys for a period of four years, that is from 2008 up to 2011 (DoE 2008: 4-5).

In the meantime the Department of Education has endeavoured to launch a number of campaigns to remedy the situation:

- *Foundations for Learning Campaign*: as espoused in the Government Gazette propagates that learners and educators will be engaged in the exercise of “dropping everything” and reading for 30 minutes on a daily basis in schools.
- *Quality Improvement Development Support and Upliftment Programme*: for public schools (QIDS-UP). QIDS-UP is an affirmative action programme targeting schools serving high-poverty school communities, where the quality of education is seriously

- compromised due to the lack of resources, shortage of skilled personnel, lack of basic infrastructure and overcrowding in the classrooms.
- *National Reading Strategy* was launched in 2008 and is intended to promote reading across the curriculum with an intention to inculcate a reading culture among learners and educators by providing support for educators, books and other resources for learners.
- *The Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign* was launched in 2009 with the intention of ensuring quality learning and teaching for all the learners in the school communities (DoE 2008: 8).

These campaigns are meant to improve the reading proficiency levels and literacy skills of South African learners. However, Grade 4 learners have different needs from all other grades in the Intermediate Phase. It seems that Grade 4 is crucial for second language learners in that they must adjust to additional learning areas offered by different educators. Eight learning areas, seven of which are offered in the medium of FAL, are introduced for the first time in this grade. These learners undergo a transition since they are offered the learning areas in the second language. This is in spite of their home language (HL) being different from the language of teaching and learning (LoLT). Educators teaching FAL are faced with challenges in teaching these learners how to read as alluded to in the numerous campaigns launched by the Department of Education (www.doe.gov.za/2008/08/6).

2.2 **OUTCOMES BASED EDUCATION**

South African education system has undergone transformation since 1994. Presently, Outcomes Based Education (OBE) is being introduced in schools. Outcomes Based Education (OBE) as espoused in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) is explicit in its promotion

of reading skills of FAL learners (Matjila and Pretorius 2004). FAL learners do not necessarily have any knowledge of the language of instruction. The curriculum is designed in such a way that it develops the learners' ability to read by transferring literacy skills acquired in their home language (HL) to the second language or additional (FAL) (Matjila and Pretorius 2004: 3). According to Cummins (2003), this transfer can only occur if these learners have acquired cognitive language proficiency in their home language. Grade 4 learners in South African schools make this transition after three years of L1 schooling, which is at this stage also the LoLT. At this stage their first language is not yet well developed.

2.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGE (L1 AND L2)

According to Hinkel (2005), a specialist in second language (L2) teaching, reading in the second language is often criticized for depending considerably on research in first language (L1) instead of focusing more narrowly on reading in a second language. Hinkel (2005: 563) reports that even if there are problems in reading in one language, reading skills can be transferred to other languages. He reports that human beings are the only creatures that speak and as such learners must be taught how to read.

Birch in Hinkel (2005: 566) states that for second language reading to take place the reader must have developed proficiency in that language. The transfer of reading skills from one language to another is referred to as the short circuit hypothesis. Clarke in Hinkel (2005:566) is of the opinion that the short circuit hypothesis challenges the notion that learners who excel in reading in their L1 will automatically transfer their reading skills to L2.

Cummins (1984) and Kamwangamalu (2004) argue that readers whose

knowledge of L1 is not well developed will find it difficult to learn to read in an additional language (Kamwangamalu 2004:141). Coelho (2004) concurs with Kamwangamalu (2004) and Cummins (1984), both of whom assert that second language reading is most effective when a learner's first language is adequately developed and the learner needs not rediscover the principles of reading when he or she reads a new language script. Learners who understand concepts such as rhyme and figurative language learn to use these features in another language (Coelho 2004: 154).

Cummins in (Coelho 2004) explores this notion by suggesting that FAL learners should not be plunged into the learning of a second language before they have learned to decode several discrete language skills in their L1. Specific literacy skills and concepts must have been mastered in their L1 in order to transfer them to their L2 successfully (Minskoff 2005: 25, Coelho 2004: 154). Most English language learners (ELL) need at least five to seven years to become academically proficient in their second language (Coelho 2004: 152).

Cummins (1981), an expert on second language acquisition among school-aged learners, distinguishes two important aspects of second language development: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills refer to conversational fluency. Most learners develop (BICS) within the first two years of being immersed in an English language environment. BICS is used in everyday conversation and play.

It takes about two years for learners to acquire basic language skills for everyday conversation such as greetings, asking questions, and addressing each other. This type of everyday language is heavily contextualized and is sometimes augmented by gestures, pointing to

objects and pantomiming (Allecio, Galloway, Irbe, Rodriguez and Gomez 2004: 36). On the other hand, CALP refers to the kind of language skills required to achieve academic success, English learners typically need at least five years to develop age appropriate (CALP) skills without which learners will not be able to cope with academic work.

2.4 CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH READING PROFICIENCY SKILLS

According to different researchers, learners at Grade 4 have special needs and need to be taught to read (Pretorius and Machet 2004; Schlebusch and Thobedi 2005; Theron and Nel 2005; Makoe 2007; Hugo, Roux, Muller and Nel 2005). In FAL classrooms some educators believe that learners are incapable of meeting academic standards because of their demography (e.g. poverty, limited English proficiency low ability or lack of motivation).

Other educators have gradually lowered their expectations in response to pressure from parents who think their children need “less homework”, more play time and life outside the school (Mc Ewan 2007: 44). Learners are sometimes put under pressure on the pretext that they need to be high achievers in education, as espoused in the NCS principles (DoE 2002).

According to the findings of numerous studies, e.g. Pretorius and Mampuru (2007); Makoe (2007); Matjila and Pretorius (2004) and Minskoff (2005), South African schools are not well resourced with libraries and most are also without books. There is generally a lack of literacy materials in African languages, and as such learners have no opportunity to read in their own African languages. Pretorius and Mampuru (2007) claim that only 27% of South African schools have libraries. They further argue that even if Africans were to receive

literacy in their own language, they would continue to do so in a print-poor environment. There has been very little attempt by the South African government to encourage the writing of books in African languages (Pretorius and Mampuru 2007: 41, Makoe 2007: 60).

Although the importance of a good learning and text-rich environment cannot be underestimated for effective learning, it is also true that most language educators in schools the world over, do not see the connection between reading and writing. Too often, educators use only one method of teaching reading, which may not always suit all learners.

In South African schools there is a misunderstanding about the educators' role in teaching reading in Curriculum 2005 in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Most educators believe that they do not have to teach reading, but to facilitate the process for learners to teach themselves to read (DoE 2008: 8).

Another challenge facing NCS educators is that they have to develop their own teaching materials and reading programmes. These educators neither have the required experience nor the expertise to develop the required materials because in the past the Department of Education provided them with prescribed books and the literature books for the different grades.

According to the Department of Education language, educators did not receive training on material development (DoE 2008: 8). Most of these educators in the Intermediate Phase are not language educators and therefore need in-service training on the teaching of reading. They need to be well versed with teaching in strategies and methods applied to teaching FAL learners to read.

According to numerous studies, educators have found that Grade 4 requires enrichment programmes in language reading. By Grade 4, learners must be proficient readers as they now use language across the curriculum (DoE 2008: 8, DoE 2002: 4; Makoe 2007: 60; Pretorius and Machet 2004: 42).

FAL educators commonly make the mistake of moving these learners to regular classes, once they have acquired the basic communication skills. On the surface these learners appear to have mastered the language but lag behind academically (Avalos 2003: 173). To be fluent readers these learners need to have cognitive academic language proficiency. Learners with academic language proficiency in their L1 are able to read fluently (Fountas and Pinnel (2006: 6). They have a core of fluently used words that they recognise with ease and are able to predict and to make generalisation of what they read.

2.5 LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION PROGRAMMES

Multilingualism is a world phenomenon and as such the challenges faced by teachers are not unique to South Africa. Teachers in the United States of America, for example, are also grappling with how to teach learners from diverse cultural backgrounds effectively. In an attempt to address this challenge, a number of second language programmes have been established, namely, the transitional, the submersion and the bilingual models. These models will be discussed in the preceding section in order to give insight into how second language learners can be taught effectively using the various models and methods.

2.5.1 Transitional Model

In the transitional bilingual models educators are bilingual. They are able to code-switch from the learners' home language to English according to learners' needs.

These educators are invaluable in assisting learners through the transition (Manyike 2007:65)

Transitional bilingual models can be divided into two: early exit and late exit. In earlier exit models learners are taught in their L1 for a period of two years. In late exit models learners are allowed to use their language for 40 percent of the time until they reach the sixth grade (Manyike 2007: 65)

In transitional models the learner's L1 and FAL are used concurrently to facilitate understanding and L1 serves as a temporary bridge to FAL. In this model instruction is provided in the L2 or FAL for all learning areas with a small portion of instruction provided in the L1 for all learners to benefit. Learners in these models are gradually transferred to all FAL classes and eventually exit out of language instruction programmes (Alecio *et al.* 2004: 168).

According to Avalos (2003), DoE (2005:14) learners in transitional models experience problems in as far as syntactical text structures are concerned. These learners experience problems with reading because it is a complex cognitive process. Learners are forced to read in L2 when they are still acquiring reading skills in their L1. L1, therefore, serves as a bridge to L2 instruction in the Intermediate Phase (from Grade 4 onwards). The NCS assumes that learners who are able to read in their L1 will be able to transfer the literacy skills acquired in L1 to FAL (DoE 2002: 7). This assumption is supported by other researchers such as Heugh (2007), Macdonald (1990) and Manyike and Lemmer (2008). Unfortunately for South African learners the transition comes sooner, before learners have acquired CALP skills in their L1. A study by Nicholadis (in Hinkel 2005: 15) explores this by pointing out that learners who grow up hearing and using two languages will find it easy to be conversant in both languages.

The study is also augmented by research by Uchikoshi (2006: 33) who argues that learners from literacy rich-environments have the potential to perform above average if exposed to two languages on an almost equal basis to facilitate bilingualism in learners in the Intermediate Phase. Learners in this phase should be encouraged to communicate in FAL whenever possible (DoE 2002: 43).

2.5.2 Submersion Model

The Submersion model is called a sink-or-swim programme whereby learners are compelled to receive instruction through the medium of FAL, disregarding their L1. In this instance FAL is the only medium of instruction or the language of learning and teaching (LoLT).

Submersion models are the most common ways of educating African learners in South African schools. FAL dominates the L1 of the learners while it assimilates and marginalises all other languages on the pretext that it opens ways to better paying jobs as alluded to earlier by several authors (Makoe 2007: 58, Skutnabb-Kangass and Cummins 1988: 168).

According to Krashen in Manyike (2007: 68), learning a second language engenders a level of anxiety. Consequently, this might be one of the reasons why learners end up failing to master a second language.

In South African schools submersion tends to be overemphasised in urban or former Model C schools, where most, if not all educators are White, Indian and/or Coloured. The African learners enrolled in these former Model C institutions have no alternative but to develop language proficiency in a short period of time for them to cope. This instant maturity expectancy is possible because these schools are highly-resourced, well-built and well-funded, unlike the African schools which

were highly marginalised by apartheid policy which deliberately denied them of any meaningful resources and were built by communities, instead of the government. These schools were still seriously under-resourced fifteen years after the demise of the apartheid schooling (Makoe 2007: 60).

2.5.3 Bilingual Education Model

Bilingual education is a practice where a large number of learners of the same language are congregated together in the same area and learn an additional language (Coelho 2004: 168).

South Africa's NCS ascribes to the policy of multilingualism. According to NCS, schools have to offer at least two languages in their primary education, i.e. the Home Language (HL) and the First Additional Language (FAL) with the Second Additional Language as an option. The HL or L1 serves as a temporary bridge to instruction in an all English instruction classroom in the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4).

The NCS assumes that learners who are able to read in their HL will be able to transfer their literacy skills acquired in HL to FAL (DoE 2002: 7).

The study is also augmented by a research by Uchikoshi (2006: 33) who propagates that learners from literacy rich-environment have the potential to perform above average if exposed to two languages on almost equal basis and that to facilitate bilingualism, learners in the Intermediate Phase should be encouraged to communicate in FAL whenever possible (DoE 2002: 43).

2.6 **STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING READING**

Educators will need to use various reading strategies to provide learners with reading proficiency skills. There are many reading strategies; however, only three of them that are relevant to this study will be discussed.

These are reading aloud, reading a lot and peer-tutoring.

2.6.1 Reading aloud

Little and Hines (2006: 13) suggest that novice learner readers must be exposed to reading aloud for them to benefit. This practice has long been recommended in reading instruction. In 1985 the Commission on Reading reported that the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to learners. Reading aloud is a common practice in primary grades (Little and Hines 2006:13). Little and Hines (2006) also discuss this in detail and its importance in the intermediate grades (Little and Hines 2006: 13). Little and Hines (2006) argue that people read aloud to learners in order to model fluent reading and for learners to experience and hear how new words are pronounced, to learn more about about the world, and finally to develop a love for reading. According to Minskoff (2005: 3), reading aloud is also used to improve comprehension strategies and engage learners in trying out new reading strategies.

Educators who engage in reading aloud not only support reading growth through overall literacy exposure, but also model reading enjoyment and broaden learners' exposure to different types and levels of books. Learners whose first language is not English benefit from this exercise, especially if the reader is eloquent and can articulate the language appropriately (Little and Hines 2006: 14).

Trelease (2006:137) explores this notion by pointing out that reading aloud serves to "reassure, entertain, inform, explain, arouse curiosity and inspire our kids". Harvey and Goudvis (2007) warn that we should not read aloud for the purpose of instruction because that will ruin the intention of reading aloud. People need to read aloud everyday for enjoyment.

This is supported and emphasised by the Department of Education reading campaigns. Harvey and Goudvis (2007: 40) argue that reading aloud is a key to effective instruction across all grade levels. They claim that in interactive reading-aloud, one reads aloud to discuss with learners a range of high quality fiction and non-fiction texts. Reading aloud builds vocabulary and background knowledge and expands comprehension. As educators read, they have a brief conversation with learners around the ideas in the text. Harvey and Goudvis (2007) explore the importance of a conversation before, during and after reading the text as this supports understanding. The learners participate by listening; thereafter they emulate the reader, and thus enhance their reading abilities and learn how to be proficient readers (Harvey and Goudvis 2007: 40).

2.6.2 Reading a lot

While reading aloud is supported by quite a number of researchers as shown earlier, Krashen in Hinkel (2005: 563) explores the notion of reading a lot. He is of the opinion that learners who read a lot acquire language skills involuntarily and without conscious effort. These learners will become adequate readers, acquire a large vocabulary and develop the ability to understand and use complex grammatical structures. According to Krashen (2005), the readers will reach fluency, develop syntax and pragmatics and ultimately develop a reading culture (Hinkel 2005: 563).

According to Krashen in Hinkel (2005: 69), for second language learners, reading may be both a means-to-the-end of acquiring the language, as a major source of comprehensible input, and-an-end-in-itself as the skill that many learners most need to employ to learn language and to read.

Many learners of FAL rarely communicate in English in their day-to – day lives but may need to read it in order to access the wealth of information recorded exclusively in this language. To complement this, reading can serve as an excellent source for authentic language leaning. Hinkel (2005: 563) maintains that meaningful and authentic language must include every feature of the second language learned. Even though reading a lot seems to be a good model or strategy for teaching reading, peer tutoring seems to be the most commonly practised method amongst the formerly disadvantaged schools. (Hinkel 2005: 563).

2.6.3 Peer tutoring

The learners team up with work partners during collaborative practice. Paired reading has a variety of goals. Learners may be paired around a common interest, question or topic of study. Paired reading makes sure that everyone has access to the information. It nevertheless teaches learners that listening has the important functions: paying attention, thinking about, and responding to what the partner is reading. The skill of listening is seriously enhanced as learners listen to their peers reading aloud with an intention of emulating them (Harvey and Goudvis 2007).

However, Veerkamp, Kamps and Cooper (2007) argue that while the effects of peer tutoring on reading skills for elementary school children are abundant, little evidence exists to support the use of peer tutoring for improving reading among Intermediate Phase learners (Harvey and Goudvis 2007; Hinkel 2005: 563).

Fields, Lois and Spangler (2008: 108) reported that in peer tutoring children memorise words they do not understand; they view peer tutoring as an artificial form of learning and it does not in anyway serve as a basis for further academic or intellectual development.

They claim that oral and written language develops at the same time; hence little children attempt to write even before they can speak (Fields, Lois and Spangler 2008: 151).

Fields, Lois and Spangler (2008: 128) assert that the focus should be on the interconnection between listening, speaking and writing; however, these are usually taught as separate skills by most language educators.

2.7 ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR READING

Learners need to be taught how to read to become proficient readers. Evidence from research shows that learners cannot do it alone but need the support of language educators to help them acquire the skills required to be proficient readers. Educators also need to know how to test the reading abilities of their learners. Pretorius and Machet (2004: 41) claim that South African schools lack standardised reading tests in either the L1 or L2 for determining whether the learners are reading at their appropriate maturational levels. The section below will discuss the various reading assessment models that exist and how they are critiqued.

2.7.1 Alternative to assessment and evaluation

According to Coelho (2004), Curriculum Outcomes and Assessment tasks and criteria established with L1 speakers of English may be inappropriate for learners who are learning the L2, especially in the early stages of their reading (Coelho 2004). He warns that requiring FAL learners to perform at the level beyond his or her current stage of development in English is futile and leads to frustration and disappointment for both the teacher and the learner (Coelho 2004: 260). The evaluation and assessment of FAL readers cannot be lumped together with L1 readers.

FAL learners have to be given enough time and opportunity to catch up with their peers in L2 proficiency (Coelho 2004: 274). Unfortunately, South Africa has no standardised assessment tests to assess learners' reading proficiency skills. Many literacy assessment programmes use oral reading as a strategy to assess learners' reading fluency and written answers to assess reading proficiency skills. However, these assessment methods might not be appropriate to FAL learners, especially in early stages of literacy skills development.

Coelho (2004) offers the following tips about reading in FAL:

- Pronunciation errors and missed word endings say more about learners' incomplete knowledge of the English sound system or English grammar than about reading comprehension or reading strategies.
- Assessment tools used in assessing reading are based on the L1 speaker's perspective (e.g. phonic frieze).
- Reading passages followed by multiple choice questions, true or false questions, cloze tests and questions requiring answers should be used with caution as FAL learners might be unfamiliar with the format of multiple choice and true or false questions.
- It should also be borne in mind that receptive competency of FAL learners is greater than their productive competency and their reading comprehension in most cases. As a result questions requiring extended written answers should be avoided at all costs when reading is the focus of the assessment.
- Comparing the reading performance of FAL learners with that of L1 speakers, e.g. by assigning a grade-level score from tests designed for L1 speakers, might reveal how far FAL learners are lagging

behind their L1 speaking counterparts. Educators and administrators must not judge the performance of FAL learners by standards meant for L1 speakers (Coelho 2004: 260).

2.7.2 Assessing reading

Reading is the hardest skill to assess because much depends on what is being read and the reader. A passage selected for assessing reading will favour some readers and disadvantage others, since no two readers have exactly the same proficiency in language and reading skill (Hinkel 2005: 572). In practice, however, educators do attempt to assess reading through the following skills.

According to Harvey and Goudvis (2007: 48) strategic readers are:

- aware of their thinking as they read;
- monitor their understanding and keep track of meaning;
- listen to the voice in their head to make sense of the text;
- notice when meaning is breaking down;
- detect obstacles and confusions that derail understanding;
- understand how a variety of strategies can help repair meaning when it breaks down; and
- know *When*, *Why* and *How* to apply specific strategies to maintain and further understanding.

Proficient readers proceed automatically, until something does not make sense or a problem arises. At that point, experienced readers slow down and read and re-read for clarity and remove confusions before they continue and apply appropriate strategies (Harvey and Goudvis 2007: 49).

Coelho (2004) suggests educators use the following guidelines to promote efficiency for FAL learner's readers:

- choose material that appeals to learners and can reasonably be read; that reflects linguistic and cultural diversity; and that deals with topics and situations that are likely to be familiar to learners;
- educators are advised to use graded FAL readers that have been specifically designed for FAL learners at various stages of development.
- educators should not expect emergent readers of FAL to do more than recognise basic words and respond to very short, simple illustrated reading passages;
- educators are advised to ask learners to read the passage aloud, and then respond to oral questions. When they do answer these questions, it encourages them to refer to the passage to locate details and find specific words;
- the questions set should be based on knowledge acquired and information such as finding main ideas, detail, and sequence. For learners developing CALP, questions designed to elicit responses based on inference and opinion are also appropriate; and
- if using graded material meant for L1 readers such as an informal reading inventory or levelled books, educators should be very cautious about interpreting information about graded-level scores. This is because FAL learners might be fluent in their home language reading (Coelho 2004: 261-266).

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed in detail the different theories in teaching reading in FAL. OBE and the relationship between L1 and L2 were also discussed.

The challenges associated with reading proficiency skills, language instruction programmes, teaching reading strategies and the evaluation and/or assessment of teaching reading in FAL were outlined.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the methodology used to investigate the teaching of reading FAL in Grade 4 in selected schools in Moretele APO.

A research design is a general strategy for solving a research problem. The research design provides the overall structure for the procedure the researcher follows, the data the researcher collects, and the data analysis the researcher conducts (Leedy and Ormrod 2005: 85).

In this chapter the researcher empirically investigated the teaching of reading English as a foreign language by Grade 4 educators and their teaching environments.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research focuses on “describing, interpreting and understanding” the meaning people attach to their world, how they feel and think about circumstances around them in the environment they are occupying at a particular time (Thorne, 2000; Cutcliffe & McKenna, 1999). A quantitative study seeks to explore and understand the experiences of educators regarding teaching reading in FAL. Qualitative research often employs inductive reasoning and an interpretive understanding that looks at deconstructing meanings of a particular occurrence as discussed in detail in chapter one (Thorne, 2000). A qualitative research enquiry allows the researcher to acquire the descriptions or the narratives of experiences from participants.

Qualitative research does not employ null-hypothesis in its data.

The data speaks for itself and the researcher uses keys and codes to interpret and extrapolate information into segments (Albertse 2007: 37).

Rodolo (2008: 15) in her recent study defines research methodology as 'A study of a research process in all its broadness and complexity. The various methods and techniques that are employed, the rationale that underlines the use of such methods, the limitations of each technique, the role of assumptions and presumptions in selecting methods and techniques, the influence of methodological preference of the type of data analysis employed and the subsequent interpretation of findings.' Macmillan and Schumacher (2006) in Adeyemi (2008: 47) define qualitative research as:

Inquiry in which researchers collect data in face-to-face situations by interacting with selected persons in their settings. Qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. Qualitative studies are important for theory generation, policy, illumination of social issues and action stimulus.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 133) propose that most researchers who strive for objectivity in their research use qualitative research.

Relying on the above definitions of qualitative research, the researcher opted to use the method to gain a complete understanding of the context in which educators teach reading in FAL and the conditions in which they find themselves. Based on the argument presented in this section, the researcher opted to make use of qualitative study as opposed to the quantitative method.

3.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Data on teaching reading were gathered from journals, books, the Internet and newspapers. The researcher confined himself to the latest literature available on the teaching of reading. The literature consulted was acknowledged and referenced.

3.4 SAMPLING

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for the study in such a way that they represent the larger group from which they are selected (Gay 1992:23). Three diverse schools were sampled from Moretele, Area Project Office (APO). The schools were randomly selected from three rural villages because of accessibility. Permission was sought from the APO, the principals and the educators. Interviews were conducted after a number of visits for a period of two months by the researcher who acquainted himself with the educators and their conditions at the schools once per fortnight. The researcher visited the schools and had discussions with the relevant Grade 4 educators prior to the interviews.

These meetings focused on the aim and the intention of the research study. The visits made learners relax and feel comfortable with the presence of the researcher during class observations. The researcher discussed the aims of the study with the educators in preparation for the interviews.

The memo-ing tool (memoranda) was employed by the researcher to write reflective notes about incidents and events which unfolded during the interaction between the researcher and the participants (Rodolo 2008: 21). During observations the researcher used a notepad to note how the participants acted and interacted with each other. A detailed observation of the surroundings was also made.

The number of learners in classrooms varied from school to school. The learner educator ratio in the APO is 1: 40. The classes visited varied from 26 to 50 learners in a classroom depending on the size of the school. All the schools visited had only one Grade 4 class.

3.5 **CHALLENGES**

The researcher was faced with serious challenges during the research project. Most participants were skeptical about participating in the project, fearing victimization by the Department of Education for not following educational policies. Some of the schools visited by the researcher refused to participate in the research claiming they were not ready as they were preparing for a music and an athletics competition. Two other schools, although they initially agreed to participate in the study, withdrew from the project without explanation.

In some schools principals refused to allow their educators to participate in the study. In one school (School B), the educator in charge could not be reached due to ill-health. He was admitted to hospital for two weeks. However, he was willing to participate in the project and kept the communication channels open although he was on sick leave.

3.6 **INTERVIEWS**

The following suggestions by Leedy and Ormrod (2005) were taken into consideration when conducting interviews:

- unstructured questions were identified in advance.
- a suitable location was found.
- written permission was sought and granted.
- rapport was established and maintained.
- the groups were well represented.
- there was a focus on the real life situation and obstructions were avoided.

- the researcher did not put words into participants' mouths.
- responses were recorded verbatim.
- the researcher kept his reactions to himself
- the researcher acknowledged that he was not getting facts and treated explanations as perceptions (*adapted*: Leedy and Ormrod 2005: 147-148).

Grade 4 FAL educators were interviewed and probed on the methods they used in teaching reading. The environmental conditions of the schools, both inside and outside the classrooms, were taken into consideration during the data collection period. Educators were probed according to the themes (*see annexure B*). Three educators were selected from the three schools and notes were taken from all of them. Interviews were recorded on a voice recorder and transcribed for data coding and analysis.

3.7 **OBSERVATIONS**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:207), the word observation is used to describe the data collected, regardless of the techniques employed in the study. Observational research methods also refer to a more specific method of collecting information that is very different from interviews or questionnaires. As a technique for gathering information, the observational method relies on a researcher seeing and hearing things and recording these observations rather than relying on the subjects' responses to questions or statements.

The role of the researcher during observations depends on the degree of inferences or judgment that is required. At one point the observer may make high inference observations which are judgmental and which may also influence the behaviour of the participants. On the other hand, low inference observations require the observer to record specific behaviours without making a solid judgment.

In this study the researcher opted to use observations based on the above mentioned facts.

Qualitative research observation is fundamentally naturalistic; it occurs in a natural context among role players who are naturally participating in the interaction and follow the contours of everyday life. The researcher chose to use observations because have the innate advantage of drawing the observer into the phenomenological complexity of the world where connections, correlations and causes can be witnessed as they unfold. The researcher's role was that of a participant observer. Observations enable the researcher to obtain accounts of situations in the participants' own language.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The participants were made aware of their rights by the researcher. They were made aware that their identities and those of their schools would not be revealed and that the data would remain confidential. The participants were also made aware that they had a right to withdraw from the project at any given moment and not to answer questions if they so preferred. All the participants responded positively (Leedy and Ormrod 2005:100; McMillan and Schumacher 2006:334)

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher used the unstructured questions based on the questions as set out in the appendix and the responses as captured in the observational notes and the transcripts of the interviews to analyse the data by clustering and grouping them according to the responses of the participants under every question as formulated in the unstructured questions. The common themes emerged from the responses of the interviews and those transcripts of the observations were then grouped together and analysed as responses.

In certain instances the participants were quoted verbatim to emphasize the point made. (Schlebusch and Thobedi 2005:312) as attached in Annexure B.

Creswell (1998) in Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 150) describes data analysis as a spiral that is, in view, equally applicable to a wide variety of qualitative studies. In using this view, the researcher went through the data several times and followed the following steps:

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

Above all, the researcher must make a concerted effort to look for evidence that contradicts his or her hypothesis (Leedy and Ormrod 2005: 150).

Data were analysed empirically. Keys were allocated to common statements and clustered under various themes as they emerged and have been presented in Chapter 4. The unstructured questions form the basis of the data analysis and at times the participants were quoted verbatim to clarify the point they were making and to give substance to the findings (Adeyemi 2008: 70).

a) Validity and reliability of the study

'The validity of a measurement instrument is the extent to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure' (Leedy and Ormrod 2005: 28) Validity refers to the accuracy references which are made based upon the outcome measures.

When a qualitative researcher refers to validity, they imply that the research is plausible, credible, trustworthy and defensible. The researcher is aware of any bias (Rodolo 2008: 21).

'Reliability is a necessary but insufficient condition for validity' (Leedy and Ormrod 2005: 29). Reliability refers to the consistency of the outcome measures. A reliable measure has to yield the same outcome if tested more than once. In qualitative studies the researcher is concerned with the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data (Rodolo 2008: 21).

Validity of this instrument used was tested by giving it to two educators prior to conducting the interviews. After the interviews the participants were given feedback to make sure that the researcher captured their experiences correctly.

3.10 **CONCLUSION**

This chapter describes the rationale for the choice of a qualitative approach for the study of the teaching of reading in English as a foreign language in selected schools in the Moretele District. It also describes the methods used to obtain the data, that is, observations, unstructured interviews and focus group interviews. An explanation of the design of the study included the selection of participants, the problems encountered in the field, and the data analysis procedures. In the next chapter the data generated will be analysed.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research findings derived from the observations and interviews conducted with the educators as defined in Chapter Three. The findings are qualitatively presented in line with the objectives of the study.

The results of the empirical investigation are presented and discussed in two interrelated sections i.e. observations and interviews, and data analysis of the three schools.

The chapter commences with a description of the schools which participated by briefly describing the organogram of the North West Department of Education and giving a brief report on the schools' conditions, location, the culture of teaching and learning, the availability of the resources and the professionalism of the educators.

The chapter also presents a detailed analysis of the observations and the interviews as conducted in the participating schools.

4.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS THAT PARTICIPATED

The North West Department of Education's organogram is structured as follows:

The Provincial Department of Education based in Mafikeng. It includes four Regions: Ruth Mompati, Dr Kenneth Kaunda, Ngaka Modiri Molema and Bojanala. The Regions are divided into Area Project Offices (APO's) and the APO's are further divided into clusters headed by Institutional Support Coordinators (ISC).

The three schools in this project are found in the Moretele Local Municipality in the Moretele APO.

Moretele APO falls under the Bojanala Region located in Rustenburg about 200 km from Moretele. Moretele is a deep rural area located on the borders of Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Province.

A brief detailed description of the schools that participated in the project is as follows:

4.2.1 School A

4.2.1.1 Location

School A is situated in the North West Province in the Moretele Local Municipality, 70km north of Pretoria. The school has an enrolment of ± 200 learners and eight educators, one principal, one Head of Department (HOD). The medium of instruction is Setswana for Grade R – Grade 3. Learners switch to English as medium of instruction from Grade 4.

4.2.1.1.2 The culture of teaching and learning

The school's teaching and learning culture is sound; teachers go to school and attend to their classes. The school commences at 7:45 with morning devotions at assembly. The learners sing hymns and the educator in charge reads the message from the Bible after which a prayer and the National Anthem are sung before they disperse to their respective classes. The school day ends at 13:00 for the Foundation Phase and at 14:00 for the Intermediate Phase while educators leave at 15:00 daily.

4.2.1.1.3 Availability of resources

Inside the classrooms there are no bulletin boards and thus no pictures or sentences for accidental reading. Accidental reading occurs when learners unconsciously read words that they see frequently without conscious effort.

There are no resources in the classrooms, except the chalkboard and the chalk, e.g. there appeared to be no reading books or library corners in these classrooms. These learners used old plank desks as furniture. As such educators are unable to plan for cooperative learning groups. This prevents learners from being actively engaged with their own learning as required by the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

4.2.1.1.4 Professionalism of educators

Of the ten educators, only the principal has postgraduate qualifications and is continuing with his studies. The relationship between the senior educators and the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB) is characterised by tension.

One educator remarked: *'She (the Principal) thinks she owns the school and controls everything and she even goes to the extent of locking out the educators and the learners when they are late in the morning.'*

This poor working relationship compromises the culture of teaching and learning at the school. Educators and union members frequent the school to endeavour to ease the tension between the principal and the educators.

4.2.2 School B

4.2.2.1 Location

School B is situated in the North West Province in Moretele Local Municipality, 65 km north of Pretoria. The school has an enrolment of ±400 learners and 14 educators, one principal and no deputy principal because of the low enrolment and the two HoD's.

The principal and the HoD's and about a quarter of the educators have postgraduate qualifications and are pursuing their private studies part-time.

4.2.2.2 The culture of teaching and learning

The school commences at 7:45 with the morning devotions at assembly. The local priest has volunteered to conduct morning devotions on Mondays and Fridays. The culture of teaching and learning is sound and the working relationship among educators among the educators, the management and the community at large is harmonious.

Parents volunteer to do menial jobs including assisting with the administration. The school has neither a general worker nor an administrative assistant. Consequently, the volunteer help has been offered by the community: three young ladies and a gentleman assist in the administration and the cleaning of the school. Each volunteer gets a monthly stipend.

4.2.2.3 Availability of resources

The school does not appear to have teaching and learning aids. The school has neither a library nor library corners in the classrooms. The school books supplied by the department are still neatly packed in boxes in the computer laboratory. The latter is not used, apparently because there is no educator qualified to teach computer science in the school.

4.2.2.4 Professionalism of educator

The educator's morale at the school is very low. Most of the teaching staff members are young and active and are furthering their studies at the universities.

The school has educators who are very active in extracurricular activities as witnessed by the number of trophies in the office of the principal.

4.2.3 School C

4.2.3.1 Location

School C is situated in the North West Province in the Moretele Local Municipality, 50 km north of Pretoria. The school has an enrolment of ± 700 learners and there are 23 educators in all. This school is managed by the school principal, the deputy principal and the three HoD's.

4.2.3.2 The culture of teaching and learning

The culture of teaching and learning is very positive; however, the classes are overcrowded due to a shortage of classrooms. According to the Department of Education's Post Provisioning Model (PPM), the learner-educator ratio in primary schools should be 1:40. An example of this overcrowding can be seen in Grade 4 classroom which has over 60 learners. One Grade 3 class attends school in the neighbouring church hall. The school has neither a general worker nor an administrator and is dependent on two volunteers from the local community.

The school buildings are neatly kept and the surroundings are clean. The school commences at 7:45 with morning devotions at assembly which run for 15 minutes with the singing of hymns, reading of the Bible and the National Anthem.

Teaching in the first hour of the morning is very noisy with every learner engaged in reading aloud. This is in accordance with the Foundations for Learning Campaign as prescribed by the Department of Education to help address the reading problems experienced by South African learners.

4.2.3.3 Availability of resources

The school has a make-shift library at the back of the school. The library is cramped and can only accommodate 20 learners per session. The classrooms bulletin boards are colourful and provide the learners with opportunities for incidental reading.

The computer laboratory has 54 computers placed in such a way that the accommodation for the learners is impossible. The school has no qualified educator to teach computer and as such these computers are mostly used by community members to type letters, curriculum vitae and assignments.

4.2.3.4 Professionalism of educators

Most educators are also postgraduate students and are studying independently. Four educators are under-qualified and are improving their qualifications. The principal of this school is a firm believer in self-empowerment through education.

One educator remarked: *“The principal motivates the educators to improve their qualifications at the school.”*

The analysis of the observation and interviews at the three schools will be discussed based on the questions posed to the participants. The participants were asked probing questions to seek clarity on certain issues. In some instances participants will be quoted verbatim to clarify their perspectives.

The researcher visited the schools for two terms to familiarize himself with the conditions in the schools. This assisted in making both the learners and the educators feel comfortable with the presence of the researcher.

In gathering data, the researcher made sure that the participants were recorded on audio tape and verbatim language was used to validate the data; low interferences were taken into cognizance during the process (McMillan and Schumacher 2006:324).

The researcher considered the study to be reliable and valid because indeed the learners did not know how to read and the educators did not know the effective new methods of teaching reading in FAL.

4.3 RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS

Question 1: *How would you rate the reading proficiency of your Grade 4 FAL learners?*

The participants remarked that most of the learners could not read at all. The respondents said they did not understand the learners' reading inabilities. They alleged that these learners were taught by experienced educators who have always taught learners to read in the past, and apportioned the blame to the new curriculum.

An educator from school A remarked: *'The learners are lazy. I once gave them a comprehension test that I taught in the class as homework and they failed it'*. The educator remarked that he had made the memorandum available at the back of the passage by mistake and the most learners did not even detect it.

An educator from school B remarked that the majority of the learners were not serious about their schoolwork. He complained about the behaviour of the boys in particular. *'Boys in this school are too playful. When you give them work to do, they choose to play with each other'*.

The educator in this school labeled the boys as trouble-makers who did not take their learning seriously and could not read. When he gave them homework, none of them could do it.

The educator in school C felt that she was in control and her learners reading was improving day-by-day. She indicated that the parents personally thanked her for teaching their children how to read. She even remarked: *'I have all sorts of praises, presents and letters from the parents thanking me for teaching their learners how to read.'*

The educator said she grouped the learners according to ability. Group B learners would be promoted to Group A if they proved that they could read the articles from local newspapers and magazines allocated to them every week. They also had to show that they practised reading at home with the assistance of their siblings, peers and parents.

Question 2: *Which methods do you often employ in teaching reading and why?*

The most common method used by all the educators in teaching reading is reading aloud. An educator in School A indicated that he reads aloud to learners three times before he requests the able readers to read. The less able readers are requested to be attentive and point at each word read to make sure that they follow.

A School B educator pointed out that he prefers to give an explanation of the text to the learners in their home language. The practice was taught to him in a workshop conducted by Molteno. Molteno is the international institute for language learning and literacy. In addition, the educator felt that in the workshop educators had been instructed by the facilitator to request learners to point at the words that they were reading as well as when other learners were reading.

This practice was emphasised to make sure that learners focused on the text that they were reading.

In school B it became evident that the educators were still yearning for the use of corporal punishment. *'The stick is the only thing that worked for us in the past'*. The educator lamented that poor discipline in this school, especially among the boys, was due to the lack of corporal punishment prohibited in South African schools.

Despite this practice, the researcher observed that the learners paid little attention to the words which were read. The learners read well in groups, but were unable to read when requested to do so as individuals.

In school C, the reading was relatively better with the majority of the learners aspiring to graduate from group B to group A as alluded to earlier by the teacher.

Question 3: *Do you think that your current methods of teaching reading are successful?*

'I don't think they are successful because if they were successful all my learners would be reading well'. The educator in School A indicated that the majority of his class could not read at all and that they were lazy as he has indicated earlier.

The School B an educator indicated that his methods are only partially successful because most of the boys in his class could not read. *'They just cannot read at all'* and he attributed this again to their playfulness.

The School C an educator remarked that though her methods were successful, some learners still could not read.

She maintained that the spirit of competition amongst her groups of readers helped to motivate her learners to do well in reading. She also prided herself in the fact that since introducing these groups, she had attracted an increased enrollment in her school.

According to her, learners are also motivated by the award-giving ceremony where certificates of merit are given to learners who did well during the course of the year.

Question 4: *How would you compare your FAL learners' reading to their home language reading?*

All the three educators felt that their learners struggled equally in reading in both languages. However, the School C an educator felt that the language issue was not a problem to her. Most of her learners speak different languages at their homes and the majority of the learners are refugees from neighbouring countries: *'In our school we have learners from Mozambique and Zimbabwe.'* She further indicated that she did not use code-switching in her classroom. She also encouraged her learners to communicate with her and their peers in FAL.

The educator indicated that most of her learners read far better in FAL than in their home language, Setswana, which is the first language of the majority of the learners.

Question 5: *In what ways do you provide your FAL learners with opportunities to improve their reading skills?*

School A educator remarked: *'Fortunately I am a sport fanatic and read a lot of sports magazines and newspapers'.*

He indicated that he provided his learners with sports magazines and encouraged them to read. He also indicated that his love for sports had encouraged most of his learners to develop some liking for sports.

The educator from School B indicated that he never gave learners extra books to read. *'It is just a waste of time because they are not going to read them anyway'.*

School C educator said she preferred articles from local daily newspapers because the articles appealed to the learners' interests. According to her, learners could directly relate to the incidents in the articles.

Question 6: *How often do you encourage your learners to read material for leisure?*

As mentioned, School A educator indicated that he provided his learners with sports magazines and newspapers; some of his learners have developed the habit of reading about sports. *"They come to me to request sports magazines to read during their spare time".*

The educator indicated that the learners enjoyed discussing current sport events with him especially soccer. Soccer is played by both boys and girls in his school.

School B educator indicated that he never encouraged his learners to read for leisure and he intended to start immediately after the interview with the researcher.

School C educator remarked that her learners brought magazines to school. They then told the class about an article that they had enjoyed in front of the classroom.

Extra classes for struggling learner readers are conducted by a volunteer facilitator from the local church on Saturdays.

Question 7: *How can educators improve on teaching reading in their classrooms?*

All the educators felt it was the duty of every educator to teach reading in the classroom. They felt that educators who taught content subjects code-switched frequently in their teaching and that this practice should be stopped.

The educator in School C believes that learners in the lower classes should be taught phonics and the letters of the alphabet. She also felt that educators in lower classes were not doing enough when it comes to teaching reading.

Question 8: *What is your opinion as regards the “Foundations for learning campaign”?*

The educator from School A had heard about this endeavour but did not know really what it entailed. School B educator remarked: *‘I have never heard of it.’* School C was the only school where the *Foundations for Learning Campaign* was integrated into the school activity plan (i.e. timetable).

Everyday all educators supervise reading in classes for the first thirty minutes of the day (the first period). During this time all learners engage in either reading aloud or choral reading in classes. The educator indicated that this practice was started at the beginning of 2008. As a result the learners’ reading has improved tremendously and she would encourage other schools to embark on the project to improve learners’ reading.

Question 9: *Do you receive enough support regarding teaching reading from the following stakeholders?*

1. *The Department of Education*
2. *The HoD*
3. *Subject Advisors or Senior Education Specialist(SES)*
4. *Parents*

All the educators felt they were not receiving enough support from the Department of Education. They had neither attended workshops nor any in-service training on teaching reading in their schools. One educator remarked: *“The Department should be offering us bursaries to improve our qualifications since they do not offer any incentives for improving one’s qualifications at own expense.”*

School A and School B educators remarked that they seldom held meetings in their departments and their HoD’s were reluctant to organise workshops. School C educator remarked that they held monthly meetings and the HoD’s arranged school-based workshops.

All school educators indicated that there was no engagement with subject advisors in FAL. They indicated that the only time they saw subject advisors is when they submitted their CASS moderations at the end of the term.

Educators in School A and B indicated that parents had little interest in their children’s education. *“When we invite them to school, they refuse to come,”* remarked one educator. School C on the other hand is in constant engagement with the parents. The parents take an active part in the day-to-day running of the school including volunteering as cleaners.

Question 10: *Have you ever attended a workshop or in-service training in the last three years and who conducted it?*

All the educators indicated that they had attended workshops conducted by textbook publishers. The Department did not conduct any workshops since there were no subject advisors to present workshops for educators.

4.4 **DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

The discussion of the results of the research is divided into categories: observation and interviews results which are discussed and correlated with the literature reviewed in Chapter two.

According to the report by DoE in National Reading Strategy (NRS), educators in most South African schools have an underdeveloped understanding of how to teach reading. Educators know only one approach of teaching reading, that is reading aloud (DoE 2008).

This report postulates that educators misunderstand the role they must play in NCS. Most educators believe that they do not have to teach reading, but to facilitate a process whereby learners teach themselves to read (DoE 2008).

In this study, the researcher observed that educators encountered many challenges in their workplace. The study was conducted during the first and the second quarter of the school year. During this period schools are engaged in athletics and music competitions. The two events are usually not well planned in the school calendar and often disrupt normal teaching in schools, because practice sessions are conducted during teaching time. The researcher also observed that educators tend miss school to attend union activities and memorial services.

Workshops and political meetings are also conducted during working hours at the cost of teaching time.

4.5 **OBSERVATIONAL EMPIRICAL RESULTS**

As alluded to by Pretorius and Mampuru (2007), Makoe (2007) and Matjila and Pretorius (2004), South African schools especially the black rural African schools are seriously under-resourced. According to the study conducted by Pretorius and Mampuru (2007), only 27% of the schools in South Africa have school libraries. These schools are seriously challenged in terms of material and human resources. The under-resourced schools find it very difficult to operate optimally in NCS. Schools without enough books, computers, photocopiers or learner teacher support material (LTSM) are unable to create conducive environments for effective teaching and learning. In NCS educators who are not computer literate find it difficult to cope with administrative work required on a daily basis. Of the schools visited with the exception of School C, the educators did not appear computer literate and were overwhelmed by the onerous administrative tasks they have to perform.

The schools were built by communities and are characterised by poor infrastructure and decrepit buildings without administration blocks. Most educators who teach in these schools tend to be under-qualified and have a low morale due to the phasing in of the NCS policies DoE (202). The researcher also observed that in the schools participating in the project all educators treated reading lessons as a separate entity from listening, speaking, and writing. In order to deepen and broaden language competences in Basic Education especially at primary level, listening, speaking, reading/viewing and writing skills should be taught together because they complement each other (Cummins 2000). Learner's BICS and CALP skills can be honed and developed with the emphasis on interlinking the skills mentioned above DoE (2002:9).

The four aspects of language cannot be treated as separate entities because they complement each other (see Appendix B). According to the Department of Education's Foundation for Learning Campaign, listening, speaking, and writing are integrated to redress the backlog of readers who fell between the cracks (DoE 2008).

NCS forces educators to develop their own teaching materials and reading programmes. Educators in both Schools A and B struggled with developing these programmes. However, in school C the educator had embarked on these projects with ease and did not rely on a textbook to teach reading. In all three schools, educators preferred only two approaches of teaching reading, i.e. reading aloud and choral reading. However, no single method of teaching reading is suitable for diverse learners with different aptitudes. Different learners need to be taught reading using a variety of teaching methods. Little and Hines (2006:13) suggest that novice learner readers must be exposed to reading aloud to benefit as also emphasised by a Commission on reading in 1985. Other studies emphasise reading a lot as an effective method of teaching reading; reading a lot might be both a means and an end in the process of learning to read (Hinkel 2005:69). Fields, Lois and Spangler (2008:128) are of the opinion that peer tutoring links listening, speaking and writing and as such seems to be the most plausible method of teaching reading to learner readers. The practice of pointing at the words read when proficient readers are reading helps to focus and promote the concentration of learners who do not read well. Learners read aloud in most of their reading periods. Where learners were reading as individuals, others participated by pointing at words read. The practice of pointing at the words while reading helps learners emulate the words read by proficient readers. They hear how words are pronounced and how punctuation signs are observed in reading (School C educator).

This process served to help other learners to concentrate while other educators or other learners were reading (DoE 2008).

The researcher also observed that the three selected schools have no libraries and that the culture of reading was neglected in the two schools. According to Uchikoshi (2006:33), print rich environments have the potential to influence the learner readers to perform above average. Learners who are exposed to a print rich environment tend to be curious and try out the new words displayed. Words accompanied by pictures and concrete items, such as labeled windows, doors, tables and books seem to inspire novice readers to learn how to read. Educators in A and B appear not to know other methods of teaching reading apart from reading aloud.

The educators also implemented choral reading poorly. Choral reading serves to “reassure, entertain, inform, explain, arouse curiosity and inspire learners” (Trelease 2006:137). Reading aloud is analogous to a conversation because learners listen to readers and emulate them (Harvey and Goudvis 2007: 40). Teachers used this method of teaching reading to keep learners busy while they were doing their administrative work, either marking learners’ books or doing lessons preparation. Learners who are not properly supervised tend to be playful and not concentrate during lessons. According to Coelho (2004), learners who are not properly supervised tend to commit errors and pronunciation mistakes while reading. The study conducted by Fields, Lois and Spangler (2008:108) found that unsupervised learners tend to memorise words they do not understand; this is an artificial form of learning and does not contribute to the intellectual development of learners.

The classrooms in both Schools A and B, with exception of School C, had ‘print-poor environments’.

These educators neither improvised teaching aids nor did they try to make classrooms colourful to inspire learners' accidental reading. According to Wagner, Andrea, and Kante (2007), learners enter school with differences in vocabulary and print 'rich classrooms' facilitate vocabulary building. Socio-economic status (SES) and other risk factors disadvantage learners if they are not exposed to an educative environment. Classrooms should be unique, busy, predictable social environments, which encourage reading (Makoe 2007: 56).

Apart from these poor-print environments learners were also exposed to a lot of code-switching. According to Allecio et al (2004: 37), Setati (2005: 6) and the DoE (2002: 5), code-switching is meant for the following: to emphasise a point, because a word may not be known in one language; to quote someone verbatim; or to deliberately exclude someone from an episode or a conversation. Code-switching, however, has the tendency of causing learners to express themselves in mother tongue rather than try to explain or answer in FAL.

4.6 **INTERVIEWS**

The responses from the participants revealed that educators needed assistance from the Department of Education. The DoE must visit schools to monitor and assist educators with their teaching. They (DoE) also have a duty to conduct in-service training and workshops to teach educators how reading should be taught. The teaching of reading cannot be left to chance as explained in the Foundations for Learning Campaign (FLC). FLC is geared towards inculcating a culture of reading and numeracy in the primary schools. Learners have to develop a love for reading across the genres on a daily basis (cf. Appendix B).

However, educators who participated did not have knowledge of the strategies introduced by the DoE to assist in resolving the reading problems such as FLC and other intervening strategies.

Principals and HoD's did not assist the educators in planning and preparing for reading programmes. Most of the books supplied by the Department were still in boxes in the storerooms; moreover, schools did not run workshops to assist teachers.

During interviews educators indicated that they did not receive support from the HoDs and the Department Education. Educators in the selected schools need support in teaching reading in FAL. Senior education specialists must assist HoDs in schools to implement the campaigns such as Foundations for Learning. Qids-up, National reading strategy and the quality learning and teaching campaign should be employed to restore and inculcate the love of reading in the learners (DoE 2008).

During interviews educators in the three schools indicated that they also needed retraining in teaching reading. Educators in these schools must be retrained and taught new methods of teaching reading and be taught the principles of NCS. NCS promulgates that educators must teach learners how to read and not expect them to teach themselves to read because learners need to be taught how to read.

The literature reviewed emphasises that learners have different aptitudes and, therefore, should be taught using different methods of teaching reading. According to literature, most South African schools have no libraries and as such learners are not motivated to learn reading skills (Hinkel 2005).

4.7 **CONCLUSION**

This chapter has presented and analysed the data emanating from the observations, interviews and the examined and summarised documents as presented from the research conducted in the three schools participating in the project.

The chapter has made an effort to link empirical data with the literature reviewed in chapter two. The findings and the recommendations of the research will be dealt with in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter entails the summary of problems, procedures, findings of the study and the conclusions based on the findings related to the research questions and the limitations of the study (Adeyemi 2008: 134).

The main research question is: *How effective is the teaching of FAL reading among Grade 4 learners in primary schools in the Moretele Area Project Office?*

This research question has been addressed according to the following sub-questions:

- What FAL reading models exist in South African schools and how are they critiqued?
- What are the teaching conditions in which the educators find themselves?
- How effectively is reading taught in South African schools?
- What recommendations can be made to improve the teaching of reading in South African schools?

The questions were addressed through a literature study and an empirical investigation based on the questions as they appear in appendix B.

5.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The following aspects were explained in Chapter 1: the problem statement, the primary research question, sub-questions, aims and objectives of the research design and the research methods.

A demarcation of the research area, the limitations of the study, key concepts used in the study, the research programme and the motivation and the relevance of the study were also presented.

In Chapter 2 a literature study was conducted on teaching reading, based on the following sub-headings: the relationship between the first and the second language, challenges associated with reading proficiency skills, language instruction programmes, strategies for teaching reading and assessment procedures for teaching reading.

In Chapter 3 the research design was described according to the following headings: research methodology, methods of gathering data, literature reviewed, empirical investigation, sampling, interviews, observations, ethical considerations and data analysis.

Chapter 4 discussed the presentation and analysis of the data. The research was conducted empirically by means of observations and interviews. The literature review contained in Chapter 2 was used as basis for analysing the data from the empirical research. The findings of the empirical research, which were presented according to the themes that emerged, were compared to the findings of the literature, in order to ascertain the differences and similarities.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research focused on the educators' teaching of reading and the conditions in which educators function. The research was limited to three schools in Moretele APO; township and former model C schools were not researched and therefore the research was not inclusive.

Owing to financial constraints the three schools selected were in the same geographical area. The schools may not be representative of the whole community of the Moretele Area Project Office.

The quintile system in South African schools is used to categorise schools according to their financial status. Quintile 1 includes the poorest schools whilst Quintile 5 includes the wealthiest schools. The schools selected ranged between Quintile one and Quintile three in which the poorest school fell. These kinds of schools are mostly found in rural formally disadvantaged areas and are attended by black learners.

5.4 **FINDINGS**

The following were the main findings of the study:

- Schools had no libraries, laboratories or reading books.
- Most educators appeared not to know how to teach reading properly.
- Parents appeared not to be assisting their children with schools work, e.g. homework and checking learners' school books.
- The DoE did not visit schools or conduct workshops or in-service training on teaching reading.
- Educators spent more time doing administrative work and less time teaching; contact time with learners was not ensured.

5.5 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are made with regard to the culture of teaching reading in FAL bearing in mind the attitude of the administrators, educators and the learners:

- Schools need to be resourced with libraries and reading books to function normally.
- The DoE must assume responsibility for conducting workshops and retraining educators on teaching reading in FAL.
- Parents as stakeholders must be involved and be taught to assist children to read at home.
- The DoE must give constant support to the educators and introduce them to the new methods of teaching reading.

- Teaching time should be protected at all times: educators should be at school on time, in class and teaching.

5.6 **FINAL CONCLUSION**

The main aim of the research project was to investigate the teaching of reading in FAL in Grade 4 and the conditions in which the educators found themselves in selected primary schools in the Moretele APO.

The teaching of reading in English as a foreign language in the selected schools was hampered, among others, by learners' early introduction to English as a medium of instruction before they had acquired CALP skills in their L1. The situation was further exacerbated by lack of libraries and overcrowding in the classrooms. The researcher also found that most language teachers are trained as language specialists. They therefore relied on one method of teaching reading which was not effective.

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ANNEXURE A

Annexure A: Consent form

UNISA

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

Title: The teaching of First Additional Language Reading in Grade 4 in selected schools in the Moretele Area Project Office.

Research Question: How are Educators teaching reading and what are the conditions in which they are teaching?

What are the best practices in teaching reading in FAL?

Purpose: This is a research project by Mr.Bob Maswanganye which will be submitted to UNISA in part fulfillment of a Master Degree. The study investigates the teaching of reading in English Second Language Grade 4.

You are hereby requested to participate in the project as a respondent, and will be interviewed by Mr.Bob Maswanganye. Participation is voluntary, and your identification is not required, so anonymity is guaranteed. Please also note that the information given during the interview will be treated with the fullest confidentiality and your personal privacy will be respected.

If you agree to participate in this research project, please sign this form, but also note that you can voluntarily withdraw from the project at any time you feel so.

I agree to participate in the project

Signature of participant:

Date:

Witness:

ANNEXURE B

Interview themes for Grade 4 for Educators adapted from Schlebusch and Thobedi (2005: 312- 312).

The themes were modified to suit the topic. The researcher will be probing educators to get clarity from the interviewees.

1. How would you rate the reading proficiency of your Grade 4 FAL learners?
2. Which methods do you often employ when teaching reading?
3. Do you think your current methods of teaching reading are successful?
4. How would you compare your FAL learners reading to their home language reading?
5. In what ways do you provide your FAL learners opportunities to improve their reading skills?
6. How often do you encourage your FAL learners to read FAL material for leisure purposes?
7. How can teachers improve on teaching reading in their FAL classrooms?
8. What is your opinion as regards “Foundations for learning campaign”?
9. What can teachers do to encourage learners to read In FAL?
10. Do you receive enough support regarding teaching from the following:
 - (a) DoE?
 - (b) H.O.D and Principal?
 - (c) Subject Advisors?
11. Have you ever attended an In-Service training workshop in the last three years?
12. Who conducted the workshop?

ANNEXURE C

FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING CAMPAIGN.

TEACHING AND LEARNING TIME

1. In terms of Section 4 of the Employment of Educators Act, (1998), the formal school day for teachers is seven hours, plus an additional one and half hours for preparation and marking time per day.
2. The minimum contact time is set out in the following table:

Phase	Grade	Time	
Foundation Phase	R, 1 and 2	22 hrs	30minutes
	3	25 hrs	
Intermediate Phase	4, 5 and 6	26 hrs	30minutes

3. The formal teaching allocation for literacy (Languages) and Numeracy (Mathematics) in the foundation and Intermediate Phases are presented below as actual hours per grade.

Learning Programme	Grade	Time Allocation per day	Total per week
Literacy	R, 1 and 2	1 hour 50 minutes	9 hours 10 minutes
	3	2 hours	10 hours
Numeracy	R, 1 and 2	1 hour 30 minutes	7 hours 30 minutes
	3	1 hour 45 minutes	8 hours 45 minutes
Languages	4, 5 and 6	1 hour 30 minutes	7 hour 30 minutes
Mathematics	4, 5 and 6	1 hour	5 hours

FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING CAMPAIGN
 DAILY TEACHER ACTIVITY DURING LANGUAGES TIME
 GRADE 4 – 6

Literacy Focus Time (60 min)

3 X per week in LOLT/HL

2 X per week in FAL/HL

Language development (30 min)

Learners do writing and listening and speaking in the LOLT each once a week and in FAL each ones a week. The Second Additional Language (SAL) can be introduced in the fifth weekly time slot.

1.	<p>Weekly whole school assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners from one class do a literacy presentation for the school: read part of the interesting book/give a brief review of the book/read part of the text they have written/reside a poem etc. 	10 minutes
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Literacy Focus Time

2.	<p>Shared reading or shared writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the text and new vocabulary. Draw out learners' prior knowledge. Read the text, modeling a reading strategy. e.g. predicting, noticing story structure, reading types of text, reading diagrams and graphs etc. Read the text with the learners joining in, using shared reading technique. Or write a short text using shared writing techniques. Check understanding and encourage learners to respond to the text through focused oral questions. 	15 minutes
3.	<p>Word and sentence level work: Do one of the following</p> <p>Spelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach the new spelling pattern in context (shared text). Provide more examples. Reinforce with directed activity, e.g. making sentences with the words, findings similarities between words. <p>Sight words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show the word in context (shared text) and out of context (flash card, board). Reinforce spelling, meaning and use e.g. writing it in the air using it etc. 	15 minutes

	<p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find the target words in shared text. Revises the meanings. Reinforce e.g. learners make their own oral sentences with the words make up riddles etc. <p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show language item in context (shared text). Reinforce with directed oral activity e.g. making own sentences, substitution table etc. 	
4.	<p>Group, guided and independent reading/writing</p> <p>Learners work individually, in pares or in groups to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a written activity based on the class work, e.g. complete a written comprehension based on the shared text, write in their journals, sentence completion, copying spellings words and vocabulary into their personal dictionaries using words in sentences etc. or Read graded readers and complete a worksheet. <p>Guided reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While this is happening, groups of same ability learners do guided reading with the teacher. They read a text at their developmental level (this can be the shared text or another text). The teacher uses the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised reading skills and strategies already taught (sight words, predication, etc.) Listen for fluency Check reading for meaning by asking a question. 	30 minutes

Language Development

5.	<p>Writing (Three times a week – once in FAL and twice in LoLT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing: learners are given a writing frame, and using a shared text as a model, do their own writing, e.g. a greeting card, set of instructions, letter, informational paragraph, and story etc. One piece of writing is brain stormed, drafted, revised, edited and published over the course of two weeks 	30 minutes X3
6.	<p>Listening and speaking (two times a week- once in FAL and once in LoLT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach 3-7 vocabulary words based on the story Read aloud the story to the class Have learners work with the story: respond to the story/re-tell the story in groups/dramatise the story in groups/ critically discuss the story/write the new vocabulary into their personal dictionaries/debate issues in the story etc. 	30 minutes X2

7.	<p>Reading for enjoyment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone, including the teacher, reads a book of their choice and record the title on a reading record card • In the last ten minutes, learners share their responses to their books with others in pairs, groups or the whole class. 	30 minutes Daily
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RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR LANGUAGE IN GRADE 4-6

For the walls	For each learner	Resources for the teacher
Word wall	Personal dictionary	Vocabulary flashcards as needed.
Side-word chart/list per year	Language text book and language exercise book	Grade-level shared text of different types (as per NCS: informational texts, short stories, poems etc) in the form of big books, text books or readers.
Writing charts/writing frames showing different genre (e.g. dialogs, research report, recipe, book review, letter, instruction, etc.)	Work cards per reading book	Reading vocabulary list for the year.
Reading motivation posters	Bookmarks/reading record cards.	Spelling list for the year. Graded Grade level readers or other texts. Read aloud texts e.g. short novels, newspaper articles, etc. collection of library books including different level fiction and non-fiction books, dictionaries. Publishing dictionary

Additional resource

Teacher's reference books

Educational Magazines

Children's encyclopaedias