

**Exploring how language teachers' employment of Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy
enhances Grade 10 learners' reading skills.**

BY

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**A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Education
(full thesis) in English Language Teaching**

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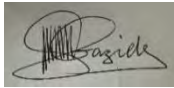
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NOVEMBER 2023

Declaration

I, S. Gazide Student No: 20G3916 hereby declare that the work, *exploring how language teachers' implementation of RtL enhances Grade 10 learners' reading skills*, herewith submitted, is my own work. Wherever I have used the work of other scholars, I have acknowledged them in accordance with Rhodes University reference guidelines. This work has not been submitted to any other institution, in whole or in part, for the awarding of any degree.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sydney Gazide', enclosed within a rectangular border.

Signature:

Sydney Gazide

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my late grandmother, Rosina N'wa Semende Khoza Nyathi, my late father, Amos Mbuso Gazide, my mother, Salome Khoza and my brother, Rodney Reason Gazide

The four people mentioned above carried the most significant commission and became custodians of God's promise upon my life. They stood their ground amid trials and tribulations for my sake. Having them as a reference point through life's journey is a generational blessing. I believe the spirit realms are opened for the departed souls to witness the shining star upon my head.

Acknowledgement

I want to take this opportunity to express my unreserved gratitude to the people who demonstrated their unwavering support during the research project:

- First and foremost, I thank the creator of heaven and earth, the Almighty God, King of Kings, Alpha and Omega. Lord, without you, I could not have come this far. Let your master plan continue to unfold in my life. The sky is the limit.
- My supervisor Dr Rethabile Mawela, thank you for the continued advice, guidance, input, and support on the study. Your unlimited effort always gave direction toward set and well-defined milestones on the research project.
- Professor MaDey' Andile Mbelani; you have been a pillar of strength when everything seemed impossible in this research work. You laid a solid foundation that unlocked the reality of conquering challenges and attaining victory.
- My son Masana Gazide (20), you are a special child with unique gifts and talents. You always sat beside me during awkward night hours while I was working on this project, and I firmly believe you were part of this journey. You gave me every reason to accelerate my speed to finish my study.
- My entire family and friends, you have been there from the beginning of the study until the end, and thank you so much for being attached to the project.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL

Abstract

The study aimed to explore how language teachers' employment of the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy enhances Grade 10 learners' reading skills. The RtL was designed to address challenges regarding learners' literacy development which other methods could not successfully address. Unfortunately, poor reading skills in English First Additional (FAL) and home languages (HLs) continue to be a challenge among learners from schools situated within poor socio-economic communities in South Africa. The study employed the six-stage curriculum cycle advocated by RtL pedagogy as a scaffolding interaction cycle in the teaching practice reading development sequence to bridge the gap in acquiring reading skills. The main research question for the study was: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading? The study was located within the critical education paradigm which encourages critical thinking, creativity, freedom to appreciate and critical awareness in students. This study generated data through focus group discussions, interviews, and document analysis. The research was a case study involving four teachers selected from a secondary school in an informal settlement with low socio-economic standards. A sample of four grade 10 classes with 45 learners in each class for English First Additional Language (FAL), Sesotho Home Language (HL) and Isizulu Home Language (HL) were used in the study. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to choose participants who were willing to be part of the project. The Reading to Learn pedagogy developed by Rose was drawn from Vygotsky's, Bernstein's, and Halliday's theories. The findings revealed that RtL was used for the professional development of teachers and a methodology that supported learners to improve their reading skills. Even though the study was conducted when South Africa was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic with concomitant learning losses, evidence shows that the Reading to Learn pedagogy improved the sampled Grade 10 learners' reading skills. It was also highlighted that the department of education (DoE) should create conducive teaching and learning conditions through infrastructural development and provision of resources.

Keywords: Scaffolding Interaction Cycle, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Zone of Proximal Development, Home Literacy Environment, Early Grade Learning, Coronavirus, COVID-19, RtL pedagogy, Teacher Assistant

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List of Acronyms/Abbreviations

ANA	Annual National Assessments
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EGRS	Early Grade Reading Study
ERP	Event-related potentials
FAL	First Additional Language
FET	Further Education and Training
FP	Foundation Phase
HL	Home languages
HLE	Home literacy environment
ICT	Information and communication technologies
KAL	Knowledge about language
NRS	National Reading Strategy
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PD	Professional development
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
QUILS	Quick Interactive Language Screener
RtL	Reading to Learn
SFL	Systemic functional linguistic
SGB	School Governing Body
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

While most learners in secondary schools have quite good reading skills, many still need to improve with low proficiency levels in reading (Spaull et al., 2020). This research explored how the Reading to Learn (RtL) pedagogy can improve learners' reading skills. As a member of the school management team for a period of 10 years, and the school manager (headmaster) for a period of two years, the researcher discovered that learners in Grade 10 struggle to read. This was evident through analysis of results; most of them are retained because they fail languages, and evaluation strategies reveal that their reading abilities are severely ~~impair~~

The specific school where the research was conducted provides English First Additional Language (FAL) as the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and isiZulu and Sesotho as HLs. The resultant effect of the problem is that acquisition, mastery and learning of all these languages is a challenge for most learners. Gauteng has more migrant learners than the other provinces, covering the 11 official languages. Most learners present a strong background of multilingualism; they are taught through other HLs at the primary school level that are not offered at the secondary at secondary school. They also use their HLs (as heritage speakers) in family and community settings (Kartika- Ningsih & Rose, 2018).

This creates a challenge for them because they need to gain fundamental knowledge of these African HLs at an academic level from primary schooling. Spaull et al. (2020) highlight that the nature of alphabetic knowledge, word reading and oral reading fluency are examined in Grade 3 with African languages to identify decoding concepts. By the end of Grade 3, learners are expected to read accurately and independently at a steady rate or speed with comprehension and enjoyment. Yet, this is not the case with many Grade 3 learners in schools in poor socio-economic

communities (Spaull et al., 2020). Thus, these learners continue schooling with these reading deficiencies until they reach Grade 12. Furthermore, Grade 10 is a transition grade from the Senior Phase to the Further Education and Training phase (FET), where learners choose subject streams for specialisation in preparation for the National Senior Certificate (NSC). At this grade, their competency levels are tested severely, and as a result, many drop out of school. Diagnostic evaluation attributes the dropout rate to poor reading skills. Even though the advent of democracy laid a foundation through which literacy and reading campaigns were established, reports indicate low literacy rates among school goers in South Africa (Department of Basic Education, 2017).

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) reported that the 2011 Annual National Assessments (ANA) results declined since testing in 2008 (DBE, 2011). These are standardized national tests for languages and mathematics in the intermediate phase (Grades 4–6) and the senior phase (Grades 7–9). The purpose of these standardized assessments is to measure learner performance nationally and assist the department with intervention plans to improve learners' literacy and numeracy levels. For instance, while 36% of Grade 3s in 2008 scored below 35% in literacy, 57% of the Grade 6 learners in 2011 scored below 35%. It is important to note that the learners who were doing Grade 3 in 2008 were supposed to be in Grade 6 in 2011. If the instrument applied in 2011 surveyed an important percent of the learners in 2008, one may deduce that scores of language worsened within the cohort (DBE, 2011). Using a scale of achievement that varies from 'not achieved' to 'achieved', the DBE (2011:6) reveals that the percentage of learners reaching at least a 'partially achieved' level of performance varies from 30% to 47%, depending on the grade and subject considered. The percentage of learners reaching the 'achieved' level of performance varies from 12% to 31%. If the skill was not mastered in grade 3 then it means the problem persists as the learners move to the higher grades.

The National Reading Strategy (NRS) was established in February 2008 by the Department of Education (DoE) to promote a nation of lifelong readers and lifelong learners. It became essential to the National Curriculum Statement when the curriculum learning outcomes were designed. It addressed, among other issues, teacher competency, libraries, teaching conditions and language issues. However, systematic evaluations have continued to show that learners in schools situated in poor socio-economic communities perform poorly when tested for their ability to read at age-

appropriate levels. On the other hand, the DoE has engaged in several national and international learner achievement assessments. The results indicated that the learners' literacy levels were so low that they became a cause for great concern. The results of these national and international tests suggest that a large number of South African learners cannot understand what they are reading (Kruizinga & Nathanson, 2010).

Against this background, this research explored how the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhances Grade 10 English FAL and isiZulu and Sesotho HL learners' reading skills. Reading to Learn (RtL) draws from Vygotsky's theory of learning as a social process, Bernstein's education as a pedagogic discourse and Halliday's language as text theories. The next sections present the problem statement, objectives and research questions and finally provides an overview of the whole thesis.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The analysis of term examinations revealed that the Grade 10 learners at the school struggle to read for meaning. This was evidenced by their poor performance in the languages offered at the school, which are English FAL and isiZulu and Sesotho HLs. Diagnostic analysis of these results showed that the comprehension questions have the lowest scores. Also, an analysis of the content subjects revealed that the learners struggled to interpret the questions. This suggested that they do not read with understanding, right across different learning areas. The school is located in a squatter camp which is an informal settlement where most parents are illiterate and unemployed. Because of such conditions, learners do not engage in reading activities at home since their caregivers do not possess reading skills.

Secondly, during our intervention strategic meetings at the school, the language teachers expressed frustration over how to assist these learners. They felt helpless because they did not know how to help these learners since they were not trained as Foundation Phase teachers. The National Reading Strategy (DBE, 2008) reported that many teachers in South Africa have an underdeveloped understanding of teaching literacy, reading and writing. It is likely that this report also reflects the pedagogical capacity of the teachers at this school.

Van der Berg et al. (2022) looked at the percentages of Grades 3s and 6s that passed the language test at the lowest possible level (scored at least 30% on the test). At Grade 3, the percentage passing at this low level dropped from 68% (2019) to 59% (2021), and at Grade 6 dropped from 85% (2019) to 76% (2021), with the most significant declines for the poorest learners. The declines were also more significant at the Grade 6 level than at the Grade 3 level. If it was supposed that South Africa experienced learning losses equivalent to the Western Cape, it is estimated that the percentage of Grade 4 learners who could not read for meaning in PIRLS would increase from 78% in 2016 to 82% (if Grade 3 losses are the proxy) or 85% (if Grade 6 losses are the proxy). There is reason to believe that the national learning losses may be even more significant than those in the Western Cape since many studies have found that no-fee schools (Quintiles 1–3) experienced more significant learning losses than fee-charging schools. The Western Cape has the lowest proportion of no-fee schools in the country.

These discussions made the researcher realise that there was a need to find ways to help the learners. It also became clear that as head of the school, the researcher needed to find ways of capacitating the team of language teachers so that they could stop feeling helpless when such cases arose. The RtL pedagogy is such a tool that may empower them to deal with this reading for meaning challenge in Grade 10 classrooms.

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

The general aim of the study was to find out if the RtL pedagogy could improve learners' reading abilities. The specific objectives of the study were stipulated as follows:

- a. To explore how language teachers' employment of RtL pedagogy enhances their ability to teach reading.
- b. To propose necessary alternative interventions to enhance learners' reading skills.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was framed by the following questions:

- a. How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading?
- b. In what way can the RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

This was an investigation of how teachers' implementation of the RtL pedagogy enhanced the teaching of reading and was measured using the six stages of the interaction cycle to support learners with their reading and writing activities.

1.5 An Overview of the Thesis

Chapter 1: This chapter focused on the study's introduction, the problem statement, and the research aims and objectives.

Chapter 2: This chapter focuses on the literature review of different recent research on the RtL pedagogy. The researcher provides an in-depth discussion of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks in which the study was located. It is followed by an intense debate on how the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle are suitable for the needs of a democratic classroom. The fusion of Bernstein, Vygotsky and Halliday's theories was used in the study as they inform the RtL pedagogy.

Chapter 3: This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology selected for the study and the rationale for all the strategies used. The chapter starts by outlining the research aim, questions and objectives. The critical paradigm is discussed as the research design and classroom action research methodology was used in the study. The sampling techniques and data-generating tools are also outlined in detail.

Chapter 4: This is an analysis chapter where the researcher presents all the study findings. The study used three data-generating tools which were focus group discussions, interviews and document analysis. All the data collected was analysed as it was generated. The presentation of the data is in response to the research goal and research questions.

Chapter 5: This chapter provides a summary of findings from the data analysis chapter (Four). Most importantly, the summary of these findings reflects on the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle of the RtL pedagogy that the Grade 10 language teachers used as a methodology to teach reading skills.

1.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter gave the background of the study, linking it to the RtL pedagogy used to improve the sampled Grade 10 learners' reading skills. Through the problem statement, the researcher highlighted some challenges attributed to the reading impasse at the identified research site. As a starting point, the research aim, objectives and questions were also outlined in this chapter. These assisted the researcher in constantly aligning new information with the research project's purpose until the closing steps in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the studies that different researchers conducted in relation to the RtL pedagogy. It begins with current literature about reading challenges, specifically focusing on South Africa's reading crisis. Then, it discusses the theories that inform the RtL pedagogy. An intensive discussion of the scaffolding interaction cycle of RtL follows. It also focuses on the theoretical framework adopted in the study, the RtL pedagogy as a developmental programme for teachers, and the methodology to teach learners reading skills at the school where the study was conducted. Learners' performance is very poor in all languages because they struggle with reading. The resultant effect of the problem is that acquisition, mastery and learning of all these languages is a challenge for most learners. Gauteng has more migrant learners than the other provinces, covering the 11 official languages. Most learners present a strong background of multilingualism; they were taught through other HLs at the primary school level that are not offered at the secondary school level. They also use their HLs as heritage speakers in their families and during informal community activities.

2.2 South Africa's Reading Crisis

Reading is a skill or activity of getting information from a written text. It is a complex process of decoding symbols to derive meaning. The ability to read and write gives learners access to information and the ability to explore subjects in detail and gain a deeper understanding of the world. One of the goals of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is for every global citizen to be literate by the year 2030.

Another aspect identified as key to achieving this goal is to build inclusive societies through inclusive early childhood education, which will help identify and address special needs early through integrated services such as inclusive curricula that support children's socio-emotional development and identity formation. Educators will be given the knowledge and support to

implement inclusive practices and work with families from all backgrounds. In a study in Chile, an analysis of Grade 4 learners showed that those who had attended a public early childhood education programme, before kindergarten, scored higher in reading than children who had not, with effects higher for poorer children (Cortázar, 2015).

In Karnataka, India, 40% of the considerable gain in cognitive development was attributed to a preschool scholarship that persisted to the end of Grade 1 (Dean & Jayachandran, 2020). In Indonesia, an early childhood education intervention in about 3 000 or 4% of villages in the country reduced gaps in language, cognitive development, communication, general knowledge and pro-social behaviour between poorer and wealthier children (Jung & Hasan, 2016). An early childhood education programme in Kenya involving teacher training, classroom instructional support, teaching and learning materials significantly improved school readiness (Ngware et al., 2022). The findings above reflect that early childhood development forms a strong foundation for good literacy skills. In line with this goal, the government of South Africa provides free education for every learner from the Foundation Phase to Grade 12 (UNESCO, 2018).

Regrettably, the literacy crisis in South Africa runs along the lines of social classes. Analysis of literacy scores in the country shows two sets of learners. The first set comprises 20–25% of learners with excellent literacy skills. These learners come from economically comfortable homes and thus live-in affluent communities. The second set comprises 75–80% of learners with below-standard literacy skills. These learners come from poor socio-economic backgrounds and live-in disadvantaged communities (Spaull, 2013).

Many South African learners need to be proficient readers of texts in a range of genres at the expected levels, either in the middle years of primary school or at the end of secondary school. The outcomes of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2006 and the ANA from 2011 to 2016 showed that three-quarters of South African learners could not reach the lowest international benchmark. The performance across all 11 languages was below the international mean. Learners tested in all African languages achieved shallow scores, with 86% to 96% of them not reaching the lowest benchmark compared to half of the learners writing in English and Afrikaans (Howie et al., 2008).

The PIRLS results also showed that Grade 4 learners in South Africa perform very poorly in reading comprehension even when reading in their African HLs (Howie et al., 2006, 2012, 2017; Spaul & Pretorius, 2019). The latest round in 2021 reflected a positive 94%, close to the universal basic literacy in 4th grade. In 2016, the PIRLS results showed that 78% of South African learners had yet to learn to read for meaning in any language by Grade 4 (Howie et al., 2017), suggesting unsuccessful reading trajectories. Yet, it is necessary to know which components of the reading processes children struggle with. While the PIRLS results provide information about reading comprehension and signal challenges within the education system regarding comprehension, they do not tell us why South African children struggle with reading comprehension. The 78% of learners who could not read for meaning also raises questions about developing early decoding skills and how these enable comprehension, particularly in the African languages.

Pre-PIRLS (2011) showed that Grade 4 learners from rural areas and townships were two to two and a half years behind urban children in reading. This has been attributed to the different public-school systems in South Africa – the smaller and larger systems that split learners by wealth, socio-economic status, geographic location and language. It is further assumed that the minor system accommodates the wealthiest 20–25% of learners who achieve the higher scores, while the larger system caters to the poorest 75–80% of learners (Spaul, 2013).

A comparison between the 2008 Grade 3 results and the 2011 Grade 6 results suggests a worsening performance in the learners' reading comprehension. For instance, while 36% of Grade 3s in 2008 scored below 35% in literacy, 57% of the Grade 6 learners in 2011 scored below 35%. Notably, the learners who were doing Grade 3 in 2008 were supposed to be in Grade 6 in 2011. If the instrument applied in 2011 surveyed a critical per cent of the learners in 2008, one may hypothesize that scores of languages worsened within the cohort (DBE, 2011). Using a scale of achievement that varies from “not achieved” to “achieved”, the DBE (2011, p. 6) reveals that the percentage of learners reaching at least a “partially achieved” level of performance varied from 30% to 47%, depending on the grade and subject considered. The percentage of learners reaching the “achieved” level of performance varied from 12% to 31%. This suggests that if the reading skill is not mastered by the end of Grade 3, the challenge worsens as the learner moves to higher grades.

Independent researchers have also carried out numerous studies and they concur that learners need to read at the level expected of them in a specific grade. For example, Horne (2002) found that many Grade 12 learners who struggle to read or write possess the literacy levels of Grade 4 pupils. The problem escalates to the height of annually reported statistics for the NSC examination in Grade 12. Out of 100 learners who start school, only 50 will make it to Grade 12, 40 will pass, and only 12 will qualify for university. Those 18–24-year-olds who do not acquire some forms of post-secondary education are at a distinct economic disadvantage and not only struggle to find full-time employment but also have one of the highest probabilities of being unemployed for sustained periods if not permanently (Spaull, 2013).

While the importance of language proficiency is acknowledged, Baatjies (2003) argues that it is incorrectly assumed that learners acquire basic literacy by the end of Grades 3 and 4 and problems experienced by learners in later grades are regarded as a “language problem” not as a “reading problem”. However, Matjila and Pretorius (2004) found things differently; in their study, they gave two reading tests to Grade 8 learners: one in Setswana, which was the learners’ primary language and the other in English, which was the language of teaching and learning. One of their findings was that the learners read more slowly in Setswana than in English, suggesting that learners cannot practice their reading skills because of inadequate exposure to books. The problem of the learners’ poor reading skills in primary schools is usually carried over into secondary schools and, inadvertently, higher education institutions (Howie et al., 2006). There has not been enough research on African languages spoken in South Africa with their syllabic and transparent orthography as opposed to English being partially analytic with an opaque orthography (Pretorius, 2018). Currently, educational judgements are passed based on intuitions and anecdotal experience that teachers are poorly trained on teaching reading (Taylor & Taylor, 2013) and do little reading themselves (Pretorius & Knoetze, 2012).

Howie (2003) reports several factors specifically related to learners’ poor performance in South African classrooms in Mathematics specifically, but also in general. These factors include inadequate subject knowledge of teachers, inadequate communication ability between learners and teachers in the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT), lack of instructional materials, difficulties for teachers to manage classroom activities effectively, pressure to complete

examination driven syllabi, heavy teaching loads, overcrowded classrooms, poor communication between policy makers and practitioners and lack of support due to shortage of professional staff in the ministry of education.

The last nationally representative survey that tested South African children's reading abilities was the 2021 round of the PIRLS which indicated that 81% of grade 4 learners could not read for meaning in any language. The 2016 round of PIRLS showed that 78% of Grade 4 learners in South Africa could not read for meaning in any language (all 11 official languages were assessed), i.e., they could not reach the Low International Benchmark because they were unable to "locate and retrieve explicitly stated information or make straightforward inferences about events and

reasons for actions” (PIRLS, 2016, p. 53). Although there have been no nationally representative surveys of reading achievement since the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been several studies measuring learning losses in smaller samples of no-fee schools in some provinces and one province-wide assessment – the Grade 3 and Grade 6 Systemic Evaluations in the Western Cape. That assessment tested all Grade 3 and Grade 6 children in the Western Cape in 2021 in language and mathematics.

In her background note for the Reading Panel, Dr. Gabrielle Wills reports on the findings of the ‘COVID Generation’ research project summarising the impact of the pandemic on education from extensive studies in Mpumalanga, the Northwest, the Eastern Cape, and the Western Cape. She reports that learning losses for children in the early grades ranged from 50% to 120% of a year’s worth of learning. Put differently, the average 10-year-old in 2022 had worse reading outcomes than the average nine-year-old from 2019 (Wills et al. 2022).

2.3 Early Grade Reading in South Africa

South Africa today is fortunate to have a large and reliable empirical research base on reading outcomes that did not exist 12 years ago. In December 2022, Oxford University Press published two edited volumes, one on Early Grade Reading in South Africa (Spaull & Pretorius, 2022) and

one on Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Interventions in South Africa (Spaull & Taylor, 2022). Over 50 South African authors contributed to the chapters in these volumes, summarizing what is now known about reading outcomes, teacher practices, available resources and interventions that have led to improvements in reading outcomes and those that have not.

Perhaps the single most significant advance in reading research over the last decade has been the large-scale and systematic collection of data on early reading outcomes in African languages, testing not only the end point of reading (comprehension) but also the necessary components of learning to read – letter-sound knowledge, decoding, oral reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, etc.(Spaull & Pretorius, 2022). These datasets cover more than 40 000 learners and reveal the empirical regularities that should guide our thinking on Early Grade Reading in South Africa. For example, the Department of Basic Education’s pioneering Early Grade Reading Study (EGRS) in the Northwest followed children from over 200 schools for over seven years. This long-term longitudinal data is incredibly useful when trying to understand to what extent later comprehension failures (in Grade 7, for example) are predicted by earlier decoding losses (in Grades 1 and 2). By following the same children overtime and testing them on comparable tests, we now have a much better understanding of where the wheels came off.

South Africa has participated in PIRLS four times (2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021). The latest results of the PIRLS survey that was conducted in 2021 have been released, and the findings indicated that 81% of Grade 4 learners could not read for meaning in any language, up from 78% in 2016. Only 19% of South African Grade 4 children could read for meaning in any language in 2021. Between 2006 and 2016, the percentage of children who could not read declined from 87% (2006) to 82% (2011) to 78% (2016), then 81% (2021), wiping out a decade of slow progress. Northern rural provinces experienced the most significant declines in reading, with coastal provinces experiencing the most minor decreases. English and Afrikaans schools did not experience a decline between 2016 and 2021. In comparison, most African language schools declined, highlighting that the pandemic increased inequality between no-fee and fee-charging schools.

2.4 Interventions in South Africa

Over the period 2010–2022, there have been many government-led and NGO-led interventions to improve reading outcomes in the early grades. Some of these have been evaluated, and some were designed to measure whether there were causal improvements in reading outcomes. To summarize what is known about reading interventions in South Africa, 36 researchers contributed to writing 16 chapters on 14 different interventions over this period, including how they were designed and implemented, whether they were evaluated, and what we have learnt from them. All 14 interventions were scored on four dimensions: (1) Programme dosage, (2) Cost and implementation scale, (3) Government buy-in, and (4) Evaluation method and evidence. There were two types of interventions: (1) Small-scale, well-resourced, well-evaluated interventions with evidence of impact, and (2) Large-scale, train-the-trainer approaches that work within existing constraints but lack evidence of improving reading outcomes. Train-the-trainer approaches typically train subject advisers who are then expected to train teachers. The main problem with this approach is that it relies on subject advisers as the “implementing trainer” of teachers, apart from the fact that subject advisers typically have inadequate knowledge of how to teach reading themselves – typically scoring 50% on tests measuring this (Chetty et al., 2022).

There are also simply too few of them to realistically train the teachers they are responsible for. By using data on the number of Foundation Phase (FP) subject advisers and teachers per province, it is possible to estimate the ratio of FP teachers to FP subject advisers. In four provinces (Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal), the average FP subject adviser is responsible for more than 500 FP teachers. In KwaZulu-Natal, the average FP subject adviser is responsible for more than 1 500 teachers. These ratios make meaningful training and support impossible. In contrast, the heavy-dose interventions that have shown improvements in reading outcomes (EGRS and Funda Wande) have a balance of one coach to approximately 33 teachers.

2.5 Advocating Reading to Learn

Reading to Learn (RtL) is a pedagogy that supports learners to read with comprehension and engagement and then to use what they have learnt from reading to write coherent texts. It is also a professional learning programme designed to provide teachers with skills in the methodology and associated knowledge about pedagogy and language. It is a set of resources for teachers to meet

the needs of the learners. The professional learning programme includes an assessment to track students' literacy growth as teachers develop their skills. In this respect, it evaluates language learning and teaching tasks (Rose, 2017; Rose & Martin, 2012, 2013).

2.6 Knowledge About Language

The RtL is more than a classroom methodology; it is also a professional learning programme that gives teachers the knowledge about pedagogy and language to apply the methodology confidently (Rose, 2018). Secondary school teachers usually get trained in their curriculum fields, but only some have comparable knowledge of the language of their subjects. The RtL professional programme aims to provide teachers with broad practical knowledge about language (KAL) at each stratum. Language knowledge is embedded in learning about classroom curriculum genres that are subject areas in different learning streams. That means language knowledge is learnt from repeated experiences of instances in context, as language itself is taught (Rose, 2018). The next level of KAL in the professional programme is classroom discourse analysis. Reading to Learn (RtL) uses a closely detailed analysis of teacher and learner interactions to plan detailed reading lessons. It applies the model of pedagogic activity to the level of moves in learning exchanges (Martin & Rose, 2007, 2012; Rose, 2014, 2017).

According to Rose (2017, p. 1), methodology rests on three broad principles, including “social models of language, pedagogy, and education as institutional practice”. The model informs the language principle of language as text in social contexts developed in systemic functional linguistic theory (SFL) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Martin & Rose, 2007, 2008). One dimension of this model is its organisation in strata related to realisation. For example, social context is modelled as a stratum of meaning-making that is realised (i.e., “manifested/symbolised/expressed”) in the language of texts. This model is critical for integrating language learning with curriculum learning as the social contexts of education are realised in pedagogic texts. Educational contexts include the fields of the school curriculum and the pedagogic activities through which these fields are taught and learnt. The curriculum is learnt through the language in which it is written in texts and discussed in the classroom.

The SFL is ‘functional’ because it focuses on language functions in social contexts. Three dimensions of social contexts include the tenor of social relations, fields of activity and knowledge, and modes of meaning (i.e., spoken, written, visual, and somatic modes).

These variables are known as registers that interweave during “social genres” that form a culture. That is, “a genre is a regular configuration of field, tenor and mode that unfolds in patterns that are predictable to members of a culture” (Rose 2017, p. 1).

Rose (2017, p. 1) further adds:

The SFL is ‘systemic’ because it focuses on organising language as a system of resources for making meaning. Texts consist of instances of these meaning resources. The relation between systems of resources and their instances in texts is known as instantiation resources systems at each language and social context stratum constitute potential meanings in a culture.

Therefore, a community’s groups and individuals create valuable resources using the entire “reservoir” of its culture. Relations between a culture’s reservoir and individuals’ repertoires are individuation (Martin, 2006). The model is thus rich enough to account for the complexity and diversity of teaching and learning in contemporary education. It is neither normative nor static but allows us to systematically map learning processes and hence design practical strategies for teaching. For example, the model of instantiation allows us to recognise that language is learnt by experiencing instances in context. Through repeated experience, individuals construct their repertoires of resources from their cultures’ reservoirs. The model of stratification allows us to recognise that resources at lower strata are learnt in higher-level contexts. Learners build resources for exchanging meanings in texts by repeatedly experiencing them in social contexts, with the guidance of carers, teachers and others. Conversely, instantiation means that cultures’ reservoirs evolve from repeated instances; systems of genres, registers and language evolve along with the social relations and activities of their users and uses.

In contrast to some common literacy teaching methods, such as “memory drills of lower-level systems like letter/sound or grammar rules” the context of actual texts frequently through individualised activities are where these insights about “language systems realizing social functions” are learnt through (Rose, 2017, p. 1).

In genre pedagogy, language features are taught explicitly but only as they arise as meanings in context. On the other hand, genre pedagogy also addresses some common objections to explicit teaching, since guiding learning through instances in context necessarily draws learners' attention to variation and change, to meaning as a choice, rather than rules of structure. (Rose, 2017, p. 1)

Rose (2017, p. 1) states that

the methodology's pedagogy model incorporates all these elements of the language model, which further enables the description and design of practical learning activities. Curriculum genres have evolved in educational institutions to reproduce the knowledge and values encoded in knowledge genres. The research tradition in genre-based pedagogy has focused on describing the social functions, structures and language features of knowledge genres and on designing curriculum genres for students to succeed with reading and writing knowledge genres.

As stated by (Rose 2017, p. 1):

This model of education as institutional practice has been inspired by Bernstein's (2000) sociological analysis of education as a 'pedagogic discourse' with a double function: an 'instructional discourse' of skills and knowledge embedded in a 'regulative discourse' of social values. In Bernstein's analysis, the knowledge and values of pedagogic discourse are 'recontextualised' from outside education in practices and structures of social institutions.

In other words, curriculum and resource distribution in society serve as the "recontextualisation" of information created in academic contexts. Social inequalities are perpetuated across generations when disparities in the distribution of resources in society are reframed in educational institutions as disparities in access to knowledge.

The model of curriculum genres builds on these insights from Bernstein, integrating the model of language in a social context. Curriculum genres configure two registers simultaneously. One is a pedagogic register of relations between teachers and learners (tenor), teaching/learning activities (field), and various modalities (or modes). The other is a curriculum register of the knowledge (field) and values (tenor) exchanged through the pedagogic record. These dimensions of curriculum genres are schematised with knowledge and values projected (or "created/manifested/constructed") through pedagogic relations, activities and modalities. More

specifically, “pedagogic relations vary in degrees of inclusion and exclusion in learning communities, hierarchies of success and failure in evaluations, and explicitness or implicitness of teachers’ institutional authority” (Bernstein, 2000 cited in Rose, 2017 p. 8). Pedagogical activities are arranged in lesson sequences, with each lesson’s activities being made up of several learning cycles, discussed further below (Rose, 2014; Rose & Martin, 2012). Pedagogic modalities include “speaking, writing, visual, and somatic (manual, gestural, kinetic) modes of meaning” (Rose, 2014, p. 8).

A critical component of the RtL methodology is “analyzing and designing pedagogic activities to ensure all students continually succeed” (Rose, 2017, p. 9; Martin, 2006). Learners build their repertoires using learning tasks, which are at the centre of pedagogical action. Each job is only performable by the student. While a teacher cannot complete a task on their behalf, they can direct the learner to do so and then relinquish control to allow them to do so. The fundamental element of the pedagogical relationship between teachers and students is this direction.

Although they are organised in sequences of alternating teacher and learner roles, pedagogic relations are not static. In the simplest terms, teacher supervision entails defining a task and typically assessing the learner’ performance. The task can be described using an “instruction or question” (Rose, 2017, p. 9). This sequence becomes the three core phases in a pedagogic activity,

Focus, Task, and Evaluate, in which the roles of teacher and learner alternate: Focus and Evaluate are teacher roles, but the Task is for the learners. In addition, more support can be provided by deliberately preparing the learner for the task. This is apparent in manual activities, where teachers often demonstrate tasks before handing control to learners to practice. If the learner successfully completes the task, it is then possible to elaborate by extending or reinforcing understanding. (Rose, 2017, p. 9)

These newly developed curriculum genres have a purpose in that they successfully prepare many students for higher education. They also give diverse student groups unequal access to knowledge, which leads to unfair evaluations and inequitable educational outcomes. In this way, they serve the social purpose of the school, which is to support an unequal socio-economic order (Rose, 2017).

Rose (2017, p. 10) notes that in contrast, “genre pedagogy aims to re-design the school’s curriculum genres to distribute access more equally to knowledge”. Effective design involves pedagogical strategies that provide all students the same access to curriculum knowledge, pedagogical relationships that include all students equally in learning activities, and pedagogical modalities that do the same.

The original curriculum genre in genre-based pedagogy was known as the “teaching/learning cycle” (Martin, 2000; Rose & Martin, 2012; Rothery, 1994), which was designed to prepare students to write successful texts for evaluation. At the core of this cycle are two stages known as deconstruction and joint construction. Students are led to identify and name the text’s structure and essential linguistic components as they deconstruct a sample work from the target genre. Then, with the help of the teacher and student contributions, a new document is created using similar structuring and vocabulary. The students’ ability to produce their works using the target genre’s structure and linguistic conventions will be strongly supported by this collaborative practice (Rose, 2017).

2.7 The Theories that Inform the RtL Pedagogy

The RtL pedagogy is informed by a fusion of Bernstein’s theory of education as pedagogic discourse, Vygotsky’s theory of learning as a social process, and Halliday’s model of language as text in social context. These theoretical foundations have been included in teaching strategies developed with teachers to capacitate them with the practical, diverse classroom settings and infusion in their curriculum area. Rose drew from the three theories to develop the six-stage scaffolding interaction cycle, which supports learners in developing their reading skills. Rose considers the three theories “tools for democratizing the classroom” (Martin & Rose, 2005). The above theories are discussed in the following sections.

2.7.1 Bernstein: Theory of pedagogic discourse

According to Bernstein (1996), pedagogic discourse has two dimensions: instructional and moral. Instructional discourse creates specialised skills; moral lessons create order, relations, and identity as regulative discourse. Bernstein sees these as aspects of a single process, though a practical classroom would treat the transmission of skills and values differently. This suggests that the

social-moral order of the school allows learners to classify themselves as successful, average, and unsuccessful, resulting from their background. Learner identities are produced through the moral order of the classroom, and teacher training programmes do not prepare educators to manage or overcome inequality. Rose (1998) views this process as contributing to socio-economic inequality whereby professional and vocational or manual roles are produced.

The inequality in learners' abilities is generally accepted as cultural in origin and different kinds of preparation and support. Children from literate middle-class families experience reading before starting school, whereas those from oral cultural backgrounds may experience little or completely no reading before starting school (Rose, 2005). This means acquiring the reading skills associated with the social class and the socialisation process through which the learners are socialised at an early age (Bergin, 2001). The researcher believes that regulative discourse classifies the learner as average, while instructional discourse will subject the learner to a vocational role in society. The learner's performance is weighted according to their level of achievement, which is victorious, average, or unsuccessful, which encourages classroom inequality (Rose, 2005). Irrespective of their social background, these learners expect equal opportunities in the classroom.

Bernstein believes that learners from poor backgrounds and elite groups should be brought together in the same classroom and learn at the same pace (Bernstein, 1990). The research study used Bernstein's pedagogic discourse to create a democratic classroom environment where learners from advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds were put together in the same classroom and learned at the same pace (Bernstein, 1990). Similarly, the RtL pedagogic activities allowed learners to do the tasks to develop their repertoires. The teacher guided and handed control to encourage them to work independently. Teacher guidance involved specifying the task: Reading text or extracting and evaluating the learner's performance. More support was provided by deliberately preparing the learner for the task. The teacher demonstrated the tasks before handing control to learners and then elaborated by reinforcing understanding if the learner is successful with the task (Rose, 2018).

2.7.2 Vygotsky's theory of learning as a social process

Vygotsky's theory of learning is a social process that presents the teacher as a facilitator of the learning context. The teacher should provide support to all learners from different backgrounds to do high-level tasks together in the classroom (Vygotsky, 1978). In this model, learning is presumed to happen within individuals in increments as they master one step after the other (Gamble, 2003). The home environment also influences children to acquire a common set of linguistic and identities that are supported by their parents (Painter, 1984, 1996, 1998, 2004). The Vygotskian model presents an entirely different view of learning by claiming that learning takes place in the zone between what learners can do independently and what they can do with the support of the teacher.

2.7.2.1 Zone of Proximal Development

The Zone of Proximal Development concept was initially established as a framework to describe the process of self-development (Chaklin, 2003; Van Der Veer, 2007) as it occurs with the guidance of adults and peers in the learning environment. The Zone of Proximal Development is Vygotsky's response to using intelligence testing to measure students' knowledge and skills and indicating what should be taught (Blanck, 1990; Van Der Veer, 2007). Student learning is aided by the support of peers, teachers, and family through the constantly evolving Zone of Proximal Development. A context is given in which learners are expected to discover concepts for themselves. The learner-centred activities provide a modicum of support for all learners, but the task level is higher for some and lower for others. Both sets of practices advantage more advanced learners as they are pitched just beyond their independent competence. They also disadvantage less advanced learners. Teacher-centred ones are beyond their independent competence and provide insufficient support to bridge the gap. Vygotsky's model suggests that a teacher can potentially support learners to operate at a high level regardless of their independent ability, which contrasts with both these sets of practices. The RtL pedagogy strongly agrees with this view: the teacher is neither simply an authority presenting information nor simply a facilitator managing a learning context but a guide providing what Bruner (1978) has called "scaffolding" (Mercer, 2000; Wells, 1999; Woods et al., 1976).

2.7.2.2 Scaffolding

Scaffolding supports all learners to do the same high-level tasks but provides the greatest support for the weakest learners (Rose, 2018). Learners acquire independent competence through repeated practice with high-level tasks and the scaffolding support is gradually withdrawn as learners take control. This becomes a guiding concept for transforming an unequal moral order into a democratic classroom where all students can receive an equal share of the identities of successful learners (Rose, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978).

2.7.3 Halliday: Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a study of language and views language as having two characteristics: systemic and functional. It is systemic because SFL “uses a theory of meaning as a choice, by which a language or any other semiotic system is interpreted as networks of interlocking options” (Halliday, 1994, p. 14). It highlights meaning as the key component in language analysis. Because it is intended to consider how language is used, language is also functional. Systemic linguists have four main theoretical statements about language, according to the SFL perspective. These are:

language is functional; its function is to make meanings; these meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged; and the process of using language is a semiotic process, a process of making meanings by choosing. (Eggins, 1994, p. 2)

The SFL views language as functional linguistics. Language is available because each element can be explained by its function in the total linguistics system. Its function is to make meanings. The choice of the word meanings instead of meaning is significant. It highlights the fact that linguistic writings generally convey more than one meaning at once. Every time meanings are produced, the context in which they are made has an impact, and these contexts are the cultural and situational circumstances. Meanings are created through the semiotic process, where meanings are selected. The SFL perspective also views language as a social-semiotic process because “language is functional in the sense that it is a kind of semiotics system where all elements of language have interlocked each other to perform meaning. It performs social functions at once” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p. 20).

The RtL approach adopts Halliday's theory in using language structures (i.e., grammar) to teach reading skills. Complex grammatical structures are used in texts for readers to interpret meaning, and more often, repetition of these exercises continuously develops learners' reading skills (Halliday, 1994; Martin & Rose, 2003). Halliday's theory of language as text in social contexts focuses on comprehension of meaning and language structures. Halliday considers SFL as a tool to develop "learners' ability to analyze texts' functional grammar and observe the relation between meaning and form in the English language grammatical systems" (Schleppegrell, 2004 p. 1). Reminiscent of Vygotsky's theory is the "scaffolding" cycle of learning (Wood et al., 1976). The teacher uses the scaffolding process to support learners with their reading tasks and gradually withdraw to the point where they can do it independently. Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) helps teachers gain an increased awareness of text organisation and the language features of academic genres (Brisk & Zisselberger, 2011). The study used RtL to infuse the SFL model in what Rose refers to as a more comprehensive set of curriculum genres through which the complexity of writing tasks is broken into manageable tasks, supporting and handing control to learners to build their repertoires in steps at each level preparing students to achieve at assessment tasks.

2.8 The Reading to Learn Pedagogy

The RtL pedagogy has been developed to address the existing situation regarding indigenous and other marginalised learners to improve reading and writing for educational access and success. Rose (2004a) believes that children with a wealth of reading experience before starting school can handle the next stage of junior primary learning literacy practices, unlike their counterparts who come to school without that wealth of reading experience. It is possible for all learners "to rapidly acquire skills in reading at any stage of the curriculum, and that is by teaching them explicitly instead of leaving them for tacit acquisition" (Rose, 2005, p. 139).

In RtL, a more comprehensive set of curriculum genres has been designed to guide reading and writing across the school setting. Sentence making may be followed by the RtL spelling genre, in which the teacher guides students to recognise and practice the letter patterns that make up a language's spelling system. The task here is for students to recognise letter patterns in the words they have been reading and practice writing them. It is prepared by identifying letter patterns in

familiar words from the sentences and may be elaborated by identifying other words with the same letter patterns. Traditional spelling activities focus on systems of spelling patterns using decontextualised words. The RtL approach starts with instances in meaningful contexts and extends this to other instances to build students' knowledge of spelling systems through repeated practice. For this reason, it may be applied to any expression system, including character, syllabary, and sign languages, as the knowledge of the expression system is built from instances in meaningful contexts.

Spelling is followed by the sentence writing genre, in which students practice using the words they have learnt to spell. The task is to accurately write the sentence, making sentences from memory. It is prepared by supporting students to remember the sequence of words in the sentences, covering most of them and leaving a few as reminders of the sentence structure. The functions of sentence writing include practice with spelling words in context, forming letters, and fluent writing. These tasks are made more accessible by practicing with familiar sentences rather than inventing new ones.

This sequence of curriculum genres, from preparing for reading to detailed reading to sentence making and spelling, handles the complexity of the task of reading step-by-step, following the strata of language in context from the 'top-down.' Preparing for reading is concerned with how the field of a text unfolds through its structures, at the level of the whole text, and paragraph by paragraph. A general comprehension of the whole text provides a context for detailed reading, focusing on patterns of meaning within and between sentences in a short passage. Detailed comprehension of such a passage offers a context for sentence making, focusing on words and word groups in sentences. Students are then able to recognise and remember their letter patterns in spelling. The complexity of the reading task is thus reduced by working with its components one step at a time, ensuring continual success for all learners by making a problematic job meaningful and doable for all.

Success with learning tasks and controlling meanings at each level guarantees effective learning at each stratum. Students simultaneously develop their repertoires of resources at each level of the language as they gain access to the register of the texts they are reading. In each activity, they are not simply learning the resources that are used as examples in passages, sentences, or words but

they are developing general skills in recognising patterns at each level. Through repeated practice, these skills soon transfer to independent reading and learning through reading, as the results outlined above illustrate.

In this curriculum sequence, writing begins with spelling and sentence writing, building from letter patterns to words to paragraphs. The following curriculum genre in this sequence is joint rewriting. Here, the teacher guides students to use the language of a detailed reading passage to write a new passage of text. With factual texts, notes are made of the information highlighted during detailed reading, and new sentences are written using the same information. With a passage from a story, the same patterns of literary language are used but with new characters, events, and settings. With arguments and text responses, the same evaluative language patterns are borrowed from detailed reading passages to evaluate a new issue or text.

The rewriting task is prepared by reviewing the language patterns in the detailed reading passage or notes from a factual text. As in detailed reading, the new passage is constructed sentence by sentence by reviewing each wording, proposing new wordings, and reviewing each proposal.

The moves in classroom exchanges are typically focused questions that teachers address to the class or individual learners. The learners' task is to respond to the teacher's question. Responses are usually evaluated in some way and elaborated with further information (Alexander, 2000; Wells, 1999). The assumption that learning occurs through tasks appears to underpin this practice. Teachers break up lessons with continual teacher/learner exchanges and allow focus questions to engage learners to respond. Teachers can monitor understanding through learners' responses and provide a platform for new knowledge and elaborations as a step toward a lesson's instructional goals (Rose, 2018).

These RtL strategies are designed to repair or be infused in the reading development sequence of ordinary teaching practice to bridge the gap in acquiring reading skills (Rose, 1998). The six-stage curriculum cycle advocated by RtL pedagogy as the scaffolding interaction cycle unfolds through: preparing before reading, detailed reading, preparing before writing, joint reconstruction, individual reconstruction, and independent writing tasks. Below is a description of the scaffolding interaction cycle (Rose, 2018).

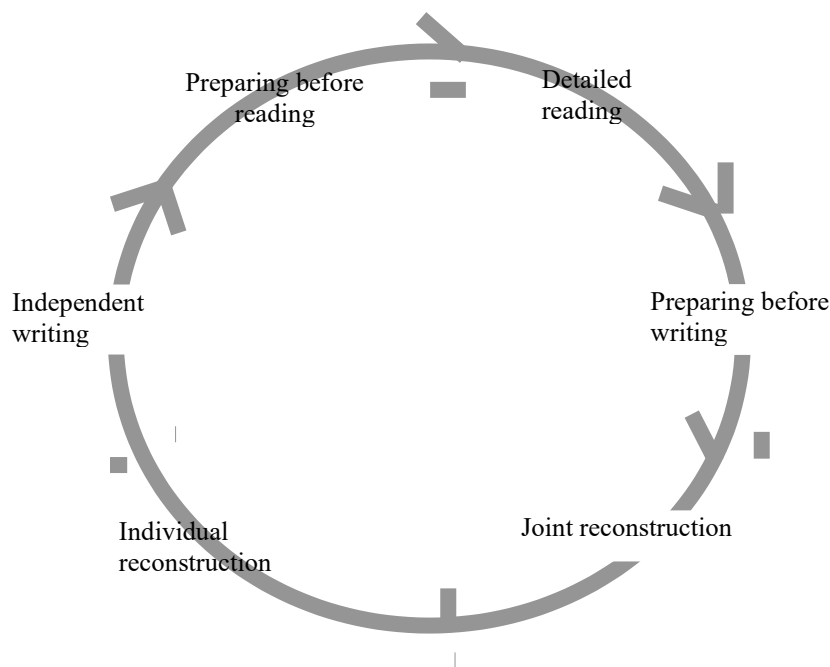


Figure 2.1: RtL pedagogy’s scaffolding interaction cycle (adapted from Martin & Rose 2005, p. 263)

2.8.1 Preparing before reading

Rose and Martin (2012) introduced the third generation of genre pedagogy, known as Reading to Learn (RtL), as a solution to unequal outcomes. Lying at the heart of the RtL is the scaffolding interaction cycle which consists of six steps. Learners can follow the words of a text as the teacher reads it aloud, first orally summarising its overall sequence of meanings in terms all learners can understand. It becomes easy for them to understand the text and decode unfamiliar words as they are read aloud. The effect is to reduce the semiotic load of the reading task so that the learners do not struggle to recognise what is going on as the text is read but can follow without overload. With factual texts, the teacher may also guide learners to identify and mark critical information in each paragraph, building their skills in recognising and comprehending critical information (Rose, 2015). Preparing for reading enables teaching curriculum content through reading despite learners’ varying reading skills. It places curriculum texts at the centre of classroom practice, supporting learners to develop skills in independent learning through reading (Rose, 2018).

The task is to follow a text with general understanding as it is read. It is prepared with the background knowledge needed to access the text and a preview of how the field unfolds through the text, step-by-step. This preview reduces the reading task, enabling students to follow the words of the text without struggling to recognise what is going on. With stories and novel chapters, the preview is followed by reading the entire text and may be elaborated with a discussion of critical points. With denser factual texts, the preview may be followed by reading paragraph by paragraph. Each section is briefly previewed and read, and its pressing issues are reviewed. Students may also be guided to mark critical information as it is reviewed. Preparing for reading enables teaching curriculum content through reading despite students' varying reading skills. It places curriculum texts at the centre of classroom practice, supporting students to develop skills in independent learning through reading.

2.8.2 Detailed reading

Learners read a short passage sentence by sentence with the support of meaning cues provided by the teacher. The teacher prepares each sentence with a brief synopsis, reads it to the class, and then guides learners to identify each chunk of meaning they highlight, giving them visual and manual control of the wordings. The whole course is engaged by asking learners to identify each wording. As preparations are designed to enable every learner to identify wordings successfully, all students are continually affirmed (Nuthall, 2005; Rose & Martin, 2012). Detailed reading is a powerful strategy, enabling learners to read and comprehend challenging texts and enabling the class to work with readers that may be well beyond learners' reading capacities.

The goal is to make the reading processes of proficient readers visible to learners and simultaneously enable the teacher to explicitly guide these otherwise hidden processes. The method is a carefully designed exchange between teachers and their classes. The teacher previews and reads a sentence aloud as the students follow the words. Each wording in the sentence is then previewed with a meaning cue. The students' task is identifying and marking the language from the meaning cue. They are asked to identify the words aloud to engage and affirm all students equally, and the whole class marks the words in their copies. Once wordings are identified, their meanings may be elaborated with further discussion. Detailed reading is a robust curriculum genre

for supporting all students in a class to read passages of text in-depth and detail, no matter their level of independent reading skills and the text's difficulty level.

2.8.3 Preparing before writing

This stage varies with the type of text and level of schooling, i.e., story texts from primary years may involve manipulating sentences on cardboard strips, followed by practice in spelling and fluent writing with factual texts at all levels and involves making notes from the text in which spelling can also be practised. The movement through the three stages is defined as 'top-down' from overall meanings in text, through sentence wordings to letter patterns in words. Each sentence's meaning is typically worked on in turn, and learners take turns to scribe. With factual texts, the class first scribes note of the wordings highlighted during the detailed reading, and the teacher guides the class to use this detailed information to write new sentences.

Here, the teacher writes critical sentences from a detailed reading passage on paper or cardboard strips and guides students to cut them up and manipulate their wordings. This manual practice can reinforce and extend students' control over sentence language. It may be practised in groups so that students support each other as a step towards independent control. As in detailed reading, the sentence is previewed and read, and the teacher guides students to identify wordings, which they take turns to cut off the strips. The student's task is then to mix up and reorder the words and word groups, giving them practice in recognising words and sequences of meaning. It is elaborated by rearranging the wordings to create new sentences and word groups as a step towards creative writing. The activity may focus first on clauses in sentences, then word groups in clauses, words in groups, manipulating and discussing meanings at each step.

2.8.4 Joint reconstruction

The same literate language patterns are used as the original passage with new content events, characters, settings, etc. The teacher guides the class to write a new text, with all learners taking turns writing on the board. Learners can use the literary resources of the accomplished author they have learnt to read and apply them to a new story.

With factual texts, joint reconstruction uses the same content as the original text via the notes scribed from it, but the new text is written in wordings closer to what the learners might use in

assignments. As students are guided to construct whole texts in target genres, the focus is on recognising patterns in instances and appropriating them to create a new instance. To this end, texts are deconstructed into phases of meaning at the level of paragraphs, and the same patterns of phases are followed in joint construction. Again, joint construction may be followed by individual construction, in which students practice using the same generic structuring with the teacher's guidance before writing independently for evaluation.

Joint rewriting is a powerful method for learning how to appropriate the language resources of accomplished authors to build students' repertoires. It makes explicit the otherwise intuitive process of learning to write from reading, as accomplished writers do. The clear teaching of this process has roots in the classical practice of imitation. Joint rewriting may be followed by individual rewriting, in which students practice the same task with the teacher's guidance as needed. This practice has also been used successfully to teach other languages in bilingual classrooms (Kartika-Ningsih, 2015).

2.8.5 Individual reconstruction

Learners use the text patterns or notes they have practised with the class to write their own text. Stories would involve the same text patterns with new content, while factual texts involve the same content with new wordings.

2.8.6 Independent writing

Learners use all the skills developed through each supportive stage for assessment purposes. The techniques for reading and writing support learners to read with engagement and enjoyment, to develop identities as readers, and to recognise and use literate language patterns in their writing (Rose, 2004b). All these strategies can be applied across curricula to enable learners from any language or cultural background to learn to read with understanding and enjoyment, to use reading for learning, and to write successfully. They provide a wide range of development within the diversified learner environment and fulfil the principles of democracy in society for equal opportunities.

Independent writing follows the sequence of curriculum genres outlined here, in which learners apply their developing repertoires of genre, register, discourse, grammar and spelling resources.

The SFL model of language explains the overwhelming complexity of the writing task and why learners so often struggle with it. The RtL sequence of curriculum genres breaks this complexity into manageable tasks, supporting and handing control to learners to build their repertoires in steps at each level, preparing every student to succeed at assessment tasks.

Each curriculum genre may be repeated within a sequence with varying texts, passages, and sentences, building students' resources through repetition with variation. Technically, such sequences of genres constitute a macro-genre. A lesson sequence is a macro-genre whose components vary according to teaching goals and students' needs. However, the overall sequence in any curriculum unit starts and ends with whole texts, working on smaller units in more detail in the intervening activities. This sequence of curriculum genres constitutes the core of the RtL methodology, but each genre is a resource in its own right. They are elements of teachers' repertoires that can be deployed flexibly depending on each lesson's teaching goals, curriculum unit, and student needs. In this respect, they are no different from the evolved curriculum genres teachers deploy in their daily practice.

2.9 Theoretical Framework: Narrative Enquiry

The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and due to protocol restrictions on social distancing, the researcher could not use observation to collect data as was initially planned; however, narrative inquiry was used to conduct the study. Narrative research is often regarded as a set of signs involving writing, verbal or other sounds, or visual, acted, built, or made elements similarly conveying meaning. For a group of such signs to constitute a narrative, there must be movement between characters, whether in sound, reading or an image sequence or via a distinct spatial path that generates meaning. It requires that the researcher ask the research participants to produce stories. These could be spoken life stories, photographic self-portraits, or day-by-day journals of events. The researcher may alternatively collect material that will likely include narratives without explicitly asking for them, for instance, by asking participants to write about their personal experiences and encourage them to talk at length about their opinions regarding something that matters enormously to them. According to Andrews et al. (2007), some researchers are interested in the truth of stories, in other words, their accurate representation of physical realities and expanding narrative meanings that include psychic and social realities. Therefore,

researchers often take stories themselves as the themes of research (Plummer, 2001), addressing how narratives work and how they affect people's understanding and actions in the world. Narrative descriptions are created through personal experiences and develop to make sense of the behaviour of others (Zellermayer, 1997). The researcher employed the narrative inquiry to establish how the Grade 10 language teachers experienced the implementation of the RtL pedagogy amid the COVID-19 pandemic. As its name suggests, narrative research is grounded in the humanities and social sciences and focuses on stories. The stories of (often one or two) individuals are analysed in-depth and ordered chronologically, with great attention to the context in which the stories occurred (Creswell, 2013).

Narrative inquiry is the study of how human beings experience the world, and narrative researchers collect these stories and write narratives of experiences (Gudmundsdottir, 2001). It is a new branch within the qualitative or interpretive research tradition. It is increasingly used in educational practice and experience studies, chiefly because teachers, like all other human beings, are storytellers who individually and socially lead storied lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). It is one of the more recent qualitative methodologies focusing on life stories as the essence of people-orientated sciences. As a research inquiry, narrative approaches endeavour to attend to how a story is constructed, for whom and why, and the cultural discourses it draws upon (Bochner, 2007; Trahar, 2009). The study used narrative inquiry to show teacher participants how they experienced implementing the RtL pedagogy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Narrative research is based on the premise that people understand and give meaning to their lives through the stories they tell (Andrews et al., 2013; McMullen & Braithwaite, 2013). In doing so, people use narratives to compose and order their life experiences. Through story forms, people account for and give meaning or significance to their lives (Bleakley, 2000). Among the early proponents of narrative research are Connelly and Clandinin (1990), who proposed to put the person back at the centre of research inquiry, ensuring that people's voices are not lost in translation. The two main elements comprising this approach are the participants' account of a particular experience and the exploration of meaning embedded in the participants' stories. The focus on specific experiences is from the presumption that lives are bounded by events that vary in significance to the people involved. Exploration of personal meaning means that meanings are evolving, and persons may recognise some meanings, not others.

The narrative approach used two fundamental underpinnings that examined the narrative research process, focusing on Vygotsky's (1978) ideas on the development approach to studying human beings and Bakhtin's (1986) ideas on dialogue. According to Vygotsky (1978), human learning development occurs in socially and culturally shaped contexts. People become what they are because of their experiences in the social contexts in which they participate. The social contexts arise at different times, thus presenting a historical background of events that resulted in changed contexts and opportunities for learning and development (Schribner, 1985). Vygotsky (1978) believes that genetic or developmental approaches contrast with approaches that attempt to analyse psychological phenomena without regard for their place in development. He claims that analysis of static products would often be misleading as they provide descriptions but do not explain human mental functioning without considering how and where this occurs through growth (Schribner, 1985).

Bakhtin's (1986) concept of dialogue has three central concepts: utterance, addressee, and voice. In social contexts, an utterance may be spoken or written, whereas on the inner, mental level, it may be a thought. An utterance assumes a person to be talking to someone, an addressee and can exist only if produced by a voice. The voice making an utterance always addresses someone. An individual always exists around others; living means being in an endless dialogue with voices that interact and create meaning and understanding. Meaning and understanding cannot be transferred from one person to the next. Instead, they are made when voices engage in dialogue with each other.

Teachers' voices should be present in the public debate on teaching. Teaching has become increasingly demanding, and learner's classrooms are characterised by diversity and variety, full of complexities and multidimensionality. Teachers are expected to teach learners to be reflective, thoughtful, responsible, and active human beings in these environments. There is no simple solution to this demanding task. Narrative research offers an opportunity for teacher's voices to be heard in their stories of experience and to present the complexity of teaching to the public (Moen, 2006).

The education sector was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. The rapid spread of the virus developed into a global crisis in the absence of mitigation factors. The

temporary closure of learning institutions disrupted all educational programmes from primary to higher education sectors. Introducing a lockdown adjustment system required that learners attend schools through a rotation system to comply with COVID-19 protocols. Learners could not be fully assessed, and curriculum coverage was compromised.

Through narrative inquiry, the study reflected on the experiences of teachers during the implementation of the RtL pedagogy amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Collecting qualitative data during an international crisis such as the pandemic was a cumbersome task since the pandemic majorly restricted face-to-face interactions; data collection during this period was predominantly conducted through online sources such as social media platforms. The Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was declared a public emergency of international concern on 30 January 2020. Within a few weeks, the disease was recategorised as a pandemic (Ienca & Vayena, 2020). Collecting qualitative data during COVID-19 posed risks and benefits based on the availability and relevance of data during COVID-19 (Tracy, 2010). Availability refers to the convenience experienced by the researchers in obtaining data (Cai & Zhu, 2015) and whether a particular piece of data is available depends on its accessibility, i.e., the level of difficulty experienced in obtaining data and timelines which are related to the time delay between the generation of the data and its acquisition and usage. This situation became a challenge because of lockdown restrictions and social distancing resulting in few numbers of learners in a classroom. Some learning activities could not be conducted due to social distance restrictions and to some extent this compromised collecting data during the study i.e., role plays and dramatisation. The researcher was not allowed to go into the classroom and observe lessons, hence he resorted to narrative inquiry.

2.10 Summary

The chapter focused on the current literature about the topic of the study, and the researcher linked it to the theories of Bernstein (1990), Vygotsky (1978) and Halliday (1993) that inform the RtL pedagogy. Narrative inquiry was also discussed as the theoretical framework of the study. The researcher also explained how Rose's RtL pedagogy is infused with the theories of Vygotsky, Bernstein and Halliday to create a democratic classroom that equips learners with the required reading skills to succeed in their academic activities. The researcher further discussed the reading crisis in South Africa reported through the PIRLS surveys. Statistics on poor reading skills

continue to escalate irrespective of intervention strategies, hence, RtL is seen as a suitable methodology that can be used to address the reading crisis in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects on the methodology used in the study to explore how the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhances Grade 10 learners' reading skills. The researcher starts by outlining the paradigm orientation of the study, the research approach, and the design. The chapter outlines in detail the sampling technique used in the study. The researcher further discusses the data-generating tools and procedures used in the study. The procedures included selecting participants, the RtL training workshop, implementation of teaching and learning, and data analysis. Data analysis included analysis of focus group discussions, narrative interviews, and analysis of lesson plans. The researcher further engages with the trustworthiness of the study, which includes the credibility, dependability, transferability, confirmability, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Paradigm Orientation

The study was located within the critical education paradigm which encourages critical thinking, creativity, freedom to appreciate, and critical awareness in students. It projects education as a critical reflection on ideologies and dominant interests that are dehumanising in nature to give birth to social transformation. In a critical paradigm, the main tasks of education are to conduct critical reflections on unjust systems and their structures, deconstruct them, and advocate a more just social system. From the critical education paradigm perspective, education should provide enough space for stakeholders to identify and analyse social transformation in a free and critical way. In other words, the main task of education is to "humanise" humans who have been dehumanised by existing unjust systems and structures (Fakih, 2002). According to Cannella et al.(2016), critical qualitative science is an academic enactment that would address power relations and enlarge opportunities for justice. The critical inquiry advocates exposing and redressing oppression, inequality, and injustice (Charmaz, 2017). Through this qualitative research study, the social phenomenon of inequality in learning and injustice in the classroom was put into context

and interpreted, as Bernstein's theory (1996) of "pedagogic discourse" alludes to the issues of instructional discourse and moral discourse.

The critical paradigm also helped present an in-depth insight into the disparities in the schooling system that continue reproducing learners labelled as successful, average, and unsuccessful in the classroom. Rose (2018) advocates the RtL pedagogy as a tool to emancipate learners from the demise of this inequality. The researcher, therefore, articulates the process of using RtL as a tool for both professional learning programmes that give teachers the broad knowledge to apply it with confidence and support learners to read with comprehension and engagement. The teachers' implementation of the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle allowed them to find expression regarding the impact of RtL in the classroom.

3.3 Research Approach

The study used narrative inquiry as a qualitative research method which was appropriate for the study as it intended to create a sound platform for teachers to tell and retell their own stories of experience. In this instance, they found expression in their natural environment regarding teaching reading through the RtL methodology during the COVID-19 pandemic. Qualitative research from the interpretive inquiry position seeks to understand the meaning of experiences, actions, and events that can be interpreted by the participants and the researcher, paying attention to the intricacies of behaviour, and meaning in the context where it naturally occurs (Richardson, 1996). Classroom action research was used in the study to establish whether teachers can use RtL pedagogy to teach reading and if RtL can be used in the classroom as an effective methodology to support learners in improving their reading skills. Mills (2018) defines action research as a form of action-orientated research wherein teachers and other educational stakeholders systematically investigate an issue or topic of interest to them to inform their practices and enhance student learning and outcomes. According to Pushor and Clandinin (2012), narrative inquiry work is interconnected with action research in that the approach to narrative inquiry includes growth and change. This growth and change can occur for interviewees as they formulate, retell, and evaluate their own stories and for interviewers as they learn with interviewees. Narrative inquiry was used in the study to enable teachers to implement RtL pedagogy in the classroom. Using narrative and action research assisted with understanding the contradictions and omissions encountered when

teachers changed their practice. It also helped develop a better understanding of self (for both the researcher and participants) and share findings more engagingly that benefit the phenomenon under investigation.

3.4 Research Design

The research was a case study involving four teachers selected from a secondary school classified as quintile one, according to the DoE quintile system. It is located in an informal settlement with low socio-economic standards. The general aim of the study was to find out if the RtL pedagogy could improve learners' reading abilities. It has been established through performance statistics that the high failure rate of Grade 10 learners is a result of their reading skills challenges. The RtL methodology, through the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle, was used as a teaching methodology to support learners with reading skills. The study was framed by the following questions:

- a. How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading?
- b. In what ways can the RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

The specific objectives of the study are stipulated as follows:

- a. To explore how teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhances their ability to teach reading.
- b. To propose necessary alternative interventions to enhance learners' reading skills.

The researcher used focus group discussions, narrative interviews, and document review to collect data from four teachers who teaches English FAL, and IsiZulu, and Sesotho HLs. The four teachers and the researcher had undergone training in using the RtL scaffolding interaction cycle to implement the methodology in the classroom to teach reading skills through stories or by reading extracts. This training was conducted by RtL South Africa, an independent organisation that runs workshops for educators, training them to use the pedagogy. After the training, the participants were prepared to support the Grade 10 learners in their classrooms for their reading skills to improve.

3.5 Sampling Technique

Purposeful sampling

Sampling involves deciding which people, settings, events, or behaviours to include in the study. Researchers must choose how many individuals, groups, or objects to observe (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). According to Moser and Korstjens (2018), sampling is selecting situations, contexts, and/or participants who provide rich data on the phenomenon under study. The selection process allows the researcher to sample deliberately and not randomly.

The researcher employed purposeful sampling in the research study. Purposeful sampling means the researcher makes specific choices about which people, groups, or objects to include in the sample. The researcher targets a particular group, knowing that the group does not represent the wider population. This sampling approach only aims to generalize the results within the people of the study (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to decide on the target that fulfil the criteria (Maestriperi et al., 2019).

This study was conducted in one secondary school as the only research site. As a strategy for recruiting participants, the researcher relied on his acquaintances at the school. He connected with four teachers who showed interest in participating in the project. Four Grade 10 classes with 45 learners in each class were used for the three languages: English FAL, IsiZulu HL, and Sesotho HL. Two English FAL teachers, one IsiZulu HL teacher, and one Sesotho HL teacher were used as participants. The four participants were selected because of their experience, knowledge, and willingness to participate in the study. Bernard (2017) supports this view, when he notes the importance of availability and willingness to participate and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner. The four classes were chosen because of their high failure rate, and most learners needed help with English as an additional language (FAL) and HLs (isiZulu and Sesotho). Consequently, they had to meet the pass requirements and eventually repeat the grade. Grade 10 transitions from the general education and training (GET) to the FET band. Learners choose their subject streams for specialisation in preparation for the NSC in Grade 12. The researcher sought to determine if the teachers' implementation of the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle of RtL would improve the learners' reading skills across the curriculum.

3.6 Data-Generating Tools and Procedure

The researcher collected data from focus group discussions, narrative interviews, and document review. All four participants received training on the RtL methodology before implementing it in the classroom.

3.6.1 Reading to Learn training workshop

A well-designed professional development programme deepens and extends teachers' subject matter knowledge and extends and refines their teaching practices (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Several recent studies have begun to identify potential facets of high-quality Professional Development (PD) for teachers, including teachers' collective participation, active learning opportunities, and coherence (Armour & Yelling, 2004). Workshops are an integral part of in-service training (Sargent, 2003) and are well-designed professional development programmes designed to understand the process of change in teacher practices due to PD experiences (Henry & Opfer, 2004; Neville & Robinson, 2003). The first data collection phase unfolded through a training workshop for all four participants, including the researcher, on teaching reading using the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle. The principal researcher conducted the training workshop for five working days on behalf of RtL South Africa which focused on the six-stage scaffolding interaction cycle of RtL teaching methodology: 1) Preparing before reading 2) Detailed reading 3) Preparing before writing 4) Joint reconstruction 5) Individual reconstruction 6) Independent Writing.

3.6.2 Focus group discussions

This method allowed participants to narrate their experiences about learners' reading challenges before the pandemic without the RtL methodology and during the pandemic while implementing the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle. The researcher used this data-collecting tool to get detailed information about the teaching and learning process as it unfolded during the study since COVID-19 protocols prevented observations being used for the research. Focus group discussions enable a discussion environment with previously prepared flexible questions on a pre-determined topic (Bowling, 2002; Krueger, 1994).

3.6.3 Narrative interviews

Narrative interviews are a way of collecting people's stories about their experiences. People tell stories about events in their lives all the time; it is one way people make sense of their lives. The narrative approach places the people being studied at the heart of the study process and privileges the meanings they assign to their stories, for example, when looking at people, observing their experiences, and trying to understand their lives. Narrative interviews ask the how, why and what questions common in qualitative research (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016). In particular, narrative interviews allow one to prioritise the storyteller's perspective rather than imposing a more specific agenda.

The researcher used narrative interviews as a data-collecting tool to allow the participants to narrate how they implemented the RtL methodology following the six-stage scaffolding interaction cycle and also reflect on the impact it had after teaching reading to the selected Grade 10 learners. Through this data-collecting tool, participants' responses were able to answer the two research questions: Does teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance their teaching of reading and can the RtL pedagogy improve learners' reading skills.

Through narrative interviews, researchers allow for more organic and creative conversations than question-and-answer formats usually facilitate (Fraser, 2004; Fraser & MacDougall, 2017). A premium is placed on hearing and co-constructing stories through shared discussions with participants. As the participants responded regarding the implementation of RtL in the classroom, they also revealed new or different experiences directly linked to their employment conditions. These seemingly frustrating experiences impede the creation of a conducive teaching and learning environment. They reflected on the socio-economic and political status quo in the education sector, for example, poor infrastructure, overcrowding, and lack of resource facilities, especially in informal settlements. Unearthing often unexplored connections during interviews can ignite emotions in all involved in the conversations (Ezzy, 2010; Whitaker & Atkinson, 2019).

3.6.4 Document review

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating printed and electronic documents. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that

data be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007). Documents contain text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher's intervention. The analytical procedure entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesising document data. Document analysis yields data excerpts, quotations, or passages organised into major themes, categories, and case examples, specifically through content analysis (Labuschagne, 2003).

Since the researcher could not go into the classroom to observe because of COVID-19 restrictions, participants were requested to submit their lesson plans to him. This document review aimed to see whether the participants planned the lessons in line with the RtL pedagogy. It also helped to strengthen the claims made by the participants during the focus group discussions and narrative interviews.

3.7 Data Analysis

Flick (2013, p. 10) defines qualitative data analysis as “the classification and interpretation of linguistic or visual material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is presented in it.” For analysing qualitative data which is usually “textual or visual,” the researcher opted for the inductive approach since the “analysis starting point was the raw data generated from the study,” and because “data analysis inductively builds from particular to general themes and the researcher makes critical interpretations of the meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2009, p. 28). Data analysis started with data collection (Flick, 2013) through focus group discussions, narrative interviews, and document review. Data from focus group discussions and narrative interviews were transcribed, and emerging themes were sought and categorised accordingly for coding purposes. In coding the data, the researcher used the open-coding method, which means that codes will surface from the data and, in return, will be presented in narrative and table formats. The researcher colour-coded similar information, established patterns, and created themes or categories.

3.7.1 Analysis of focus group discussions and narrative interviews (thematic analysis)

The researcher used thematic analysis to analyse the study's data from focus group discussions and narrative interviews. The thematic analysis process assisted the researcher in identifying,

analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning from the participants' responses. The method also influenced the generation of essential descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation and responded to the research question: How can the RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills? The researcher identified themes through careful reading and re-reading of all the collected data (Rice & Ezzy, 1999). Thematic analysis was used as a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes became the categories for analysis. The researcher organised all data collected from focus group discussions in a table form. The transcripts were summarised separately by outlining the key points made by the participants in response to the questions asked by the researcher. These questions formed the framework for the narrative interviews; participants gave their experiences about teaching reading during the COVID-19 pandemic before the RtL methodology and responded to teaching reading using the methodology during the pandemic during the focus group discussions. Participants implemented the RtL methodology in the sampled Grade 10 classroom, and the researcher used narrative interviews to collect data to determine if they were able to implement the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle of the RtL pedagogy and whether the research questions were answered.

The researcher summarised the responses from participants and used a template to organise the information according to the questions asked and the identity of participants as teachers 1, 2, 3 and 4, representing English as the FAL and HLs (Sesotho and IsiZulu). All data was coded to identify similar information. Coding is a data management tool for organising similar or related text segments to assist interpretation (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Through coding, equal segments were identified and groups were created according to their names. Separate data groups emerged as the process of connecting codes unfolded and they indicated areas of consensus in response to the research questions and areas of potential conflict. Themes began to cluster from each data group and were corroborated by confirming the findings (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Themes were clustered and assigned phrases to describe the meaning underpinning the theme. The main findings led to data analysis by linking evidence from the raw data and literature (concepts, theories and new research) through which new results were established.

3.7.2 Analysis of lesson plans

For document review, the researcher analysed the lesson plans provided by the participants. The lesson plans were analysed in line with the RtL pedagogy. The six-step interaction cycle was helpful in this exercise in that, for each lesson plan, the researcher checked which and how the steps were covered.

3.7.3 Implementation of the RtL in the classroom

The implementation process which was the actual teaching and learning in the classroom was subjected to a controlled environment whereby the researcher always had a planning session before the lesson and a reflection session after the lesson. Each participant conducted seven lessons, so a total of 28 lessons were conducted. Individual teachers were interviewed after each class they taught, and the process of preparation followed. The data generated in this study were analysed qualitatively within the framework of the RtL scaffolding cycle. The sessions were important because participants had to conduct teaching and learning through the RtL methodology without the researcher entering the classroom as an observer. Lesson planning was based on the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle to teach reading skills. The participants used to read texts throughout the implementation process. All the activities conducted in class were based on the six stages of the interaction cycle. The activities were organised according to the eight-day cycle allocated for teaching and learning through RtL.

3.8 Trustworthiness

Law (2002) suggests that establishing the trustworthiness of research “increases the reader’s confidence that the findings are worthy or attention” (p. 337). This is clearly illustrated by Jackson (2003), who states that trustworthiness refers to establishing the validity and reliability of qualitative research. The validity of an instrument refers to the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure (Maree, 2007). When an instrument is validated, one justifies the instrument’s composition measured in terms of the underpinning literature survey and conceptual framework. The researcher ensured that the identified data-generating tools responded to the questions asked by this study. The researcher fully understood that the research aimed to improve learners’ reading abilities through the RtL approach. Objectivity prompted the research process to

unravel as expected and be able to generate findings that would assist future research efforts. Only direct interaction with teacher participants without influencing the sample helped the process. The sample was used to demonstrate its full potential so that reliable data could be provided. The validity of the process was also supported by the fact that the research was conducted at the site where the researcher and participants were working. Learners could easily relate to the learning process because they were taught by their teachers without the researcher present in the lessons.

3.8.1 Credibility

All data was collected using focus group discussions, narrative interviews, and document review. The document review process affirmed the credibility of the findings from focus group discussions and narrative interviews. Credibility refers to trustworthiness and how believable a study is; validity concerns how much a study accurately reflects or evaluates the concept or ideas being investigated. Credibility is not an undebated term in qualitative research; following Eisner's (1991) interpretation: "We seek a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility, that allows us to feel confident about our observations, interpretations and conclusions" (p. 110). Ideally, this would lead to "an agreement among competent others that the description, evaluation and thematic ... are right" (Eisner, 1991, p. 12).

The participants used lesson plans to teach reading in the classroom. Combining theories, methods, or observers in a research study, including triangulation, could help the researcher overcome fundamental biases arising from using a single method or observer. Triangulation is also an effort to help explore and explain complex human behaviour using various techniques to offer readers a more balanced explanation. It is a procedure that enables data validation and can be used in quantitative and qualitative studies (Noble & Heale, 2019).

3.8.2 Dependability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), dependability regards whether the qualitative data collection process was sound. Avizienis et al. (2004) define it as "the ability of the system to deliver services that can justifiably be trusted". Dependability raises questions like: "Are the research questions clear, and are the features of the study design congruent with them?" Although dependability is synonymous with reliability, dependability is a global concept that evaluates the

attributes of reliability, availability, safety, security, performability, and maintainability, among others. Concerning dependability, it was essential that the RtL pedagogy had been widely used successfully making it dependable – this means that the pedagogy has had a significant impact as a professional developmental tool for teachers and a teaching method that can be used to support learners with reading skills.

3.8.3 Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that the degree of transferability is a direct function of the similarity or fit between settings. The applicability of research results in other locations depends on the similarity between the research setting in which the phenomenon studied occurred and the settings in which the results are expected to be transferable.

The notion of transferability is not tied to the research method or form of data analysis. Instead, it is tied to the potential applicability of research results in other settings. This potential applicability is optional as the researcher might not know the different settings where their results may apply; instead, the researcher must provide enough details about their setting so that readers can assess the applicability of those results (Klein & Myers, 1999).

3.8.4 Confirmability

The idea of assessing whether conclusions seem trustworthy goes back to Lincoln and Guba and their presentation of a confirmability audit to assess confirmability and dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability regards whether the data analyses were coherent and whether the interpretations based on that data were fair. For assessing confirmability, it is crucial to ask, “Are the study’s general methods and procedures described explicitly and in detail: Do we feel that we have a complete picture, including ‘backstage’ information?” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 278).

The study used focus group discussions, narrative interviews, and document review. Data was collected through the mentioned tools, and later transcribed, coded, and analysed. The findings that were generated responded to the research questions. The study required that the researcher conduct lesson observations, but this could not happen due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Document review (lesson plans) was then used as a data collection tool to confirm the implementation of RtL pedagogy in the sampled Grade 10 classes.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The ethical decision-making process is composed of four discrete steps. First, an individual must have ethical awareness (step 1) and be able to recognise an ethical issue. Second, the individual must be able to make an ethical judgement – what should be done (step 2). Third, the individual must be able to establish ethical intent (step 3). As opposed to deciding what should be done, this step involves determining what will be done. Finally, the individual engages in an ethical action or behaviour (step 4). The characteristics of the ethical issue itself impact each step. Six specific characteristics define the issue's level of moral intensity (Jones, 1991). Research has generally shown that the higher an issue's moral intensity, the more likely individuals follow the ethical decision-making framework, at least through step 3 (Cohen & Bennie, 2006; Jones et al., 2003). The researcher conformed to all ethical matters regarding the study, and clearance was granted (see appendix A).

3.10 Positionality and Its Effect on the Research Process

New researchers must acknowledge that their positionality is unique and can impact all aspects and stages of the research process. As Foote and Bartell (2011, p. 46) identify, “the positionality that researchers bring to their work and the personal experiences through which positionality is shaped may influence what researchers may bring to research encounters, their choice of processes, and their interpretation of outcomes”.

Positionality, therefore, can be seen to affect the totality of the research process. It acknowledges and recognises that researchers are part of the social world they are researching and that existing social actors have interpreted this world. This is the opposite of a positivistic conception of objective reality (Cohen et al., 2011; Grix, 2019). Positionality implies that the social-historical-political location of a researcher influences their orientations, i.e., that they are not separate from the social processes they study and that there is no way we can escape the social world we live in to study it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Malterud, 2001). Using a reflexive approach to inform positionality rejects the idea that social research is separate from broader society and the individual researcher's biography. A reflexive approach suggests that, rather than trying to eliminate their effect, researchers should acknowledge and disclose their selves in their work, aiming to understand their influence on and in the research process. New researchers need to note here that

their positionality not only shapes their work but influences their interpretation, understanding, and, ultimately, their belief in the truthfulness and validity of another research that they read or are exposed to. The researcher was aware that being the principal of the school where the study was conducted could pose a challenge. To address this, the teacher participants were encouraged to do so willingly. A request was made for the services of the site steward on behalf of teacher unions in the circuit to discuss the research process with them and to assure them that they were protected whether they participated or not. They were further allowed to withdraw from the research if they felt uncomfortable.

3.11 Conclusion

The main aim of this chapter was to outline the methods used to conduct the study. The researcher started by discussing the purpose, research questions, and objectives. A broader definition of qualitative research, narrative inquiry, and action classroom research was also given and narrowed down to show how the researcher applied this methodology to the study. Emphasis on the fact that the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic was made, hence, the applied methodology to generate authentic data and reliable findings. The researcher also gave a brief background about the research site and participants. Data sources were discussed, and the researcher explained how trustworthiness was used to validate all the findings in the data analysis chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected during the study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data from focus group discussion, narrative interviews, and document reviews. The themes from the data show how the six-stage scaffolding interaction cycle used by the participants as a teaching approach impacted the learners' reading skills. The chapter is in two parts; the first part focuses on the focus group discussion with the participants before they were trained to use the RtL pedagogy. The second part focuses on the interviews and the review of the lesson plans during and after the intervention. The general aim of the study was to find out if the RtL pedagogy could improve learners' reading abilities. The research study was framed by the following questions: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading skills and in what way can RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

The participants were two English FAL educators, one IsiZulu HL educator and one Sesotho HL educator. Grade 10 learners were sampled for the study, and the educators conducted seven lessons each where they implemented the six-stage interaction cycle. All the lessons were infused with the six stages: 1) Preparing before reading 2) Detailed reading 3) Preparing before writing 4) Joint writing 5) Individual writing and 6) Independent writing. Teachers and learners engaged in reading texts that were guided by RtL principles.

4.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the procedure of breaking down the data into smaller parts. Qualitative data analysis is "the classification and interpretation of linguistic or visual material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is presented" (Flick, 2013, p. 11). The researcher used a focus group discussion, narrative interviews, and document reviews to collect data for the study with four language teacher participants. Interpreting data included transcribing all the data, colour-coding similar information, establishing patterns, and creating themes or categories.

4.2.1 Part 1: Before the intervention

One focus group discussion was conducted before the educators were trained to use the RtL pedagogy. The focus group discussion aimed to establish the language educators' opinions regarding the learners' reading challenges. The data presented in the next section is from the focus group discussion. The following codes were used for the teachers: Teacher 1 – T1 etc; English FAL – EFAL; Sesotho Home Language – SHL and isiZulu Home Language – ZHL.

4.2.1.1 Focus group discussions

A focus group is a technique involving in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are focused on a given topic. Therefore, participants in this type of research are selected based on the criteria that they have something to say on the subject (Richardson & Rabiee, 2001). The purpose of using this method was to allow participants to narrate their experiences about reading challenges in the classroom and listen to others' impediments to teaching reading. According to Zellermyer (1997), narrative descriptions are created to reflect our experiences for ourselves and others, and we also develop a narrative to make sense of the behaviour of others. It is a process of acquiring and producing in-depth information, where individuals can discuss ideas in a free environment with previously prepared flexible questions on a pre-determined topic (Bowling, 2002; Krueger, 1994). The questions sought to elicit expressions from teacher participants regarding learners' reading challenges before implementing the RtL pedagogy.

4.2.1.2 Finding 1: Absence of out-of-school support for literacy development

- Lack of parental support

Based on the collected data from the focus group discussion, two teacher participants indicated that lack of parental support at home greatly contributed to learners' poor reading skills. This was evident from the raw data collected during the discussion.

T1-EFAL: Learners lack interest to practice reading at home because there is no one guiding and supervising them.

T3-SHL: Learners fail to become good readers because they do not read literature books with their parents at home.

- Absence of community-based literacy activities

The focus group discussion also revealed that the lack of community-based literacy activities further impairs learners' literacy development.

T2-EFAL: These learners seem to have challenges regarding doing some extra reading activities at home and the high levels of illiteracy within the community contribute to the problem because most parents do not know how to encourage them to read. T4-ZHL, in his response, alluded that the learners are failing to realise that the most important time when they should practice reading on their own is at home with the support of parents.

This finding indicates that lack of parental support contributed to the poor reading skills of the sampled Grade 10 learners. Parents do not read with their children at home to support their literacy development. As highlighted in the background of the study, the school where the research was conducted is in an informal settlement in Gauteng. The province has more migrant learners than the other provinces, covering all 11 official languages. Most learners present a strong background of multilingualism; they were taught through other HLs at the primary school level that are not offered at the secondary school. They also use their HLs as heritage speakers in family and community settings. Most parents need to be more literate as they cannot support their children with literacy development outside the classroom. The high unemployment rate in South Africa means that many parents must fend for their families through part-time jobs on meagre incomes. They must ensure that meals for their children are on the table daily. As a result, they do not have the time to support their children with academic activities. As indicated in my literature review, research has proven that there is a reading crisis in South Africa and other parts of the world. One of the goals of the UNESCO is for every global citizen to be literate by the year 2030. In line with this goal, the government of South Africa provides free education for every learner from the FP to Grade 12 (UNESCO, 2018). The democratic dispensation encourages every country's citizen to access free education to succeed in life.

Further, this is supported by Vygotsky's theory of social learning, indicating that the home environment also influences children to acquire a standard set of linguistic identities backed by their parents (Painter, 1984, 1996, 1998, 2004). This theory of Vygotsky also claims that learning takes place in the zone between what learners can do independently and what they can do with the support of teachers. The Zone of Proximal Development occurs with the guidance of adults and peers in the learning environment.

Recent research studies have revealed that shared reading plays a significant role in early childhood development and socio-economic status as elements of literacy development. Muhinyi and Rowe (2019) considered specific features of shared reading interactions with 10-month-old infants to be positively associated with expressive, receptive, and pragmatic language skills at 18 months. Other literacy activities such as oral storytelling complement early reading and enhance emergent literacy and language development in early childhood, with improved benefits for oral language, i.e., story comprehension in retelling of stories. Logan et al. (2019) suggest that children who read one book daily are exposed to 78 000 words yearly. In addition, access to books in the home environment can lead to increased reading achievement. For very young children, this may involve ~~it~~ interaction between a parent and child where the adult reads, draws the child's attention to pictures and text, and discusses the story with the child. Having parents engage with their infants in reading and other language-rich activities is considered particularly important for parents who were not read to or do not enjoy reading (Sinclair et al., 2018).

Van Staden and Bosker (2014) conducted a study in South Africa to discover factors that predict reading literacy proficiency among Grade 4 learners. The findings revealed the importance of encouraging engaged reading and instilling a love of reading in children from an early age, mainly through parent participation. Research has shown close associations between children's early linguistic skills and their social and emotional functioning, arguing that linguistic abilities form the basis upon which socio-emotional competencies emerge (Seidenfeld et al., 2014). Rose and colleagues (2016) demonstrated that children's linguistic skills at age three are predictive of children's self-regulation, cooperation, and aggressiveness at age seven. Both linguistic and socio-emotional competencies develop in early childhood in children's learning environments at home and during interactions with their parents (Cochet & Byrne, 2016).

The home literacy environment (HLE) refers to activities with family members at home, literacy resources, and parental attitudes to literacy (Puglisi et al., 2017). Shared reading is essential within the HLE, supporting early childhood language development (Hoyne & Egan, 2019; Niklas et al., 2020). The HLE comprising shared reading routines in families and different indicators of a literacy-orientated learning environment such as the number of books in household and parental attitudes towards reading, has been shown to support children's linguistic development from an early age onwards (Niklas & Schneider, 2017). Moreover, some studies indicate that the HLE may influence children's development in further areas, especially concerning children's social and emotional competencies. The HLE and shared book reading, in particular, create opportunities to talk with children about the socio-emotional experience of book characters. Studies suggest that shared reading contributes to children's ability to speak about their emotions, facilitating social connections (Rose, 2018).

According to Niklas et al. (2020), parents' attitudes to reading and the environments they create in their homes influence activities and learning for their children. Research by Krijnen et al. (2020) shows that parents with stronger beliefs about the value of reading and literacy engage more frequently in literacy behaviours than those with less strong literacy beliefs, suggesting that parents' own beliefs about reading motivate children to read more than the frequency of reading or library visits. However, parental influence on reading activities at home has limitations, especially for low literacy skills, because they lack specific skills such as phonological sensitivity and letter knowledge.

Niklas and Schneider (2013) suggest that additional child and family characteristics should be considered when investigating the relationship between the HLE and the development of children's competencies. Children growing up in families with a higher socio-economic status usually experience a higher-quality literacy environment. Further studies report differences in children's linguistic abilities depending on their level of nonverbal intelligence (Niklas & Schneider, 2017). In addition, children with greater nonverbal intelligence show better self-regulation and cooperation skills (Rose, 2018). Studies indicate a substantial gap in children's vocabulary ability during early childhood, with lower socio-economic status children scoring lower on language assessments than higher socio-economic status children. Children's language

competence is linked to parents' socio-economic status, income level, education, and occupational prestige (Levine et al., 2020). In my view, families' socio-economic status determines the HLE level.

A classic society constituting low-, middle-, and high-class family units will present different HLE scenarios. Most low-income families would fail to create a conducive environment for learners to practice reading and engage in other community literacy development activities. They do not have books to read at home, and with their low level of education, parents do not assist learners at home. Some learners come from child-headed families and become their siblings' parents after school. There are no libraries in the informal settlement. Because of the high levels of poverty within the community, learners focus is always on where their next meal will come from rather than engaging in literacy development activities. Domestic violence is also a deterrent to parental support and literacy development activities. A study conducted in Ghana revealed that children exposed to attitudes of spousal violence from their parents suffer consequences that can harm their overall well-being and development (Vu et al., 2016).

4.2.1.3 Finding 2: The impact of remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Lack of motivation of teachers, learners, and parents

It also emerged from the focus group discussion that the COVID-19 pandemic hurt effective teaching and learning. This was evident from the responses given by the teachers during the discussion.

Teacher 1 (EFAL) noted that “time was very limited for effective teaching and learning and the syllabus was not completed due to rotational programme” which had a negative impact on teaching and learning. Teacher 2 (EFAL) said that “there was no time for remedial activities due to rotational programme and learner performance was affected”, thus effective teaching and learning was compromised.

- Lack of learner discipline and content knowledge

Two teachers noted the following in the discussion.

T3-SHL: Teaching assessment compromised content coverage and it was difficult to assist learners because most of them were not completing their tasks at home.

T4-ZHL: Rotation timetable had a negative impact on additional support and poor learner performance was due to lack of basic concepts from previous grades.

The general aim of the study was to find out if the RtL pedagogy could improve the learners' reading abilities. This was supposed to be measured in a regular teaching and learning environment with uninterrupted learner engagement regarding notional time for secondary schooling. However, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted swift action towards a new approach to teaching and learning. Teachers, learners, and parents were demotivated by the country's sudden change in the country's education system due to the pandemic. They had to abruptly switch to teaching with Information and communication technologies at a distance, which we refer to as online teaching and learning (Scherer et al., 2021). This new teaching and learning dimension provides an option in the country's education system. However, it presents a questionable status quo perceived through the socio-economic and political imbalances, resulting in inequalities.

4.2.2 Part 2: The intervention

After the focus group discussion that indicated the absence of out-of-school support for literacy development and the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on schooling and literacy development, it became necessary to find a pedagogy to enhance the learners' reading skills without needing out-of-school support. The RtL was such a teaching approach. The four teacher participants received training on the RtL methodology, and each of them prepared seven lessons guided by all the steps in the six stages of the interaction cycle: preparing before reading, detailed reading, preparing before writing, joint reconstruction, individual reconstruction, and independent writing.

The RtL training programme gave teachers hope that the pedagogy would bring a new dimension to professional development and support learners in improving their reading skills. This section details the findings during and after the intervention. It is important to note that the training occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, it was used by the participants during the latter part of the pandemic, during 2021 and 2022.

4.2.2.1 Narrative interviews

The researcher used interviews as a data collection tool to probe the impact of the six-stage scaffolding interaction cycle on teaching reading skills to the sampled Grade 10 learners. This data-generating tool allowed the participants to present their experiences which generated perceptions regarding RtLs impact on the Grade 10 learners. Their responses answered the two research questions: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading and in what ways can the RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

4.2.2.2 Finding 1: RtL motivated learners to participate actively in the classroom.

- Narrating stories

It emerged from the interviews that narrating stories before reading activated and increased the learners' participation in the learning process. This was revealed when teachers gave the following responses.

T1-EFAL: It is important to narrate stories before reading as it allows learners to participate actively on the lesson.

T2-EFAL: Narrating the story attracts learners' attention.

The responses above further support the RtL first stage of the scaffolding interaction cycle: preparing before reading. Learners are supported to read texts that may be beyond their independent reading skills. The task is to follow a text with general understanding as it is read. It is prepared with the background knowledge needed to access the text and a preview of how the field unfolds through the text, step-by-step. This preview reduces the reading task, enabling learners to follow the words of the text without struggling to recognise what is going on (Rose,

2018). Narrating the story before reading prepares the learners emotionally to grasp the content of the reading text and this influences active participation.

The finding is directly related to Vygotsky's theory of social learning, which states that learning is presumed to happen within individuals in increments as they master one step after another (Gamble, 2003). The model suggests that a teacher can potentially support learners to operate at a high level regardless of their independent ability. Vygotsky (1978) relates his deep interest to understanding the complex whole of unit analysis and how to break it down into its constituent parts.

Research has also revealed other methods that promote learner engagement during lessons in the classroom. The University of Kentucky in the USA compared two commonly used engagement plans, hand raising and digital response cards, to determine their effect on students' active engagement, on-task behaviour and reading comprehension among high school learners with intellectual disabilities. Every Student Succeeds Act (United States Department of Education, 2015) renewed the focus on academic achievement for students with intellectual disabilities. It increased the expectations that all individuals, regardless of their abilities, will be educated using the most effective methods available. The renewed focus on academic achievement highlighted the need for intentional instructional practices that facilitate academic and behavioural growth. The Council for Exceptional Children met the call with the identification of high-leverage practices (McLeskey et al., 2017) that have a vast body of research to demonstrate their effectiveness in educating students with or without disabilities.

Active student engagement is commonly associated with opportunities to respond. Traditionally, educators check for understanding by allowing students to respond to a teacher-directed question throughout instruction. These opportunities can be prompted by the teacher (e.g., choral responses, individual responses) or peers (e.g., peer-to-peer responses) (McLeskey et al., 2017). The reactions can vary from performing a skill, answering a question, or responding to a task direction (Ault & Horn, 2018). Students can respond verbally, through a physical gesture (e.g., response cards) or through an electronic system (Common et al., 2020). Identifying strategies that promote the active engagement of all learners simultaneously (i.e., choral responding) has been associated with greater frequencies of on-task behaviour (Haydon et al., 2013) and academic success (Brophy &

Good, 1986; McLeskey et al., 2019). Allowing all individuals, the opportunity to simultaneously answer may also reduce the anxiety associated with being the lone individual called upon to respond to the teacher-posed question (Menzies et al., 2017).

Further research indicates that the significance of narrating stories conveys character-based information which creates an order of events comprehension in texts. Troyer and Kutas (2018) refer to the process as event-related potentials (ERPs). The ERPs are regarded as increasingly valuable as they allow examining the temporal resolution of brain activity and present prior knowledge about fictional characters in reading texts.

This finding responds to the second research question: How can RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills? The active participation of learners in class suggests that they are interested in the lesson. One of the causes for the lack of participation in lessons is when the learners are bored because of a teacher-centred lesson and when their reading skills are low. The active participation by the Grade 10 learners in the classes of the participants may have been because they felt included in the lessons and their reading skills were being developed.

4.2.2.3 Finding 2: Reading to Learn increased the learners' comprehension skills

It was revealed from the interviews that when educators read texts before the learners, it creates a more significant opportunity for learners to develop their comprehension skills and make meaning of the reading texts. As educators read, the learners also follow the correct pronunciation of words.

T1-EFAL: Learners showed interest during lessons and always responded to questions.

T2-EFAL: Learners engaged in all learning activities throughout the different stages of RtL pedagogy and were eager to answer questions based on the text.

T4-ZHL: Learners enjoyed listening to stories being told and they began to show more interest on the lessons and were willingly responding to questions that were asked.

This finding above further confirms that through RtL methodology, learners were able to demonstrate their comprehension skills by engaging in group discussions and giving meaning to

complex words. This finding responds to the second research question: In what way can RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

The lesson activities required that learners work in groups so that each of them had an equal chance of contributing to the learning process, thus accelerating their development of reading skills. Vygotsky's theory of social learning concurs with the finding as it presents the teacher as a facilitator of the learning context. Vygotsky uses the Zone of Proximal Development concept to describe the process of self-development. Through this model, the support of peers, teachers, and family aid student learning. A context is encouraged in which learners are expected to discover concepts for themselves.

According to Rose (2004) and Martin (2006), the RtL methodology's critical component is the analysis and design of pedagogic activities to ensure that all learners continually succeed. Reading comprehension is one of the most critical skills learners need for academic achievement as it enables them to construct meaning from different texts. Research has established that many South African learners cannot read for comprehension. According to UNESCO (2018), more than 100 million young people globally still cannot read, which calls for urgent attention.

4.2.2.4 Finding 3: Reading to Learn encouraged learners to practice pronunciation

It emerged from the finding that teachers read the text first to prepare for learner individual reading. Reading and writing are hugely complex tasks that involve recognising and using language patterns at these three levels: text, sentence, and word. For the teacher to read, they lay a foundation that will enable learners to understand the text and how it is organised, such as sequences of events in the story to be identified in factual sentences.

T1-EFAL: When learners are given the platform to read, they are able to demonstrate pronunciation of words.

T2-EFAL: I wanted the learners to get exposed to reading aloud which makes them confident readers and pronouncing words.

T3-SHL: I made the learners read individually because they struggle with pronouncing words.

It was indicated in the literature review that the persistent problem of learners' poor reading skills in primary schooling is usually carried over into secondary schooling and eventually higher education institutions (DBE, 2008; Howie et al., 2006). The Vygotskian model emphasises that a teacher can potentially support learners to operate at a high level regardless of their independent ability. The RtL agrees with this view: the teacher is neither simply an authority presenting information nor merely a facilitator managing a learning context but a guide providing what is defined as scaffolding (Mercer, 2000; Wells, 1999; Woods et al., 1976). Scaffolding supports all learners to do the same high-level tasks but provides the most excellent support for the weakest learners. As learners gain independent competence through practice, the scaffolding support is gradually withdrawn as learners take control. This transforms the classroom into a democratic order and results in successful learner identities. In the same manner of language development, Halliday's (1994) theory adopts the RtL approach in using language structures (i.e. grammar) to teach reading skills. Complex grammatical structures are used in texts for readers to interpret meaning, and more often, repetition of these exercises continuously develops learners' reading skills (Halliday, 1994; Martin & Rose, 2003; Rose, 2000b).

4.2.2.5 Finding 4: Reading to Learn improved the oral reading skills of the learners.

The study aimed to explore how RtL methodology could improve Grade 10 learners' reading proficiencies. It was established from the findings that the RtL approach positively impacted the sampled Grade 10 learners' reading abilities. This was evident through the responses that emanated from all four teacher participants.

T1-EFAL: I used the reading to learn interactive cycle to teach both reading and writing skills. Learners were involved in skimming and scanning activities in order to grasp the main idea and important information.

T2-EFAL: I followed the six stages of interaction cycle to teach learners reading skills through which learners engaged in brainstorming, reading aloud of paragraphs for meaning, write new sentences for paragraph development, reading the new paragraph and individually reconstruct the paragraph.

T3-SHL: I used RtL as a tool to support learners to improve their reading skills ensuring that they engaged in all lesson activities. They started by identifying complex words and read them aloud repeatedly, they answered questions based on a paragraph, working in groups, they cut the story line in pieces, they responded to questions by pasting answers from the entire story.

T4-ZHL: The interactive cycle approach encouraged learners to improve their reading abilities as they continued to participate in all lesson activities. The learners worked in groups to give meaning of the text, they read aloud complex words that were written on the board, they completed paragraphs in groups and wrote their own stories.

The RtL is a methodology that supports learners to read with comprehension and engagement and then to use what they have learnt from reading to write coherent texts. It is also a professional learning programme designed to provide teachers with skills in the methodology and associated knowledge about pedagogy and language. The RtL method is a set of resources for teachers to meet the needs of their students. The professional learning programme includes an assessment to track students' literacy growth as teachers develop their skills. In this respect, it evaluates language learning and teaching tasks (Rose, 2017; Rose & Martin, 2012, 2013). The infusion of the RtL approach into the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement of Basic Education would motivate teachers and build a positive attitude towards establishing a conducive teaching and learning environment in the classroom.

4.2.2.6 Finding 5: Reading to Learn was used as a classroom methodology and a tool for educator professional development.

All four teacher participants shared a standard view regarding the implementation of the RtL methodology as a teacher intervention tool to improve the sampled Grade 10 learners' reading skills. The finding confirmed that RtL assisted as a classroom methodology and a tool for educator professional development. This finding answered the research question: How can language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading? The RtL method also established critical elements of knowledge for teachers and different curriculum genres were used for literacy development. This was evident from the collected data.

T1-EFAL: The learners were able to engage in all learning activities about grammar and I enjoyed following all the steps of teaching using RtL.

T2-EFAL: Learners participated actively in identifying complex words and ask question to test their vocabulary and understanding.

T3-SHL: I think RtL developed my professional capacity and guided me while I was teaching so that I support the learners where I saw they were struggling a bit.

T4-ZHL: I managed to see where learners are showing some improvement because before using RtL many of them were not able write the correct grammar sentences.

While providing support for learners to use what they have learnt from reading to writing coherent texts, RtL also offers a set of resources for teachers to meet the needs of the learners (Rose, 2017; Rose & Martin, 2012, 2013). Secondary school teachers usually get trained in their curriculum fields, but only some have comparable knowledge of the language of their subject. Therefore, RtL gives teachers the knowledge about the pedagogy and language to apply the methodology confidently (Rose, 2018). The RtL approach is incorporated into Halliday's (1985) theory of language as text in a social context, focusing on comprehension of meaning and language structures. Teachers used grammatical structures in texts for learners to interpret meaning. The exercises were repeated to help the learners master reading, improve comprehension skills, and prepare them for writing activities (Halliday, 1994; Martin & Rose, 2003).

This finding responds to the first research question: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading skills? The participants felt confident when they observed that their use of the RtL pedagogy had improved the learners' reading skills. This turned them into competent teachers who could teach reading even to Grade 10 learners.

4.2.3 Document review – Lesson plans

The researcher used document review as a data-collecting tool to confirm that teachers implemented the six stages of the interactive cycle in the Grade 10 learners' classes. This was done through the lesson plans the teachers used to teach reading. The lesson plans assisted the researcher in further measuring the extent to which the RtL methodology enhanced the Grade 10 learners'

reading skills since he could not go and observe lessons in the classroom due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distance protocols. Table 4.1 outlines how the six-stage interaction cycle of the RtL pedagogy was implemented in the classroom.

Table 4.1: Six-stage interaction cycle of the RtL pedagogy

DAY	STEP	ACTIVITIES
1.	1. Prepare Before Reading 2. Detailed Reading	The teacher orally narrated the story in order to prepare the learners emotionally. The teacher read the story first. The teacher read while the learners read silently with the teacher.
2.	3. Preparing Before Writing	The teacher picked up complex words from the reading extract and read them aloud to the learners. Learners were asked to read the words repeatedly. The educator chose a paragraph that captures learner's attention. The educator chose a context and asked questions to test learners understanding of the story and their vocabulary. -Learners were asked to cut the story line by line and keep it in pieces. The educator asked questions and as learners gave their answers, they pasted those answers that were cut from the entire story.
3.	3. Preparing Before Writing	The teacher taught learners grammatical structures according to the context of the story: spelling, sentence making, reordering of sentences and paragraphs, sentence writing.
4.	3 and 4	The teacher continued with grammatical structures as learners prepared themselves for the writing activity. Learners did oral presentation of the story.

		They worked in groups in order to dramatize the story. The drama performance represented all characters in the story.
5.	4. Joint Reconstruction of a Narrative Text	Learners engaged in brainstorming in preparation to develop paragraphs. The teacher guided them on how to develop their own writing through sentence making. A model text was used to guide the class in writing a new text. The teacher guided learners to construct new sentences using alternative ideas while maintaining the structure of the text. Key words on paragraph development; Planning, Who? When? How? What? The learners took turns to write the new sentences on the chalk board with the help of the teacher and peers. They read the new paragraph. Learners copied the new text into their exercise books.
6.	5. Individual Reconstruction	Learners re-read the joint reconstruction. They revisited the alternative vocabulary and text structure. All learners wrote their own story individually guided by the teacher. It was a new story that will not have a reference to the joint construction.
7.	6. Independent writing	They all used the skills developed through each of the supportive stages for assessment purposes. Learners chose topic, vocabulary, genre of text, language patterns Teacher assessed this work individually.

The seven lessons for each participant had one or two interactive cycle steps each day according to the planning of the learning activities as tabled in the lesson plan above. The story or the text was used as a point of reference for each lesson. The participants covered all grammatical aspects, literary genres, and creative writing tasks using the exact text. The RtL pedagogy's repetitive nature helped struggling readers master the concepts while it strengthened and perfected the reading skills of average and good readers.

The lesson plans confirmed that the participants used the RtL as a pedagogic approach to enhance the learners' reading skills. This data-generating tool responded to the first research question: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading skills? The participants' employment of the RtL pedagogy improved their pedagogic skills. They no longer complained about the lack of support from the parents and the community because they could now develop the learners' reading skills.

The findings from the narrative interviews and document analysis (Lesson plans) were because of implementing the Reading to Learn methodology in the sampled grade 10 classes. All four participants used the methodology as an intervention to the learners' reading challenges after receiving training on RtL. Through the narrative interviews, participants were able to express their positive encounter regarding the use of the six-stage scaffolding interactive cycle. Document analysis also confirmed that the lessons covered all the steps of the interactive cycle.

4.3 Conclusion

Data was generated using a focus group discussion, narrative interviews, and document review (lesson plans) and the findings were discussed in this chapter. The data generated responded to the two research questions asked by this study: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading skills? and In what way can RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

The narrative interviews revealed that using the RtL pedagogy encouraged learners to participate actively in class, helped them practice pronunciation, developed their oral reading skills, and

enhanced their comprehension skills. Based on these findings, it can be agreed that the RtL pedagogy did improve the learners' reading skills.

The review of the lesson plans confirmed that the participants used the RtL pedagogy as a teaching approach. The lesson plans also displayed that the participants' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhanced their teaching of reading. Also, one of the findings from the narrative interviews was that the participants felt that the RtL pedagogy developed them professionally. These findings suggest that the RtL enhanced the teachers' pedagogic skills when used as a pedagogic tool.

The narrative interviews allowed the participants to reflect on the implementation of the six stages of the interaction cycle in the classroom. They used the RtL methodology to develop their teaching and supported the Grade 10 learners to improve their reading skills. The researcher further confirmed the teaching of reading through the lesson plans that the participants used during the implementation process of RtL. The findings reflect that before RtL training, participants needed help with a methodology they could use to teach reading. After receiving training, they could use the six stages of the interaction cycle to support learners to improve their reading skills.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarised the findings from chapter four that resulted from the implementation of the six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle by the Grade 10 language teachers. It was proven through the data collected and findings that the RtL as a teaching methodology improved the Grade 10 learners' reading skills. Also, as a professional learning programme, it provided teachers with knowledge about the pedagogy to apply the method confidently (Rose, 2018). The findings also confirmed that the research aim was fulfilled as the questions were answered. The two research questions were framed as follows.

1. How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading?
2. In what way can the RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

5.2 Multilingualism

Multilingualism refers to the ability to speak and understand multiple languages. It is a phenomenon in various regions and communities worldwide where individuals are proficient in more than one language. This study stands out for its uniqueness because of its examination of multilingualism in the context of three specific languages: IsiZulu, Sesotho, and English. By focusing on these three languages, the study explores the dynamics and interactions between individuals who are fluent in these languages. It explores into how multilingual individuals navigate the different linguistic systems, switch between languages, and negotiate meaning across the three languages. This research provides insights into the intricacies of multilingualism and sheds light on the challenges and benefits associated with being proficient in IsiZulu, Sesotho, and English simultaneously. IsiZulu and Sesotho are both Bantu languages spoken in southern Africa. IsiZulu is one of the most widely spoken languages in South Africa and is predominantly spoken by the Zulu people, while Sesotho is an official language in Lesotho and is also spoken in parts of South Africa. English, on the other hand, is a widely used global language and has gained significant prominence in many multilingual contexts worldwide as a language used across the curriculum.

The study's focus on these three languages allows researchers to explore various aspects of multilingualism, such as language choice, code-switching, language mixing, and language attitudes. It examines how individuals proficient in IsiZulu, Sesotho, and English navigate their linguistic repertoire in different contexts, including family, education, work, and social interactions. The study may investigate factors such as language proficiency, language dominance, language attitudes, and the sociocultural implications of multilingualism in these communities.

By examining multilingualism in the context of IsiZulu, Sesotho, and English, this study contributes to our understanding of the complexities and unique dynamics of multilingual individuals. It provides insights into how people negotiate and use multiple languages in their daily lives, the cultural and social implications of language choices, and the impact of multilingualism on identity and communication. Additionally, it may shed light on language policies, education, and language planning to promote and support multilingualism in these communities. Overall, the study's focus on IsiZulu, Sesotho, and English as three languages of investigation offers a valuable opportunity to explore the intricacies of multilingualism in a specific linguistic and cultural context, providing a deeper understanding of how individuals navigate complex language repertoires and the significance of multilingualism in their lives.

5.3 Findings of the study

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of RtL methodology on students' reading abilities and comprehension, and a comprehensive research design and analysis was employed for critical investigation. Through thematic analysis, findings were generated. The findings revealed a significant improvement in Grade 10 learners' reading proficiencies following the implementation of RtL methodology. The study demonstrated that RtL methodology effectively enhanced students' reading skills, including fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension. Moreover, the results indicated that RtL methodology positively influenced students' motivation and engagement with reading, leading to increased interest and enjoyment in the process. Having discussed the findings, it is safe to suggest that the incorporation of RtL methodology within Grade 10 classrooms can be a promising approach to promote and develop students' reading proficiencies, ultimately contributing to their academic success and overall literacy skills.

Focus Group Discussion

Using a focus group discussion as a data-collecting tool was to establish teachers' experiences teaching reading skills before implementing the RtL methodology during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their responses gave rise to the following findings.

5.3.1 Finding 1: Absence of out-of-school support for literacy development

Absence of Parental Support

Teachers 1 and 3 indicated that lack of parental support at home significantly contributed to learners' poor reading skills. This finding indicates that lack of parental support contributed to the poor reading skills of the sampled Grade 10 learners. Parents do not read with their children at home to support their literacy development. As highlighted in the background of the study, the school where the research was conducted is in an informal settlement in Gauteng. Most of the parents are illiterate, and as a result, they cannot support their children with literacy development outside the classroom environment.

Absence of community-based literacy activities

Teachers 2 and 4 also revealed that the absence of community-based literacy activities further impairs learners' literacy development. Most families in the informal settlement need to create a conducive environment for learners to practice reading and engage in other community literacy development activities. They do not have books to read at home, and with their low level of education, parents do not assist learners at home. Some learners come from child-headed families and become parents to their siblings. There are no libraries in the informal settlement.

5.3.2 Finding 2: The impact of remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic

Lack of motivation from teachers, learners, and parents

It also emerged from the focus group interviews whereby teachers 1 and 2 indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic harmed effective teaching and learning. This resulted in demotivation from teachers, learners, and parents. To continue with schooling, online teaching was introduced.

Unfortunately, online teaching and learning are thus perceived to have perpetuated a more classic society whereby only those with high economic status could meet its demands. Poor communities were left in despair. There needed to be more resources to support online learning; some learners needed tablets or cell phones and others needed help to afford data. The school was one of the schools that shut down for almost five months because online learning was not feasible.

5.3.3 Lack of learner discipline and content knowledge

Teachers 3 and 4 revealed that teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic created discipline and content knowledge challenges; there was limited time for effective teaching and learning due to the rotational programme. Teaching was only focused on teaching to assess, and there was no time for additional support and remedial work; content coverage needed to be improved. Learners could not complete tasks at home because they were not supervised. The conditions of teaching and learning in the informal settlement school also currently presents challenges ranging from social and economic ills as most parents are illiterate and unemployed. As a result, parents are more worried about how to feed their families for survival than the support that they should give their children.

Narrative Interviews

The researcher used narrative interviews as a data collection tool to probe the impact of the six-stage scaffolding interaction cycle of RtL as a method of teaching reading skills to the sampled Grade 10 learners. This data-generating tool allowed the participants to present their experiences, which generated their perceptions regarding RtL's impact in the classroom. Their responses answered the two research questions: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading? and In what way can the RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills?

The four teacher participants received training on the RtL methodology, and each of them prepared seven lessons guided by the steps covering the six stages of the interaction cycle: preparing before reading, detailed reading, preparing before writing, joint reconstruction, individual reconstruction, and independent writing. Teachers conducted the lessons in the classroom with the learners

without the researcher observing due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions. However, for every lesson preparation, the researcher met with the individual teacher to provide guidance and feedback discussions were conducted after every lesson as part of the reflection process. This assisted the teachers in identifying challenging areas and measuring the level of improvement regarding learners' reading proficiency.

5.3.4 Finding 1: Reading to Learn motivated learners to participate actively in the classroom.

It emerged from the interviews with teachers 1 and 2 that narrating stories before reading activated and increased learners' participation in the learning process. Narrating the story before reading prepares the learners emotionally to grasp the content of the reading text, and this influences active participation.

5.3.5 Reading to Learn increased learners' comprehension skills.

It was revealed from the interviews by teachers 1, 2, and 4 that when educators read texts before the learners, they create more significant opportunities for learners to develop their comprehension skills and make meaning of the reading texts. Learners build comprehension skills and use them to give sense to texts. Reading comprehension is one of the most critical skills learners need for academic achievement, as it enables them to construct meaning from different texts. Research has established that many South African learners need help to read for comprehension.

5.3.6 Reading to Learn encouraged pronunciation.

This finding emerged when teachers 1, 2 and 3 highlighted that teachers read the text first to prepare for learner individual reading. They indicated that when learners constantly read aloud, it makes them confident readers, and they also master the pronunciation of words.

5.3.7 Reading to Learn improved the oral reading skills of the learners.

My study aimed to explore how RtL methodology can improve Grade 10 learners' reading proficiencies. It was established from the finding that the RtL approach indeed improved the sampled Grade 10 learners reading abilities. This was evident from the responses given by all four teacher participants. They all mentioned that they used the six stages of the interaction cycle through which learners were engaged in reading activities involving skimming and scanning,

brainstorming, reading aloud, using language patterns, sentence writing, paragraph development, and giving meaning to complex words.

5.3.8 Reading to Learn was used as an effective classroom methodology and a tool for educator professional development.

All four teacher participants shared a standard view regarding the implementation of the RtL methodology as a teacher intervention tool to improve the sampled Grade 10 learners' reading skills. The finding confirmed that RtL assisted as a classroom methodology and a tool for educator professional development. This finding answered the research question: How can language teachers' employment of RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading? The RtL method also established key elements of knowledge for teachers and different curriculum genres were used for literacy development. While providing support for learners to use what they have learnt from reading to writing coherent texts, RtL also provides a set of resources for teachers to meet the needs of the learners (Rose, 2017; Rose & Martin, 2012). Secondary school teachers usually get trained in their curriculum fields, but few have comparable knowledge of the language of their subject; therefore, RtL gives teachers the knowledge about pedagogy and language to apply the methodology confidently (Rose, 2018).

5.4 Limitations of the study

The following paragraph introduces and discusses the limitations of a study that aimed to explore how RtL (Reading-to-Learn) methodology can improve Grade 10 learners' reading proficiencies. While the study yielded valuable insights, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the study focused solely on Grade 10 learners, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other grade levels. It would be beneficial to conduct similar research with learners from various grade levels to determine if the results are consistent across different age groups. Additionally, the study employed a specific RtL methodology, and variations of this approach were not explored. Different implementations of the RtL methodology may yield varying results, and therefore, it is crucial to examine the effects of different instructional strategies within the RtL framework. Moreover, the study relied on self-reported measures and teacher assessments, possibly introducing bias or subjectivity. Future research could incorporate objective measures like standardized tests to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of students' reading proficiencies. Lastly, the study was

conducted within a specific school or educational context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to different settings or cultural backgrounds. Further research should consider diverse educational environments to determine the effectiveness of RtL methodology across various contexts. Despite these limitations, the study's findings offer valuable insights into the potential benefits of RtL methodology in improving Grade 10 learners' reading proficiencies.

5.5 Reflections on what I learned through this study

Throughout the study aimed at exploring how RtL (Reading to Learn) methodology can enhance Grade 10 learners' reading proficiencies, I have gained valuable insights and reflections. This research has shed light on the effectiveness of RtL in improving students' reading skills and has provided me with a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in implementing this approach. One of the key reflections from this study is the importance of explicit teaching of reading strategies. RtL methodology emphasizes the explicit instruction of reading strategies such as predicting, summarizing, and questioning. By explicitly teaching these strategies, students have the necessary tools to comprehend and analyse complex texts. This approach enhances their reading abilities and fosters critical thinking skills.

Another significant reflection is the role of vocabulary development in improving reading proficiencies. The study highlighted the need for explicit vocabulary instruction, as a strong vocabulary is essential for understanding and interpreting texts. RtL methodology incorporates vocabulary activities that engage students in actively learning new words and using them in context. This approach not only expands students' vocabulary but also enhances their overall reading comprehension. Furthermore, the study emphasized the importance of scaffolding and support in the learning process. RtL methodology provides scaffolds such as graphic organizers, sentence starters, and guided questions to support students' understanding of texts. These scaffolds help students navigate through complex texts and develop their reading skills gradually. The study revealed that providing appropriate scaffolding is crucial in enabling students to access and comprehend challenging texts effectively.

In conclusion, the study on RtL methodology has provided valuable insights into how this approach can improve Grade 10 learners' reading proficiencies. The explicit teaching of reading

strategies, vocabulary development, and the provision of scaffolding are key elements in enhancing students' reading skills. By implementing RtL methodology, educators can empower students to become proficient readers who can critically analyze and comprehend a wide range of texts.

5.6 Recommendations

It has been proven that teachers' implementation of RtL enhanced learners' reading skills and used the scaffolding interaction cycle to support learners. At the same time, they developed their reading and writing skills. Therefore, the DoE should infuse the RtL pedagogy in the curriculum design to provide equal opportunities in the classroom. A pilot project on implementing the RtL methodology across the curriculum would capacitate officials and teachers about the pedagogy and its unfolding process. The department should also improve infrastructure to solve the problem of overcrowding and lack of resource facilities, i.e., libraries, computer laboratories, smartboards, etc. There is a communication gap between mainstream schooling and vocational training because policies do not provide clear guidance regarding referrals and procedures used to place learners who cannot read and write for skills development. These policies should be reviewed to accommodate all learners from different socio-economic backgrounds.

The socio-economic and political situation has a direct impact on the education system of the country. The quintile system propagates a classical society in which poor communities or informal settlements do not receive the same services as the affluent suburbs or middle-class residential areas. Poor infrastructure development, lack of resources and overcrowding are the order of the day in quintile one school (formally described as the poor of the poorest) in informal settlements. In contrast, there is always an equal distribution of resources meant to support teaching and learning in former model C or quintile five schools. This situation has severe negative impacts on teaching and learning. The DoE should establish commissions to improve teaching and learning in public schools and eliminate marginalisation. This will help create a conducive learning environment for learners and improve teachers' working conditions.

5.7 Suggestions for further research

The findings of this study have the potential to contribute significantly to the development of effective teaching strategies and interventions for improving reading skills among students. However, several areas warrant further research and exploration.

Firstly, it would be beneficial to investigate the long-term effects of implementing RtL methodology on the reading abilities of Grade 10 learners. While the initial findings of this study may provide valuable insights, it is essential to understand whether the improvements in reading proficiencies are sustained over time. Longitudinal studies can help determine the lasting impact of RtL methodology on students' reading skills.

Secondly, it would be interesting to explore the effectiveness of RtL methodology across different socio-economic backgrounds. The current study focuses on Grade 10 learners, but it would be valuable to examine whether the benefits of RtL methodology extend to students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. This research could shed light on the potential of RtL methodology to bridge the achievement gap among students.

Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to investigate the role of teacher training and professional development in implementing RtL methodology effectively. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating students' reading development, and their knowledge and skills in implementing RtL methodology can significantly impact its effectiveness. Research in this area can provide insights into the necessary training and support for teachers to implement RtL methodology effectively.

5.8 Conclusion

The discussion of the findings in the study confirms that the RtL six stages of the scaffolding interaction cycle managed to answer the first research question of the study: How can the language teachers' employment of the RtL pedagogy enhance the teaching of reading? Teachers implemented the six stages of the RtL in the classroom of Grade 10 learners. The methodology also served as a professional developmental tool for teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge to know what genres to teach in the classroom.

The second research question was: How can the RtL pedagogy improve the learners' reading skills? The sampled Grade 10 classes engaged in reading activities designed according to the RtL methodology. Learners were supported by their teachers while they learnt reading skills through the six stages of the interaction cycle. All four participants confirmed that the reading skills of their learners improved.

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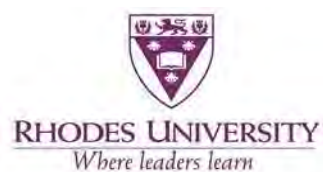
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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics approval



Rhodes University, Education Faculty
Research Ethics Committee
PO Box 94, Makhanda, 6140, South Africa
Tel: +27 (0) 46 603 8393
Fax: +27 (0) 46 603 8028
email: e.rosenberg@ru.ac.za

<https://www.ru.ac.za/researchgateway/ethics/>

Dr Rethabile Mawela 29/11/2020

ISEA

R.Mawela@ru.ac.za

Dear Mr Sydney Gazide and Dr Rethabile Mawela

Title of proposed research: Exploring how language teachers' employment of Reading to Learn pedagogy enhances Grade 10 learners' reading skills.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE NUMBER: 2020-1613-4661

This letter confirms that your research ethics application has been reviewed and **APPROVED** by the Education Faculty Research Ethics Committee (EF-REC). Your permission letter from the Gauteng Department of Education has been received and you are free to proceed with your study.

Approval is granted for 1 year. An annual progress report is required in order to renew approval for an additional period. You will receive an email notifying you when the progress report is due.

Should any substantive change(s) be made during the research process, that may have ethical implications, you should notify the Education Faculty REC Chair via email. This includes changes in investigators. The REC Chair will advise as to whether a new application is necessary.

Do keep this clearance letter secure and accessible throughout your study and after its completion. It will be needed when a thesis is examined and when publications are submitted to journals.

Please also submit a brief report to the REC Chair on the completion of the research. This can be done via email. The purpose of this report is to indicate whether the research was conducted successfully and whether any ethics-related matters arose that the committee should be aware of, in order to guide future studies. Sincerely,

Prof Eureka Rosenberg

Chair: Education Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B: Letter of approval from Gauteng Department Of Education



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4141112

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	24 November 2020
Validity of Research Approval:	08 February 2021 — 30 September 2021 2019/694
Name of Researcher:	Gazide S
Address of Researcher:	3 Albany Street
	Extension2
	Lenasia South
Telephone Number:	011 855 9345/ 082 674 5343
Email address:	Sydneyqazide@gmail.com

Research Topic:	Exploring how language teachers employment of Reading to Learn (RiL) pedagogy enhances Grade 10 learners reading skills
Type of qualification	Masters of Education
Number and type of schools:	1 Secondary school
District/s/HO	Johannesburg South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

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

1. Letter that would indicate that the said researcher/\$ has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study

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Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel• (011) 355 0488

Email: Faith. Tshabalala@aotena

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
2. Because of COWD 19 pandemic researchers can ONLY collect data online, telephonically or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school principal.
3. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate. The approval letter will then indicate the type of arrangements that have been made with the school.
4. The Researchers are advised to make arrangements with the schools via Fax, email or telephonically with the principal.

5 A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

6. A letter/ document that outline the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively,

7. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and cooperation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their cooperation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.

8, Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.

9. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.

IQ Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE, Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.

11 It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.

12. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport fares and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.

13 The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.

14 On completion of the study the researcher's must supply the Director: Knowledge Management.

& Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research

15. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.

16. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

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

Kind regards



Mr Gumani Mukatuni

Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 24/11/2020

2

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Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

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Appendix C: Questions for focus group discussions

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

QUESTIONS

1. How did COVID-19 pandemic affect teaching and learning at your school?
2. What challenges are you facing as a language teacher that are attributed to the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic?
3. How did you infuse the RtL pedagogy in your lesson planning in order to align with the Annual Assessment Programmes and work schedules?
4. How will you use RtL pedagogy outside the classroom environment to mitigate challenges in reading literacies amongst learners?

Appendix D: Narrative interview questions

NARRATIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did you start by narrating the story to the learners?
2. Explain the activities you have used in order to engage learners in the classroom.
3. You indicated that you first read the text before learners could read, why was it important for you to do that?
4. Why did you ask individual learners to read the text?
5. Do you think you have used special strategies to teach the learners reading skills?
6. How did the RtL interactive cycle assist you and the learners to achieve the desired outcomes?
7. What served as confirmation to you that RtL improved learners reading skills?

Appendix E: Reading text

Reading Comprehension

In this essay, Judith Ortiz Cofer recalls how her childhood fantasies and her mother's dreams intersect. Read the essay "Volar," which means "to fly" in Spanish, and answer the questions that follow.

Volar

by Judith Ortiz Cofer

|

At twelve I was an avid consumer of comic books—Supergirl being my favorite, I spent my allowance of a quarter a day on two twelve-cent comic books or a double issue for twenty-five. I had a stack of Legion of Super Heroes and Supergirl comic books in my bedroom closet that was as tall as I. I had a recurring dream in those days: that I had long blond hair and could fly. In my dream I climbed the stairs to the top of our apartment building as myself. but as I went up each flight, changes would be taking place. Step-by-step I would fill out: my legs would grow long, my arms harden into steel, and my hair would magically go straight and turn a golden color.

Sleek and hard as a supersonic missile. Once on the roof, Supergirl my parents had safely to be asleep aerodynamic in their beds, I would get on tip-toe, arms outstretched in the position for flight and jump out my fifty-story-high window into the black lake of the sky. From up there, over the rooftops, I could see everything, even beyond the few blocks of our barrio; ¹ with my X-ray vision I could look inside the homes of people who interested me. Once I saw our landlord, whom I my parents feared, sitting in a treasure-room dressed in an ermine coat and a large gold crown. He sat on the floor counting his dollar bills. I played a trick on him. Going up to his building's chimney, I blew a little puff of my super-breath into his fireplace, scattering his stacks of money so that he had to start counting all over again. I could more or less program my Supergirl dreams in those days by focusing on the object of my current obsession. This way I "saw" into the private lives of my neighbors, my teachers, and in the last days of my childish fantasy and the beginning of adolescence, into the secret room of the boys I liked. In the mornings I'd wake up in my tiny bedroom with the incongruous—at least in our tiny apartment—white "princess" furniture my mother had chosen for me, and find myself back in my body: my tight curls still clinging to my head, skinny arms and legs unchanged.

In the kitchen my mother and father would be talking softly over a café con leche ² She would come "wake me" exactly forty-five minutes after they had gotten up. It was their time together at the beginning of each day and even at an early age I could feel their disappointment if I interrupted them by getting up too early. So I would stay in my bed recalling my dreams of flight, perhaps planning my next flight. In the kitchen they would be discussing events in the barrio. Actually, he would be carrying that part of the conversation; when it was her turn to speak she would, more often than not, try shift

the topic toward her desire to see her familia on the Island: How about a vacation in Puerto Rico together this year, Querido? ³ We could rent a car, go to the beach. We could . And he would answer patiently, gently, Mi amor, ⁴ do you know how much it would cost. for the all of us to fly there? It is not possible for me to take the time off.. . Mi vi.da, ⁵ please understand And I knew that soon she would rise from the table. Not abruptly. She would light a cigarette and look out the kitchen window. The view was of a dismal alley that was littered with refuse thrown from windows. The space was too narrow for anyone larger than a skinny child to enter safely, so it was never cleaned. My mother would check the time on the clock over her sink, the one with a prayer for patience and grace written in Spanish. A birthday gift. She would see that it was time to wake me. She'd sigh deeply and say the same thing the view from her kitchen window always inspired her to say: Ay, si yo pudiera volar. ⁶

3 Querido — dear

⁴ Mi amor — my love

⁵ n,fi vida— my life, used as a term of endearment

⁶ A.v, si yo pudiera volar— Oh, if only I could fly

"Ear" by Judith Ortiz Cofer, translated by Elena Olazagasti-Segovia, from *El año de nuestra revolución*. Copyright (Q) 2006 by Arte Público Press—University of Houston. Reprinted by permission of Arte Público Press—University of Houston.